

0209. 30 Community Halls Application to Icco

Comments on the role of Meetings and Training in Coolie Sangha building, and the need to build up a physical infrastructure in the villages.

1. APPLICANT

Dairy Development Society,
ADATS Campus,
Bagepalli 561 207,
India.

2. LEGAL STATUS

Reg. No: 64/84-85 under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act, 1960.
Union Home Ministry No: 094570002 under the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act, 1976.

3. BANKERS

Account No: 3331 with Canara Bank, Bagepalli branch.

4. PROJECT TITLE

SUPPLEMENTARY APPLICATION for the ADATS/DDS EXTENSION PROGRAMMES

5. OBJECTIVES

- To construct 30 Community Halls in as many central villages of Chickballapur, Chintamani and Siddalaghatta taluks.
- To construct an office, training hall and other facilities at Chintamani town.

6. BACKGROUND

6.1. Stage of Coolie Sangha building

Coolie Sangha formation work in the 3 Extension Programmes which cover 160 villages through 30 Clusters are nearly 3 years old. ICCO has been supporting this effort for 2 years.

In another year, we will be in a position to withdraw Community Workers (CWs) who have been appointed from outside the 3 Areas, and begin to introduce income and employment generating schemes planned and implemented by the member coolies themselves.

But for this, it is necessary that the technical and conceptual skills of the village staff – the 160 Village Level Workers (VLWs) and 160 Village Health Workers (VHWs) – is enhanced through regular and systematic training.

6.2. Meetings

The culture of holding regular and weekly meetings with a proper quorum and minutes properly recorded has been established in all the 3 Areas.

160 CSU MEETINGS AND 160 MAHILA MEETINGS EVERY WEEK:

Each village has 2 meetings a week. A mixed CSU Meeting for all member coolies, women and men, is held on a fixed day every week, and a separate Mahila Meeting for one woman from

each member family is held on another day. These CSU and Mahila Meetings are held at night, in their own villages.

30 CLUSTER MEETS EVERY WEEK:

3 elected CSU Representatives, the VLW and the VHW from each of 5-6 villages that form a Cluster get together to share experiences, deliberate and decide on common issues on a fixed day every week. These Cluster Meets last for about 3 hours and are held in the day time in central villages which are within walking distance for the 25 to 30 coolies who attend them.

3 SITUATION MEETINGS EVERY WEEK:

All the village staff of each Area get together once a week to make an overall assessment of developments in each Extension Programme. The respective Field Assistants preside over these Situation Meetings. Since they last for a full day, DDS provides some coffee and a simple meal for the 120-150 village staff members who attend these weekly Situation Meetings. But we do not pay bus fares or bear any other travel costs.

6.3. Training

Regular training is continually given to the village staff to impart techniques and skills they need to make adults literate, conduct cultural activities like songs and skits, and to liaison and represent with banks and government offices. Participatory training sessions are integrated into the weekly Situation Meetings in order to enhance the conceptual clarity of both, trainers as well as trainees. A special training on health and gender related matters is conducted for 3 days every month.

At Chickballapur, where we have already built a Campus, these monthly training are conducted in facilities that we have, and DDS only pays for the food costs.

But the Siddalaghatta and Chintamani village staff have to travel distances of 50-60 kms, twice a month, in order to attend training sessions held at the main ADATS campus in Bagepalli.

6.4. Staff travel

While the Chickballapur staff live in and work out of the campus we have at the taluk headquarters, the Chintamani and Siddalaghatta staff operate from out of Bagepalli.

The first problem is distances. The Chintamani and Siddalaghatta Field Assistants and Field Workers travel an average of 120 kms every day in order to attend Cluster Meets, CSU and Mahila Meetings, and their weekly Situation Meetings. Apart from the wasted travel time, the sheer exhaustion makes like unnecessarily uncomfortable.

The second is that very many of the issues and struggles need liaison work at the taluk headquarters. Not living there and developing a working relationship with officials at that level is a serious handicap.

7. ARGUMENTATION FOR THE NEED OF THIS PROJECT

7.1. To build up a permanent infrastructure

The mainstay of DDS' Coolie Sangha building effort is meetings and training. This strategy is based on our well proven belief that the coolies must fully and consciously participate in planning and implementing not only the material activities for their development, but even the non-material inputs like struggle and the seeking of an alternate culture.

In the next phases of DDS' Coolie Sangha building effort, it is these meetings which will ensure the smooth implementation of economic projects. Only then will our efforts be sustained to last beyond our intervention.

