

## Site visit by Samyuktha Kumar, Asha Arizona

Site visit date: January 9, 2018

### Basic information

Date of the site visit: 01/09/2018

Name of the Project: Rewards Trust

Name of the Organization Running the Project (if different):

Was your site visit announced? Yes, it was planned

	Project Contact's Information	Site Visitor's (Your) Information (Volunteer conducting the visit)
<b>Name</b>	Rewards Trust (Sridhar, Kalavathi)	Samyuktha Kumar
<b>Address</b>	3, Bhairavi Anupuram 603127, Tamil Nadu	
<b>Phone(s)</b>	9445682090	6266953023
<b>Fax</b>		
<b>E-mail</b>		
<b>Affiliation to project</b>	Coordinator	None
<b>Affiliation to Asha</b>	Fund recipients	Volunteer

## **PART A: Particulars about the organization and its environment (cross-validation of information presented in proposal)**

1. What is the main ideology of the organization behind the project?  
Rewards Trust basically tries to improve the quality of teachers in public schools. They train the teachers to help them teach beyond what's available in the books.
2. How old is the organization?  
Organization is around 13 years old now.
3. How and why was it founded?  
Organization was Sridhar's brainchild. Both Sridhar and Kalavathi wanted students in public schools have the same quality of education as that of the private school.
4. What are the different focus areas of the organization? (give a rough estimate of the % of their total effort/funding)
  - Community development 60 %
  - Education 100 %
  - Health \_\_\_\_\_ %
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_ % (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the administrative structure of the group (e.g. Board of Directors/Grassroots-based/Volunteer based)?

Sridhar  
Kalavathi

6. Are there any other organizations working in the area providing any one or all of the services provided by the visited organization? (Briefly mention their names and their objectives)

Organization(s)	Objectives of the organization(s)

7. Is the organization/founder involved with any other social issues/causes/projects other than running the project proposed?

None

8. When was the project of interest started?

It was started back in 2005.

9. What is their vision about the future of the project?

To better the education system in public schools.

10. What were the initial challenges faced by the organization and by the founder when starting the project? How did he/she overcome them? Who helped them through the initial stages?

Lack of support from the local community.

Irregular students.

Lack of funds to supports a lot of schools.

Lack of well trained teachers.

11. Has the organization ever approached the government for funding? If so, what was the outcome? If not, why not?

No, since they themselves hire teachers to teach in public schools for a lower salary than public school teachers. They do not get help from government.

12. Currently, what are the main problems the organization faces for running this project?

They do not get enough funding to support their project.

13. How many centers/schools does the project run? How many of those were you able to visit?

They run around 13 schools. I could visit around 3 schools.

14. Were you able to choose the project centers to visit? Or were all centers visited suggested by the project partner?

Centers were suggested by the project coordinator.

## **PART B: The beneficiaries and the community**

*(Information to be gathered from parents and children)*

1. Approximately how many families live in the area?  
Around 50 families live in the area.
2. What do the parents do for a living? (Agricultural worker, Daily wage laborer etc.)  
Daily wage laborers, fishermen, farmers.
3. What is the religious/economic/educational background of the parents/community?  
(Are the parents able to pay any fees? Are the parents literate? etc.)  
Most of the parents aren't literates. Rewards trust covers only public school, and parents need not pay any fees for it.
4. Does the project/school target specific families (e.g. agricultural workers, families with specific backgrounds, illiterate parents, first generation learners, orphans, sex workers, etc.)  
They do not target any specific community
5. How often do the teachers meet the parents?  
Teachers do not meet the parents frequently.
6. How do the parents/the community view the efforts taken by the organization that runs the project?  
Both parents and teachers are extremely grateful to what Sridhar and kalavathi are doing to the community. They couldn't ask for more.
7. What is the motivation for the parents to send their children to school?  
For their kids to lead a better life and they feel education can make them achieve it.
8. How do the parents participate in the organization's activities? (e.g. by contributing their time, money or labor in the school's activities etc.)

Parents contribute to the organization's activities by sending their kids regularly to school and making sure they continue to pursue towards their goals.

