

# Meeting minutes for Asha Chennai on 27th Feb, 2022

Minutes of the Hybrid meeting held via GoogleMeet and in person on Sunday 27 th February 2022 at 9.30 AM

Following were present in Asha Chennai Office	Following Logged in Google Meet
Anitha	Kalyan Vaidhyanathan
Bhaskar	Ramakrishnan
Kasturi (partly)	Sriram
Parpoornam	Sundaram R
Rajaraman	
Shiva	
Venkat	
Usha Rao	

## 0. Ratification of the minutes of the meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2002 via google meet were ratified unanimously.

## 1 Update on Bank account Signatories

Ramakrishnan stated that action was complete, Rajaraman , himself and JhansiRani the newly joined Office Assistant now have ENET requestor access. The process of getting authoriser access for Ramakrishnan is still progressing. For now Rajaram is still the only one with ENET authoriser privileges.

## 2 Staff Issues

### i) Loans

Four teachers in Sangamam had applied for scooter loans. All of them are required to commute in connection with implementation of the Pravartak project of Asha Kanini. Proposal to sanction loans of Rs 50,000 each for purchase of scooters in respect of 3 teachers and Rs 40,000 in respect of a teacher who has some outstanding against house building advance was unanimously approved. One more teacher from Sangamam had requested a loan for construction of a house. Rs 50,000 was approved as loan for her as well.

### ii) Resignations and/ or new employee

The issue of retention of a particular teacher in Thulasi project was discussed and it was left to the project steward to take appropriate measures.

Moorthy who was handling office and accounts resigned and in his place Ms Jhansirani has taken over from 16/2/22. Gomathy has joined as a Programmer.

### iii) Transition from Moorthy to Jhansirani

Transition from Moorthy at Luz Ave Office to Jhansirani has been accomplished smoothly with Moorthy giving full support to the incoming Office Assistant

### iv) Use of Malliga's time.

At present Malliga's salary expense is allocated as below

Scholarship Project 50% , Poorna Vidya Project 25 % and Sangamam/Admin 25 %.

With the resignation of her husband Moorthy, she would find it hard and expensive to come to Asha Chennai Luz Avenue office. Venkataraman stated Malliga's services to the Scholarship project though seasonal and sporadic are invaluable since she kept telephone contact with all scholarship students, helped in home visits while scrutinising applications to evaluate indigent circumstances of the applicants. Sriram and Kasturi were of the opinion that Malliga would be useful in expanding the Poorna Vidya project activity for adding schools but she does not have the potential to carry out activities in the field like the other coordinators in Sangamam, Pearl etc. It was decided to continue things as is till May. We can discuss things with her after that Scholarship project was willing to absorb 75% of expenses on account of Malliga if required.

## 3. Asha US and Asha India Conference in Pondicherry on March 25 to 27th

Rajaraman gave the details of the Annual Conference of Asha India and Asha US to be held on the same calendar days with late evening sessions to interact with each other to bridge the time zones between the US and India. That is on March 25th to 27th. . He also gave details of venue and availability of accommodation in Pondicherry. He stated that the Theme of the Conference will include Covid Impact on Education, Quality of Education and Equity in Education. T M Krishna noted Singer and Activist on behalf of the underprivileged and Ratna Pathak, noted filmmaker and activist and Simanthini Dhuru are expected to address the gathering.

Rajaraman requested help from volunteers in arranging the transit of people from Asha India Varanasi, Mumbai, Guwahati etc coming from the North through Chennai .For further entails volunteers could contact Rajaraman or Venkat. He also requested volunteers to attend in large numbers.

#### 4. Scholarship Progress on disbursal - in person meeting with students.

Venkataraman explained the status of the disbursal of second instalment and the Project group has started meeting students in person to verify their fee receipts etc and also for counselling from February 11th in batches as the Covid has abated and things were returning to normal. .

#### 5. RTC Inauguration in 2 centres and reception among High School Students

Rajaraman gave an account of the inauguration of RTC centres at Seethanjeri and Kanakammal Chathiram. IITM had issued a press release and therefore the event was widely covered in print media.

