

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 Parts B & 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: 1st December 2016

Name of the Project: Palas Project

Name of the Organisation Running the Project (if different): Vishwa Mandal Sevashram, Shirpur

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	Fr Neelam Hopes/ Fr Joseph Poshapir	Sachin Mehta
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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 30% Education 70% Health check-ups _____%
Other ____% (please specify) _____

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

The centre is part of Gesus Missionary that runs such projects globally including India. The center operates out of Shirpur for more than 50 years now. The current structure is run by group of approx. 4 fathers who are engaged in different programme directly benefiting Adivasi population in rural areas of shirpur district. The administration of the center is centrally managed out of Mumbai- Andheri where the main center is based supporting all projects in the Maharashtra.

The local administration for Palas is managed by Father Neelam Lopes supported by supervisor Father Joseph Posephair. Additionally, there are 2 fathers are indirectly support the project by way of guidance and coaching to childrens at Boarding.

Accounting : They have dedicated accountant who maintains regular accounts for all projects with proper segregation including bank accounts and tracking budet vs actuals. I met the accountant personally and went through the accounting procedures and underlying issues if any.

Payments : The expenses of the project including administration etc are all approved by Father Neelam Lopes based on inputs of Father Joseph and his direct interactions with teachers, supervisors who visit shirpur center once in a month.

Funding : The Asha funding is accounted via separate bank account. The accounts are maintained in accounting package “ Tally”. The excess spends if any not supported by Asha is covered by internal funds received from their main center where required.

Audit : The accounts are audited centrally out of Mumbai for all centers thus ensuring accuracy and maker-checker checks in place for Palas Project. The underlying vouchers are physically send to Andheri centers for review at the time of audit.

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
Zila Parishad School	Government schools are physically present in the villages. However, the teachers do not visit regularly.
Anand Sadan	Women’s boarding school is run at the same place opposite VMS center supported by Gesus run by “nuns” to impart education to girls including those from palas schools

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?** Approx 30 families in each Padas (Small villages on Mountains)

2. **What do the parents do for a living? (Agricultural worker, daily wage laborer etc.)**
Agriculture, Daily wage laborer during non farming season

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?**

They organize a meeting with villagers including parents once in a month with updates on various initiatives. The introductory meeting is also held while proposing Palas school in new Padas post discussion with parents and " Patil" of the village

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.)**

Parents/ Patil contribute by way of providing their houses for operating schools as VMS does not have its own structure and relies on existing houses of the villagers for 2 hour schooling everyday. Additionally, the villages support by way of freeing the kids from farming where possible to support the initiative of Asha. They have also been encouraging other villagers and are looking forward to see their community move to next level in new arena

6. **Are there any Government Schools in the area?**

Yes No

7. **If yes, how far are the Government Schools from the community?** Close to community in the radius of approx. half KM

8. **Why did the parents choose this school over the Government School?** the teachers in the government schools do not visit on regular basis and there is no adequate monitoring from government side to ensure kids are taught every day. Effectively, the teachers are paid without imparting education to rural kids. Palas classes operates only where either the government schools are not present or if present but not operating with due benefits to kids

9. **When you visited, how many children were present in the class?** Approx 20-25 kids in each class

What is the regular class strength? 25-30 children

Comments: It ranges from 20-30 depending upon seasons. Typically, the strength is lower when parents of the students have to leave villages for few months in the year for employment

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

The children are indeed enjoying the education world specially considering that they are completely unaware of modern world outside the villages. They still do not have access to basic benefits such as electricity, water and government schools and completely ignorant of their rights as citizen of the country. They enjoy coming to schools and look forward to hear from teachers on learning languages and are looking up to Asha/ VMS collaboration to take them to next level.

