

# Meeting Minutes for Asha Chennai on 8th, Oct 2023

Minutes of the meeting held in person & via GoogleMeet on Sunday 8th October 2023 at 9.30 AM

## Following were present

1. Kalyan
2. Komalavalli
3. Paripoornam
4. Rajaraman
5. Shiva
6. Sriram
7. Sujatha
8. Sundaram
9. Venkat
10. Venkataraman

## 0.0 Ratification of minutes of meeting 27th August 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th August were ratified unanimously

### 0.1 Ratification of the Polls held on 1st October 2023 on Sugadharam, staff loans, Staff Policy, Purchase of scooter-Pearl project

Rajaraman explained the circumstances under which the earlier approved proposals in respect of Sugadharam (construction and repair of toilets) had to be altered in some schools.. He mentioned that since a potential donor had visited couple of our schools that require toilet work and had come forward to support this effort, it became necessary to recast the plan.

It was also explained how in view of a somewhat a long hiatus between meetings it became necessary to seek a poll on Staff Loans. He said he would share the list of borrowers highlighting those under default.

Regarding Staff policy as suggested by Bhaskar amendments had been proposed to cover some medical relief in case our staff meet with accidents in the course of their work.

The poll on new scooter for Pearl to be used by Murugan to carry material and commute between schools was also explained.

After some discussions the poll results were ratified.

## 1. Staff Matters

Rajaraman recalled that some teachers in the past had been designated as Senior Teachers sometimes with an addition of Rs 500 in salary. He suggested that there should be a regular scheme of designating teachers with a loyal service of 5 years and found competent to continue and there should be an award of an additional salary of Rs500 per month. This suggestion was approved and Rajaraman was requested to share the names of teachers who could qualify to be designated as such so that project stewards could give their remarks on their eligibility.

## 2. Update on Fund Flow from Amazon, IIT Prvartak, individual donors and Fund raising

Rajaraman mentioned that funds for RTCs from IIT Pravartak kept flowing at a pace far less than anticipated. Only CAMS, it appeared was sending funds There was no information from SYRMA. It is possible to keep the RTCs going with our own funds, but another donation of USD 100,000 would be required and he wanted volunteers to canvas for more donations since potential donors (in US and other countries) would be doing their taxes now.

## 3.0 Accounting / Legal updates

### 3.1 Ramification of new FRCA rules on assets

The recent notification on keeping accounts of assets by NGOs who receive funds that are subject to FCRA was explained for general information. Asha is already following these accounting rules.

It was also noted that the used laptops donated by Amazon, Ford etc. are treated not declared as assets in our books as they are fully depreciated before being donated to us..

### 3.2 Audit status.

Rajaraman stated that as far as Asha Chennai was concerned FY 22-23 Audit had been completed and sent to Asha India.

### 3.3 Closing Asha trust Rupee account.

Headquarters (Varanasi) has requested that we close the Asha trust Rupee account as we already have a Asha South India trust Rupee account. We have requested that we take this up after the completion of the 24-25 financial year. There are pending loans in that account and also there are many registrations where we have given both the FCRA and Rupee accounts together.

## 4. Asha India Conference on Feb 24/25 at Mumbai

Annual Asha India conference is planned to be held in Mumbai on Feb 24th and 25th.. Originally this was to be held in Manipur but was moved because of the disturbances in Manipur. Asha India Conference is a very useful forum to keep abreast of what is happening elsewhere in India and listen to some interesting speeches. Volunteers are requested to attend the same. 2nd Class to and fro Train fare and accommodation at Mumbai would be provided.

## 5. Content Work and training

Rajaraman intimated that a new version of Asha Kanini will be launched soon. Additional content mapping including various lesson plans has been in progress during examination times of the schools.

#### 5.1 Various CS curricula.

Venkat and Rajaraman were working on refining the CS curriculum in view of the large-scale launch of CS training for government teachers and schools.

While on the subject it was mentioned that our CS teachers were undergoing training in Media Editing Tools.

#### 5.2 Science training by Purva.

Ms Purva conducted Science training in Sangamam, Pearl and Thulasi project areas in which the teachers participated eagerly. She also did one day of training for school students at Pearl area schools.

#### 5.3 CS training by our teachers.

It was proposed to hold CS Training for Asha Teachers in December from 20th to 22nd.

While on the subject Rajaraman wanted assessment to be done on CS for all the various CS training done by Asha. The last such attempt was made in 2019. In the case of Maths/ English and Tamil such assessments have been routineised. It is time we introduce regular assessment in the case of CS also. We have promised to carry such exercises in our MOU with Samagra Siksha. We must work on the methodology of such assessment in CS

### **6. Update on other projects:**

#### 6.1 Scholarship.

Venkataraman stated that 27 new students have been awarded and at present the number of scholars for 23-24 is 105 which might go to 110.

#### 6.2 RTC

The latest RTC was inaugurated at Thomur making a total of 7 (5 in sangamam and 2 in Pearl).

#### 6.3 Sugadharam

The progress is satisfactory the work is continuing in the Sangamam area.

#### 6.4 Arogyam

As the government started the breakfast scheme, this was discontinued in many of the places. This is being conducted in a limited way in very poor localities from where the children attend govt schools where Asha teachers also teach.

#### 6.5 Mirzapur and Rajatalab

New teachers have been appointed in Mirzapur and Rajatalab.

### **7. Update on MOU with TN Samagra Siksha**

Rajaram explained the various back and forths that happened before the MOU could be finalised and signed. All the volunteers congratulated Rajaraman for the efforts made to open up govt schools for teaching CS to both government teachers and Govt school children covering up to Class X. Rajaraman explained arrangements being made for the launch function at a suitable government school hall inviting District Educational authorities in Tiruvallur on the 19th instant.

### **8.0 . Completion of distribution -- Stationery Student Material and Uniforms**

Distribution is complete in all projects except Pearl which will also be done in a week. Uniforms have been distributed in all projects except in a small number of schools at Sangamam and Pearl. These are also being completed. There was a discussion about the T Shirt selection for male staff members. By the way, our society, being in the midst of a sartorial revolution among women, it was wondered when would our female colleagues transition from saree to Churidar to Pants and T shirts.

### **9. Teacher Excursions plan**

Venkat stated that so far 102 persons had signed up for the excursion to Kochi. Sangamam, Poorna Vidhya and Manigal are included in this. Pearl teachers plan to go to Thanjavur and Thulasi teachers to Ooty.

### **10. Oral Assessment**

Rajaraman stated that Oral Assessment would commence by the end of October and requested Komalavalli to ensure Rajatalab also participates. Necessary instructions about creation / updation of master files are being issued to all projects. .