Initially it took time for students to trickle in and now it seems to be catching up. Much depends on proximity to the harvest area of potential candidates. Venkat explained how the timings of these centres are organised to facilitate students in 15 batches per week keeping open the centres from 6 to 9 PM Plans are afoot to scout for place etc to open RTCs in Pandur and Kamagaram shortly. Venkat explained the broad curriculum that is being initially rolled out. At present 3 new Teachers are available for this program. But each of them is located at a different place and we need to hire three more suitable people to run the new RTCs.

#### 6. Updates on other Pravartak Related Initiatives

##### i) Asha Kanini

This is now an ongoing programme with 7 trainers dedicated to inform and train Government teachers. It is estimated that upto about 300 Government Schools in Tiruvallur District ( which has about 1500 government schools) is already covered. We are still pursuing with the TN Government for permission to spread the application throughout TN. That would also call for scaling up our human resources.

##### ii) Assessment Proposal to NSE

National Stock Exchange under their CSR umbrella and IIT Madras under Pravartak are considering a proposal to launch an assessment of Education outcomes at school level. The Coordinating Officer at NSE Ms Rema Mohan is happy with a proposal that has been given to cover diagnostics and assessments. This has a good chance of fructifying.

#### 7. Operationalising Asha south India Registration

Rajaraman stated that most of the formalities were over in respect of Asha South India registration. We are in the process of getting CSR registration and Darpan portal registration for Asha South India completed. It was decided to operationalise this change from 1st April 2022.

#### 8. Asha Mumbai related issues

Rajaraman stated that asha Mumbai has requested for some financial help in rupee account as at present their liquidity is constrained by CSR obligations. After discussion it was decided to extend help to the extent of Rs 5 Lakhs after due consideration.

#### 9. Reopening of Government Schools - Instructions to regular and computer teachers - Expansion of support to government schools.

Project stewards explained the status of schools in their projects and pointed out areas of shortage of teachers which were noted . Stewards were requested to fill the vacancies wherever recruitment process had been completed,

Meetings are being held with teachers to reiterate the basics of Asha support to government schools and their duties and responsibilities.

Regarding expansion of coverage of support, Bhaskar stated that in our proposal to Amazon for financial support we have projected fund requirements to expand coverage from 100 (approx) to 150 government primary schools.

#### 10. Update on other funding opportunities.

- Amazon. Please see item 9 above.
- Muthoot Finance other CSR Opportunities: Being Pursued
- Indian Oil .Indian oil approached Asha Chennai on their own for consideration to extend financial support under CSR after seeing the recent press coverage. In response Venkat made a presentation to them last week. This lead will be pursued.
- Asha Silicon Valley offered upto \$20,000 for Toilet construction. Finally only Rs 5.5 Lakhs is finally being provided. Action is in hand to construct a new toilet in Gandhigramam and repair toilets at Old Thirupachur and Kosavampalayam in Sangamam project and repair at Koovachipatti in Pearl Project.

#### 11. Give India

Rajaraman explained how the GiveIndia platform gives varying amounts of additional bonus, by adding up to 25 % of the donor's contribution for donations both from India and abroad. Since Asha Chennai is registered with GiveIndia he requested the volunteers to draw the attention of potential donors and request them to route their contribution through GiveIndia wherever possible.

#### 12. Stepping up Expenditure in March'22

Asha India had requested Asha Chennai if the latter could step up expenditure to about Rs. 25 Lakhs to meet the target of 85% utilisation in the FCRA account. In response stewards were requested to undertake following steps

- Blackboard Painting
- Purchase Materials
- Purchase books for library
- Appoint teachers where recruitment process was complete

It should be noted that this contingent step is to incur expenditure within the already approved budget which is being brought forward.

#### 13. English Training

Venkat presented a summary of views of mentors who coach our teachers and scholarship students in Spoken English. It was generally felt that the progress of asha teachers is not satisfactory as they appear to lack motivation and wouldn't want to move out of their comfort zone. It appeared from responses to weekly assignments that Asha teachers were less than serious. After some discussion on assignments it was felt that such weekly or periodic exercises were indeed necessary to pursue our overall object of making Asha Teachers acquire skills in English.

Finally Asha Chennai would like to place on record its hearty congratulations to Prof. V. Kamakoti on his appointment as the Director IIT-M. It is recalled with pride that Prof. Kamakoti had been Ashs Chennai coordinator for some period in 2005-06.

R.Sundaram