

Lakshmi Murmu Smriti Shishu Vidyalaya

Managed By: Chaachanpur Mahila Kalyan Samiti, Kharbona, Bankura



Introduction: The collective and the School

The *Lakshmi Murmu Smriti Shishu Vidyalaya* was set up on **26th January 2015** at Chaachanpur. The collective imagination was to have an open learning center for the villagers and a Primary School for the children of Chaachanpur and neighboring villages. Currently children from the age group 3-9 years are enrolled. The school is run by **Chaachanpur Mahila Kalyan Samiti**, a collective formed by women from Chaachanpur and a few adjacent localities around Chhatna block of Bankura district in West Bengal.

The organization works towards upholding the voice of *adivasi*¹ women. Although it is a collective run by women majorly from the Santhali community their sphere of engagement also includes women from Lohar and Karmakar community. One can say that the focus of work is on the *adivasis* and the marginalized caste groups residing in the hamlets of Chattna block of Bankura district.

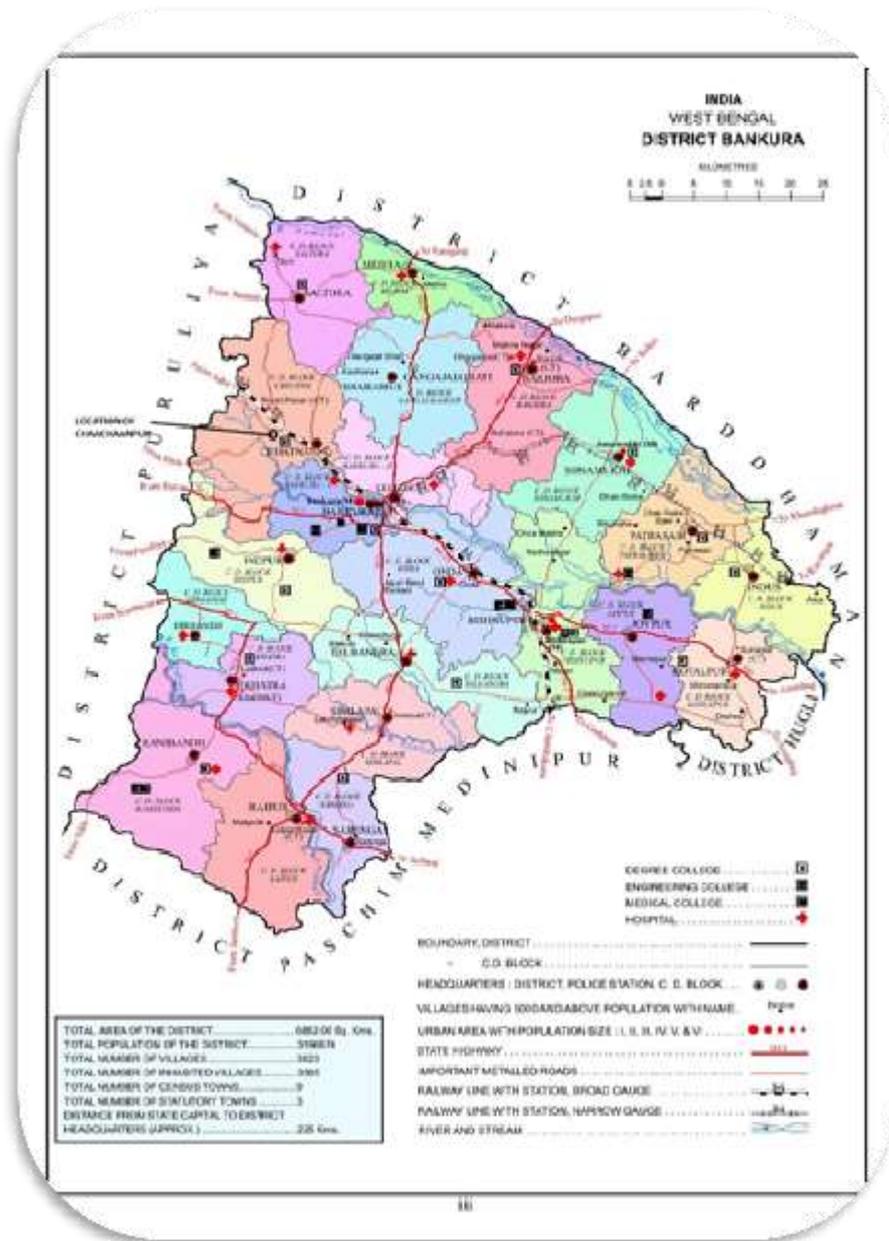
The core objectives of the organization are:

1. To generate a conducive climate for the women of Chaachanpur and surrounding hamlets to come together and share their hopes, vision, dreams, grief and also mundane problems of everyday life.
2. To explore through discussion the cultural shifts that their own community has undergone.
3. Generate necessary political awareness and catalyze critical sensibilities amongst women through discussions to become aware of their rights as citizens and prevent their community from becoming passive subjects of Developmental aid and services.
4. Generate economic capacity and an ethics to engender functional collective bodies and practice alternative models of livelihood. E.g. subsistence and communitic farming, kitchen gardening, rethinking education etc.

