

Asha for Education™

Site Visit Questionnaire

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Dear Volunteer

Thanks for conducting this site visit.

The following set of questions is only a suggested guideline. Some of the following questions may not be relevant or applicable to the particular project you are visiting, but please do try to answer as many of them as possible. Please note that Part sB & C necessitate that the information be gathered through conversations with the children and their parents, and not simply the group's teachers and staff.

Please feel free to attach any documents/photos you feel are pertinent to the project.

Thanks.

- Asha for Education

Date: Feb. 18, 06

Name of the Project: Sri Vikasa Bharathi School

Name of the Organisation Running the Project (if different): Kamalakar Memorial Trust

Was your site visit announced? Yes, it was planned ☐

No, it was a surprise visit ☒

	Project Contact	You Name (Asha volunteer conducting the visit)
Name	Ms. Bharathi Devi	Ravi Mundoli
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PART A: Particulars about the organization and its environment

1. What are the different focus areas of the organization? (give a rough estimate of the % of their total effort/funding)

Community development ____% Education 100% Health 100%
 Other 100% (please specify) Under the umbrella organization, there is a school, old age home, and a cultural organization

2. What is the administrative structure of the group (e.g. Board of Directors/Grassroots-based)?

Not sure what the entire organizational structure of the trust is, but the school itself is under a principal and 11-12 teachers. Ms. Bharathi Devi takes active part in the day-to-day running of the school also. It is definitely not a grassroots organization. Details about the structure can probably be got from Rajeev A./Ms. Bharathi Devi herself.

3. 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	Objectives of the organization
-	This is semi-urban/rural area on the outskirts of Hyderabad. There are schools in the area (government and private), but I couldn't really get a sense of who else is doing what else.

PART B: The organization and the community it serves

(Information to be gathered from parents and children)

1. Approximately how many families live in the area? Hard to judge/irrelevant. It isn't in a village.

2. What do the parents do for a living? (Agricultural worker, Daily wage laborer etc.)

Mostly migrant labourers (construction workers, quarry workers(?), maidservants, other menial jobs).

3. At the time of enrolment, does the school ask for the names of both parents?

Yes ☐ No, just the father's name ☐ No, just the mother's name ☐

4. How often do the teachers meet the parents?

Not sure what the regularity of the meetings is, but I was told that one-on-one meetings are held with the parents of the kids. There isn't a formal parent-teacher association type thing, as such.

5. 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.)

The parents send the children to school, and some of them pay fees.

6. Are there any Government Schools in the area?

Yes ☒

No ☐

7. If yes, how far are the Government Schools from the community? Nearby. Less than 5 k.m. away.

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

Student-teacher ratio was mentioned as one issue, it is 1:50 in the government primary school, and all the usual problems with government schools seem to be prevalent. In this school, the ratio is more like 1:12-15.

9. When you visited, how many children were present in the class? 80-100

What is the regular class strength? About double the above,

Comments: Went on a Saturday, so that may have something to do with attendance. Also, the school bus could not go out that day (driver was ill) to pick up students from some areas.

10. Do the children seem to enjoy coming to school?

They seemed to be bright, active and chirpy, like schoolkids everywhere. The younger class kids seem to be happy in the school, the older (>7th) were a little subdued. All responded chirpily enough when engaged in conversation. A couple of children wanted to go home during lunch break for various reasons.

PART C: Project particulars

(Information to be gathered from students and staff)

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

A. Formal (State Board, Central Board etc.) ☒

till what class? 10th

B. Non-Formal Education (NFE) ☐

do the students also attend formal school?

C. Vocational ☐

D. Other ☐. Please specify _____

2. If A (Formal), up to what grade(LKG, 5th, 7th etc.) does the school conduct classes?

There are classes up to 10th. At the moment, there is only one student in 10th standard, but in 9th there are 7-8 kids who will hopefully write their 10th exams next year.

