

Meeting Minutes - 21st Dec 2014

Attendees - Ranga, Bharath, Mohit, Vikram and Sowmya

Siddamma's Fellowship - Vikram and Sowmya

A) Supporting 20-25 new Irula (tribe) villages

- 1) 20 to 25 new villages have contacted S for help
- 2) The support request generally falls under these specific categories
 - + Bonded labor, salary issues, slavery,
 - + Awareness of their rights and privileges as a citizen, ration, kids education
 - + Accidental death and injury, threats, legal cases and abuse cases
- 3) She is well known and is generally reach out for help. The specific issues will be known in the coming weeks/ months to then cater to the most urgent needs
- 4) She will send us the list of the villages by December 11
- 5) Generally she trains a bunch of self-starters and guides them to then take over their community and handle the local effort where it is possible.
- 6) It generally takes 2-4 years from the time a village approaches her.
- 7) However, the progress duration is getting compressed with experience
- 8) Some issues (that ASHA may be interested):
Sumangali Chitta: Young girls are sent for work with a promise of taking care of their weddings when they grow older. Leads to exploiting and child labor,

B) Un-Organized Worker's federation (UOWF)

- 1) Siddamma is an advisor to the UOWF
- 2) UOWF is membership based union that meets regularly to:
 - + Promote workers' rights
 - + Educate workers on government schemes
 - + Control human rights abuse
- 3) She to send out a report on social impact of the work done by them

C) Bharathi Trust Resource Center (Farm)

- 1) 2-3 officials from TN Agriculture Dept generally bring seniors and others to the farm to learn and observe the procedures
- 2) TN Agri Dept regularly buys 40-50 k INR worth of seems/ rice from BTRC farm
- 3) Last year's produce include Tuvar daal, Wheat and black gram
- 4) She has a man that tends the cows-which are essential for an organic farm. This has been a difficult proposition
- 5) She has been invited to the government Rice Research center in Thiruvur for a meeting on the 9th december
 - + It will be attended by scientists and farmers and industry officials to discuss issues, best practices and the likes
- 6) BTRC has been able to spread the Organic word to the local farmers
- 7) But regulations and incentives favor cash crops like sugar cane and dithers that rely on chemical pesticides
- 8) government is leaning towards GMO and mor epeople like Namalvar may be needed to do go

towards non-GMO organic future

9) TN (unlike Kerala and Karnataka) seems to have no strict zoning which allows only farmers to buy farm lands. This is leading to lesser farmers and farm land and more migration towards other sectors(crick , construction, etc

Questions/Comments -

1. How did Siddamma support herself in the past couple of years ? 2. Generally, the fellowship is for personal expenses.

Actions -

1. Mohit - Find out what amount is provided to Fellows.

Girirajpura School - Update : Mohit

Discussed likely funding situation with Asha Austin. Asha Austin coming off from a tough time, being small number of volunteers and low capacity to fundraise, we may only be able to support upto \$6k budget. He is OK with Asha Austin funding \$6k. He also understands Asha Austin cannot be a big funding agency. Murali had already made him aware of that. Maneesh mentioned that he will be meeting GSK partners in January. He will put forth Girarjpura also for partial support. So, its likely that GSK Partners will support the remainder amount. Some of the partners are Yatra foundation (australian - 2 schools, and sports etc in all school), Michael helsley Foundation

Ques. How are you providing salaries to the teachers ? What is the current funding resource ?

Ans. Contribution from parents + funds in reserve - 1 teacher, helsley foundation - 1 teacher from jaganpura (sponsored by helsley foundation). Once funding comes in, they will hire a new teacher for jaganpura school. 15 teachers jaganpura (225)

Ques. What is involved in legal formalities ? What is the current understanding between Uday Girirajpura, villagers, forest department about ownership of the land and use of it. **Ans.** legal formalities - affiliation to rajasthan board. everything belongs to the village. They have been asked by the forest dept and villagers to provide education.

Ques. Is the increase in number of students shown per year estimated based on migration rate ?

Ans. # of children based on the relocation plan decided by local administration

Ques. Original budget was 5.17 lakh but in the new sheet its 6.25 lakh. What was the reason for increase ?

Ans. He was travelling so did not know the exactly why. More likely it was to keep salaries consistent with other schools.