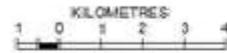
Participation is considered both means and an end in engendering a transformation through which the entrenchment of dominant patriarchal practices and monetization of social relations could be resisted. Attempts have been made through various means to reinitiate the cultural practices of the *adivasi* community to preserve social cohesion and

¹ *Adivasi* is understood by us as ethnic groups, which have shared a common fate in the past century and from this, has evolved a collective identity of being adivasis. It is not meant to imply that adivasis are the original inhabitants (Xaxa 1999). The term adivasi is not just a colloquial term for the category or word “Tribal”, nor is it a loose translation. Tribes, as understood originally in the context of indigenous people from North and South American (or perhaps African) continents have perhaps had a very different history and points of entry into the modern world. Homogenized under the same category “tribal” by European ethnographers and anthropologists for their own convenience of understanding, these myriad variety of communities and cultures across different landscapes had then been (and still are being) clubbed under one simplifying category that ignores their nuanced differences. To continue to do so is to continue to perpetrate injustice to the vast and mystifying histories of human civilization and the varieties within. In the context of the Indian subcontinent (a part of which later became India), indigenous people (or to use the white term “native”) have had their own stories and their own distinct and separate ways of communion and kinship than say, the American Indians or the Maasai in African continent. We have tried to maintain the use of the term *adivasi* throughout when referring to the indigenous people in what is currently demarcated as the sovereign nation-state of India, to maintain this distinction and respect such difference.

mutual interdependence; alternatives to accumulation through exploitation and displacement are discussed, cultural reconstruction initiatives, discussion sessions on socio-political issues have been a few of the major activities of the organization.