3. If B (Non-Formal Education) how many of the children also attend formal schools in the area?

If none do, does the project plan this for the future?

4. *If Non-Formal Education, does the organization create its own study material (books, games)?*

5. *If C (Vocational), what do the children do after they finish training?*

6. *How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community?* None. The staff are essentially mostly young 10th class graduates, perhaps lower middle class, whereas the children are not from the same socioeconomic stratum.

How many of the staff are women? All except 2 (one male teacher, one driver).

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

Was told that teacher turnover was not a big issues, most of the teachers have been around for 3-4 years. Usually, a teacher completes his/her academic year.

8. *How many new teachers have joined in the past year?* Not sure.

9. *Does the organization train the teachers?*

Yes ☐

No ☒

If yes, how do they provide the training?

10. *How much is the staff paid?* Didn't ask this directly, but it seems to be in the region of Rs. 1000 per month. Please see Vikasa Bharathi proposal.

Is it on par with the salary paid to the staff in the Government schools?

Yes ☐

No ☒

PART D: Financial resources of the organization

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit)

1. *Do you think the proposed amounts in the budget are reasonable?* Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☒

2. *Are all items covered in the budget?* Yes ☐ No ☒ Maybe ☐

Comments: In addition to whatever is in the budget, the organization could use some more infrastructure, such as electrical fittings (if a new building is funded, hopefully this will be taken care of), teaching aids (charts etc.), and lab equipment.

3. Is there anything you think should be added or removed from the budget?Yes ☐ No ☒**If you recommend any changes to the budget, please explain your reasons for this.**

The budget is not very detailed, hard to comment on this.

4. Did you discuss the proposed changes with the project? If so, please describe their response.**PART E: Comments***(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)*

Essentially, this school is the outcome of the good intentions of one person, Ms. Bharathi Devi and as such it has all the advantages and disadvantages that go with such an organization. She seems to be the driving force behind the school, and as long as she is there to look out for it, the school will keep moving along. From the "conventional" Asha viewpoint, the following may be of importance:

1. The teachers are all fairly young and sincere. There is a de facto second rung of leadership (one of the teachers, who seems to be fairly involved in the admin activities of the school), which augurs well, but this capacity should be built up further. The school should not rely on Ms. Bharathi Devi's energy, enthusiasm and availability - which is what it essentially hinges on at the moment.

2. The syllabus being taught is the state syllabus, but with additional emphasis on cultural stuff - songs, dramas and so on. The classes are mostly in English, Telugu and Hindi are also taught, and there was some mention of a Sanskrit class as well (not yet started). This is all fine, but as usual, 'culture' here is culture of a very particular kind, with its own assumptions.

3. The children are from mixed religious backgrounds, and in 2-3 classes, Muslim girls were the toppers, which was very heartening. From a bias perspective, there is no cause for alarm :-) even if they have sloka recitation before lunch.

4. In one of the classrooms, just as we walked in, the teacher was in the middle of hitting a student. But then this is nothing unusual.

5. The teachers could probably benefit from some training, I mentioned the Jodo Gyaan maths teacher training stuff to Ms. Bharathi Devi and they were interested. Also, the AID-TNSF science experiment kits may be useful.

6. There needs to be some serious long-term planning and thinking done, in terms of growth, administration, funding and so on. I think Ms. Bharathi Devi is already thinking on these lines, but didn't get a chance to talk in detail.

7. The school provides uniforms and books to the children. The text books are "Holy Faith" (a publisher)

books for lower classes, and the state board books for the higher classes.

In balance, the organization/people involved seem to be very sincere and dedicated. Funding seems to be the major crisis at the moment. The monthly expenditure on the school is about Rs. 50,000 and it is becoming hard to meet that. If they get some capital, they could set up a corpus fund and use the interest on operating expenses. A proper school building with classrooms and other facilities is also essential. It is important to understand what their long term vision and plans are. This isn't an 'activist' or 'ideological' type organization, more like an extremely well-intentioned, but small scale and effort.