

Changing Education Landscape in Rural India: Fieldnotes from School Capacity Building Project, Hapur, UP

“Freeing from the Traps of
Educational and Social
Backwardness”

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Human Welfare Foundation

Established in 2006, Human Welfare Foundation (HWF) has evolved as one of India's leading nongovernmental organizations dedicated in carrying out humanitarian and development programs to fight poverty and people's sufferings by working in partnership with vulnerable communities regardless of faith, caste, gender or political beliefs.

Vision 2026

HWF's flagship project "VISION 2026" is an ambitious plan to bring about transformation on the social landscape of the country. The plan envisages the establishment of multifarious institutions across the country, with a strong human resource of committed volunteers and recognized community leaders. The program intervenes the needs of the day when one-third of country's population hardly met the basic amenities for its survivability.

School Capacity Building Project

So far, we have supported 70+ schools across the country.

Lots of studies have confirmed the fact that school infrastructure plays a vital role in the education and development of a student. There is a large number of schools in the country without even basic infrastructure. Over 6,000 schools across India do not have a building, according to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) Report for the year 2019-20. As per the report, over two lakh schools do not have a library facility, nine lakh schools do not have functional computer facilities for the students, and over 11 lakh schools do not have internet facilities.

Our School Capacity Building Project aims at rehabilitating such schools by supporting them with the necessary funds to develop their basic minimum infrastructure. Under the project, so far, we have supported 70+ schools across the country.





Intervention in Hapur School

In the last decade, the HWF has transformed more than 70 schools under its Capacity Building Project. Most of the schools that benefited from this project are from the most educationally backward districts in India. A school is selected based on a list of parameters, but the backwardness of the operating location is paramount. In this report, we are presenting the transformation story of Madrasa Falah-e-Aam Junior High School, situated in Tiyala village of Hapur district in Uttar Pradesh.

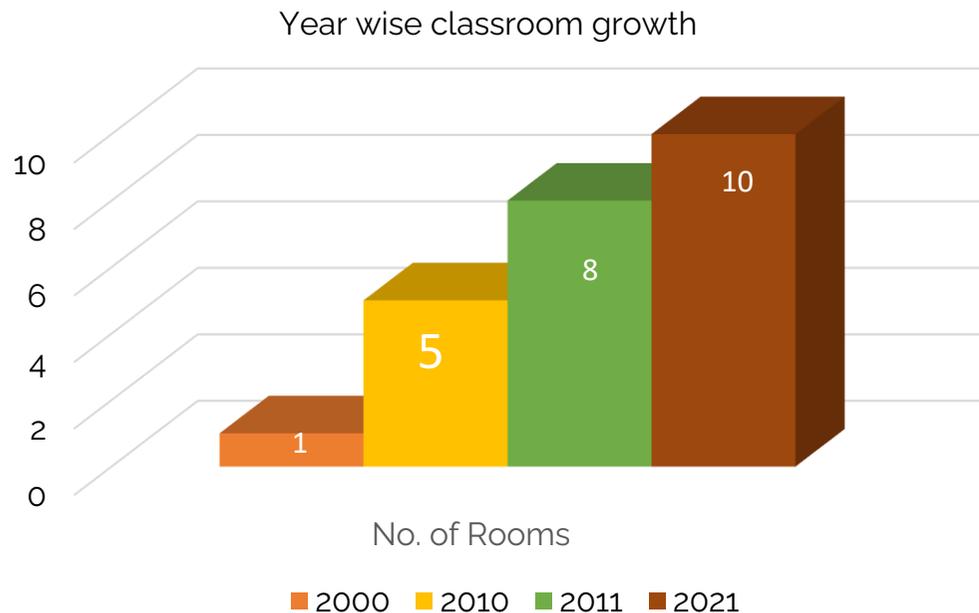
At present the school runs classes from pre-primary to VIIIth standard. The school is affiliated with the State Madrasa Board. The school is co-ed and the medium of instruction are Urdu and Hindi. The school is in a rural area and caters to the low-income group as well as educationally backward communities. It plays a vital role in minimizing the educational underperformance of the region. However, it had inadequate resources to bring measurable change. Therefore, through its capacity building project, the HWF endeavored to support this institution to extend its facilities and classes thus accommodating more students from the target region and making it an excellent centre of learning and teaching.

At the genesis, the school started with one room. Later the management built three rooms and gradually expanded to five rooms. They began to impart primary education. The syllabi were a blend of modern curriculum and traditional teachings. In 2011 the HWF added three rooms and a lavatory. Thereafter the school became eligible for affiliation till the 8th standard. As the school was in demand more students sought enrolment. Thus, in 2021 two more rooms and a gallery were built by the Foundation. The HWF intervention resulted in gradual infrastructural growth as shown in the following graph.