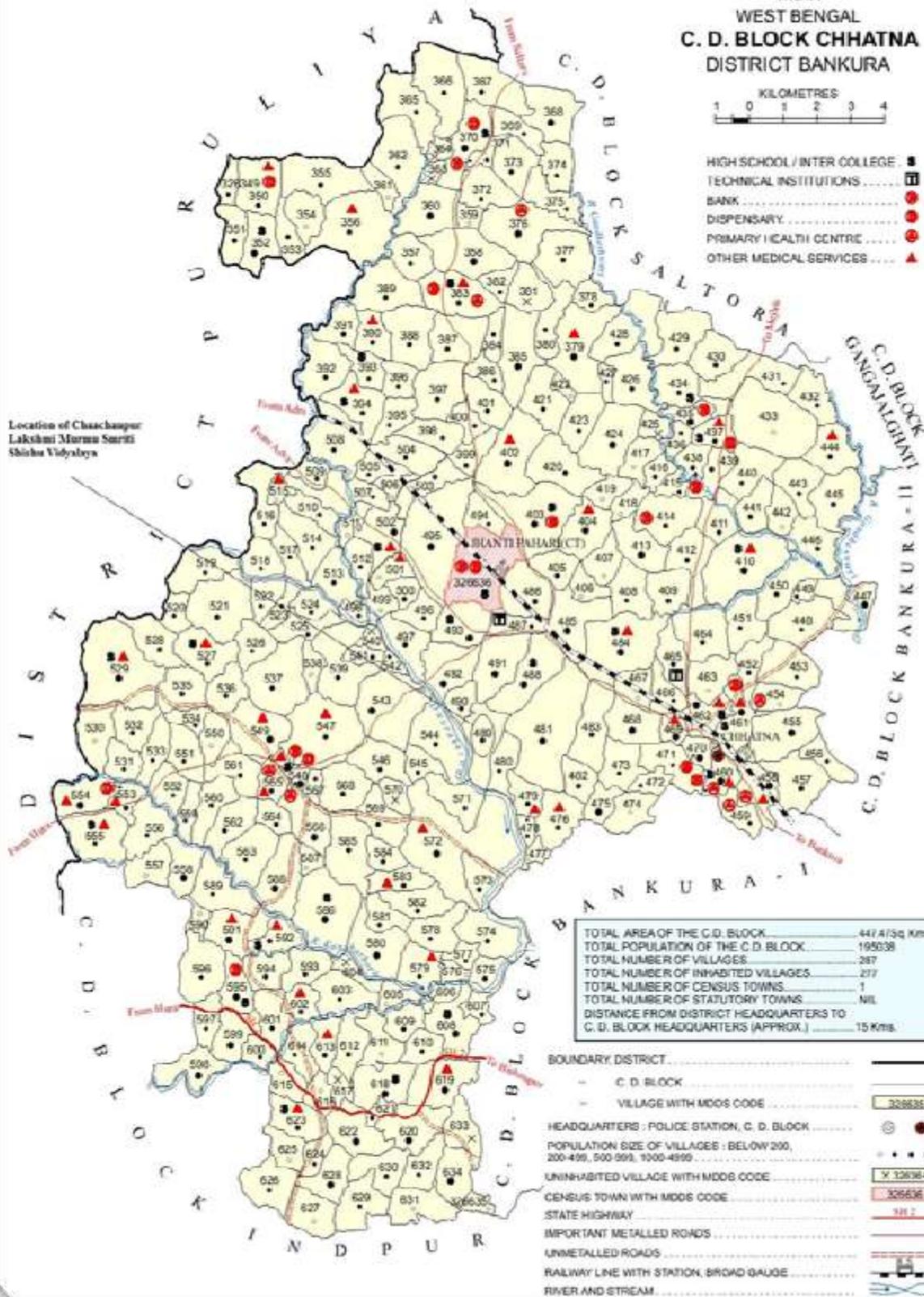


INDIA
WEST BENGAL
C. D. BLOCK CHHATNA
DISTRICT BANKURA



- HIGH SCHOOL / INTER COLLEGE ■
- TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS □
- BANK ●
- DISPENSARY ○
- PRIMARY / HEALTH CENTRE ●
- OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES ▲

Location of Chaachampur
Lakshmi Murtu Surti
Shikha Vidyalaya



TOTAL AREA OF THE C.D. BLOCK	447.4/34 KM ²
TOTAL POPULATION OF THE C.D. BLOCK	195038
TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES	287
TOTAL NUMBER OF INHABITED VILLAGES	277
TOTAL NUMBER OF CENSUS TOWNS	1
TOTAL NUMBER OF STATUTORY TOWNS	NIL
DISTANCE FROM DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS TO C. D. BLOCK HEADQUARTERS (APPROX.)	15 KM ²

- BOUNDARY DISTRICT ————
- C. D. BLOCK ————
- VILLAGE WITH MDS CODE [328635]
- HEADQUARTERS : POLICE STATION, C. D. BLOCK ●
- POPULATION SIZE OF VILLAGES : BELOW 200, 200-499, 500-999, 1000-4999 ● ● ● ●
- UNINHABITED VILLAGE WITH MDS CODE X 128084
- CENSUS TOWN WITH MDS CODE [328536]
- STATE HIGHWAY 101 2
- IMPORTANT METALLED ROADS ————
- UNMETALLED ROADS ————
- RAILWAY LINE WITH STATION, BROAD GAUGE ————
- RIVER AND STREAM ————



The Village:

The name of the village is Chaachanpur. It is a small *santhali* village. Like most *santhali* villages it is aesthetically clustered alongside the northern bank of a meandering river called the Darakeshwar and protected by a couple of holy grooves of sal, palash, ber and palm trees on the eastern and the western ends. The river separates this village from the forest of sal that vegetate the rest of the landscape. The village is surrounded by a few equally small settlements; on the north lies the hamlet of Musibdihi and Shuarbakra, to the south lies the settlement of Shaldiha, on the east the post office of Bhalaidiha and to the west the village of Agoya. Being at the brink of the ‘civilized’ world the village (although visible on the government records) never really received any amenities till about 2012 when the first poles of electricity were erected and a PMGSY road was constructed to connect it to the nearest stopover on the State Highway around seven kilometers from the village. Chaachanpur is approximately 250 kilometers west of the metropolis of Kolkata.

Chaachanpur has thirty seven households and the residents are majorly related through kin-ties; i.e. they are all part of one large family which has expanded, except for the two Karmakar families. Mostly the villagers depend on agriculture and almost every household has about an acre of farm land for themselves. Only the two households of Karmakars who are notified as scheduled castes never had cultivable land and worked as metal crafts men. The village has no health care centre, education or even postal communication. The closest school is about five kilometers away in Dumdumi, the village post office is in Bhalaidiha and the state healthcare facility has little role or demand as the *santhali* community generally depended on their own traditional nature based preventive and curative medicines. Due to a lack of necessary modern (read western) educational systems to be at par with the globalized world the village remained a site which was not completely overhauled by the neoliberal values, thoughts and desires. The effect of globalization nevertheless did reach the margins of the ‘civilization’ as it slowly entrenched itself through a small retail store and also with an increasing rate of migration of the youths in search of ‘jobs’ from the neighboring Karmakar settlement of Shuarbakhra. In Shuarbakhra most of the villagers are engaged in manual laboring and various crafts such as masonry, house building (Gharami) and as metal workers.



The society and the economy:

The introduction of individual ownership by the British in 1770 was to result, later, in the alienation of tribal lands and in the migration of Santhals to clear jungles or work as contract labour (Tambs-Lyche, M. C. 2007). The 'Diku' or the non-*adivasi* elite who quickly aligned with policy of enclosure of land, private ownership of resources and started settling down in the *adivasi* hinterlands of Bengal. Elders of the village often recall how land was slowly bought around Chaachanpur. Across decades non *adivasis* bought larger tracts of land and *adivasis* started working as agricultural labourers on their own lands, now owned by the Dikus.

A cursory reading of the *Bengal District Gazetteers* inform us how the gradual implementation of land revenue system slowly led to the disappearance of 'commons'. Disappearance of 'commons' led to the disappearance of local governance mechanisms as they were not designed to protect private property. With the disappearance of local governance, disappeared the ethics of sharing and reciprocity! One of the elder by the name Ravan Mandi keeps repeating to himself even today how his nephews (referring to all of the younger generation of the village) have stopped working for each other! The essence of Wage Labour has silently made its way within the *adivasi* life world of Chaachanpur.