9. Has the community supported the project (e.g. financially, donating land, volunteering, etc.)?

The schools encourage rewards trust to continue with their activities. Rewards trust also have a lot of donors and trustees who contribute a lot to the community.

10. Are there any Government Schools in the area? (Circle one)

- Yes
- No

11. **If yes**, how far are the Government Schools from the community?

They are around 2-3 miles from each other.

12. Why did the parents choose this school over the Government School?

N/A

13. When you visited, how many children were present in the class?

Around 14 children in higher secondary school

20 in high school

20 in kindergarten.

14. What is the average age group of the children per class? How are they handling older children that need basic education?

Higher secondary – 15-16 years

High School- 14-15

Kindergarten- 5-6 years

15. What is the regular class strength? What is the boy-girl ratio in the school?

Class is close to 20 in every school. Higher secondary had only girls, but in the other schools it had equal number of boys and girls.

16. Do the children seem to enjoy coming to school? (Site visit volunteers observation)

Yes, children seem to be very happy.

17. What portion of children from the local community (approx.) attends this school?  
What portion of children does not go to ANY school? Where do other children in the community go to school?  
Around 40-50 children attend school. Schools in meyyur have a pretty irregular number of students, mainly because their parents seem to leave the city in search of better opportunities.
18. What activities do the children do after school hours?  
They tend to play and do household work after school hours.
19. What is the main motivation for the students to attend school?  
Mainly teachers and rewards trust.
20. What is the drop-out rate among students? Why do they leave the school? (If high, what is the organization doing regarding this?)  
Dropout rate is pretty low. They tend to leave the school only if their parents leave the city and go to someplace else.
21. What do the children feel about the school? Do they feel happy to come to school every day? (Question posed to the children to gauge their replies)  
Yes, they seem very happy.

### **PART C: Details about the project and its staff**

*(Information to be gathered from students and staff)*

1. How far is the project site from the main town/village? How do the children commute? (foot, bus, etc.)  
It takes around 20 minutes to go in car.
2. Are the children charged fees for attending school? (Either school or bus, etc.)  
No, it's a public school.

3. What infrastructure and facilities are available at the project site you visited? (eg. Furniture, buildings, toilets, library, sports, hostels, mid-day meals etc)  
Schools lacked libraries and neat toilets. Otherwise everything else was available.

4. Is the building permanent or temporary construction? Is it owned or rented? What is its physical condition? How are they being maintained at the condition?

They are all government schools. Schools are well maintained.

5. How big are the classrooms? How many children per room? How many classes (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> etc) per room?

Classes are of normal size. Around 15 children can study in one class.

6. What is the medium of instruction? Is this the student's mother tongue?

Tamil is the medium of instruction. Except in kindergarten, where English is the medium of instruction.

7. What is the mode of teaching in the school? (Check the appropriate choices)

- Formal (State Board, Central Board etc) upto \_\_\_Sate Board\_\_\_\_\_ grade (LKG, 5<sup>th</sup> etc)
- Non-Formal Education (NFE), do the students also attend formal school? \_\_\_\_\_
- Vocational
- Other. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

8. **If Non-Formal Education**, how many of the children also attend formal schools in the area? **If none**, does the project plan this for the future- either by setting up formal schools or by setting up a process to send children to mainstream schools?

9. **If Non-Formal Education**, does the organization create its own study material (books, games)? Or does it use NCERT/NIOS books?

10. **If Vocational**, what do the children do after they finish training?

11. What are the daily school hours? How many days of the week/month/year is the school open?

Schools function from 8-3 pm.

12. How many staff or volunteers are involved in the project? (Full-time/Part-time/Volunteers) What are their roles? Give breakdown by roll (eg. 2 full-time teachers, 1 full-time volunteer teacher, 1 cook, 1 administrator, etc.)

1) V SRIDHAR, Scientist with IGCAR, Kalpakkam, President

2) D V NATARAJAN, former Scientist with IGCAR, Kalpakkam, Secretary

3) ANANTHI BASKARAN, Educationist & Primary Teacher Trainee, Treasurer

4) Dr S V M SATYANARAYANA, Asst Prof of Physics, Central University, Pondicherry, Trustee

5) Dr T SENGADIR, Prof of Maths, Central University, Thiruvarur, Trustee.

