

Payir Conference Call Minutes - 30th August 2009

Attendees : Senthil and Ram (Payir); Hari (AID Boston); Rahul S, Pratibha and Kamal S. (Asha Madison); Ajoy, Dr. Sitharam, Sharan and Sanketh (Asha UFlorida)

The call minutes is recorded as a discussion and hence reference to names has been omitted.

Payir folks are working on the **Payir brochure** and updated the groups about it. They are looking at using recycled paper. Since they can get it printed for free in the US they are looking into the possibility of printing it in US and mailing it to India.

Updates on the Intervention Program: Attendance in Tottiyapatti school is bit lower compared to last year. Senthil managed to get some kids whose family migrated to work in brick kilns to join the school and arranged for temporary accommodation for them. But the kids haven't been able to manage without their family and the family take them back in sometime. Also, there are some health issues in this village. Last year, the attendance in this school was around 90-95 %, this year so far it has been around 70-80%. There is a volunteer Ranjith who has been working effectively in this school. Payir has also started an Aanganwadi in this school.

Natakadu school is performing well. There is a new and revised ABL cards being made available and this will be implemented soon.

Highest grades being offered in schools supported by Asha through the Intervention Program.

Tottiyapatti – 5th standard

Thenur – 8th Standard

Nattakadu – 10th Standard

Trying to get a coordinator to oversee the activities of the Intervention Center.

Updates on NFE center : There are 10 kids in the NFE this year and the trust is happy with the way things are running in the school. Parents of the kids seem satisfied with this experimental approach, but they want homework to be assigned to the kids. 6 of the students are from last year and 5 of them are sure of staying with the NFE. Payir is not planning on sending teachers (support staff) henceforth for training as it is expensive. There is a volunteer who is based in Chennai who visits the center and teaches children and support staff English. The plan is to keep these children for about 10-15 years and train them to be leaders of the village.

The reason for ABL not being taught completely in the NFE like the intervention program.

ABL does not cater to the local needs and doesn't consider local knowledge. Moreover, the ABL program state-wide is only till the 4th grade. Teachers at NFE prepare study material. ABL

cannot create local leaders. Payir support staff can also bring about some changes to ABL in the Intervention program but it's a statewide syllabus till the 4th grade and hence may not be able to do much. The support staff do share study material between the NFE and Intervention Program. ABL doesn't implement anything which involves going into the community and getting involved directly with the community. NFE style education does try to do this. At this point the kids are too young to do this but can try involving parents more.

After-school program : Payir trust has also initiated an after- school program from kids from local school not directly affiliated with Intervention program. But they are running into some problems with this. 8th standard kids are being sent to work by their families to earn a living. So they cannot come to this program. Education is being given secondary importance. Asha UFlorida project, Vikasana was facing the same problem. The goal of this organization is to reduce child labour problems. A two pronged approach can be taken to solve this issue. Council parents regularly about benefits their family will get in the long run by sending kids to school. Secondly work with employers of these kids and try to drive the point to them. Also, work on giving some incentives to kids.

Summer camp : Payir had organized a summer camp for kids with whom Payir wasn't working with. One of the aim of this program was to get more volunteers from different villages to get involved in Payir's activities and this did happen. Also, Payir volunteers got experience in working with these new volunteers.

Can Payir find volunteers from the 'Teach India' campaign ? This program is mainly based in Chennai and hasn't come in a big scale to Trichi.

Where else has Payir applied for funding ?

- PKF funding was a one-time funding and is complete.
- AID may help with the health care aspect of Payir
- ACTION 2020 – Payir has been seeking help from this organization
- NEAC – Funding for health care of the community and community awareness in the village.

Possibility of approaching Acumen Foundation for social venture initiatives was suggested. Payir is trying to start a business model and this organizations support non-profit organizations. Can approach them for bi-gassifier unit.

Community is more involved with Payir right now and people see Senthil as a part of the community.