Scholars such as Marine Carrin and Herald Tambs-lyche are of the opinion that although history reflects that there were political resistances directed towards such policy changes gradually the *adivasi* subject started adapting to the routines of Modernity. According to them education played an important role in reconstituting the *adivasi* subject as per the needs of the Modern Western Institutions.

Adult males of Chaachanpur have been working as agricultural labourers for generations but it is only over the last couple of decades that seasonal migration of labourers to rice mills, brick kilns and construction sites of mushrooming cities of Jharkhand and Odisha started. Labour contractors would ensnare young adults with hefty advance payments and would empty out villages. As the migrants returned from their work place they would either return with some saved cash or would run into debt cycles as they were unable to work off the debts they incurred as advance payments. Most of them only returned during the harvesting or the sowing season to work on their respective plots. Over the last few decades most of the villagers started expecting wage labour in cash if they were asked to provide labour by neighbors as an extra pair of hands during the sowing or during the harvesting season. Slowly the trend of monetized labor relation took over compensation in kinds or exchange through reciprocity of labour. Migration of laborers prevented many villagers especially the young adults from participating in their festivities which upheld communitic practices of reciprocity of labour or sharing of harvests. On the eve of '*Magh Purnima*' often called '*Majhi Purnima*' by the santhals; dues, debts and other resource related issues get settled. It happens right after the harvesting of crops is over. Over the past few decades villagers report that most of their young adult males leave quickly after harvesting and the festival of *Majhi Purnima* was not celebrated. Consequently most of the villagers had various land and debt related issues with each other which never got resolved over a few decades.

It has been these prevalent cultural practices which encouraged the community to foster reciprocity and integrity. In the broader sense the community festivals and rituals provided a framework to deliver systematic resolution to such issues and they always culminated with music, dance and sharing of food and brews which generated a climate of communal harmony. With the shift of economy, the relations within the families of the villages fell apart which in turn is added to the decadence of the santhal community and its ethos of shared life.

Lakshmi Murmu & Reba Murmu: The story of the 'Collective'

The history of the school would not start without the story of Lakshmi Murmu and Reba Murmu.

Reba Murmu was from Chaachanpur. Lakshmi Murmu was from Hapaniya, about twenty five kilometers away from Chaachanpur. Reba Murmu met Lakshmi Murmu for the first time in 1998 as a colleague working for an NGO posted at Ayodhya gram panchayat of Purulia. They were working as facilitators/ promoters to set up Self Help Groups (SHG) amongst marginalized tribal (Santhali) women. As they both came from *Santhali* community

themselves they quickly made a positive impact and were able to bring about considerable change in the lives of the *Santhali* families in Purulia. They made them aware of their democratic rights and the entitlements that they could access as citizens of India. Their work made sure that the small area where they worked successfully resisted the forces of social discrimination. The women from the families also found a stronger footing as they gradually became financially independent. Unfortunately dark days consumed them as they lost their support from the NGO.

Reba and Lakshmi Murmu stood by each other in their crisis and they both bought a piece of land in Chaachanpur with their scanty savings at the edge of a forest in Chaachanpur. They built their home with their own hands to live together and continued to serve their community as social workers. Since then they ran a school and a shelter for the village kids on their own accord. They worked for various NGOs to promote community cohesion. Their hard work helped the women to form a collective and they took up various entrepreneurial work. For the next ten years the collective tried to address various familial discord which were arising as the village economy was undergoing a transition. The collective supported itself with the help of an organization called 'Ankur Kala' they managed to make their ends meet and continued with their home schooling of village children. Their idea of school was more of initiating children to the *Santhali* way of life rather than teaching them the discourses of the state language and

However discords within Chaachanpur were growing rapidly especially as each family blamed the other for owing money to each other; by 2012 the conditions worsened and the collective started falling apart. Consequently Lakshmi Murmu and Reba Murmu were forced to shut down their school.

To make situations worse Lakshmi Murmu was diagnosed with a carcinoma in her cervix in 2013. Unfortunately they could not afford treatment with their limited income and she literally passed away without treatment. The loss of Lakshmi Murmu came as a shock to Reba Murmu and she took months to recover from the trauma.

Reviving the 'Collective': From a crèche to a school

By the end of 2012 Lakshmi Murmu and Reba Murmu had started receiving a fellowship from Action Aid India to promote a critical grass-root leadership. A program which aimed at equipping grass-root leaders with the necessary support to transform themselves into organic intellectuals. Since 2012 Arunopol Seal, a young Development Practitioner started working closely with Reba Murmu to organize a leadership within the village. Quickly they realized that the villagers were not ready to sit with one another; leadership was a farfetched dream.

At that juncture an elderly woman whom Reba Murmu addressed as her aunt sarcastically asked them to not run after the cows. She asked them to instead run after the calves and cows will follow...! She intended that if we diverted our energies to care for the children their mothers and fathers will automatically come.

