Nari Gunjan – Aavishkar Call

Date – 10th May, 2021, 10:30 PM EST

Attendees – Sandhya ji, Sudha ji, Surabhi, Kushagra, Aditya, Sameer, Adarsh, Roopashi

1. How is the COVID situation in India with the Nari Gunjan girls (Sudha ji)?
   1. In Bihar, government asked everyone to go home from hostel. Many girls do not have access to phones.
   2. 2-3 girls have had fever but otherwise it has been fine health wise. Since harvest season just completed, there is no issue with food yet. They are also looking to get vaccinations for the girls.
   3. Are the teachers able to talk to the girls regularly?
      1. They are trying to do online classes. Due to lockdown, girls have gotten used to the online classes. Teachers have also gotten used to this.
      2. Problem is – some of the girls do not have access to smartphones. Teachers are managing but maybe can give some teacher some training for online education.
   4. Has anyone tested positive in the staff/teachers/students/community?
      1. No one directly has tested positive for teachers. Their family members have been affected.
      2. Within the staff, 4-5 of them tested positive and they were quarantined. They were only able to come back after testing negative.
      3. In the community, there were no cases in the Mushar community until last week, one man died from COVID within the community.
      4. Situation in Bihar not very encouraging.
2. How is the COVID situation in India with the Aavishkar? (Sandhya ji)
   1. Some of the teachers have tested positive. For many on-site, they have quarantined people as necessary, and things are running fine.
   2. Programs –
   3. Community– There is a lack of oxygen cylinders/concentrators. They are trying to get funds and access to these supplies. This is a constant challenge.
3. Surabhi - Budget Proposal Questions
   1. In the budget, for served community every quarter you have students and teachers from Nari Gunjan or serving students and teachers from others – who are the others?
      1. Others will be students/teachers serving or getting educated from underprivileged communities.
   2. If fellows are working with other organizations, is Nari Gunjan paying for the full salaries of these fellows (when they work for other organizations)
      1. Nari Gunjan will be paying for every session.
      2. Comment made – It will be better if the budget is structured so that it shows in each line-item on what exactly is Nari Gunjan paying for to the fellows. For example, each session could be a line-item. Can you write it per session. Can write up the necessary line-items for the expenses for each of the sessions.
   3. Aavishkar Yatra vs Aavishkar (name of program vs name of the non-profit)
      1. Is it permitted under the current FCRA bill to send money from one non-profit to another non-profit?
         1. There are two ways of funding. Earlier, foreign institutions used to fund an organization in India with FCRA and then that would transfer to other organization with no tax deduction. Another approach was to write a service contract with tax deduction.
         2. So are there no problems with FCRA with this service contract?
            1. Yes – correct. (Answered by Sandhya ji)
   4. Is tax included in the current budget proposal?
      1. No. If permitted, they would include this in the budget.
      2. Comment made – Currently, Asha Purdue fundraising is not good so maybe we cannot funds it.
4. Sudha Ji Question – Clarity needed on the usage of funds. What exactly can Asha fund?
   1. Comment made – Our suggestion is to have a discussion between Nari Gunjan and Aavishkar fellows and come up with a proposal and give it to us. Can write a little descriptive budget proposal for what activities/sessions are getting planned? It will be good for us (Asha Purdue) to know more about the different activities that the Aavishkar fellows will be conducting at Nari Gunjan.
5. Sudha Ji Comment – FCRA
   1. FCRA amendment that happened in Sept last year. It has caused lack of clarity and that subgrant is not allowed. Even now, they do not know what the Home Ministry will come up with. For now, they have agreed to go with the tax-deducting approach (10%) but if the Home Ministry does not approve this, then they will have to reconsider.
   2. Have gotten their new SBI account. Waiting on MHA approval. Once received, they send that back to MHA and they include Nari Gunjan into the list of organizations allowed to receive funds.
      1. Currently, due to lockdown, the offices that handle this are not yet working. If they are, they are running very slowly. But they are confident that this will get resolved in 3 weeks.
   3. Comment made (Asha Purdue) – If you feel like the legal team or auditors tell Nari Gunjan that this arrangement could risk their FCRA status, please let us know.
   4. Comment made (Asha Purdue) – Once you receive the MHA letter, send that to us. Till then, can you send us the SBI details so that we at least have the account details so when we get the MHA letter, we can immediately add it and send funds.
6. Surabhi Question – Admin expenses limit of 20%. The new budget that you will submit based on activities and workshops, can you talk to your auditors and ensure that they will limit the admin expenses to 20%
   1. Yes, sure. They will do that (Sudha ji)
7. Kushagra Question – Can you ensure that you do not include non-Nari Gunjan items on the final budget proposal? The final budget having non-Nari Gunjan services will create confusion.
   1. Yes – They (Sandhya and Sudha ji) will ensure that.
8. Kshitij Question – When did you request for the MHA letter and when do you think you will receive it?
   1. Sudha ji – They received account confirmation on 27th to 28th of April. Due to lockdown, it took 4-5 days to send the letter to auditor and she has uploaded that for MHA on 6th of May.
9. Surabhi Comment – If you are raising money for COVID, you can share it to us. We can share it to our members to see if they can donate. Please share such links.
   1. Sudha ji – There are many orphans because they have lost their parents. They are looking to do something for those orphans. No one (the government) is revealing who is orphan and has been affected. They are trying to coordinate with an adoption agency center for these kids. Until the government gives permission, they cannot volunteer for this.
   2. Comment made – if you are raising funds via link, please share the link with us.
10. Sandhya ji Question – Is Asha Purdue involved with COVID relief for sending some funds to India? Specifically trying to send concentrators to India.
    1. Asha Central was trying to procure concentrators for projects in India. They had secured a consignment for projects to order from. Projects will use their own money and then we can send relief money to them.
    2. Follow up Question – Can Asha procure the oxygen concentrator for the organizations and pay for it?
       1. No. Unfortunately, Asha cannot buy directly these since it could result in an audit issue (as Asha is registered as an educational organization). We are sending some relief funds to our projects.
       2. Can we send relief funds to Nari Gunjan?
          1. Not sure. Will have to ask central team regarding this.