Measuring the Impact

As the standard practice of the HWF, all its Capacity Building Projects are regularly evaluated and monitored. To evaluate the performance and assess the project's social impact quantitative examination of infrastructure, how it has enhanced the student's strength, infrastructure's role in attracting students, and the quality of learning ambiance in the school was done. Qualitatively we endeavored to assess the school's role in bringing social change in the surrounding community, how it contributed to girl education and its instrumentality in transporting lower-income group students to the senior secondary level. To assess these parameters the research team visited the school and surveyed the surroundings, compared the data from two phases of intervention and post-intervention, and interacted with the school officials, teachers, and former and present students.

The HWF intervention resulted in gradual infrastructural growth as shown in the following graph.



Old classrooms built in 2011



New classrooms built in 2021



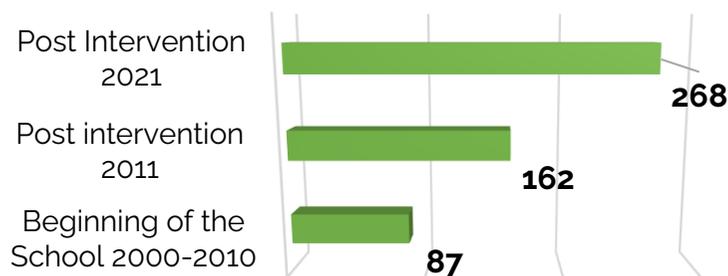
Front Entrance after the second phase of Intervention

Front View of the School Before Intervention



The infrastructural expansion resulted in constant student growth. Many parents who were averse to sending their wards to distant schools were comfortable enrolling their kids here. The girls were the major beneficiaries, as conservative parents did not prefer to send them to other schools. As we traversed the trail of student growth a corresponding correlation was visible with infrastructure growth. In the following bar chart, three phases of student growth are illustrated.

Phase-wise Student Strength



The impact of the intervention is incomplete if only measured in terms of the number of rooms and students. The parameter through which the impact could be gazed at is how the intervention resulted in academic performance. To assess academic performance, we looked into the track record of alumni from the school. The findings of the study are impressive as a good number of pass-out students reached to senior secondary education, under graduation and post-graduation level. In the following table, we illustrate the streamwise academic excellence of the students.

Academic Performance

Level of Academic Achievement	Number of Students
Post-Graduation	9
Under Graduation	28
Law	5
Engineering	4
Diploma Pharma and Nursing	16
Diploma Polytechnic/ITI	26
Maulviyat	3
Total	91

Given the limited resources of the school, this is an extraordinary accomplishment. However, we need to introspect certain factors. Most students, after completing their 8th class from the Falah-e-Aam school go to the nearby government school in Hapur city. The majority of them are boys. Out of 91 students, only 19 are girls who managed to reach further level of education. This is an achievement in the sense that prior to the school the girl enrolment in the area was negligible. Most passed-out students went to inter-colleges and degree colleges in Hapur and Ghaziabad districts. Nonetheless, the school succeeded in creating an impact in the community by raising social consciousness toward education.

مدرسا
فلاح-ع-آام
جونیئر ہائی اسکول

MADRASA
FALAH-E-AAM
Junior High School

مدرسه فلاح عام
جونیئر ہائی اسکول

School Assembly

Socio-Economic Impact

In the preceding section, an overview of the quantitative impact on infrastructure expansion and student growth has been illustrated. To assess the qualitative impact of the School Capacity Building Project in Tiyala Village socioeconomic parameters play defining role.

Falah-e-Aam Junior High School is situated in Tiyala Village of Hapur District in Uttar Pradesh. Only 45 km from the national capital however untouched by its impact on educational excellence. The village is educationally backward. Avenues of education were minimal and for girls, the school was 4 km away from their village. Among the Muslim community, who are the majority in the village, education was never a priority. And from a gender perspective, their attitude was regressive.

Amid this scenario, Khalil Ahmad, the founder of Falah-e-Aam Junior High School Started one room Maqtab at his home. As the number of students grew, a tract of land was bought in 2001 to expand the classes. In the beginning, only the primary section was started due to a lack of rooms. In 2011 the HWF supported the school and three new rooms were built. Thereafter middle section was started and official affiliation was sought from the district education department. When the affiliation was received more students enrolled in the school. As the revenue was low due to minimal fees the HWF supported the school by building two more rooms and a veranda in 2021. Resultantly the number of students grew.

Many girl students were allowed to attend the school by their parents due to proximity. As girls were attending school they were prevented from the susceptibility to the devil of underage marriage. Many of the girls could go to further education and earn a livelihood. Few of them were employed within the school. Around 15 locals are engaged in the school job due to the presence of the school.

We also interviewed a few alumni and recorded their feedback regarding the quality of pedagogy. The responses are satisfactory and pedagogy is qualitative to pave a strong foundation.

Since the people in the village and nearby areas are economically poor and struggling in all indices of development from economy to education, the supported school making a difference in the region and helping the target beneficiaries come out of their educational and social backwardness.



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