

ASHWASA BHAVAN (St.Francis House of Hope), CHEEKANAL NARRATIVE COMPLETION REPORT OF THE GOAT REARING PROGRAMME (Second phase)

Introduction

Ashwasa Bhavan Special School for the mentally and physically challenged, Cheekanal was founded in the year 2007 to provide special training to the mentally and physically challenged children. The organization was able to provide a caring service to the disabled children in the local area. Training is provided to each child as per the mental capacity of the child. Staff members of the organization undertake regular visits to the families of the disabled children. Periodic meeting of the parents are organized to have good rapport between the beneficiary families and to have coordinated efforts for the development of the special child.

During these interaction meetings and house visits we have come to know most of these families are economically poor and struggling to meet their family needs. Due to low-income families are not able to mobilize resources for the development of their families, especially to provide good education to normal children in these families. Mothers of disabled children are not able to go for work, because they have to be at home to look after the needs of the special child. These days there are a number of employment opportunities for the rural women but mothers of special children are not able to participate in it. At the same time it is important for these marginalized families to have a steady source of income for their development.

We had a number of meetings and interaction with the mothers of the Ashwasa Bhavan inmates on the matter. They suggested Goat rearing as a suitable income generation activity for them. Most of the families have got experience in goat rearing and the area is best suited for the activity. But they do not have the initial capital to purchase goat and start the activity. They requested Ashwasa Bhavan to support them with initial capital to start goat rearing. It was in this situation, we requested Franz Kunzler, Raiffeisenstrasse-3, 86405 Meitingen, Germany to provide necessary financial support rural poor families to start goat rearing. An amount of Rs.3,78,704, equivalent of Euro-5388 has been credited into our bank account on February 23,2015. Below given is a short report of the activities implemented under this project.

Selection of Beneficiaries

We have given much importance to the beneficiary selection. Since there were many needy families to receive the financial assistance we followed a rigorous selection process to ensure that the neediest families receive the support. Economic backwardness was the

main criteria for the training. Families live in dilapidated houses, families with more number of school going children and with no steady income are other criteria followed for the beneficiary selection. Prior to the selection, Ashwasa Bhavan staff members visited the families in person to have a clear understanding about them. We also involved the local parish priests in the beneficiary selection. This process has helped us to ensure that the financial assistance to purchase goat has gone to the right beneficiary. We have selected 30 families to receive the financial support to start goat rearing.

Orientation Programme

One-day orientation programme for the selected beneficiaries was organized at Ashwasa Bhavan on June 28, 2015. Though majority of the beneficiaries has got some experience in goat rearing we consider it is important for them to undergo a training to refresh their knowledge and learn new skills in goat rearing. It is important for the beneficiaries to possess right knowledge about goat rearing so that they will be successful in their new venture. Dr.Harikumar, veterinary doctor was the resource person for the training. Resource person was very good in conducting the sessions. During the training resource persons explained in detail about different aspects of goat rearing. They conducted the sessions in an interactive method. Veterinary doctors highlighted the importance of selecting the right breed of goats for goat rearing. Selection of goat is very important for the success of the activity, Malabari goat is best suited for our area. Time was allotted to the participants to clarify their doubts during the training. Mrs.Shoba a participant of the orientation programme said “ The training was very useful for me to know more about goat rearing even though I have some previous experience in goat rearing. I have gathered additional information about the feeding habits of goat and common sickness. This training has given me the confidence to venture into the activity and I am sure that I will be able to earn a steady income from the goat rearing activity which I have just started with your support”

Distribution of Goats to the beneficiaries.

Ashwasa Bhavan purchased good verity Malabari Goats from goat farm, Konni and distributed to the beneficiaries. We have been able to get good verity goats from the farm. Further it has reduced the burden of the beneficiaries finding out good verity goats. Fr.Varghese Chamakalayil distributed the goats to the beneficiaries in a simple function on September 30,2015. During the meeting he narrated in detail the importance of goat rearing for the beneficiary families and the need for involving the disabled children in goat rearing. This can be treated as therapy for the disabled children. He explained in detail how this project fund is being mobilized and generosity of Franz Kunzler, Germany. He requested the beneficiaries take proper care of the goats and earn a decent income from it. The objective of this project is to have regular additional income for the families so that it will reduce their financial burden in looking after the special child in their family. The beneficiary families

were very happy to receive goats and expressed their gratefulness to the donor. Ashwasa Bhavan staff members made necessary arrangements for the training.

Follow-up

Ashwasa Bhavan staff members are undertaking regular visits to the beneficiary families. During the visits they oversee how they are looking after the goats and give them necessary guidance in running activity in a better way. The staff members also suggest ways to involve the special child in looking after the goat. We will give thrust in running the goat rearing activity as family income generation activity.

Conclusion

Rural poor are desirous of improving their family income by involving in some economic activities which fetch them regular income. Goat rearing is very much suited for the rural households and it is easy for the women to manage it. We consider goat rearing is an ideal activity for its target group people, most rural poor families. The geographic specialty of the area is also best suited for goat farming. The goat rearing programme has found very effective in supporting 30 marginalized families to have their own goat rearing unit. Family members are very happy about the new activity and we have seen brightness in the face of the disabled children. We are optimistic that the goat rearing will provide a regular additional income for the rural poor families which will help them to lead a contented life. On behalf of the beneficiaries we express our sincere thanks to **Franz Kunzler, Germany** for his generous financial support.

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Reported by

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Director

ASHWASA BHAVAN St.FRANCIS HOUSE OF HOPE, CHEEKANAL
GOAT REARING PROGRAMME
SUPPORTED BY FRANZ KUNZLER, GERMANY
Photographs of the Programme



Participants actively attending the Orientation Programme



Resource Person Conducting the Orientation Programme



Fr.Varghese Chamakalayil blessing the goat before handing it over to the beneficiary.



Beneficiary is very happy to receive the goats from the hands of Fr.Varghese Chamakalayil



Goat distribution in Progress



Beneficiary thankful collecting her goats from Fr.Varghese Chamakalayil



Fr.Varghese Chamakalayil handing over the goats to a beneficiary