

# Meeting Minutes for Asha Chennai on 24th May, 2020

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 24th May 2020 at 9.30 AM by videoconferencing courtesy Google Meet.

The following were present

1. Bhaskar
2. Kasturi Easwaran\*
3. Paripoornam K
4. Rajaram Krishnan Coordinator.
5. Ramakrishnan C
6. Saraswathi P
7. Shriram V
8. Sundaram R
9. Venkat Natraj
10. Venkataraman M
11. Usha Bhaskar

\*Kasturi's audio did not function, however she could hear the proceedings in full and conveyed her votes on WhatsApp Message in the Volunteers of Asha Chennai Group.

Decisions are highlighted in blue.

## 1. Ratification of Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on May 3rd was ratified.

## 2. Repair work in office Premises at Luz Avenue

Rajaraman informed that some repairs urgently needed like retiling and filling cracks in the roof at the Asha Chennai office premises were carried out recently at a cost of Rs 14,500. Although this amount was spent from Asha Chennai funds at the moment, these will be offset by deducting from the monthly rent to be paid

## 3. Work For Asha Teachers during June 2020 and after

In view of the continued lockdown and with little prospect of schools reopening after summer holidays in June'20 the question of engaging the teachers other than Manigal was under serious discussion among volunteers. It has been decided that all teachers who are doing mapping of resources to Kanini App will continue the same.. Compulsory attendance at external training sessions as organised should be enforced during this period.

Apart from these stewards of projects may decide how else to usefully and productively occupy the teachers. Other tasks like preparation of TLM and conducting mini schools for small number of children without attracting objections from the main school or the community should be explored. Teachers who reside in the same village where their schools are situated they can organize mini schools.

It was explained how lockdown hits the poor most in the field of education. They lose the habit of going to school and forget whatever they had learned due to lack of practice . Seven locations had been tentatively identified in Tiruvellore and 3 in Pearl for running mini schools. Wherever possible, use of WhatsApp and Zoom could also be seriously tried.

## 4. Funding Status Update

As already announced Asha Chennai has been allocated USD 75K from the AfE central funds for 2019-20. It was informally learnt that from Mr. Arun of Hyundai Glovis that there may not be any change in funding for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, since the Indian economy and auto industry are facing an unprecedented downturn, there could be a resource crunch in 2021-22. In the case of the other major local donor, Trimble Asha Chennai could spend only Rs 18 Lakhs although allocated Rs 25 Lakhs. Asha Chennai should keep a vigil in this matter.

## 5. Teachers' Salaries Update

Rajaraman gave the present position regarding grant of conveyance allowance to teachers who have to commute. The conveyance is based on actuals depending on the prevalent bus/share auto fares. The maximum in such cases has been set to Rs 2000 with the average being Rs 1000. With the current COVID situation the fares are soaring and it was decided that the maximum cap may need to be raised to Rs 3000 with the average being Rs 1500. This will also adversely affect our project budgets.

## 6. COVID Relief at Manigal Project at Indiranagar

It was recalled that this item was the subject of discussion in the previous meeting and Usha Bhaskar had been requested to verify the ground position once again. Consequently, she after reexamining, reiterated that the case was deserving of assistance. [Her proposal to render relief at the rate of Rs 600 per family to Narikurava families in Indiranagar at a total expenditure of Rs 38,400 was approved with nine votes in favour and two abstentions.](#)

#### 7. Budget Proposal for Scholarship Project

Venkataraman presented the proposal for expenditure for award of scholarship in 2020-21 totaling Rs 23,80,600. Although an expenditure of Rs 2,00,000 had been provisioned for career counselling by utilising external resources, it was found too difficult to locate a suitable career counselling guide. [It was decided to delete this item for now and the budget expenditure of Rs 21,80,600 was unanimously approved.](#)

#### 8. Budget Proposal For Manigal Project Indiranagar

The suggestion that all project proposals should have three columns viz Budget For Previous FY, Actuals for Previous FY and Budget for Current FY was accepted and project stewards were requested to follow it.

It was also decided on the basis of current Data Plans on offer by ISPs a uniform rate of Rs 2500 per Annum per connection may be used for budget purposes in all projects..

A suggestion also was made to suitably group together in adjacent rows expenditure on similar items.

[Usha's proposal to fund Manigal Project Indiranagar at Rs 5,85,1200 was unanimously approved.](#)

#### 9. Budget Proposal for Manigal Project Kottur

[Expenditure for Manigal Project at Kottur at Rs 7,03,400 was also unanimously approved](#)

#### 10. The budget proposal for Poorna Vidhya

Sriram presented the budget proposals for Poorna Vidhya projects for both urban and rural schools together. The presentation was in two parts, one for the ongoing during 20-21 and another for 2 additional schools for the second half of 20-21. It was stated that the figures of number of teachers hired /to be hired should be reconciled although there was no change in financial figures. The expenditure for computer accessories should be increased to Rs 5000 in both parts of the proposals.

[With the above minor changes the budget proposals for Poorna Vidhya was passed unanimously for an amount of Rs 16,95,000 for existing schools and an amount of Rs 2,50,000 for the addition of 2 new schools.](#)

[Incidentally, the proposal to increase the salary of Arputha Raj who acts as a coordinator for and is a computer teacher, from Rs 10,900 to Rs 14,000 was unanimously approved.](#)

#### 11. The budget proposal for Pearl

Bhaskar expressed satisfaction that during FY 19-20 almost the entire amount budgeted could be spent and gave a brief history of how the present geographical cluster of Asha supported Schools near Kayathar evolved. Items of expenditure were discussed at length and some suggestions made.

However, for paucity of time and the required quorum, it was decided that Bhaskar would put it up for online voting or take that up at the next meeting.