

Sep 30, 2014

Funding Proposal for Kedi Residential School for Tribal Girls

1. Kedi continues to do outstanding work for education and all round development of tribal girls. Not only is Kedi doing very good work for formal education, a wide ranging cultural, vocational, and entrepreneurial activities are done by the students.
2. Kedi has 84 Residential students for Std 9, 10 & 11. Six former Kedi students who have passed SSC, are pursuing higher studies and can not afford a place to stay are given hostel accommodation, including food and other facilities.
3. Kedi students are generally from poor background, mostly first generation school goer in their family & mostly living in scattered remote villages in the forests & hills. They are transformed into confident young women, armed with knowledge, skills, ability to express themselves and ready to face the world that is very different from their villages.
4. During our visit every year, we ask the students what they aspire to be. In earlier years when the school had just started, it was mostly a factory worker or a police woman or a clerk or a nurse and sometimes a teacher. In our visit this year, Std 9 students responded as below:

Doctors	6
Engineers	3
Nurses	13
Tailor	3
Teacher	5
Science Teacher	3

This marks a significant change in the aspiration of the students, their self-confidence and their view of the society. Coming from a very disadvantaged socio- economic background, it is quite a transformation.

5. Ex Students & Ex Teachers have a strong bonding with Kedi. They remain in touch & participate in Kedi activities. Several teachers, who have moved to high paying Government schools as teachers, volunteer to teach at Kedi in their free time.
6. Gujarat Government has decided that Std 1 to 8 will be in the primary schools. Kedi, which was starting from Std 8, now starts at Std 9. Learning is very poor In the Government schools in this rural region. Kedi gives intensive teaching in Std 8 to lift the learning level. Kedi strongly believes in learning and makes a few students repeat Std 9 in case they do not meet the minimum standard. Parents are willing to allow their daughters to spend an extra year to catch up in learning.
7. As informed to Asha last year, Kedi wanted to start Std 11 for Science stream & Commerce stream from this year. Kedi has started Commerce stream for Std 11 this year. Kedi will start Commerce Std 12 and Science Std 11 in 2015-16 and Science Std 12 in 2016-17.
8. The salary levels for Std 11 & 12 teachers are very high, especially for science stream. Kedi has been able to recruit Commerce teachers at reasonable salaries this year. However, paying salaries for Science teachers will be a challenge.
9. Kedi has all infrastructure & educational facilities that would exceed RTE criteria. However, since they are starting from Std 9, they are beyond the RTE requirements.
10. Kedi students had toured Madhya Pradesh last year. Students told us that it was a great learning experience.
11. Detailed reports by Kedi on activities carried out last year and future plans are attached. A presentation of Kedi Story 2013-14 is also attached.

12. Kedi's mentor Aparnaben is an Architect with 20 years of experience in California. For Not-for-profit NGOs, she designs schools with very good functionality while optimizing cost of construction. She charges no fees for herself. NGOs pay directly the cost of making drawings to a woman engineer associate. A past woman student of Kedi, now an engineer, will also be joining Aparnaben. Several schools in South Gujarat have benefitted. She has also designed a school in Rajasthan and one in Jharkhand. We can also request for her help in design if Asha's other project partners in nearby areas need designs for schools.

13. In view of her experience in design of schools, I have suggested that she start & mentor a not-for-profit "Institute for Optimal Design of Schools", which would offer good designs for Indian conditions at a minimal cost. This would avoid many cases where rural schools do not appoint an Architect to save costs and end up having poor aesthetics, structure, finishes, lighting, ventilation, workflow and higher total cost. Although she has yet to decide her priorities, Asha may wish to partner with such a project. Many Asha volunteers in USA, with experience in design, would also be able to make significant contribution in improving the design of schools by partnering with such not-for profit Indian organization. Asha would thus contribute knowledge in addition to funding. This can be of immense value to the schools in India. It would also be a satisfying and fulfilling experience for Asha Volunteers.

14. It may be noted that Pankaj Kadikar, Aparnaben's husband, is a Trustee of Kedi. He has an MBA degree from USA & had worked in senior positions in USA for 20 years before they decided to return to India to give back to the society. He works as an administrator to a local charitable Hospital and also contributes to Kedi's activities. Pankaj could also contribute to the design institute.

15. Aparnaben has often told me that she is able to do such public services because partners like Asha contribute funds so that she does not have to spend time for fund raising. Asha is therefore also a supporter in many other such public services carried out by her.

16. Kedi has a budget of Rs 1,904,300 for running expenses, excluding capital budget. Kedi believes that it can receive contribution of about Rs 1.2 Million towards running expenses from other partners. Kedi has therefore requested Rs 704,300 as a contribution from Asha. This represents 37% of the running expense budget & a smaller percentage if capital budget is included.

17. It may be recalled that last year (2013-14) Kedi had reduced its request for contribution to Rs 600 K from the previous year (2012-13) funding of Rs 900k despite a high inflation. This was possible as Kedi had received a significant one-time pledge from a donor. They had requested that the reduced funding may not be kept as a base for funding in future years. This was discussed in the funding meeting and was considered as a reasonable request. I therefore suggest that we do not restrict funding this year as 10% increase over the previous year.

18. I propose that Asha contribute Rs 704,300 to Kedi for the school year 2014-15 as requested by Kedi.

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