On her advise Reba Murmu started a small crèche for young children. Mothers would leave their children during the day and would take them back in the evening. Slowly the evenings became a time to sit and chit chat before everyone would take their children home. Things started changing for Reba Murmu and she saw a glimmer of hope as she found some support from a few philanthropists and revived the community organization which would fight for the cause of the marginalized population of their locality.

Reba Di received support from various individuals and institutions for her initiative to transform the crèche/ home school into a regular day school. Mr. Kajal Sengupta a prominent Gandhian educator stretched out his help and support through an enlightening article which got published in a popular development monthly called the 'Lokayat'. Mr Sengupta gave necessary leverage to her dreams and presented her project to develop a school to the 'Kishore Bharati Trust for Education and Research'. The trust board visited the area and inspected the existing infrastructure and agreed to provide a pedagogical framework and partial financial support to initiate the education programme. Finally it was decided that the school was to be named after the memory of Lakshmi Murmu since the school was initiated by her and also because she was one of the pioneers of women liberation through social transformation for the santhal community in Chaachanpur.

Why a School?

The women from the collective and the Development Practitioner working alongside Reba Murmu quickly realized that they needed to engage with the younger generation of Chaachanpur and its surrounding villages as they would shape the future and would allow the activity of the samity to filter down to the family of the children. Engaging with the children would not only allow the practice and assimilation of the fast disappearing cultural ethos of the rural/ *adivasi* community from their foundation but would also engage the family of every child to participate in such community building activity. We saw such activity as a long term resistance to the effect of global capital which is on an overdrive to coerce the productive population of Chaachanpur into an isolated money dependent consumer and a self –coerced labourer.

The collective strongly felt that self- preservation would not be possible without mutual interdependence within the rural community which will produce, consume and educate itself with its own resource. Hence ‘education in the rural’ is an essential step towards imagining a future beyond the grasp of global capital. The education program is directed towards the youngest population of the village and aims at building a foundation of relationships with the child and his or her surroundings; especially through the practices that people were involved in around the locale.

The School and its Vision:

The vision of the school is to do away with the alienation of ‘learning’ from the everyday practices of the *adivasi* children and rethink the way primary education is propagated and catered to *adivasi* (santhali) children in a rural pockets of Bankura district of West Bengal.

Apart from facilitating learning and propagating primary education amongst children of the locality the school focuses on three fundamental areas of intensive engagement.

1. To encourage and build capacities of local teachers to facilitate the process of learning amongst children from their environment and also from their communitarian practices.
2. To engage with the parents, their immediate kins and other community members to re-ignite relationships and practices which will enable their children to learn about their lives and their environment through their everyday interactions and participation in the communitarian way of life i.e. to categorically do away with the conception that learning only happens within the school premises and the only learned person is the teacher.
3. To develop pedagogic material in collaboration with the teachers and parents from the *adivasi* communities for the children who attend the school.

The Philosophy of Educational Practice in Chaachanpur:

The school in general seeks to create enabling conditions for *adivasi* children to develop a sensorial appreciation of their surroundings and with an emphasis on the ability to comprehend meanings as they learn their language and are initiated into their culture. Through our sustained engagement for over five years we have identified three major lacunae through an exhaustive review of the context, existing pedagogic techniques and programmes adopted by various organizations who have worked with *adivasi* children and also with the state education departments:

Firstly, we understood that *adivasi* communities have a rich heritage of 'oral' and 'aural' forms of expression and communication, however the educational content (in use) for children coming from such communities have been largely 'ocular' and 'textual'. Most educational content are based on visuals (pictures) or symbols (letters of languages) with a stress on 'rote learning' the symbols of a politically dominant language. Rote learning symbolic 'letters' and 'words' of a foreign language do not contribute towards 'developing capabilities to comprehend' or relating to one's language, culture or with their surroundings.

Secondly, one finds that most educational content for children are designed by educators - from a position of privilege and not by *adivasi*'s themselves. This alienates *adivasi* educators teaching in remote peripheral villages from following the pedagogies and educational content (no matter how progressive) and they do not find an incentive or motivation to apply or own such processes or content.

Finally, the above two reasons combine to create a general apathy and alienation amongst the parents from the *adivasi* communities towards education. *Adivasis* neither relate nor do they engage with process of education, that has nothing to do with their language, culture or life.

As Prof Ashish Nandy says, that in today's world where faith in the gods of the religions are dwindling the human mind seeks an alternative to religious faith. It seeks refuge, a sojourn in the certitudes that the West offer through the idea of the nation state and also through the idea of Development. Development of the world in the image of the West. An urban, industrial, commercial West driven through 'scientific' rationality. A rationality which can barely be questioned, a rationality which can seldom go wrong.

In our country, history suggests that the non *adivasis* have espoused the 'West'. They have established what is termed as the main-stream. A stream which is fed by the waters of the certitudes promoted by the West, a stream in which everyone needs to swim and must swim. A stream which seeks to homogenize life, expectations, aspirations, desires and fantasies. The *adivasi* and dalit communities who are still holding out are at risk of either being forced to swim in this stream or get washed away by it.