Ques.

- What is the motivation behind being a resource center ?

- Who will conduct government teacher workshop ? Who pays for it ?

- Who will be running the training centre ? What is the plan for that ?

Ans. Resource Center concept is for GSK in general. GSK's goal is not to open and run more and more schools. Their goal is to set examples in education for govt. school teachers. They can implement ideas, innovating ways of teaching. Govt. teachers are invited to come. Govt does not send them, they come on their own free will. The resource center is done by GSK at location where schools exist. Depending on the capacity and capability of the school and its teacher, they can also organize these workshops. Typically these would be organized at the school itself.

Questions/Comments -

1. Asha SV is phasing out with Sawai Madhopur since the school is being transitioned to govt. What is Asha SV's plan with Girirajpura school ?
2. Would like GSK to be transparent about their funding. When the contribution from Partners come in, would like to know what part of their budget is being supported by them.
3. How RTE going to impact ?

One time funding for Infrastructure Project - Khushboo Welfare Society : Ranga

"One new area we have embarked upon is adaptation of the products, tools and appliances emanating from developments in Assistive Technologies, to supplement the human training efforts for enhancing communication skills, learning, mobility, and to cope with activities of daily living. For this we are working together with a leading similar institution for children with special needs in UK - [The Ash Field Academy](#). Under this ambitious program we are creating an appropriately equipped 'Assistive Technologies Assessment and Application Unit' where the typical special needs of individuals for the state-of-the-art tools to enhance their capacity to compensate as much of their impairments as possible could be assessed, they are trained in their use and eventually the aids provided to them to enhance their overall quality of life. This unit is intended to serve not only our own pupils but also to be thrown open to children from other institutions in this region. This project would need a good amount of investment in infrastructure of additional space, equipment, training of our people etc. I would like to know from you whether you could consider raising some funds for constructing the addition of about 3000 sq. ft of additional building space which we want to take-up immediately, to cover the needs for this project and also to ease space crunch for our other recent additions like setting-up of preschool for children <6yrs, program for overnight stay to develop independence and social skills, Art based therapy program, multimedia training, indoor play area etc. For this we need to fill in the uncovered gap of about INR 2,500,000 as of now. Can you kindly bring this into your consideration to cover by whatever extent possible? I know this is a tough expectation; but would be grateful for whatever best can be done."

Questions/Comments

1. Need a better understanding of the project.
2. What is the shortfall amount ?
3. What is the current source of funding ?
4. What is the timeline ?

Mohit

Meeting Minutes - 11th Jan 2015

Attendees : Ranga, Sowmya, Arvind, Mohit

Siddamma's Fellowship

Answer to earlier questions

1. How did Siddamma support herself in the past couple of years ?

Ans) Siddamma has not any fellowship support for the last two years, since Asha Austin discontinued her funding. Her son has resumed work in India and is supporting her personal expenses and her work at this point in time.

2. How much is the fellowship amount ?

Ans) Siddamma's Fellowship amount in 2009-2010 was Rs 20,000/month. In 2011, Asha Fellowship Program ([link](#)) revised the max cap to Rs. 25000/month. The chapter has the flexibility to decide what is the correct amount of fellowship. This should be based on the feedback from the fellow, project steward and the information chapter has about the cost of living in the geographic location etc. Since, Siddamma is now working with 20-25 new villages and is based in Chennai, Asha Austin feels Rs 25000/month is suitable for her fellowship.

Other Questions :

1) Has anyone done a site-visit ? Who will do the site-visit in future ?

Ans) Savitha met with Siddamma in Dec 2014 and the update on Dec 21st was based on that. Vikram or Sowmya plan to do future site visits.

Action item : Setup Poll

Mohit to setup an online poll to vote on Siddamma's Fellowship (amount Rs.25000/month).

Mathru Foundation - Update

1) What does the staff do? Roles and responsibilities.

- a) Cook.
- b) Assistant to the cook.
- c) Driver/care-taker- Driver to drop and bring them from school, and also care-taker for other work (pay bills , take them to doctor etc).
- d) Accountant work for audit report.
- e) Some work done by Malathi too.

2) Are children taught in the house?

No. Looking for a tuition teacher.

