

Documentation of COVID Education Innovation Model

General Information

1. **Organisation Name**
Asha Chennai.
2. **Program Name**
Mini-schools.
3. **Nature of the intervention (what areas did you work ineg.,)**
 - a. Nutrition support
 - b. Learning programs for children

We were running mini-schools to teach children. In poorer areas, our mini-schools also started providing nutrition support to the children.

4. **When did the intervention start –**
June 2020. We have been supporting schools in most of these areas even before Covid. So after Covid we started these mini-schools to continue the education for the children during school closure.
5. **Location and demographics –**
Most of the places are rural. The villages where our teachers come from and where we had a presence. In a small number of cases, we specifically selected Tribal areas with greater poverty and attendant problems.
6. **Extent of pandemic in the area (if available)**
Given that most of the places are rural, the pandemic impact on health has been less.

Nature of the education intervention

7. **Age of children**
Mostly classes 1 to 8. There are a few children in higher classes.
8. **Duration of intervention**
We started in June 2020 and it is still continuing.
9. **Detailed narrative**

The following link covers most of the information you have requested –
<http://kanini.ashanet.org/media/mini-school.html>.

Some of the key successes of our mini-schools are,

- Concluded that online education just wouldn't work and focussed on in person education right from June 2020. We also tried a hybrid model which we tried to push some govt.

schools to use. I still think it could have worked if the govt. teachers were at all motivated.

- Decentralised decision making in terms of starting the mini-schools and keeping it running. More than masking, hand-washing and social distancing (which frankly weren't followed all that much at the schools), this is what made our schools safe. None of the 2000 children or 80 teachers have been infected during this period.
- Designed a specific curriculum for the mini-schools focussed on conceptual clarity. Gave teachers the freedom to teach to the level of the children.
- Emphasis on worksheets and activities as a way to deal with huge spread in skill levels because of all class children coming to mini-schools.
- Encourage the teachers to learn from each other and also provide the platform for the same.
- Focus on craft, PT, school functions etc. for all round development of the children.
- Formal assessments to show actual learning. In the oral assessments conducted in Nov 2020, we found that children who have attended at least 3 months of our mini-school, did as well as same class children in Nov 2019 and earlier. We came to similar conclusions with our written assessments in April 2020 as well.

Our recommendations for school reopening are,

- **DO IT NOW. DO NOT DELAY IT ANY MORE!!!**
- Decentralise decision making on school opening and closing
- Nothing new like revised curriculum is really required. What is required is the simple approach of evaluating the actual learning level of the children and teaching to that level. This should anyway be how any good school/teacher approaches teaching.
- Worksheets at different skill levels and activities that can engage children at different skill levels are good tools that can really help the teachers.