

Mission Gagillapur
Case Study: Education Interventions

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1. Backdrop

Gagillapur, a village in the recently allocated Medchal District of Telangana, is set in a peri-urban landscape. The village has been clamped with a number of industrial establishments that makes it difficult to connect the image of a typical village environment with it.

The village has about 840 Households spread over five habitations. With Migrants moving in and out, it is difficult to estimate the exact population size in the village. Gagillapur comprises of the five habitations, namely, Main Village, Church Gagillapur, Rajivgandhinagar (or 214 Gagillapur), Thanda & Chaitanyanagar.

In 2016, Mahila Abhivrudhi Society partnered with the Shakti Hoermann Group to transform Gagillapur into a model village, under the Grama Jyothi Scheme, over a period of five years, through a community led development process.

Gagillapur, being set in a peri-urban landscape, has both private as well as government schools within its vicinity. There are two private schools in the village, St. Ignatius (Classes 1 to 10) and NSKK (NaveenaSanskara Kala Kendra) High School (Classes 1 to 10), in Church Gagillapur & Main Village respectively.

Saint Ignatius has a total strength of 650 students, with 30 staff members, while NSKK has the strength of 750 students with 40 staff members.

While a certain section of the population is able to avail private schools, with an advance deposit of 3000 & 8000 INR during the time of admission, the marginalised sections of the society avail the facilities of the government schools.

The village has three primary government schools, in Main Village, Thanda & Church Gagillapur, and one High School in Main Village.

SL NO.	SCHOOL	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
1	Primary School in Main Village	83	3
2	High School in Main Village	76	7
3	Primary School in Church Gagillapur	135	3
4	Primary School in Thanda	25	2

A total of 319 students go to Government schools as opposed to 1400 students in Private Schools, which reflects the low levels of learning outcomes & quality of education.

2. Bottlenecks identified

At the time of the Needs Based Assessment conducted in the village in 2015, the following intervention areas were identified:

- i. Education Sub-Committee to be trained on their roles and responsibilities.

- ii. Placement of teachers (Vidya Volunteers) as per requirement (based on student – teacher ratio).
- iii. Training of Vidya Volunteers by St. Ignatius School teachers (need to be discussed further)
- iv. Community support in ensuring 100% enrolment, retention and attainment.
- v. Ensure that Government provides necessary teaching learning materials to schools.
- vi. Monitor the quality of education in private schools.
- vii. Honorarium to teachers paid by the Village Development Committee.

On the basis of these gaps identified, a plan was formulated to improve the quality of Education.

SL NO.	ACTIVITIES (2016-2020)
1	Training teachers and facilitate interactive session with professionals in School education
2	Arrange school bags & Shoes with 2 pair of socks to all Govt School going students
3	Celebrate school functions yearly twice
4	Arrange one day exposure visit to the teachers & students
5	Arrange basic infrastructure in Schools
6	Place four Vidya volunteers to ensure quality education to the children (ten months per year)

3. Education Interventions

A number of interventions were taken up within the first year of operation of Mission Gagillapur, with the assistance of the Village Development Committee (VDC)¹ formed. They can be grouped under the following heads:

- i. Improvement of Learning Levels*
- ii. Infrastructural Improvements*

¹ Village Development Committee (VDC) is a voluntary association formed by the residents of the village for local administration and development of the village, under the Grama Jyothi Scheme. The VDC of Gagillapur has 23 members from all the five habitations in the village.

i. Improvement of Learning Levels

In order to improve quality of education & improve enrolment rates in the government schools, a number of interventions were taken up, through interaction with concerned stakeholders.

a) Improvement of teacher- student ratio in Primary school

The Main Village Primary school has total 83 students with 3 teachers. With the national teacher student ratio being 30:1, the school had a teacher- student ratio of 28:1. Two out of the three teachers were deputed to a different village, leading to a lower teacher student ratio in the school. Having identified this problem, it was further discussed with the Gram Panchayat and the VDC. With support from the MAS team, the two teachers returned to the school, restoring the teacher-student ratio.

b) Providing Education Volunteer in Primary School

In Church Gagillapur, the teacher student ratio is 45:1, far higher than the desired ratio. The recent increase in the enrolment of students has not been recorded. As a result of this, the official records show 100 students as the total strength, as against the actual 135. Without the government initiated rationalization of schools, the number of teachers cannot be increased.

