

Conference Call Minutes

Date : Monday, August 1st 2011 (Austin) / Tuesday, August 2nd 2011 (India)
Attendees : Vijaybhai (Project coordinator, Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Reoti)
Kumar Abhinav (Project steward, Asha Austin)
Ganesh Krishnamoorthy (Project steward, Asha Austin)

1. Teacher Training

- The teacher training session that was supposed to happen in June got canceled
- Trainers from Jagriti were involved in another meeting in Kanpur for a program regarding education of brick kiln worker's kids and could not make it (Vidya Ramchandran is one of the founders of Jagriti)
- Vijaybhai talked to one of the Jagriti volunteers Mahesh about a week ago regarding this
- Tentatively the dates can be finalized only after 15th August

2. 2011-2012 Academic year

- The school has started new session on 1st July
- Around 25 new students have joined this year
- Most of the new students are from around the school area; younger kids who just started going to school
- As a matter of principle, the school admits kids who are younger and encourages them to pursue their education continuously
- Some students went to other schools or public schools (~15 students). Their exact number will be available soon
(Abhinav to follow up with Vijaybhai on this by mid-August)
- Vijaybhai will also try to send the Austin chapter the updated list of students for this year
- The Austin chapter has requested photos of individual kids and Vijaybhai has promised to send those too

3. Miscellaneous

- There has been a discussion (Asha-India) regarding the Right to Education (RTE) Act passed by the Govt. of India.
- Unrecognized/unaffiliated schools are being shut down all over the state of U.P. In light of this, some urgent discussions are being conducted as to how to make the ASV school recognized
- The school is not under any pressure currently but Vijaybhai anticipates that at some point in the future there may be pressure from the government to either convert to a registered school or shut down

- They want to be prepared for any eventuality as and when the government rules regarding RTE become clearer
- Vijaybhai feels that ASV cannot possibly meet all the requirements required to register the school. These requirements are beyond the means of the school and are available on the government website.
- RTE guidelines can be found at <http://bed.up.nic.in/page1.htm>
- An alternative is to run the school as a coaching center and help the kids to enroll in the newer government schools that are coming up in the nearby areas
- The school needs to be registered with the local Zilla Parishad to be recognized as a coaching center. The requirements for this are slightly less stringent in terms of the space required, no. of classrooms, etc.
- Currently the government schools are overcrowded and under-staffed but hopefully the situation will improve in the future
- Vijaybhai to send the budget for 2011-2012 to the Austin chapter
- Austin chapter to follow up with second disbursal for 2010-2011