

Meeting minutes for Asha Chennai on 10th Jan, 2021

Following were logged in and participated

Bhaskar

Kasturi Easwaran

Madan Sudarman

Rajaraman Krishnan (Co-ordinator)

Sriram VS

Sujatha Raman

Sundaram R

Venkat Nataraj

Venkataraman Muthukrishnan

Usha Bhaskar

0. Ratification

The minutes of the Meeting held on 6th December 2020 on Google Meet were ratified unanimously

1. Updates on Funding raising and financials

Rajaram presented details of funds received from various sources during November and December of 2020. Donations from USA and India picked up considerably and overall approximately \$47,000 from the US and Rs 3,50,000 from India had been received. These consist of individual donations and also from the.Gofundme portal. With this it would appear that Asha Chennai fund balances at the end of year FY20-21 are likely to be in the same position as they were at the end of FY 19-20. This position is also due to curtailing of non essential expenditure and pandemic situation which restricted travel, meetings, outside training sessions etc

Venkat gave a brief account of the proposals pending with KRP Ltd, Microsoft, etc. On the whole we have been doing much better with individual donations rather than with corporate donations. We will continue working on corporate donations as well.

2. Tracking of Donations

Venkataraman explained in detail the necessity to have the donor details so that proper identification of the donor, the project etc can be traced as also complete record can be maintained for follow up. Quite often when donations are made in the US donors might fail to identify Asha Chennai as the intended recipient. They should inform Asha for Education in US that their donation is for Asha Chennai. In case they fail to do if they give the details to Asha Chennai, we can stake its claim for the donation with the relevant data.

Indian donors too should give PAN number, Address and email ID invariably. When volunteers seek donations from their friends and families both here and from abroad should keep these requirements in mind.

This helps in follow up mails to be sent to them and also in our efforts to persuade our donors to become regular donors.

3. Charity Partner Registration

Asha Chennai is registering with the popular charity partners. Usha Bhaskar and Sriram are driving this initiative. Asha Chennai has registered with Benevity a well known charity partner. We have also started receiving donations through this charity partner. We will also register with Give India, United Way etc. and maintain our registration with CAF and now Benevity.

4. Core Volunteer Addition

Asha Chennai follows a policy of inducting volunteers and adding their name to the list of core volunteers if debutante volunteers attend three meetings and participate in some activities of Asha Chennai. On this basis Madan Sudaraman, Gomathy and Sujatha Raman are being added the list of core volunteers. They were welcomed by all the volunteers present.

5. Loan Application

Asha Teacher Selvi has applied for a loan of Rs 50,000 for her marriage. She has a balance of Rs 20,000 outstanding against the earlier loan extended to her. [It was unanimously approved to loan Rs 30,000 to Selvi.](#)

6. English Training and Volunteer Engagement

Spoken English Classes for Scholarship Students have been arranged. However the response was poor. Venkataraman said some students were finding it difficult to concentrate on such activities from their homes as the atmosphere at home was not found conducive. Efforts are being made to put this scheme on an even keel..

Venkat gave a brief account of the status on English Training for Asha Teachers. He felt that the response for completion of the Assignments by the teacher was not good. He had asked Radhika, Lead Teacher for English to coordinate this activity by interacting with leaders of the various Mentor-Teacher Groups. Venkat felt compliance should improve once monitoring by Radhika becomes routine. Sundaram incidentally mentioned how he was using the Lesson in Assignments as teaching material during Spoken English Evenings and conducting oral quizzes on the assignments given in the textbook.

Some volunteers from Trimble (a former CSR Donor) have come forward to take part as mentors in English Training. We would need to ensure good participation by the students as well for this venture to be successful.

Of all the online facilities for English Training it appeared as of now Google Meet serves the purpose. Sundaram and Sudarman felt that Cisco Webex experience on online interaction was good. The quality of communication is of course dependent on the speed and bandwidth available at the time of the event. However we can keep an open mind and adopt the best means as this medium evolves.

7. Scholarship Reporting and Fund Raising

In the case of Scholarship Project (Support a Child) sometimes the donor desires to know the details of the name and identity of Child who is supported by him or her. It is to know how the child is performing in school or college. Asha for education had expressly prohibited identifying the child in our receipts issued to the donor due to tax compliance issues at the US end. Asha Chennai so far has been sharing progress reports mark sheets where furnished by the student with the donor. Now a donor has asked for a photo. It was decided to share such information relevant to donor's desire to oversee the academic progress of the child he or she has selected to support without revealing the child's contact information. There was no harm in sharing the photo. This is a project where it is mutually beneficial to maintain continuous Donor-Scholar relationship as the success of this charity is palpable when the student scholar graduates from school or college and gets a good start in life.

8. Mini Schools Update

Launching of a pilot Nutrition programme for 4 schools in Sangamam and 2 schools in Pearl is still under consideration.

Rajaraman stated that he had shared his observations on Mini schools based on his field visits to Sangamam and Poorna Vidhya and Pearl projects. He would be going to Thulasi project shortly.

Some expenditure on provision of mats and some minor repair works in homes where necessary in connection with running mini schools were approved in the last meeting and these are being done.

It was stated that many mini schools are running two batches now.

Some PUP schools, it appeared, have started functioning on a regular basis and Thulasi project area and also in Pearl project. With the decline in Covid spread it is expected that this activity might start winding down.

Oral assessments have been successfully completed and data is being collated. This will also give us the precise numbers covered by mini schools and among them were pupils of regular schools nearby.

9. Asha Kanini Update

The progress on Asha Kanini update is satisfactory. 40 Packages were already supported by Asha Kanini and another 10 to 20 packages are in the pipeline. Steps have been initiated to make Asha Kanini available also on Android Devices.

R.Sundaram