This issue was discussed in the 5th VDC Meeting (6th August, 2016). MAS identified an Education Volunteer with prior experience, to serve as a Vidya Volunteer in the Primary school. The Volunteer has been placed & working since September.

c) Election of School Management Committee

As a part of Right to Education (RTE), every school must have a School Management Committee (SMC) which will help in actualizing the goals of the RTE. The key functions of the SMC are:

- Making a school development plan as per the RTE guidelines
- Management of the school
- Supervising and supporting implementation of the Plan.
- Supervision/monitoring of finance, management, academic progress, distribution of entitlements, & other functions.
- Ensuring accountability & transparency in the system through social auditing
- Keeping proper accounts of the fund available and sharing its deployment & utilization with the Gram Sabha
- Creating & maintaining educational database
- Coordinating with local authority & generating funds from other sources for school development
- Monitoring academic progress of the school
- Instituting social audit mechanism and processes to bring transparency in the system and ensure universal participation

The SMC should have 27 members, out of which 24 members are parents of the students, one will be the elected representative, one member from the MahilaSamakhyas of the village

concerned, and the Headmaster/ Headmistress who shall be the convener of the committee. This committee is reconstituted every two years.

In Gagillapur, the Project Officer (CS Goud) participated in the election process of the school management committee in the high school and the primary school of church Gagillapur. He also briefly oriented them on the role & importance of parents in providing quality education to the children and the need to work in coordination with the headmaster of the school.

d) Remedial Classes for Class 10th students

Before Mission Gagillapur commenced, the previous year's pass percentage of Class 10th students of the High School was zero. In view of this, it was decided to aim for 100% pass percentage for the nine students in class 10, and 50% with first class marks. Remedial Classes were started for the Class 10th students.

With the reference from the Mathematics teacher, a Volunteer was identified & placed, for Science and Maths classes. The remedial classes were started from 27th of October. The PO and the physical science teacher participated in the first class on mathematics and provided feedback to the volunteer for further improvement of teaching.

The Head Master (newly appointed Mandal Education Officer) has stalled the classes currently, as he felt perturbed by the presence of MAS. This was followed up with the VDC members & Panchayat Secretary. But with constant pressure from our end, he has now instructed remedial classes to be conducted by the teachers from the High School.

e) Training session by Vande Mataram Foundation

On 18th September, six students (from Class 7,8,9&10) and three teachers from High School visited Vandemataram foundation at Kalvakurthy in Mahabubnagar, to be trained on mental mathematics skills, and "Bala sabha" to improve the capabilities of students and motivate them. The students returned to the school and practiced the "Balasabha" in their school as well.

f) Celebration of Independence Day & Children's Day

In order to motivate the students & instill a sense of patriotism in them, the 15th August celebrations were celebrated in the High school & primary school in Church Gagillapur with the help of MAS. A meeting was held with the High School teachers on 05.08.2016 with Project Officers (CS Goud & Madhuwanti Mitro) in order to identify some of the immediate needs of the school, such as geometry boxes, dictionaries, story books, colouring boxes, etc. These were incorporated while purchasing the prizes for the activities & games to be held on Independence Day. A number of sports activities & games were organized, and all the prizes were distributed in both schools (details attached as Annexure 2). The children were very excited & enthusiastic about taking part in the events.

The Project Officer also facilitated in providing prizes to the primary school in Thanda with the Sarpanch (Srinivasnaik) and to the primary school in the main village with the MPTC (Sunita Reddy)

On 14th November, in the celebration of Children's day, the MAS team conducted Children's Day Event in the Anganwadi Centre for 32 children, and in the Primary School of Church Gagillapur. A brief discussion was held on the importance of Children's Day & the need to follow up on their aspirations. Games like kabaddi, duster game, musical chair etc were organised & prizes distributed.

g) Plantation Drive

As a part of the larger Plantation drive conducted by the Telangana Government, plantation was conducted in the government schools on 11th July. The Project Officer participated in the "Telanganaku Harithaharam" program in the main Gagillapur village on avenue plantations along the roads and the government schools premises.

The tree guards have been fixed with the help of Innofab Private Limited.

h) Distribution of bags, shoes & socks

On 03.08.2016, MAS distributed school bags, one pair of shoes & two pair of socks to each student in the three Primary schools and one High school in Gagillapur. Quotations were prepared & finalized prior to that, and the shoe supplier (Globe shoes Company) accompanied the MAS team to the village.

The CEO of MAS (CS Reddy) attended the event, and held a brief round of discussion with the school children. He motivated the children to take part in the various development activities in the village, informed them about Mission Gagillapur, and interacted with them at length on their future plans. The Project Officer briefed the students, teachers & School management committee members on the activities taken up under Mission Gagillapur.