3) Corpus Fund - 10 lakh, General Fund - 1.3 crores. How much is being used for Construction ?

What is the purpose of General Funds ?

- General Funds is mostly for building
- Most of the money gone for the building. Here is the approximate split-up to get a sense of money used:
 - 21 lakhs spent for the land.
 - little more than 1 crore on building.
 - 3 - 4 lakhs per annum for core needs.

- Corpus fund is there to handle any shocks in funding.
- Malathi to send latest 2014 - 2015 details which reflects a more up-to-date balance sheet.

4) How are the students chosen ? Financial background ?

Almost all kids are from Rural areas. Malathi is in touch with Local health center of various small towns/districts. They ask for kids who are having disabilities. Then they go and contact the parents. They contact during summer holidays timeframe so that they get them for the next academic year. Mathru asks the parents to bring the child to the foundation and stay with them for a week or two, and does home-sickness counselling. Home-sickness counselling is done by Malathi ji. After that the parents are allowed to visit once a month, and call once a week. They prefer children who do not have the income to support the children.

5) What happens if the building is not finished ?

She is determined to finish the house by June 2015. Worst case, she is planning to extend the rent for another year.

6) Building update is as follows:

- 1st floor tile work is going on.
- Floor work, electrical and other utilities are pending.
- focus on ground and 1st floor so that they can move in. Shall worry about the second floor later.
- Ramp is there for going to 1st floor.
- Girls will be admitted once the second floor is ready.

7) How are parents involved in the children's life ?

First 15 days after they are enrolled into the foundation, they are requested to not call the foundation to prevent home-sickness from growing. Then every Sunday they can call, and every month they can visit. Parents also spend time with them during summer holidays.

8) How many children have graduated ?

Totally 2005 - 2015 approx. 23 students.

Breakup:

3 graduated. Work in MNC companies earning 12-15k per month.

3 - finished 10th; completed ITI apprenticeship which helps them getting jobs in mechanical tools.

They now work in small scale industries.

2 - finished ITI apprenticeship; lecturers in the same college.

1 - joined MNC as travel business assistant. Had issues going to toilet due to locate of his work place in the building; had to stop working.

Malathi found him a remote job for Christ college for taking textbooks and converting them to soft copies. Now he gets Rs. 4000 per month.

13 students currently studying.

9) Which schools do the students go ?

- 4 in english medium schools.

- 4 degree holders: 10th,11th, 1st year bcom, 2nd year bcom.
- Rest in Government schools.

10) What is her plan for next 5 years ? How many kids, budget ?

Long term plan is to create a sustainable institution for 50 kids from rural community who cannot support these children.

11) How do the parents feel about having their children living separately from them ? Khushboo (a past project) had a school bus which dropped and picked children

3 local kids from Bangalore stay in the foundation. Feels uniformity is important, and so the kids are not sent home everyday. Parents do come and visit them.

12) Do children go home during summer holidays?

Yes. Sent home for summer vacation.

13) Other discussions:

- Vegetarian food served at home.
- Lower age students are brought in. Above 5 to 6 years. Lower the age, the more preferable it is as they are easier to integrate in the foundation.
- She left her bank manager job because she wants to be more dedicated to the foundation.

Action item : Further Questions

- 1) Why does the foundation prefer to have the children stay at the foundation home versus commuting daily to school for kids who are from Bangalore ?
- 2) If a child does not want to stay at the foundation, but wants to stay with parents, does the foundation offer school fees and support to the child ?
- 3) What activities do children do together after school ?
- 4) Are the schools disable friendly ? Do they have ramps, toilets, etc. for the disabled children ?
- 5) How are the schools chosen for kids ? Why are the children going to different schools ?
- 6) How does the drop off/pick up to school work ? It must be time consuming to drop each child to different school every morning
- 7) Elaborate on Long-term plan for sustainable institution.
- 8) How does the foundation pick its staff ?
- 9) What controls are in-place to make sure that staff takes good care of children ?

