

OSAAT Newsletter

3Q 2020

2019 Flood-affected schools



It is not easy to forget how the floods in August 2019 devastated many parts of India – including northern districts of Karnataka. As we had reported, hundreds of villages were affected to varying degree with untold loss of livelihoods, homes, schools, hospitals and places of worship.

After multiple visits to the flood affected areas, we had selected 6 government schools from the Belagavi district of Karnataka. All these schools were adopted by donors by February 2020. We had planned to start construction at these schools in March-2020, but this was delayed due to the CoVid-19 lockdown. We now plan to start construction of 3 to 4 classrooms and toilets at each of these schools, starting from Oct-2020. These schools are at the following villages in Belagavi district – Masaguppi, Rajakatti, Awaragola, Katrala, Melavanki, Hubbarawadi.

Young Volunteer Spotlight

Ayush spent the summer teaching himself Dart and Flutter - to develop a mobile app for the elderly who are stuck in this COVID pandemic. The app helps connect the elderly to a pool of volunteers who can help them out with their errands (Available on Play store).

He then conducted 2 weeks of classes spanning 25+ kids and adults and taught them programming. All the proceeds were donated to OSAAT.



Wheels in motion amid the Pandemic

Just the word “pandemic” makes us groan. Haven’t we had enough? When is it going to end? Can we talk about something else, please?

Everything we were doing on a day to day basis in the world came to a complete stop right around February-March 2020. We expected to shut everything down for a month and then life would be back to normal. Little did we know that 6 months into the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be redefining what “back to normal” means.

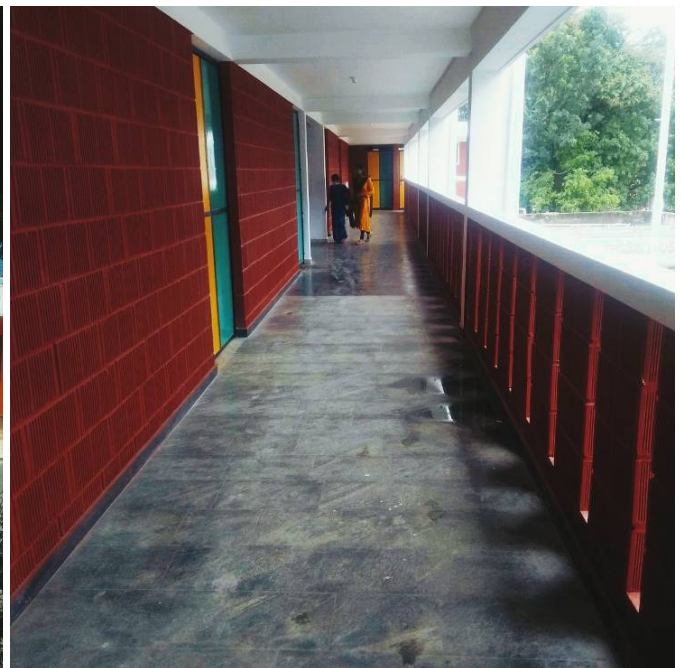
All our school projects were brought to a screeching halt around March 2020. We saw schools shut down, kids sheltering at home and everyone scrambling to find ways to keep the kids engaged in learning, playing, just being kids.

So, we waited, like the rest of the world, to get back to what we were doing. And we have some great news! We were able to complete the construction work on the unfinished portions of two of the projects. These are:

- Govt. Model Higher Primary Girls School, Malur, Kolar district, Karnataka, and
- Zilla Parishath High School, Peddathumbalam village Adoni mandal, Kurool district, Andhra Pradesh.

Formal inauguration of the new facilities will be held as soon as the schools restart.

Govt. Model Higher Primary Girls School, Malur, Kolar district, Karnataka:



This is the largest project for OSAAT so far, in terms of the budget – here we constructed a new building with 8 classrooms, staff rooms and toilets. Construction was done using hollow clay blocks by Porotherm Smart Bricks. These blocks are designed to provide better efficiency, durability, ease of use and a host of other benefits that aid in cost- effective wall construction.

Zilla Parishath High School, Peddathumbalam village Adoni mandal, Kurool district, Andhra Pradesh



This is our first project in Andhra Pradesh. Here we built 4 large classrooms.

In addition, another 3 stalled projects that have been restarted are expected to be completed in Nov-2020: Government Higher Primary School, Surahonne village, Nyamati taluk, Davanagere district (4 classrooms and toilets), Government Higher Primary School, Bai-aregoppa village, Hanagal taluk Haveri district (4 classrooms and toilets) and Sri Mahadeva Vidyalay, Ravalgundwadi village, Jath taluk, Sangli district, Maharashtra (new toilet block).

New Projects

Despite Covid-19 lockdown, we are going ahead with new projects. We have started three new projects this quarter.

- **Municipal Middle School, Kumarapalayam, Namakkal district, Tamil Nadu**
 - o This is our first major project in Tamil Nadu. This is a very progressive school with 500+ students. Here we are constructing 4 new classrooms and toilet block.
- **Government Higher Primary School, Mukanahalli village, Hunsur taluk, Mysore district, Karnataka**
 - o This is a model school where students are very active in local folk arts such as “Kamsale” and “Pooja Kunitha”. Here we are constructing two new classrooms.
- **Government Higher Primary School, N-Devarahalli village, Challakere taluk, Chitradurga district, Karnataka**
 - o This school caters to children of nomadic tribes (“alemaris”) and very backward “Adi Karnataka” and “Lambani” communities. Here we are constructing 4 new classrooms and a kitchen with store-room.

