

This is the report of my visit to TFS office in Hussainpur and the subsequent visit of what they refer to their “mother project” in DMTS school near Kalighat, Kolkata. I have the privilege to spend few hours with Mr Riwik, the CEO of TFS and had a chance to discuss this particular project, supported by Asha and few others currently undergoing under the supervision of TFS.

### ***A few words about TFS:***

TFS is an independent NGO operating in three states of India (Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and West Bengal). It runs multiple projects in each of these states with different types of people having different goals of these programs.

- Few projects are targeted to provide better education to the needy;
- Few are about providing assistance to the physically handicapped to make them financially independent
- There are some about providing alternative means of living to the poor families.

### ***About the “Mother project” run by DMTS school in Kalighat:***

The mother project is for providing after school coaching for students with poor financial backgrounds. It has more than 200 students in class 1 through 12. It even has a few students pursuing their under graduation from different colleges. ASHA for Education supports 50 of these students including 8 from undergraduate level.

#### **The students from class 1 through 12:**

These students attend different govt. schools during the day. Most of these schools are within an area of 5km from the DMTS School. TFS runs the after school coaching cum guidance session 5 days a week from 6 – 9 pm in the DMTS school premises.

The students are divided according to the class they are attending in their day school. Most of the students from the higher classes are allocated an independent classroom in the DMTS premises. Students of the primary section (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standard) are accommodated in a large hall.

The students are taught by the teachers appointed by DMTS on different subjects. Since the students are from different schools, often their progress is different in their individual schools. To keep the study material in sync across all of them is a challenge to the teachers here. However, they seem to be doing a great job.

The students seemed to be enthusiastic and the teachers sincere about their job. Since TFS is using the building and furniture of an established school, the basic infrastructure offered to the students is good. The school had electricity connection, clean bathrooms and a safe source of drinking water fitted with UV water filter.

Students are provided with a set school uniform per year. It is usually distributed just before the Durga Puja celebration in October. My visit being just a few weeks in advance, the uniforms of some of the students may look in bad shape. The good thing is that they are almost towards the end of their cycle and a new set is due to be distributed within a couple of weeks.

Apart from the school uniform and books, TFS also provides the students with light evening snack everyday.

#### Saturday classes

On each Saturday, TFS runs a dance/singing coaching camp for the students. Even some of the students of the senior class act as a teacher and role model to the younger students. They are even running a football coaching center in a small ground nearby, for the boys.

The Saturday classes are very popular among the students.

#### Hostel program for the students coming from hostile environemnt

TFS provides hostel facilities to students of different ages, coming from hostile environments. I personally met a few of such students who attended residential schools in earlier days, supported by TFS. As far as I remember, none of the students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standard supported by Asha are attending residential school at the moment. However, among the 8 undergraduates, a few are attending residential colleges.

TFS keeps track of their progress through a monthly visit to their school and hostel.