

Parner Virtual Site Visit Report

February 19-20, 2023

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My name is Rushil Khadilkar, and I am the project steward for the Parner Project. On February 19 and 20th, 2023, I conducted a virtual site visit to the preschools and the support classes with the help of Mr. Yogesh Huprikar, Mr. Dilip Gavhane. Mr. Huprikar is a member of a local organization called MASOOM which oversees the Parner Project, and Mr. Gavhane is the coordinator for the Parner preschools and support classes. Both guided me through the site visit and provided key details regarding the schools and support classes. The virtual site visit took place on Zoom with my parents and I in Minnesota, but an in-person site visit may be made this summer so that I can meet the kids and teachers.



Images from Virtual Site Visit to Preschools (left) and Support Classes (right)

Virtual Site Visit Overview

There are 3 preschools in Parner supported by Asha with a total of 31 students, 19 in Mendoh and 12 in Selvag, while the 3rd pre-school (Godasedhara) has been closed since October due to a lack of students. Although there has been no change in Selvag, there are 8 new students in Mendoh with 5 moving into first grade. Despite the visit taking place over Zoom, I was able to interact and speak with the teacher (Miss Mangal) and students through translation or other assistance from my parents and Mr. Huprikar. In the preschool classroom, students seemed to be excited to learn, speak to other classmates, and follow instructions from their teacher. They learn alphabets, numbers, rhymes, and crafts. The students spend 9AM-Noon in these pre-schools and then are dropped off to their grandparents or nearby villages. They also must be picked up in the morning by teachers and staff in case their parents are unable to drop them off (most parents are farm laborers working long hours).

The support classes are conducted in the evenings (6:30-8:30) for older children in the 4th-12th grade to complement their school learning during the day. There were 23 students (10 boys and

13 girls) in the Borwak support class I visited. The students showed similar engagement and seeing success in passing 10th grade and going on to 11th grade.



Improvements and Continuities from 2022

Several activities have been organized by the coordinators in 2022 to engage students and teachers. They arranged teacher training in June 2022, with a primary focus on visual aids and teaching methods, as well as activities such as paper crafts and clay work. There is a monthly plan for monitoring the learning of numbers and language and monitoring children’s progress on learning objectives. They organized a health and nutrition check-up twice a year. Furthermore, all the classes are in-person which is a great sign considering that all classes were closed during COVID.



1. Anganwadi (Village Name - Mendoh)



2. Anganwadi (Village Name - Godasedara)



3. Support class (Village Name - Borwak)



4. Support class (Village Name - Mendoh)

Activity Photos Provided by MASUM from 2022

Challenges Faced by the Preschools and Support Classes

During the site visit, we had a thorough conversation about difficulties faced by the preschools and support classes. Major problems for the preschools are that river flooding prevents student attendance as the pre-school location is across river for several children. The monsoon often causes power outages. They have explored an alternate location across the river, but the location does not have a roof to protect them from the elements. In addition to monsoon issues, their main challenges are that the classes are in remote areas requiring children to walk 3-6 km. There are a variety of different indigenous languages that the teachers must adjust to. In support classes, the parents want the children to continue till 12th grade but some of them are married before they can complete school. For support classes, it is difficult to provide and find available teachers in the evenings and pay them enough for them to work there. Older girls often struggle to join evening classes as they are expected to help in their homes rather than go to these classes.

2023 Objectives and My Thoughts

Three primary objectives were discussed in the first call with the preschools. These goals are as follows:

1. Ensure all 1 to 6-year-old children are placed in the pre-school (no child left behind philosophy)
2. Improve teacher training and methodology for pre-school teachers
3. Restart pre-school # 3 (Godasedara or preferably across the river)
4. For the support classes, they are hoping to add one more support class, 1–2-day workshop for the kids, extra activities, space, and teachers.

These objectives should benefit the students, as their consistent and continued education is central to these goals. I believe that the MASOOM and the schools are doing a great job in the face of COVID, monsoon issues, and the lack of teachers. There are a variety of opportunities for the tribal children to learn, have fun, and grow.

Additionally, in discussing future needs with them, there is a need for Rs. 60k (Sixty thousand) to build a shed in school where they can hold the pre-school on the other side of the river on/near school premises. As for Asha's help in the future, I think that increased (one time) funding towards additional classes or reopening a preschool closer to the villages would dramatically increase attendance/learning and decrease the hardship for students during the monsoon season.