Photos from the ground-breaking ceremonies held at Kumarapalayam (on 10-Jun-2020), at Mukanahalli on 23-Jul-2020 and at N-Devarahalli on 30-Aug-2020



One Mask At A Time (OMAAT) – A Creative Challenge

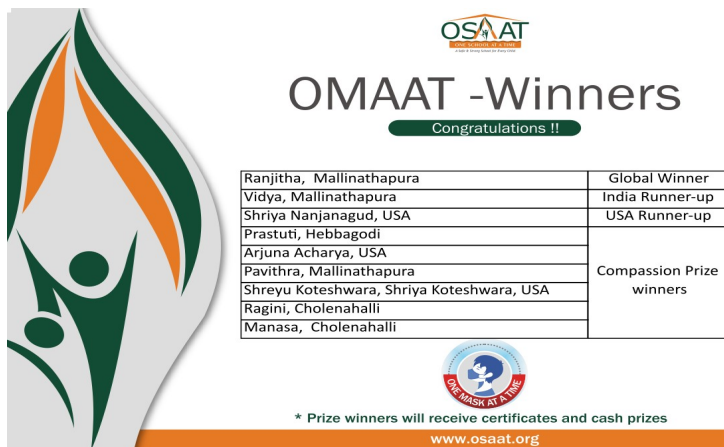
How do we help kids in rural India deal with CoVid-19? How will they be able to afford masks, hand sanitizers, and other hygiene supplies? These questions prompted us to put on our thinking hats and think of some innovative solutions we could come up with. As a result, one idea that got everyone excited was a “mask making” contest, floated by Sudheer Hullemane. His idea was to involve the community, especially youth under 18 years of age, in a “kids helping kids” kind of way.

“A contest would certainly be exciting, and gets the children involved in coming up with some neat ideas”, explained Sudheer, happily taking on the responsibility to spearhead the project. He also helped the team formulate the rules of the contest in terms of ease of making, ease of maintenance, cost to produce, re-usability, originality of design, aesthetic appearance, presentation, protective nature and practicality of use.

The contest generated a lot of excitement for us for sure, and we named it - what else - One Mask At a Time! The team also got many volunteers and their families in making a promotional video quickly and OMAAT was launched in May 2020.

We hope to help the kids in rural India by getting the masks made in large quantities at a reasonable cost. At a time when loss of jobs and loss of income due to CoVid-19 are threatening to persist for a lot longer than expected, rural areas that were impoverished to begin with will no doubt be stressed even more, longer.

We congratulate all the winners and participants of the OMAAT Contest



OSAAT
ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

OMAAT -Winners

Congratulations !!

Ranjitha, Mallinathapura	Global Winner
Vidya, Mallinathapura	India Runner-up
Shriya Nanjanagud, USA	USA Runner-up
Prastuti, Hebbagodi	Compassion Prize winners
Arjuna Acharya, USA	
Pavithra, Mallinathapura	
Shreyu Koteswara, Shriya Koteswara, USA	
Ragini, Cholenahalli	
Manasa, Cholenahalli	

* Prize winners will receive certificates and cash prizes
www.osaat.org

The contestants were given 2 weeks to come up with a design that met all the criteria set forth by the OSAAT team. It did not take long for the contestants to get their plans together. The pandemic and its devastating effects had been widely known by May 2020, along with the need to social distance, wash hands and wear masks. Almost everyone had experienced the effects of wearing a mask all day long and that made a big difference.

The young contestants instinctively knew what would appeal to someone their own age, facing the same type of issues and challenges of wearing a mask for long periods of time, keeping it clean, feeling comfortable. They got into action making their own promotional videos, explaining their designs. It sure was very exciting to see their creativity and the thoughtfulness that went into making a product that had a purpose that resonated with them.

Tree Planting Initiative

Tree planting in OSAAT schools is one of the post intervention initiatives that we have identified. With the help of Dr. M. Sanjappa, INSA Senior Scientist of GKV Bangalore, we got some plants which have medicinal value, and which grow into shade providing trees in 5 to 6 years. We coordinated the planting of these saplings in Gurupura and Benkipura schools on the Teachers day (5th September). The schools have identified individual student groups who will maintain these plants.





New School Reviews and Selections continue...

Team India expects to get three more projects in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh off the ground in a few weeks. Few more projects have also been shortlisted in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh for the next round of funding. These projects are all in a day's work at OSAAT and things are always moving. Please visit www.osaat.org for information on the organization and school projects. Donate, volunteer, cheer! Please support us in any way you can. Volunteers are the heart, soul and backbone of the organization.

Digital Infrastructure Initiative

There has never been a greater need for digital infrastructure in rural India than now. "Back-to-school" remains a much anticipated as well as much dreaded goal amid the pandemic. OSAAT's volunteer force consists predominantly of engineers and entrepreneurs, all eager to solve the issue of lack of digital infrastructure in rural India which is directly affecting the kids forced to stay home or go through drastic measures just to learn their ABCs.

Distance learning is how schools everywhere are coping with the pandemic challenge. However, distance learning poses its own challenges in rural India. Availability of affordable, reliable technology such as a laptop or desktop computer or tablet is one such challenge. Reliable internet with sufficient capacity, reliable power supply are other challenges. In addition, troubleshooting, repairing, spare parts or replacements for equipment, knowledgeable technicians, timely assistance for fixing technical issues are also significant challenges.

OSAAT is working furiously to come up with a solution to address all these challenges. Efforts are underway to fill up all areas of the solution, in much the same way a high-tech company manages a product design, testing, launch, distribution, service and maintenance. For more details visit <https://osaat.org/digital>. Please contact us at info@osaat.org or india@osaat.org if you want to be a part of this ambitious plan.

Thank you

OSAAT thanks all donors in India and USA for their generous contribution and helping OSAAT with all projects.
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