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? _____
 B. Non-Formal Education (NFE)
 C. Vocational
 D. Other . Please specify _____

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

6. How many students are currently enrolled? 831 How many new students were enrolled in the past 12 months? 219

7. How many left in the past 12 month, and why? 151 (Primarily moved to 5th Grade in to government schools)

8. How many school days were missed in the past 6 months by all students? Not material. The attendance is taken on daily basis and look fine

9. How many days was the school open in the past 6 months? Schools are open whole of the year except for 2 months during summer

10. How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community? All teachers and supervisors are from community (3 supervisors and about 31 teachers)

How many of the staff are women? 2 teachers

11. How many teachers are there in total? 30 teachers, 3 supervisors

How many new teachers have joined in the past 12 months? 5

12. How many teachers have left the school in the past 12 months, and why? 5 : low salaries offered, better jobs, could not travel daily due to accessibility issues

13. How many days did the teachers miss work in the past 3 months? NA

14. Does the organization train the teachers? Yes No

If yes, how do they provide the training? Teachers are called twice to the main center in shirpur for training. There are few volunteers regularly visiting from Mumbai (Professionals) imparting teachers (Not educated) to enhance skillsets on teaching, coaching and guiding kids. The training held is also for supervisors who are responsible to ensure teachers are up to speed when newly hired for the role. The supervisors currently serving the schools have been supporting the initiatives for more than 10 years now and have evolved primarily due to training inspite of having no formal education . Basics training on soft skill development, English , public speaking and on training materials is imparted.

15. Does each child have their own books? How many books does a child have on average? Only 2 books with 2 exercise books provided to each children

16. Does each child have their own school uniform? Are there enough school uniforms for all children? 2 sets of uniform were provided by Asha for the first time since inception of the project. There are current plan to provide uniforms annually or have few in stocks for new students

17. How much is the staff paid? Teachers : INR 1400 per month, Supervisors : INR 3300 per month, Co-ordinator : INR 6000 per month

Is it on par with the salary paid to the staff in the Government schools? Yes No
(Please have a look at the accounting books of the organization and answer the following questions)

18. Have the teacher salaries in the last 6 months been paid on time? Yes No

He teachers are passionate and are not serving only for money as underlying purpose is also to support their community. This is one of the reasons that most of the teachers are around for more than 2 years and have no complains in general.

PART D: Financial resources of the organization

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit – you may again request the accounting books/overview of Operating Expenses (OPEX))

1. Is there a deviation between the OPEX and our approved budget? Yes No

Are all items covered in the budget? Yes No Maybe

If yes, what is the deviation (list per item)? Supervisors currently paid out of Asha budget also covers additional 10 schools which are managed via internal funding. The topic has been raised to the local coordinator and they would soon be hiring additional supervisor only for projects not supported by Asha

2. Do you think the proposed amounts in the budget are reasonable? Yes No Maybe

3. Is there anything you think should be added or removed from the budget?

Yes No

- Currently, there is no annual budget for Uniforms. Effectively, there is no budget for uniforms for new students or replacement atleast once a year considering schools are run for 10 months
- All the schools currently operate in the houses with no light or sunlight and mainly conducted in dark during monsoon and pick summer (for almost half of the year). There is an immediate need to organize for portable lamps atleast one each for all schools (Approx 30 schools)
- Currently only 2 note books+2 exercise books are provided annually to the students in addition to one slate with pen. However, it was observed that students lack writing practice due to limited books and mainly focus on verbal training on the board from teachers
- The teacher's salary are very low as compare to government schools and needs to be aligned to ensure they are reasonably paid and focused on the teaching. This is one of the reason for requesting salary increase of 10-12% every year
- The costs per child is very low and hence it is necessary to decide whether Asha should aim to increase the coverage with more schools or impart better quality education to existing schools

4. Did you discuss the proposed changes with the project? If so, please describe their response.

Yes. The response was encouraging. However, due to increase in budget every year with new schools, they were not sure about the support and hence did not request anything on lines of my proposal.

VMS also started new 10 students due to high demand from villages without asking for budget support from Asha. They are currently funding from other local donations/internal funding.