



*Asha for Education*TM

UFlorida Chapter

Gators for Asha, 300-9 J W Reitz Union, P.O Box 118505, Gainesville, FL 32601

www.ashanet.org/uflorida

The raised question and the responses

Budget:

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(1) Who are the current director, coordinator and community organizer?

The person who are currently in-charge:

Current Director : M.Shiamala Baby.

Co-ordinator : K.Matthews.

Community Organizer: S.Mary.

Proposal:

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(2) How do they self evaluate? How do they test themselves for quality?

Community Organizer:

S.Mary, the Community Organizer belongs to Dalit community. She has an experience of ten years in organizing the community towards positive collective social actions and community development activities. She belongs to a women's group, in Ganapathipuram, Tambaram, which was organized by FORWARD, in the later part of Nineties. From ordinary member she rose to the status of Community Organizer, because of her commitment to the cause, experiences of the issues of human right violations and the mind set to challenge them in the creation of a just society. She has been working in FORWARD, for the past 10 years.

By her ability in raising a community of resistance, she evaluates herself and the motivated community members organized into women, men and youth groups and their disciplined way of functioning proves her quality in her responsibility.

K.Matthews, the Co-ordinator, evaluates himself by the success and the failures of the covered children by their attitudinal and academic out put. The respect, he commands in the community among children, their parents and regular school teachers test his effectiveness, in his responsibility.

As a Director of the project, I evaluate myself by bringing my original commitment in front of my mind, measuring the amount of challenge, as a team, we had brought in the society, the success and the failure stories and the lessons learnt.

The over all fruits of her hard labour in FORWARD- a just society, wherever, FORWARD works, keeping the staff team and volunteers motivated towards it, facing



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the challenges, while working towards establishing it and the never dying spirit proves the quality of a director in her.

(3) Details on past students from the evening centers - what are they doing now?

When we started this Project some seven years back, the scenario was entirely different. Children being the first generation of school goers, our children were in like 2nd 3rd or 4th standards. Majority of them have now in their higher secondary status.

A list of a few:

- S.Raghu from Thandarai Pudhucheri, a long standing child of asha is now doing his III year degree course.
- K.Ramachandran from Kudalore is in his II year degree course. He is a long timer of asha.
- A.Subha who joined our evening classes in Jothi Nagar in her 5th standard has now appeared for her higher secondary examinations.
- S.Suguna Sundari, a visually challenged scholarship recipient of asha is now working as a teacher in a Government Higher Secondary school in Thiruvallur.
- K.Yamuna, a student from Irumpuliyur is now in her III year degree course.
- L.Sheeba, who was helped for her M.A Sociology is now working in a firm and is the sole supporter of her family, her mother being a sick domestic helper, father a bed ridden sick patient and sister a paralytical-affected person.
- B.Vinoth a scholarship recipient, helped with his DCA is working in an I.T.Company and is supporting his poor family.

A detailed list with pictures will follow.

(4) Details on past supported night schools - how many are functioning on their own now?

Thirumudiwakkam



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Thiruneermalai
Madambakkam
Kuthanoor
Ganapathipuram
Irumpuliyoor
Durga Nagar

The above centres were handled for a term of four years and now had been handed over to the communities, two to three years back.

Elappakkam
Mohalwadi
Ramapuram
Kudalore
Kolathur
Mathur

All these six centres will be handed over to the community from June 2011.

The main criterion with these centres is that the State Government of Tamil Nadu has started its development programmes in the Block of Achirupakkam, where all these centres are situated 'Vazhnthu Kaattuvom' (a Tamil phrase meaning 'Let us live a good life and show it to the world') is a project through which, the State Government works for the development of the community. Activities like giving credits, giving free domestic things, conducting evening classes to children are taken up by it. FORWARD does not want to duplicate.

[\(5\) Details on future night schools - how are the places chosen?](#)

In the recent past, FORWARD conducted a survey of the status of children, in Thiruporur and Thirukazhukuntram Blocks in Kanchipuram District, where the Vaazhlnthu Kattuvom project of the Government is not announced. Out of that survey, the taken up areas were chosen since children of these areas are in need of such educational support badly. We were invited by the community leaders and requested to work for the development of their children and thus the new areas were chosen. Kundumedu and Kannadapalayam are quarry and slum areas respectively, which are deserving places, for development activities among children. In Madambakkam, where Irular community (Tribal or Adivasi) lives, is a most deserving area, where education is a neglected area. Issues like child marriage and child labour, worst hygienic condition are the common



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issues of this area (which is not looked as issues by the community) and hence in order to promote education among children and to ensure their rights-ensured future, we are introduced and invited by this community to take up this responsibility. Thus the new areas are chosen, keeping in mind on the need of the community, amount of deprivation and other related factors.

We look forward, as in our existing centres the attitudinal change and academic efficiency of the children, with whom, we will be working in the years to come.

(6) Are there any other agencies supporting this overall project or related project (in general we would like to know what other projects FORWARD is engaged in)?

This project is not submitted to any other Agencies for support. The Education Project among children always, since its inception is supported by Asha for education and is not shared with any other support-agencies.

Apart from this Education Project, FORWARD is implementing different programmes, mainly a) Campaign against Child Marriage and Child Labour b) Right to Life and Livelihood of women in Agriculture c) Naturopathy. We are part of so many campaign networks like “Campaign Against Child Labour-CACL”, “Movement Against Newclear Weapons-MANW”, “Indian Social Action Forum-INSAF”, National Alliance of Women’s Organization-NAWO” etc.

(7) Are any of the teachers/director/coordinator/community organizer drawing salaries from any other agency other than Asha for Education supporting this project or any other project that FORWARD is engaged in?

FORWARD has appointed different staff to handle their different responsibilities. Hence this staff Team, which is designated with the responsibility of Education, do not draw payment from any other sources. The Director, who also works in FORWARD, is not drawing her salary from this Education project of Asha. But her travel to visit the areas, is partly supported by this project.

(8) Does FORWARD have any type of relationship with a religious organization?



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FORWORD is purely a secular organization, having a secular mandate. The Pivot of FORWORD is a Christian by faith and got her motivation & vision from this faith. But the staff team belongs to different faiths. Belonging to any faith is not that matters to us in FORWORD, but having the same vision and commitment is that matters to us in FORWORD, FORWORD has chosen its working team not based on their faith in any particular religion but their faith in human liberation and commitment to work towards the creation of that just society, twenty four hours, a day. This is the clear stand of FORWORD.

Thanks.