Advisors & Team members

1) S KALAVATHI, Scientist with IGCAR, Kalpakkam.

2) MEGALA RAJAN BABU, Specialist in Biology.

13. How many of them are from the local community?

Pretty much all of them are from the local community.

14. How many of the staff are women? What are their roles?

Three women in rewards trust. They are either teachers or help in managing the rewards trust.

15. What is the education level/teaching experience of the teachers? What is their background?

Teachers aren't very experienced. Rewards trust's primary goal is to help the teachers to get better at their job and help them to teach kids in a more interactive manner.

16. What is the motivation for the teachers to work in this project (eg. pay, service, etc.)? What are the other employment opportunities that they have in the town/village?

Teachers seem to work for their own satisfaction and for the pay.

17. How long have they been with this project/organization?

Some teachers have been with rewards trust for quite some time. Some teachers tend to leave the organization for better opportunities.

18. How many teachers have left the school in the past one year, and why?

Around 4-5 teachers have left rewards trust. Either they were removed from rewards trust because of the unsatisfactory performance of their students or they opted to leave the institution.

19. How many new teachers have joined in the past year?

2-3 teachers have joined the trust.

20. Does the organization train the teachers? (Circle one)

- Yes
- No

21. If yes, how do they provide the training?

They have monthly meetings to train the kids.

22. Where do they live, and how much they travel to work here?

They live within city limits. They generally use public transport to travel to school.

23. How much is the staff paid? Are they happy with their salaries?

Staff are paid around 3k-7k rupees.

24. How often do the main founders/organizers/volunteers visit the center? Do they do only administrative duties or spend time at the grassroots as well?

They visit schools once in a month. At the school, rewards trust trustees spend a lot of time with the kids. They gauge the student's performance by asking them questions and train the teachers to better improve their teaching skills.

25. What does the organization say about education of the child after they leave its school?

Organization tries to keep track of their student's performance even after they leave the school. They are still in touch with their student's progress. One of the reward's trust students is now working with a multi-national company in Japa.

26. Were you able to look at actual work of the students? Homework/classwork/tests, etc? Comment.

I did look at their school projects and artwork. I got a chance to look at SMART exam test papers, which are created by rewards trust to help students to apply what they learn in school.

## **PART D: Financial resources of the organization**

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit)

1. What are the different sources of funding for this project? (different agencies/Govt)

It was supported by Silicon Valley through Bangalore till 2007-08 Once they got their FCRA regn done, since 2007-08 we got direct funding from SV till 2015-16.

Stanford from 2012-13 till 2017-18

Princeton from 2012-13 till 2016-17

Florida from 2014-15 till 2017-18

Arizona, Berkeley, Dallas, Danbury started support from 2016-17 ( Arizona has not sent its grant for 2017-18 yet)

Boston & Hartford supported from 2017-18

2. What is the annual budget?

As on date total budget hovers around 70 Lakhs per year of which Asha ( all chapter) support for this year is around Rs 46.3 lakhs till now

3. Are detailed records of past funding and spending available? If possible, please request a copy (of annual financial statements, for example).

Detailed records of the funding has been sent to the Boston chapter coordinators.

4. What is the largest portion of their expenses (salaries/infrastructure/etc.)?

Only on Honorariums, Incentives, SMART Test prizes, and small portion to pay for external resource persons & auditor expenses. We do not deal with any infrastructure works.

5. Do the salaries listed on their account books match the salaries that the teachers communicated to you?

Yes

6. Do the expenses in the proposal reflect the quality/quantity of material found at the site? (ex. Do the students have uniforms if they have been itemized? Do they have the number of computers they claim to have? Does the food seem nutritious? Are there enough books? etc.)

For the teachers, Yes.

## **PART E: Comments**

Please use this portion of the document to attach pictures and make additional comments. Remember, we need you to be our eyes and ears on the ground. Please assess the situation carefully. If it seems weird, do let us know. Some examples of red flags- The school claims to be providing students with uniforms and school has been in session for 6 months, but the uniforms look brand new, The school claims high test results for the children, but when you talk to them they are unable to answer basic



questions, etc. If you sense something is wrong or the project partner is being less than honest with us, do let us know.







