Site visit Report
Project: Sandnya Sanwardhan Sanstha, Butibori, Nagpur, Maharashtra
Date of Visit: 25th Oct 2013

My visit to Sandnya Sanwardhan Sanstha this year occurred over 2 days. Apart from the customary visit to the school I got to attend their annual cultural event. The cultural event was well attended with an audience of close to 1000. That goes to show how many supporters and well wishers the organization has locally.

It was great to see kids perform plays, dances and songs. A play based on Ramayana garnered the biggest applause from the crowd. It is quite commendable that the teaching and non-teaching staff of the institute take tremendous efforts and months of practice and rehearsals to prep the students for this event. Unfortunately, pictures of this year’s event were lost so I don’t have anything to share in this report but pictures from previous years events are available on the institute’s website listed in the Additional Resources section at the end of this report.

When I visited the institute few days later the mood was upbeat due to the upcoming Diwali vacations. Generally, the institute suffers from higher absentee rate due to the nature of children they deal with and this day was no exception. While the absentee rate is higher than a conventional school, the institute has managed to keep it constant and they make periodic efforts to reduce it. Here’s how the attendance looked on this day
The rehab unit where some students do vocational work was closed so I couldn’t check on their progress. They have one full time vocational unit functional and other units are seasonal.

A continued effort of the institute has always been to create awareness of their work in the local community. There was a group of students from a nearby dorm visiting the institute that day. They were being oriented on the special needs of the children and were then given a tour around the campus.

The current student strength of the school is 93 students. In the last year, they added a third school bus thereby reducing the overcrowding in the two buses. It also cut down the commute time for many students since the pickup routes were restructured. It is impressive that the institute was able to raise funds for purchase of a third bus completely from individual donations that were being collected solely for this purpose. The two older buses have been sponsored by GAIL (Gas Authority of India Ltd) & Asha.
The building expansion that was undertaken in 2011 is also now complete. The project was nominated by Asha Athens for Work-An-Hour campaign in 2011 to raise funds for the construction. We raised about $9500 in the campaign. With additional classrooms in the concrete building the older hut like structures that looked very temporary (but were used for years) have been done away with. There was no sign of them on the campus (one of my earlier report had a picture of those structures)

The institute has always maintained a nice green space for kids to entertain and play. It looked prim and proper as always. I met a parent of a mentally challenged kid who liked the environment they create in the campus and he believed that it has a beneficial effect on the children. He had driven over 8 hours all the way from Indore, MP to meet with the secretary of the institute. I learnt that he visits every few months to learn the methods of teaching and training used by the institute and teaches his own son. He has tried to persuade some institutions in Indore to adopt Sandnya’s teaching methods without success. But his son has shown remarkable improvement with Sandnya’s methods.
While Asha has traditionally supported salary expenses of the staff of the institute as a recurring expense, I feel this year there’s a greater need to fund the cost of replacement of the exercise equipment in the Physiotherapy unit. Much of the equipment has become old and rusty and although it is functional, many pieces of equipment are on the brink of breakdown. Here the principal of school Mr Dwivedi is supervising a student working on the bicycle machine. There’s no doubt that Asha should continue supporting the institute in its endeavors.
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Additional Resources

Site Visit 2011
Complete picture gallery for site visit 2011
https://picasaweb.google.com/102862574956231304927/SandnyaVisit2011
Site Visit 2010
Site Visit 2008
Picture Gallery
http://sandnya.org/?page_id=1182