January, 2018 Featured Grantee: Asia Initiatives

Siddharthnagar District, India
Introducing Asia Initiatives

The mission of Asia Initiatives (AI) is to leverage the power of social capital to promote healthcare, education and sustainable development to bring positive change in the wellbeing of people in underserved communities. In this project, women will redeem Social Capital Credits earned through improving their community to start a small-scale poultry farm.
Where in the world?

This project will focus on Shohratgarh, in the Siddharthnagar district, a poor area of landless agricultural laborers in India.
What are we supporting?

This project aims to promote sustainable development and a sense of independence and strong community among the women in Shohratgarh through rural poultry farming. The initial goal is income generation for women’s self-help groups in 10 villages that will include 450 distressed women farmers. This will be achieved by helping women start small-scale poultry farms.

Direct Impact: 450 women in 10 Villages
Indirect Impact: 3,900 in the community
What are we supporting?

The Social Capital Credits (SoCC) concept is an innovative model of social development developed by AI to tackle poverty while simultaneously promoting the building of community spirit.

SoCCs
- are a community currency for social good
- enable each development dollar to have a multiplier impact, since community members “earn” their personal good, such as education, by doing a social good such as planting trees

Participants develop “earning” and “redemption” menus based on the needs of the community. In this case the redemption menu allows each participant to receive vaccinated chicks and education on how to raise the chickens.
Life Challenges of the Women Served

Asia Initiatives works with the most disadvantaged women and girls (ages 5 and older) in poor communities. These women and their families live below the poverty line, but they are also caught in the poverty trap due to severe gender discrimination, caste, and societal mores. Most people in these communities are illiterate and there is high incidence of alcoholism among men, which often results in domestic violence.
Life Challenges of the Women Served

• The most impoverished people in India are landless laborers in rural areas.

• Women usually get half the daily wages of men for similar work.

• The girl children help with household chores and care of younger siblings instead of going to school.

• Girls get inadequate protein in their diet and often suffer from anemia.

• Girls are often married before age 18, and often have babies who have low birthweight and other health issues.
### Budget

**How DFW’s grant of $47,414 will be used:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loans to participants</td>
<td>$9,693</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poultry feed, medicine and supplies</td>
<td>$5,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Management and Execution Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Includes veterinarian visits and advice, financial and business literacy training for participants, salaries for a full-time coordinator and community facilitator, travel and communication, SoCCs program reporting and monitoring, reproductive health, nutrition awareness, and transportation for the chickens.</td>
<td>$32,432</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>$47,414</td>
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About the Featured Grantee

Asia Initiatives began in 1999, when a group of friends in Tokyo strategized ways to help the severely underprivileged people in South Asia, and particularly in India. They were deeply inspired by the work of Prof. Swaminathan, known as the father of Green Revolution in India and Modern Gandhi. As the mission of Asia Initiatives of “Pro-poor, Pro-Women and Pro-Environment” resonated with people, AI was launched, and soon opened chapters in Singapore and Australia.
About the Featured Grantee

Asia Initiatives Headquarters was moved to New York in 2009. President and Co-founder, Dr. Geeta Mehta developed the methodology of Social Capital Credits (SoCCs), a community currency for social good that works like carbon credits or airline loyalty programs. Today, they leverage the power of this transformative concept, making communities the key stakeholders in their own success.
Share Your Thoughts

1. Do you think social capital based programs can help bring an end to poverty?

2. How does the involvement of the women in the community developing their SoCC menus help the program’s sustainability?

3. Why is poultry farming a good choice for women in this community?
January’s Sustained Grantee: Anchal

Anchal merges design, business, and education to empower marginalized and exploited women living in India.

DFW’s sustained grant of $20,000 per year in 2016 – 2018 supports expanding employment opportunities in textiles and design for commercial sex workers in India through a natural dye initiative. Designing Colorful Change will provide 35 new women trainees and 100 current artisans with natural dye education and training workshops. Over the course of three years, the project will fund the employment of 35 new artisans and the education of Anchal’s current 100 artisans.

Direct Reach: 135