

Asha Atlanta Projects Meeting Minutes April 24, 2017

Attendees: Anish Mukherjee, Arkadeep Kumar, Abhyuday Mandal, Anuradha Bulusu, Sandhya Dalavi, Dhwanil Shukla, Shruti Lall, Karthick S Anbazhagan, Tapomayukh Bhattacharjee, Samarth Brahmabhatt, Mayank Agrawal, Prasoon Suchandra, Adwait Mane, Shashidhar Ravishankar

Agenda:

(1) Discussion and vote to approve Kalyania budget for 2017-2018

Abhyuday introduced Kalyania

Initially school for primary school children and home nursing training program. From last 2 years they have expanded to include sewing as part of vocational training.

Anish presented his site visit report

Suhasini Shishu Niketan: Provide foundational education to students below grade 4 before they transfer to Govt. schools for middle and high school. Requesting increase in teachers' salaries to incentivize the teachers, reflected in the budget. Also looking to provide after school tutors for kids.

Parents are asked to volunteer in the school for construction, cleaning, maintenance activities. Helps them stay motivated and involved in their child's education. Events like Mathri Sachetanata help engage parents in these programs. They also have psychological counselling for kids.

Potential problems: No way of tracking students beyond 4th grade

Vocational training for women:

(1) Home nursing program : Demand is more than supply. Awaiting approval and accreditation by School of Social Work, Kalyania University.

(2) Sewing center : Started in 2014 through Asha's support. Teaches older teenage aged girls how to sew etc.

Q&A

Anu: How are they going to find tutors for the school children?

Anish: They are looking at local retired professionals to take this up. But they do not have the money to pursue this effort.

Anu: What is the basic education requirement for the nursing students for them to qualify for this program?

Anish and Abhyuday: Most probably 10th or 12th pass, but we are not completely sure

Arka: Is tutoring being planned for a group of students or per student at their home?

Anish: I think individual students

Abhyuday: I don't think so. Students beyond class 4 can attend evening tutoring classes. If they are thinking of a one to one model, maybe we can suggest that an evening school model is more sustainable.

Anu presented budget breakdown for 2017-2018

Adwait: Do you have a sense of the literacy levels of the parents?

Anish: Very low education level, but the parents are interested in making the lives of their kids better

Adwait: What do you mean by young people getting involved in Kalyania?

Anish: More younger teachers are getting involved, contrary to previous conclusion that majority of the teachers were older.

Tapo: How much is the salary of the teachers of Jawahar Vidyalaya?

Anu: That is a government initiative and has a different payscale and benefits.

Kalyania vote called to approve budget of INR: 8,52,000. Budget approved unanimously.

(2) Gram Vikas Trust (GVT)

Samarth presented his site visit report

GVT works in Bharuch Gujarat. Lot of poor people, people from minority groups. Improving child education (girl child education).

Asha funds:

(1) Bicycle program – Most villages have a primary school, but not a high school, after 7th standard people drop out, to prevent this they provide bikes to students.

(2) Shikshana teacher training program

(3) Para teachers: Hire temporary teacher to fill up vacancies in government school. Could meet only two teachers. Anu : para teachers are people who passed education similar to Govt. teachers (B.Ed.) but didn't get accepted as Govt. teachers.

(4) Vocational training: Train girls in three trades(sewing, beautician, computer skills). GVT helps girls get some placements and some help towards starting their own home business.

Samarth's site visit recommendation: Maybe Asha should increase funding for bicycles and also provide some repair funds as bike repair is an issue. Computer training, though good, maybe not be applicable to this area, maybe there can be a survey as to what could be more useful.

Q & A

Karthik : Doesn't computer training play well with the digital revolution in India?

Samarath: The skills being taught here do not translate to employability in that area.

Anu: These girls live in villages while IT center and jobs are far away in Bharuch and other districts. Makes it difficult to for the students to pursue IT centric jobs.

Arka: It looks not everything is getting communicated to GVT regarding helping the girls get employment help from GVT/Asha. Maybe communicating the initiatives that have worked for other Asha supported NGOs to GVT might help.

Anu: Presented budget for 2017-2018 and Padmanava's site visit report

Padmanava visited GVT following discussions with Anu and echoed the same recommendation as Samarth. Recommended that NGO partner Rameshji conduct a survey to find out if there needs to a shift the training programs to other focus such as driving, mobile repair, computer repair etc.

Asha will not fund shikshana program as Reach to Teach (UK based org) is funding a similar initiative at GVT). Anu presented email Q & A with GVT requiring GVT to do a study of the various local opportunities for employment in lieu of computer training.

Anu : Bicycle budget requested for 50 girls similar to last year for INR 1, 70,000

Para teacher program – funding 4 para teachers for ten months for INR 3,00,000

Vocational training program - funds requested for driver training, sewing and beautician courses INR 8,99,800

GVT vote called to approve total budget of INR:13,70,000. Budget approved unanimously.

(3) Nishtha Support a Child Budget for 2017-2018

Anu presented budget

A single Atlanta donor supports the education for three girls, two from night shelter and one from Jagaran program through the support a child program. The amount to be supported is called for a vote.

Q & A

Adwait: Why does this need to be approved by a vote?

Anu: To ensure that there is no conflict of interest between donor and beneficiaries.

Nishtha vote called to approve INR 30,000. Budget passed unanimously.

(4) 2017 ARC Cycle 1 Vote discussion

Anu: ARC is the main policy wing for Asha. They make changes to Asha policy which needs to be voted and approved by all chapters. Asha fellows do work at a grassroots level and get compensated from Asha in the form of salary from Asha or some form of their expenses get covered. ARC vote is to increase fellowship stipend cap to INR 25,000 per month to account for inflation and allocate general funds up to USD 5000 per year to Asha fellows and expand the scope to utilization of these funds.

Abhyuday: I recommend that we vote yes.

Anu: I recommend that we vote yes, but I also think that it important for all members to read the proposal, so the votes can be shifted to another day. Vote approval moved to Friday via email.

ARC 2017 Cycle 1 votes recorded via email:

YES votes: Samarth Brahmabhatt, Sandhya Dalavi, Prasoon Suchandra, Arkadeep Kumar, Abhyuday Mandal, Anuradha Bulusu