



# Asha for Education™

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## Conference Call Minutes – Senthilkumar Gopalan's Fellowship

**Date/Time:** 17-April-2016, 11 am EST

**Attendees:** Devesh Chugh (Asha-UF), Padmanava Sen (Asha-Bangalore), Pradeep Jayaraman (Asha-Stanford), Ravi Venkatraman (Asha-UF), Senthilkumar Gopalan (Payir)

**Agenda:** Asha-Fellowship discussion with nominee, Senthilkumar Gopalan

### Notes:

#### Senthilkumar's introduction

- Mechanical engineer and worked for 10 years in various capacities.
- Started Payir in 2005.
- Carried out work in Thenur, about 40km from Tiruchirapalli. Looking at holistic change in rural communities and working in as many aspects of the community as possible for holistic development - panchayat governance, health, livelihood, education, agriculture. Intend to provide better options and sustainable development - in terms of both finances and ownership.
- Married Preeti, who is a graduate from Homeopathy and joined Payir as Volunteer.

#### Outreach and work with AfE

- Payir team is around 65 full time and 35 part-time employees. Between 10-25 volunteers at any time mostly with fundraising and sometimes with specific work on-ground.
- They currently work in 5 villages mostly - but some programs reach the entire district. But, the estimated impact is around 7000-8000 people from different age groups.
- Asha has been a long term and long standing partner. Other partners have been a swiss-based organization (for a short term forest development project), Dream India (from a volunteering perspective and bringing out talents in Govt. Schools), AID India (with teacher training).
- Govt. given ownership to run and monitor the nutrition program. Senthil raised 20% more than the budget to meet the requirements.
- Contacted AfE through Meera Sitharam (faculty advisor for Asha-UF) who had known about Senthil's work and Payir. They were doing a program to strengthen the Govt primary school - ABL training and child nutrition. They also had an NFE with around 10 children aiming to build them as community leaders and social champions.

#### Funding

- Reasons for Fellowship vs Project: Senthil doesn't draw a salary from Payir for reasons of principles. So, the income is one aspect of it. Social evangelism - spreading the word on social change - cannot be immediately on Payir's agenda. Some planned activities may not be completely under Payir agenda.
- Preeti took a salary of INR 6.5k on most months as a source of income to run the family. But they have decided to not take a salary from Payir going forward.
- Asha funds around 1/5th-1/6th of Payir's funds. Senthil believes Asha's continued support has played a substantial part in the growth and sustenance of Payir.
- Due to FCRA regulations, AfE can transfer funds to an organization and not an individual. Senthil will find out from Payir if he can get funds through Payir and conduct his work under the organization itself. An alternative is to apply for prior-FCRA as an individual. Senthil will find out the best way after the Payir AGM and talking to other Asha fellows.