AfE - Change of Asha-wide Processes (Legal & Financial)

Asha for Education is making a big transition to improve the way we manage our financials after an external audit was conducted. There was a recent call to give us an update on that. The changes are discussed in this slide deck in detail - [Link](#)

We have a 'qualified audit' which highlights these deficiencies in our process that prevent the auditors from giving us a GAAP-compliant clean audit (as mentioned in the audit report) -

1. 'Inconsistent accounting controls exercised over collection of checks and cash at the chapter level' - The biggest concern auditors have had every time we have tried to get an audit has

been the lack of a control over checks and cash at the chapter level. The move to the centralized lockbox will address the issue of checks and we plan to provide all chapters with a device such as [Square](#) to reduce cash transactions. We need your full cooperation to fully move to this so that we get a 'clean' audit starting 2015. All cash interactions should be reduced to zero with a maximum cash-on-hand at chapters of \$500.

2. Basis of accounting is 'modified-cash basis' which is non-GAAP - To move to GAAP-compliant 'accrual basis' of accounting (as we also decided in the recently concluded ARC), we need to implement these changes -

a. Income must be recorded when there is a 'promise to give' rather than 'when the funds hit the bank'. This has big implications - especially for matching donations. ***We need to enter the 'matching donation' as income in our books as soon as we get a request for confirmation of donation from the companies.*** This means that Central Treasury will have to be involved with this process of confirming matching donations.

3. Estimates used in financials - Due to a lot of 'carry-over' of year-end financials and unclear notes in the TDB, we had to resort to estimates to present our year-end balance sheet. To prevent this in the future -

a. All accounts for year ending 2014 will have to be submitted to AWT by Jan 5, 2015. (and so on for subsequent years)

b. Communicate with AWT on all events to clearly delineate between donation income at an event, event proceeds, event expenses (and the categorization of these expenses).

Asha Austin communicated that we may plan Strides of Hope in 2015.

Asha Austin does not have the bandwidth to host Asha-24 conference.

Action item : Write Article

1. Ranga and Mohit to work on Article for Annual Report.

Moving Asha Austin Website to Wordpress

The development area is currently at <http://ashanet.us>. Completed sites ready to go 'live' will be migrated to ashanet.org.

Chapters can use website template - <http://chaptertemplate.ashanet.us>

Stanford Chapter website based on Chapter Template - <http://stanford.ashanet.us>

An independent Work-in-Progress at Chicago Chapter chicago.ashanet.us

To design from scratch

The site is on WordPress and the theme we use is called 'X'. It's documentation is [here](#). It's pretty quick and easy. It has a 'Visual Composer' where you can drag and drop design elements and is very intuitive.

Project Pages Approach - template <http://chaptertemplate.ashanet.us/our-projects/> is an overview page for Project with content read off the DB.

Documents are going to be uploaded via the same interface as before.

Project Pages Approach 2

Project Page Example <http://ashanet.us/project/?pid=1112> (or similar, still WIP) will replace <http://www.ashanet.org/projects/project-view.php?p=1112> (which will be an asha-wide change since that is linked to the main site)

Action item: Start creating the website

1. Ranga and Mohit to work on creating content once the website is setup.

Meeting Minutes - 25th Jan 2015

Attendees - Sowmya, Vikram, Ranga, and Mohit

1. Siddamma's fellowship program - Poll Results
 - a. Results : 6 Yes / 0 No
 - b. Poll results are available here - [link](#)
 - c. Feedback : Add option for Abstain and comments for future polls.
 - d. Question : The fellowship program mentions that the disbursal happens middle of the year. How does Asha Austin handle this. Sowmya and Vikram to find out from Rajeev.
2. Action items from previous meetings## Mohit is waiting on Murali to give an update on how SV is approaching Girirajpura project.
3. 2015 ARC Poll - Cycle 1 Discussion## Mohit forward the ARC poll email to the mailing list.
 - a. The goal of this poll is to ratify some of the by-laws of Asha. More details on this [link](#)
 - b. **Question** - Who are members of Board of Directors ? Is it the President, Secretary, et al. ?
4. Update from Khushboo Welfare Society - Infrastructure project## Documents are uploaded on Asha Austin Drive - [link](#)
 - a. Volunteers are encouraged to read ahead of time. Since the meeting was cut short, we will discuss this item next meeting.
5. Chapter Financial Planning ## Worksheet is now uploaded on Asha Austin Drive - [link](#)
 - a. We will discuss this in the next meeting.