

## **Jeevan Vidya Virtual Visit Report 2021**

**Meeting Date:** Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Meeting Attendees** (only Asha volunteers listed):

1. Deepali Bhagvat
2. Jyoti Gawade
3. Arvind
4. Vibha Deo
5. Shilpa Karve

### **Meeting Goals:**

Communicate with Jeevan Vidya resident girls, the project partners and coordinators and support staff

- to get an overview of the progress since our last site visit in 2020,
- interact with everyone and identify current conditions, their needs and challenges

**Project Name & Address:** Jeevan Vidya  
Near MHADA Colony, Korit Road, Nandurbar, Maharashtra 425412

### **About Jeevan Vidya:**

Jeevan Vidya provides housing and food for tribal girls from nearby villages for secondary education from grades 5-12. Jeevan Vidya provides lodging and boarding facilities in Nandurbar for about 90 tribal girls. The girls come from villages located around 40-50 kms away. These girls attend schools close by to the boarding facility.

**Supporting Chapter:** Seattle (<https://seattle.ashanet.org/>)

### **Virtual Site Visit Recording:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/10hcKK94H8\\_YEAOkb5W7hLt1ljg9ptFfA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10hcKK94H8_YEAOkb5W7hLt1ljg9ptFfA/view?usp=sharing)

### **Site Visit Notes:**

This year we conducted a virtual site visit owing to travel restrictions related to COVID. We met with the project partners, Jacqueline Rumao (current Director) and Martina Fargose (previous Director) along with all the staff and resident girls. With their permission, we recorded the Zoom meeting. The meeting lasted for 2-hours from 8PM to 10 PM PST.

The meeting started with project introductions by project steward, Deepali Bhagvat and a brief summary about the project and Jeevan Vidya Trust for the benefit of Asha and non-Asha members who were attending the meeting. Jacqueline Tai was accompanied with 11<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students assembled in a hall that is usually used for studying and sleeping for girls from 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. On Saturdays they use the space for tailoring lessons and sometimes used for various activities and programs. Martina Tai and Neela Tai joined the Zoom session from Baroda.



1 - Assembly Hall for Virtual Meeting



2 - Resident Students Attending the Virtual Meeting

**Interaction with Resident Students:** We interacted with a few students from 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades individually to know more about them and their experience staying in the boarding. We talked about their background and family members, and future career goals. The girls appeared cheerful and keen in meeting with us and fluently answered all questions in Marathi.

We conversed with a few students. Mayuri (11<sup>th</sup> grade) student resident of Jeevan Vidya from 5<sup>th</sup> grade, for 7 years. She likes science and wants to be a doctor. She learned public speaking and is learning English at the boarding with Tai's help. Neha (11<sup>th</sup> grade) been at the boarding for 7 years. She likes it better at the boarding more than being at home. She is a farmer's daughter and helps with farming when she visits home which helps her with gardening here. She is a very good leader and takes responsibilities. Pooja (10<sup>th</sup> grade) started in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Her mother-tongue is Bhilli and spoke to us in

Marathi and English. She likes taking leadership roles and assists Tai in administrative tasks, teaches typing. Shital (10<sup>th</sup> grade) has been with Jeevan Vidya since her 5<sup>th</sup> grade. She likes English, Marathi, Science and Math. We were told that she is artistic by the coordinators.

The girls shared their experiences about their initial inhibitions after moving to Jeevan Vidya in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and how the school support made their transition to the boarding easier to the extent that they feel like coming back.

**Interaction with Staff:** The students greeted the Asha Seattle attendees with a welcome song. We were told that the 12<sup>th</sup> grade girls had to be excused for school earlier. Currently, the facility has reduced attendance from their usual 95 students to 70 plus as the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes have not yet started. Some girls are schooling online, some are in remote areas so they are not aware that the school has started. Jacqueline Tai noted that they are expecting the number to reach 80 after Diwali vacation this year.

Sonal is from a local tribal community, a past resident of Jeevan Vidya and has returned as a helper to teach as part of her teacher training. She has learned office administration in Vidyadeep community college and teacher training. She assists Neela Tai and in training girls on using computers and on software programs like MS Office programs like Excel, typing and also helps with English tutoring.

Martina Tai noted that the teachers at the Jan Seva Mandal school and Jeevan Vidya have good relations and that was a good support for the students last year when they needed accommodation for three months.

We were told that the girls are trained to become independent after their graduation from the boarding by training them in extra-curricular activities like sewing, using computers, teaching them cycling, making them knowledgeable about the local, herbal medicines that they can apply later in their lives, gardening & composting and cooking.

For medical needs, Jacqueline tai noted that the locals trust Ayurved or herbal medications more than the commercial ones, so their thrust is on growing and making a lot of medicinal kadhas and dried powders on the premise so the girls can learn first-hand and know how to administer the medicines when needed. Neel Tai who is also a nurse, listed 15-20 herbal medicines that are being prepared on the premise.





3 - Facilities: Computer Room



4 - Facilities: Clothes washing and drying area



5 – Facilities: Sleeping area and Student Lockers



6 – Facilities: Study Area / Assembly





7 - Facilities: Playground



8 - Garden and Greenhouses







9 - Resident girls helping in the garden beds







10 - Facilities: Kitchen



11 - Kitchen Store Room



Jacqueline Tai and Rose Mary showed us around the building and campus. We started at the assembly space on first floor and moved to the ground floor for a tour of office spaces for the administrative staff like accountant, visiting Vaidus (doctors), visiting teachers approximately 10 and waiting area for parents when they visit. We visited the space where they take tuition for difficult subjects for girls that need extra tutoring, the computer room which has approximately 10 laptops. We are told that some computers need to be replaced as they are old or don't work without a power connection. We visited locker room for girls to store their personal belongings where they sleep and their bedding. There is an adjacent bathroom space with three stalls so the girls don't have to leave the building at night for using the main bathrooms located outside the building. The outside bathrooms have solar power generated hot water for use. There is a solar dryer on the outside for drying herbs. We toured the kitchen which is a shed building outside the main building. We met with Manda mavshi who cooks all the meals on the premise for girls and the staff for 3 days a week. Pushpa mavashi is the other cook who comes the other 3 days They use a lot of produce from the garden on the site. There is a storage room for grains and cooking needs. We went to another newly constructed large assembly space which was single-story with tin-roofed, gabled wood structure, which is sponsored by Asha Seattle through one time funding. Throughout our walks from the main building to the kitchen, assembly space, the bathrooms, we passed through several garden beds and greenhouses. We saw the play area with approximately 10 cycles and one 4-wheeler for use as needed.

We concluded the tour in the same assembly space where we started the meeting where the girls sang a prayer in their native Bhilli language.

#### **General Observations:**

- The resident girls appeared confident, cheerful and eager. They shared personal anecdotes which informed us that the boarding is a good support for them.
- The staff and project partners are motivated and vested in seeing the girls become independent in society and self-sufficient based on not only sharing individual achievements of current students but also keeping in touch with the past students and sharing their stories with us
- We did not meet any parents so there is no feedback
- The facility is kept clean and tidy to the extent that we could experience



12 - SSC Batch of 2020-21



13 - 11th Grade