The others who were present at the distribution are:

- From Gagillapur- Sunitha&Sanjiv Reddy (MPTC & her husband), Madhusudan Reddy (Panchayath Secretary), Mahender (HM-ZPHS)
- From Shakti Hormann-RangaRao (GM), MRK Raju(A.O), Krishnamurthy(HRM)
- From MAS-Venkatesulu (PM), Saroja(HRM), Madhuwanti (PO), Sujata (PO)

i) Meeting with Government Officials

In order to create synergy between the government & the Project, a number of meetings were conducted with the government officials, such as:

- i. Mandal Education Officer
- ii. District Education Officer
- iii. Head Master & teachers of concerned schools
- iv. School Management Committee
- v. Panchayat Secretary & Sarpanch
- vi. Project Director of DRDA
- vii. Mandal Parishad Development Officer

In each meeting, the support to be expected from their end was discussed with respect to School Education.

j) Facilitation of health camps

In the third VDC Meeting, discussions were held on the need to conduct a health camp for children, especially on deworming.

A deworming camp for school children was held on 10th August, in the Primary school of Church Gagillapur. Albandazole tablets were distributed to all the children.

k) Facilitation of “Room to Read” Library

Room to Read² is a Non-Profit Organization for improving literacy and gender equality in education in the developing world. InGagillapur, “Room To Read” inaugurated school libraries in the primary schools of Main Village and Church Gagillapur.

The Project Officer participated in the inauguration of these two libraries. Two teachers from the two Primary Schools had attended the training program at “Room to Read” on how to manage school libraries in September.

l) Exposure visit to Sri Ram Foundation

The MAS team for Mission Gagillapur attended an exposure visit to the Sri Ram Foundation, in Gurgaon, who has been working in the Mewat region of Haryana on improvement of schools in 19 districts. The objective was to learn the methods being used by them to improve quality of education in the government schools, and map out possibilities of having similar activities in Gagillapur. One of the ideas that was appealing, was that of School Twinning. Gaudium School in Hyderabad have been identified as a probable option for starting the process of school twinning with Schools in Gagillapur.

ii. Infrastructural Improvements

a) Levelling of playground in Primary school

The Primary school of Church Gagillapur used to be flooded due to water tankers coming in and the playground being uneven. The Headmaster along with the representation of MAS approached VDC. A resolution was passed, after which the Gram Panchayat levelled the playground as well as gave an order to prohibit tankers from entering the school & flooding the playground.

b) Renovation of floor in Primary school

In the initial months of Mission Gagillapur, the Primary School in Church Gagillapur underwent renovation of floors & installation of grills, as represented by VDC & MAS. The constructions were undertaken by Gram Panchayat.

² Room to Read is a global organization seeking to transform the lives of millions of children in the developing world by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education. Since 2000, Room to Read has impacted the lives of more than four million children in Asia and Africa and aims to reach 10 million children by 2015.

c) Constructing of wall in Primary School

In order to prevent youth from using the school premises for consumption of alcohol, the back gate of the school was sealed off and a wall constructed by the Gram Panchayat funds.

d) Appointment of a cleaning lady at Primary school

The Primary school lacked proper maintenance of toilets, due to a lack of proper cleaning. The person was identified & placed by MAS, being maintained by the School now.

e) Construction of a soak pit

A soak pit was constructed by the GP in Primary school of Church Gagillapur with the funds from the Gram Panchayat, for the waste water generated each day.

f) Provision of School benches

A need for providing school benches was identified in the seventh VDC Meeting. The Primary school in Church Gagillapur had no school benches, for 135 students. A letter from Gram Panchayat & Headmaster was forwarded to Aurobindo Pharmaceuticals, who was willing to provide 35 school benches for the Primary school under their CSR activities. The order has been approved, and will be delivered in three weeks' time to the school.

g) Wall writings on key issues

In order to spread awareness regarding the Mission Gagillapur, government entitlements and on key issues like sanitation, health, education and personal hygiene practices, in the Primary school.

h) Installation of grills in High School

Measurements were given to Innofab to supply grills for the high school, to avoid the continuous disturbance by local youth in the High School.

The grills have been supplied to the school, to be installed during the winter vacations of the High School.

4. Challenges Faced

The Headmaster after becoming the Mandal Education Officer, have not been cooperative with MAS activities, and stalled the Remedial Classes, and even prevented MAS team members from entering the school premises.

5. Future Plans

- i. School Twinning with Gaudium School on learning levels & key subjects for Primary School
- ii. Tracking the improvement of the Class 10th students by obtaining the marks from the periodical exams
- iii. Exposure visit for the students to Birla Planetarium, Museum, Zoo.
- iv. Training of the Education Volunteer in her roles & responsibilities
- v. Formulating a strategy paper on education after consultation with Education Experts

6. Photographs

Wall writings



Remedial Classes in ZPHS



Plantation Drive



Distribution of bags, shoes & socks



Prize Distribution



SMC Meeting



Bala Sabha in ZPHS



Room to Read