Quality of Education Grant – Project Proposal Form

Part A: Information to be filled by Project Partner

1. NGO/project objectives [be very brief.. one paragraph is adequate]

Project Samarth, located in the Ganjam district in Orissa, aims at providing primary education and vocational training to 60 eligible school going physically challenged children and ultimately try to mainstream these children. It works intimately with the parents and the community, by means of camps and educational committees, to educate them about the needs of disabled children and the utility of education. See http://www.ashanet.org/projects/project-view.php?p=934 for more details.

2. Quality of Education proposal

a. What ‘quality of education’ issue is the proposal addressing?

This proposal is addressing the need of computer literacy to augment the existing education curriculum. Vocational training in painting, tailoring, computers and music is provided to make the children self-dependent and the addition of a formal computer training program will only serve to make the children up-to-date and competitive in today's internet driven world.

b. How does the proposal address the issue?

The proposal is to purchase 3 computers to provide computer training so that the children acquire basic computer proficiency. Currently, the plan is to start a 3 month course for children below 4th standard, a six-month course for children in 6th - 8th standards and a one year long course for children in 9th and 10th standards. The teachers currently working at Project Samarth, are fully equipped to teach basic computer education. Some informal computer training is already ongoing at this project and they currently have two computers at their disposal. However, this is not enough to handle all 60 children at their facility since one of the computers is regularly used for administrative purposes.

c. How do you define ‘success’ for the proposed initiative? How will you measure the effectiveness of the proposed initiative?

Our intention for proposing this project for QED is not only to supplement the existing vocational program but also to augment it, in the sense, we hope that these computers will also be used as a medium in their curriculum, not just computer education per se. We could possibly measure the success of the project in the following ways

- A site-visit to verify, physically, the working of the computer education program, with samples of the material that they are being taught.
- Getting feedback from children that are about to be in the job market and seeing if this education has improved their chances at getting a job.
• By encouraging them to introduce computer-based learning, we could assess the impact of whether this has improved their learning by measuring their performance in class.

d. How does the proposal address requirements/concerns/interests of (a) children (b) teachers (c) parents (d) community?

(a) The impact on children is immediate, since they are the primary beneficiaries. For children, that are about to graduate from the 10th standard, they have an immediate advantage in terms of a new skill set that is valuable both in terms of employability and in access to more resources. They will, no doubt, be more confident while entering the 'real world', considering that they have some disabilities to begin with.

(b) As mentioned earlier, since the project currently has only 2 computers, the teachers are hard-pressed for resources with which to teach these children. With the addition of 3 more computers, they would be in a better position to handle 60 children.

(c) Since this project is located in a rural environment, access to such resources, both skill and material is limited, perhaps, even non-existent. Children that are taught basic computer skills then become valuable resources to their parents and the community, at large.

Some photographs from the project.

3. Budget
Please list itemized budget request for the proposal above, that you are requesting Asha to fund. If the overall budget is above $1200 (~INR 55,000), please suggest which specific items you would want funded for upto $1200 (INR 55,000)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Estimated cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Desktop Computers x 3</td>
<td>INR 1,05,000.</td>
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While this amount exceeds the stipulated amount for one year and since the money to purchase the computers needs to be upfront, Asha Stanford is willing to pay the difference in the amounts this year, with the understanding that the amount will be reimbursed.

Part B: Information to be filled by Asha chapter that is recommending this proposal to be funded.

1. Meeting minutes for discussion of the proposal. (please include chapter comments on project’s response to QED questionnaire: such as aspects of quality that project is already addressing well, and those that can be improved)

(These are not exact minutes, but are a summary of chapter discussions on this topic over many previous meetings)

• Stewards to identify projects where the QED grant might be most impactful.
• Shortlisted projects (after some delays in getting responses): Project Samarth, Mahila Vikas, Vanavasi Ashram trust.
• Of the three Project Samarth, which caters to educating differently abled children and is in a rural area seems to have the most capacity to bring in an impact using this grant.
• The project partner has been responsive with us and is in good standing. We have been actively involved with this project since their work has been impressive. Project Samarth has been the poster project for Asha Stanford over the past year, also our candidate for WAH. Unanimous decision to go ahead with this project and apply for the QED grant.
• Identified aspects that would amount to improving quality of education: Teacher training and Computer based training in addition to vocational training.
• Decided that computer-based training would be apt. Lot of new computer aided teaching available in vocational training such as stitching etc.
• Project partner expresses interest in instituting diploma courses of various durations. This would give the differently abled added qualifications when they pursue jobs.
• By having computer aids on the side, the quality of education that they get will be greatly enhanced.

• Questions raised: Do they have teachers who have training in teaching computer-based skills? (A: Yes) Cost of accessories, power, parts? (A: included in price of computer) The Money will have to be sent up front for the purchase of the 3
computers, but the QED grant process is over 2 years. We are willing to chip in the extra money if Central will refund us. (To do: Discuss case with Asha Central Projects team)

2. What is your view on success of the proposed initiative? How will the chapter evaluate the effectiveness? If successful, is your chapter willing to fund this initiative after 2 years?

The intention of proposing Project Samarth for the QED grant is to greatly improve the quality and outcomes of education that the students receive here. With the help of the diploma in computer skills, it is expected that the students who receive the particular vocational training will find jobs easier and which may potentially pay them better. As mentioned earlier, we would mandate the volunteer for the site visit to this project to specifically assess the impact of this grant, via the metrics discussed in part A Q2b. From this we could also determine the material that is being taught and we could then assess its quality and relevance. This combined with regular reports with feedback from the project, children and teachers could provide us with valuable insight. Relevant metrics for this can be: Gauging the improvement in salaries of jobs obtained by students with the computer skills diplomas when compared to jobs (currently obtained) without the computer skills diploma and assessing the improvement in the performance of the children.

As such this proposal is for a one time amount. However, if this initiative proves successful, as defined above and if the project is satisfactory as a whole, our chapter would be willing to fund any one of the following: replacement of these computers, buying new computers to augment this computer training program or hire manpower for managing this program, with the aim to improve the computer training curriculum.

3. Do you intend to continue funding the project for next 2 years? Can a site visit be arranged between June 2011 and Dec 2011?

Yes, we do intend to fund this project for the next couple of years. As such, we have had an excellent working relation with this project and the people running it. Asha-Stanford has adopted this measure of setting up progress metrics for all projects since the past year. The progress is reviewed every six months and if on track, is a sure shot way for us to approve further funding. If project Samarth is able to have a tangible impact as measured by these metrics, our chapter will be willing to fund this project.

A site visit might be hard to arrange for in June – December 2011, since our next site visit is scheduled to happen in the next week, or so. Also, this project is in a fairly rural part of Orissa. While the Naxalite movement hasn't impacted the project, traveling to this district has certainly been impeded and so getting someone to do a site-visit has been hard to find.

4. How is this proposal different from other proposals? (in case your chapter received more than 1 proposal for this grant)

Our chapter is proposing only one project for QED. This proposal aimed to bring in computer based education for the differently abled. We felt that this had more impact in a rural area, where these skills haven't been experienced ever before, especially by children with special needs. Of the other 2 proposals one was a generic request for more
books and aids, the other was to employ a manager at a school who could specifically be responsible for teacher management and retention of children in schools. It was a tough choice, but we decided to go with Project Samarth, since we felt we could make a difference better with these set of beneficiaries.