

Share and Care Children's Welfare Association - Farming initiative Report

Goal:

Setting up a banana, papaya and vegetable farm to augment local and sustainable source of funds for share and care's rural outreach work (education, health, social mobility, women's empowerment and old age care).

Background and Rationale:

Share and Care Children's welfare organization has been working in the Katchur Village for 3 decades now. The founders of this organization are committed social workers who have brought an end to Bonded Labour (modern day slavery) in Katchur and surrounding villages through their rural school (provides free of cost education to 350 children from the most marginalized groups) and their rural outreach programs.

Share and care has done some great work, but their funding (local and international) has been few and far between. The funding landscape has changed a great deal and taking this into consideration, they continue their move towards self generation of funds. Their dairy farm and vermicomposting continue to run well, the massive floods of last year was a major setback, but they have since mostly managed to get things back on track.

Activities Planned:

- Establish and run a banana plantation on 3 acres of land
- Establish and run a papaya plantation on 3 acres of land
- Establish and run a vegetable plantation of 1 acre of land.

Activities achieved at mid - stage

- The banana plantation had been established as planned during the mid way point of the project.
 - The first harvest in November brought in INR. 3,50,000/-
 - Owing to 'once in a hundred year flood' in December 2015, the project was delayed and has only started towards the end of January.
- The papaya plantation had been established as planned.
 - First harvest in October brought in INR. 3,00,000/-
- The vegetable farming had suffered repeated delays and was to commence post the north eastern monsoons of 2016.
- The project has experience severe difficulties due to exceptionally harsh weather conditions. Despite this, things are on track albeit with delayed results.

Final Report:

- On December 11th 2016, Cyclone Vardah struck and Katchur village was right in its path. It was one of the worst cyclones to have struck with wind speeds reaching 130 kmph.
- Share and Care was hit by the second natural calamity in a span of 12 months and Cyclone Vardah ended their farming initiatives once and for all.

- Both plantations were flattened and the area was inaccessible for a better part of two months. The city of Chennai was also hit badly and the authorities prioritised clearing the city first.
- When members of share and care did reach their farms, there was nothing left standing and all debris had been cleared by the village authorities.
- The monies for Vegetable farming have also got spent merely trying to make the land viable, which could not happen after the repeated disasters.
- The monies from the first harvest was used to make some repairs to their school.
- It has been nearly a year since the Cyclone and no compensation has been provided by the government, in fact, nothing has come forth even since the floods from the year before.

Conclusion:

- This project has failed.
 - 2 disasters of a high magnitude have made it impossible for the organisation to make this project a success.
- Since Friends of India has withdrawn its office here in India since May 2016, there has been no direct monitoring of the project. This writer has only had the one opportunity to visit the project since (for the half yearly report) as his new commitments have kept him elsewhere. Under these circumstances it has not been possible to provide any direct support to the organisation, though it is unlikely if any direct support would have helped under the given circumstances.
- The Share and Care organisation itself is deemed unviable following the two disasters and they have started to wind down their school and activities. This has happened because of a lack of funds and destruction to the means of generating any.
- For all practical purposes there is no organisation on the ground since they have not been able to pay their staff and there is no one left to carry forward their work.

Financials:

S.No	Items/activities	Planned Budget	Actual expenditure
Vegetable Cultivation			
1	Seeds, Fertiliser and Labour	70,000 (CHF.1076.92)	70,000 (CHF. 1076.92)
Papaya Cultivation			
2	Fencing	1,00,000 (CHF.1538.46)	1,00,000 (CHF.1538.46)
3	Irrigation	1,60,000 (CHF.2461.53)	1,60,000 (CHF.2461.53)
4	600 Banana saplings X 3 acres = 1800X Rs.20=	36,000 (CHF.553.84)	36,000 (CHF.553.84)
5	Labour for planting	30,000 (CHF.461.53)	30,000 (CHF.461.53)

6	Fertilizer	24,000 (CHF.369.23)	24,000 (CHF.369.23)
7	Administration, salary etc.	80,000(CHF.1230.76)	80,000(CHF.1230.76)
		430,000 (CHF. 6615.38)	430,000 (CHF. 6615.38)
Banana Cultivation			
8	Fencing	1,00,000(CHF.1583.46)	1,00,000(CHF.1583.46)
9	Irrigation	1,60,000 (CHF2461.53)	1,60,000 (CHF2461.53)
10	Cultivation cost 1,200 Plant X 3 acres= 3,600 X Rs. 20/-	72,000 (CHF.1107.69)	72,000 (CHF.1107.69)
11	Labour	30,000 (CHF.461.23)	30,000 (CHF.461.23)
12	Fertilizer	8,000 (CHF.123.07)	8,000 (CHF.123.07)
13	Administration, salary etc. (6 months)	60,000 (CHF.923.07)	60,000 (CHF.923.07)
		430,000 (CHF. 6615.38)	430,000 (CHF. 6615.38)
	Total	930,000 (CHF.14307.69)	930,000 (CHF. 14307.69)