Now that the selection of villages and Clusters has got stabilised, it is necessary to provide logistical support for these meetings and training by building proper Community Halls in all the central Cluster villages.

7.2. To provide visual symbols of unity

This new culture of meetings is very novel and exhilarating for a people who have lived their whole lives in a culture of tolerated indiscipline. All of a sudden, they find their getting together and talking to be productive.

We believe that this is something which has to be encouraged, symbolically propped up, and supported. The building of permanent structures in all the central Cluster villages will provide the visual and physical focal points for member coolies to identify themselves with the Coolie Sangha.

7.3. Multifarious usage

The usage of these 30 Community Halls will be decided upon by the respective Clusters. In addition to being used for conducting their weekly meetings, different CSUs will, as in the older villages at Bagepalli, use their buildings for a variety of other purposes.

- the every evening classes for coolie children will be conducted in these buildings,
- their adult literacy classes will be held here,
- the fact that they can provide accommodation will be used as a leverage to get the government organised *Anganwadi* (crèches and under-5 child care centres) that most Mahila Meetings are struggling for,
- school going youth will study late into the night and sleep in them,
- guests and marriage parties will be accommodated in them,
- cultural programmes will be held in these buildings,
- families who lose their huts in fire accidents will be temporarily sheltered in them, and other destitute coolies will be accommodated, and
- member coolies will use these buildings to sleep in during the rainy season.

7.4. To strengthen training in Chintamani

With our own resources, ADATS bought 2 plots of land at Chickballapur and Chintamani towns. The Chickballapur campus has already been built and is functional for the past one year. As a result, at Chickballapur, where there is a campus with training facility and accommodation for staff to live in and work out from, the training programmes are conducted regularly and effectively.

But in Chintamani, training suffers due to distances that the village staff have to travel to avail our facilities at Bagepalli. The building of a campus with similar facilities at their taluk headquarters will help enhance the Chintamani village staff's technical skills and improve their conceptual clarity.

7.5. To strengthen staff support

Building our own campus at Chintamani town with facilities to hold the weekly Situation Meetings, conduct the bi-monthly training sessions, and for the 2 Field Assistants, 2 Field Workers, 1

Extension Worker and 1 Desk Worker to live in and work out from will enhance the efficiency of support they can give the village staff.

8. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The need to build these Community Halls and the Campus at Chintamani has emerged from the weekly CSU and Mahila Meetings, Cluster Meets and Situation Meetings. The implementation plan that follows is therefore a recording of plans that the coolies themselves have come up with.

The 30 Cluster Meets have, after very serious deliberations, selected the central villages where they want the Community Halls to be built, and identified plots of land with clear titles. DDS has already bought these plots of land in the name of the Coolie Sangha.

Land for the construction of a campus at Chintamani, as already mentioned, has been bought in the name of ADATS/DDS.

The 30 VLWs will identify suppliers of construction material like stones, bricks, red earth and sand. The CSU Representatives will satisfy themselves on quality, negotiate and fix prices. Cement and steel will be bought centrally by the DDS Extension Workers for each Area.

The Cluster Meets will negotiate terms with masons who are prepared to train and upgrade the skills of at least 2 member coolies from each village in the course of building these Community Halls.

The CWs will be responsible for the safekeeping of all construction material and ensure that the quality specified by the DDS Extension Workers is maintained.

The DDS Desk Workers will personally make payments once a week, on the advice of the DDS Extension Worker, after perusing the Cluster Minutes Book to ensure that all the member coolies are aware of what is going on.

The fixing of wooden doors and electrification of the halls will be done centrally by carpenters and electricians chosen in the Situation Meetings.

The construction of the Campus at Chintamani will be directly supervised by the DDS Extension Worker, who will give a detailed progress and financial report to the Situation Meeting every week.

9. SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET

9.1.	Cost of constructing 30 Community Halls measuring 32' x 14' in as many central villages of Chickballapur, Chintamani and Siddalaghatta Extension Programmes at Rs 50,000 per building	1,500,000
9.2.	Cost of building 1 Training Hall measuring 52' x 22' at Rs 175 per sft at the Chintamani campus	200,200
9.3.	Cost of building an open air kitchen, store room and toilets at the Chintamani campus	125,000
9.4.	Cost of building 4 Houses measuring 29' x 27' at Rs 175 per sft to accommodate the staff and office at the Chintamani campus	548,100
9.5.	Cost of digging one bore well, installing pump set, piping and building an overhead tank at the Chintamani campus	75,000
9.6.	Cost of fencing the Chintamani campus	<u>40,000</u>
Total:		2,988,000