Western Education seeks to convert the *adivasi*. Convert them into beings who aspire for a life beyond the rural. They learn to forget their villages, despise their own culture, they feel ashamed to speak their own language. They all aspire to learn the language that would give them access to the commodities of the West, aspire a life beyond the borders of their village; they all want to swim in the turbulent mainstream.

Many drown as they 'lack the merit' of surviving the mainstream, few succeed and only a handful manage to get what they aspired. The education the school wants to promote wishes to lay foundations within the *adivasi* mind to treat the certitudes on offer critically and forward their own set of values to shape their own lives.

Progress:

On January 26th 2015 we started the school in a small thatched roof hut with 35 students and three teachers. Over the year we have made some progress which we have broadly categorized under three headings; Academic, Infrastructure and Organizational and Social Impact.

a. Academic Progress

b. Infrastructural and Organizational Progress

c. Social Impact

For our indicators to measure Academic Progress we have taken a few empirical measures and a few subjective vignettes from parents, community elders, teachers and also our school committee members. The over arching question remains around how far we are living upto the expectations. Given that parents, teachers and school committee members have various perspectives on expectation; we often get contesting responses. Empirically we monitor student attendance as our primary quantitative indicator. The organizational indicators are our policy documents which we have drawn from annual meetings of the management committee, the teaching staff and the parents of the children who attend our school.

In our first academic year i.e. 2015-2016 we had 35 students. 20 students were in the 1st standard (we call it *Prabeshik*); most of the children in *Prabeshik* are within the age group of 3-4 year olds. 15 students were in the 2nd standard *Prarambhik*. This standard has 4-5 year olds. Most of the students from the first standard has moved onto the second standard in the Academic year 2016-17 we admitted around 15 more students in the 1st standard. In our 2019 session the numbers have jumped up to 75 students as children from neighboring villages have joined the school and consequently we also had to increase the number of teachers to 5.

A continuous teacher training programme is conducted by **Kishore Bharati Trust for Education and Research** every year before a new session commences. We currently have five teachers. The teacher training is done through a series of workshop which have been designed to introduce more receptive techniques of instructions to young students. Instead of depending on mechanically pushing the student to engage with letters of a script, or with lessons which are alien to the culture of the child; the workshop promotes pedagogic techniques which depend on direct sensorial engagement of the child with her environment. Language is taught through pictorial construction of the scripts. It attempts to work through the pictorial pattern of the basic letters which form the core of the lexical construction. Such technique when coupled with oral modes of imparting education accelerates the learning speed amongst the young adivasi children; it also makes the process more interesting for the young minds to stay focused.

Our Teacher and Facilitators:

1. **Reba Murmu:** Reba Murmu is from Chaachanpur. She is the Secretary of the school and coordinates all teaching and non-teaching activities.
2. **Mala Tudu:** Mala lives in Chowghora a village which is around ten kilometers away from the school. She Graduated from Bankura Chirstian College with Bachelors degree in Bengali and then did a Masters in Santhali/ Olchiki language from Sidhu Murmu Marshal Vidyaghar. She always wanted to be teacher and loves her work to teach young children their own mother tongue.
3. **RinaTudu:** Rina is Mala's sister. She is also from Chowghora she is also holds a Bachelors Degree in Bengali and a Diploma in Santhali Language education.
4. **Sindhunil Chatterjee:** Sindhunil is an Action Research Fellow from Ambedkar University, Delhi. He is conducting an action research project on developing an *adivasi* pedagogy with the teachers of our school. He has an MPhil in Development Practice and a Masters in Economics. More on **Annexure 1**
5. **Pradip Bagh:** Hails from Kharbona he graduated out of a BA Pass Course Programme.
6. **Gourango:** Is a veteran teacher of the locality and has a Bachelors degree in Science.



Infrastructure progress:

1. Building proper toilet complex with donations. 3 proper latrines both eastern and western style and one shower chamber and a separate hand wash bay with running water.

2. Renovating existing class rooms.
3. We have bought a small plot of land about 1/10 of an Acre adjacent to the existing school.





Organizational progress:

1. Development of code of conduct for teachers and managerial staff.
2. Generation of academic schedule and coordination committee.
3. Development of proper accounting system such as cash book and purchase book entries; financial and organizational audits
4. Student fees and contributions have increased since September. Which reflects active participation of the villagers

Social Impact:

We have observed that the social cohesion has marginally improved with the children of the village attending the school. Since the children have started coming to the school it has catalyzed the cohesion amongst few families of the village and have rejuvenated the feeling of community. However discords of various nature do plague the community, old resentments are our biggest challenges. Many of our efforts for initiating livelihood activities have been thwarted due to resentments. The fall of the traditional self –governance institutions of the santhals have made the work extremely difficult; various political parties capitalize on such fissures within the community to mobilize support and a polarization of the Santhali community is becoming evident. A large section of the Santhals are heavily influenced by the mainstream ‘hindutva discourse’ and have started disavowing their own cultural practices. Although the school committee disapproves of imbibing hindu cultural

practices the young adults of the village often organizes many hindu festivals. The position of the school committee is to engage with the youth and encourage them to think critically about adopting such practices; Although it is not in favor of such saffornization of the Santhals, the school committee has no qualms against



From mulberry leaves to silk cocoons.



Broad Plans for 2019:

1. Develop a suitable curriculum. Increase salary of three existing teachers by 10 percent.
2. Develop a teacher training program to ensure no faculty vacuum is addressed.
3. Organize book writing workshop for teachers.
4. Introduce salary for secretary who till now have provided service without honorarium and shoulders maximum responsibilities
5. Provide computer training and fundamental English language training for ‘School Staff’ to iron out reporting and communication issues.
6. Generate a functional Management Information System (MIS) to ease out reporting issues.



Proposed Budget 2019 Digest:

Recurring expense:						
A.	Particulars	Cost to Organization		Units	Duration	Amount
1.	Salary-RinaTudu	3500		1	12	42000
2.	Salary- Mala Tudu	3500		1	12	42000
3.	Salary- Gaurango	3500		1	12	42000
4.	Salary- Cook	3500		1	12	42000
5.	Salary- Pradip Bag	3500		1	12	42000
Non Recurring expense:						
B.	Particulars		Cost	Units	Duration	Amount
5.	Teachers Table & chair	N.A	2000	3	1	6000
6.	Stationary (pens, exercise copies, chalk, duster, slate	N.A	2000	N.A	12	24000

	boards, white board, marker pens, attendance register etc.)					

7.	Text Books	N.A	10000	N.A	N.A	10000
8.	Teaching Aids-	N.A	5000	N.A	N.A	5000
9.	Storage –trunks, Shelves	N.A	10000	N.A	N.A	10000
10.	New class room const		20000	2		40000
11.	Renovation of existing class room shade		30000	N.A	N.A	30000
Total Three Lakhs Thirty Five Thousand (Approx)						3,35,000

School Committee details:

Lakshmi Murmu Smriti Shishu Vidyalaya

SL No	Name	Occupation	Responsibility
1.	Mihir Sengupta	Teacher; Member of Kishore Bharati Trust for Education	Chief Advisor
2.	Kajal Sengupta	Social Entrepreneur	Chairman
3.	Reba Murmu	Social Worker	Secretary
4.	Arunopol Seal	Development Practitioner	Asst. Secretary
5.	Byasdeb Dasgupta	Professor of Economics; University of Kalyani	General Member
6.	Swati Nandi	High school teacher, Kolkata	General Member
7.	Arijit Chatterjee	Research Scholar; University of Calcutta	General Member
8.	Rupdas Murmu	Farmer	General Member
9.	Balika Soren	Farmer	General Member

Teaching Staff:

SL No	Name	Position
-------	------	----------

1.	Rina Tudu	Teacher
2.	Mala Tudu	Teacher
3.	Sindhunil Chatterjee	Action Research Fellow
4.	Reba Murmu	Secretary
5.	Gaurango	Teacher/ Coordinator

Subjects being taught:

1. Santhali language.
2. Bengali language.
3. Elementary English language.
4. Mathematics.
5. Nature-Environment Study.
6. Physical education
7. Dance/ Music
8. Art and crafts.

Nature of support required:

Since the school is at its initial phase we require fundamental support for running the school. As per our Budget the annual requirement of running the school is (_INR 3,35,000_). We are completely dependent on donations, collections and support from external sources at this point. Since most of our students come from extremely unprivileged back ground only a token amount is charged as the tuition fees.

The current tuition fee is **rupees seventy (70)** per month. However, considering that most of the students come from a very modest financial background, receipt of fees on a regular basis is an idea we only wish to achieve but cannot enforce. In fact, at the moment only about 20% students pay their fees regularly.

We are in urgent need of the most fundamental things required for running a school

We would welcome donations and support in both kind, cash, cheques and also through wire transfers. Please contact:

Arunopol Seal -09331816745; 8383843856 email: chachaanpur@gmail.com Or Kajal Sengupta-9903594102 for more details about the school and if you wish to visit the school.

Bank Account Information:

The School is being managed by **Chaachanpur Mahila Kalyan Samiti**

Please transfer your donations to:

Chaachanpur Mahila Kalyan Samiti

A/C no: 11884846091

State Bank of India (SBI)

Branch: Kharbana Dumdumi

IFSC Code: [SBIN0009717](#) (used for **RTGS, IMPS** and **NEFT** transactions)

SWIFT code: [SBININBB337](#) (SWIFT CODE of SBI DURGAPUR, WEST BENGAL)**

MICR Code: [722002518](#)

**** please confirm with SBI about SWIFT (BIC) code prior to transfer since SWIFT code of closest SWIFT enabled branch has been given. (Applicable only for Overseas Transfer)**

References:

Ambasht, N. K. 1970. A Critical Study of Tribal Education, New Delhi: S. Chand and Company.

Tambs Lyche, M. C. 2007. "The impact of cultural diversity and globalization in developing a Santal peer culture in Middle India." EMIGRA Working Papers, 46. Available on line: www.emigra.org.es. Last retrieved on (26-10-2017)

Virginus Xaxa. 1999. "Tribes as Indigenous People of India" Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 34, No. 51 (Dec. 18-24, 1999), pp. 3589-3595 Published by: Economic and Political Weekly Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4408738> .

District Census Handbook, 2011, Part 12A

Annexure 1

Action Research Fellow details and his musings on *himself*:

Name: Sindhunil Chatterjee

Age: 26

Residence: Kolkata, Bankura. Previously Pune, Delhi, Jharkhand.

For details regarding academic qualifications and other interests, please refer to the CV attached alongside this document. The name of the file is “Sindhu CV.pdf”.

Without further ado, I shall move on to provide a very brief introduction of myself and how I reached where I am right now. To let know before I forget to mention, none of this would have been possible without the atmosphere I was brought up in and was fortunate to be accepted in further down the timeline. I couldn't have become who I am today without my parents, two large-hearted and wise human beings who were also wonderful parents to me and my elder sister. I cannot wish to remain who I am now without the continued presence of the wonderful people I have met over the course of my life, especially over the last three years or so. *Especially the last three years*. I'll arrive at the reasons shortly enough. Please bear with me.



I was just another economics graduate cruising (or, stumbling) through Master's (yes, in Economics), expected by all and sundry to pass the examinations and settle for a corporate job; another analyst is what was in the making, everyone thought. My thoughts did not align with theirs though. However, my zeal for the *different* could only imagine as far as the life of an academician or a professor. It was mostly with this zeal that I enrolled myself for the M.Phil programme at Ambedkar University, Delhi under the Centre for Development Practice.

“An M.Phil could do no harm to aspirations for a Ph.D later on”, thought I and my father. All this, only to discover at the orientation lecture of the course that the course was not going to turn out as I had been expecting. In complete honesty, I had expected another two years of dozing through boring lectures about *development* and inevitably, Economics. I had expected typical north-Indian guys as my potential batchmates, who would all be waiting in line to be picked up by big-name companies or the big-name government (read, civil service officers).

How I was wrong! Instead of broodish elite post-graduates looking to settle abroad or in an abroad-like fashion, I met a lively bunch of young dreamers. Not all were of my age exactly, but that never felt like a constraint or a burden in the way of forging our relationships. Yes, relationships and not friendships. I have had many friends and perhaps even more acquaintances, but for the first time I felt like I was a part of a group. For the first time, I felt like contributing to the lectures, and listening to these wonderful people who over the course of time taught me many things cherished. I learnt (how to) labour with them, I learnt (how) to love labouring with them. I felt needed and appreciated; I needed and appreciated their presence as well.

Also, the philosophy that was being talked about in the class, and the environment that was being created by all showed us glimpses of a *brave new world*.



Suddenly, it was as if I had found my calling. My questions and doubts regarding Economic theories came to life once again, this time supported by eminence and acceptance in the name of Arturo Escobar, Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, Vandana Shiva and Ernst Friedrich Schumacher. I was introduced to newer questions regarding our society and ourselves; Michel Foucault, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Sigmund Freud opened up to me in their vastness and ageless versatility. I shall forever remain indebted to the *harbinger* of our collective and personal bits of madness, Dr. Anup Dhar (an eminent and widely respected scholar, professor and academic in our part of the world who currently holds the chair of Director at the Centre for Development Practice, AUD). Without his presence, I couldn't be who I am today as I write this. Without his

continued affection and cajoling, I shall find it very difficult to keep swimming against the tide.

Against the tide, I say, because we are not very much with the flow of it. The flow of society and its members have left us few behind in its search for *development* and *progress*. Those of us who couldn't cope(or keep up) with the mad speed keep looking for other avenues; keep looking for contradictions and questions. In a world that has consented to *dominance* and *exploitation* (at least, towards the non-human) too easily and too quickly, we question the process of such a *consensus*. Also, because perhaps Alain Badiou puts it like :

“...For the philosopher, everything that is consensual is suspect.” (Abrégé de métapolitique, 1998)

Thus I have embarked on a journey. A journey for the search of the *subject* within me; a journey for the evolution of the *subjects* inside. A journey which has at the moment led me to a remote corner in rural Bengal; sitting among children who dream of reaching the stars someday. For the moment, let me be immersed in their unconditionalities and affections. For the eternity, let there be peace. *Shalom*.

“The subject is rare because, contrary to contemporary opinion, it cannot simply coincide with the individual. It falls to us to preserve the form of this rarity, and we shall succeed insofar as the God of the One has died. . . . We who are summoned by the void, we who intervene so as to decide the undecidable, we who are sustained by the indiscernible truth, we who are finite fragments of that infinity which will come to establish that there is nothing more true than the indifferent and the generic, we who dwell in the vicinity of that indistinction in which all reality dissolves, we, throws of the dice for a nameless star—we are greater than the sacred, we are greater than all gods, and we are so here and now, already and forever.”
—Alain Badiou, Une Soirée philosophique, 1988