

## **Project proposal for a training programme for women in India.**

May we the Sint Thomas Stichting present a training project for women in India in collaboration with our partner organization in India, known as START (St. Thomas Academy for Research and Training). START is a training agency which regularly conducts residential seminars and camps for groups, like school teachers, school students, youth and women, so as to prepare them for quality education and leadership.

It is an admitted fact that women, especially in the developing countries, are discriminated and kept away from active leadership roles in the society. Of course, we do not forget that in certain countries there are some outstanding women in the leadership. However, the majority of the women folk in general, are kept away from leadership roles. It is not because of their inherent inability or unwillingness to get involved in the affairs of the society but because of the age old tradition of male domination. This situation can be changed by proper education and by reserving certain percentage of leadership and job opportunities to women.

Fortunately such a movement is already being taking place in India today. Discussions are well underway in the parliament to pass a law reserving 33 percent of parliament seats to women. In fact, in some states like Kerala 50 percent of seats to local government bodies are already reserved for women, whereas until today, their representation has been deplorably nominal.

The above movement is going to open wonderful opportunities for women to come up and take up leadership roles on an equal footing with the men folk in the country. But, in order to meet this challenge the women have to be educated and trained. They need guidance, training and motivation on an urgent basis, since assembly elections in many states are already at the door steps. Being aware of this fact, in the district of Kozhikode we already conducted a programme with a group of 45 women from the rural areas. This first batch of training was found very successful and the women were all satisfied and enthusiastic about it. Our pilot project in this line being a grand success, we would like to continue it with greater participation and advanced set ups. In order to implement it we are approaching you for your helping hand. We want to continue this on a permanent basis so that any number of women can benefit from it, and that manner START can play the role of an agent of women empowerment in the country.

### **Background of the applicants**

75% of the Indian population depend on farming for their livelihood and are the most neglected group. Most villages are underdeveloped, mainly because the government's developmental programmes do not effectively reach the villagers and they are totally unaware of such schemes. In a situation of this kind, naturally, the most neglected and suffering group is the womenfolk. Therefore in our training programme, our main target is the women from the villages.

### **Possible leadership roles**

A few women, from as many villages as possible, will be selected and given a one-month intensive training. They will be trained to be the local leaders who can conscientize and educate the villagers. They will work as animators of various self help groups of 20 families and train people in sanitation, village industries, food preservation, small scale family industry for the economic well being of the women, saving methods, organic and group farming, poultry, bee keeping and so on, depending on the availability of resources and climatic circumstances of each locality. Wherever possible, they will also act as elected members of local government institutions, co-operative banks, and promoters of government's various developmental

schemes. Some of them will also serve as legal advisers to the poor farmers, especially the women.

### **About us**

Established in 2005 under the patronage of the Catholic diocese of Tamarassery in Calicut district, the St. Thomas Academy for Research and Training, or START, incorporates a unique vision in education of the young men and women. Our vision arises from the firm conviction that the currently popular fashion of orienting school education to the preparation of the young for entry into professional courses such as Medicine, Engineering or Nursing is driven more by utilitarian principles, than considerations of natural aptitude or inclination. We further believe that this obsession with success in “entrance tests” is seriously distorting the aim of education which is cultivation of the mind and not cramming of information as is happening today. The pervasive preference for professional courses that disregards personal aptitudes of individual students leads to misallocation of precious human resources.

START offers a program that fosters self esteem and self-discipline, encourages respect for others and recognizes the unique and creative abilities of each student. The START community has set high academic goals and offers. These conditions will form excellent future leaders with high ideals.

The 4 focus areas of the programs:

- **Intellectual potential – developed through a college preparatory curriculum, which fosters a respect for knowledge, critical thinking, creative expression, effective communication and independent inquiry.**
- **Moral potential – developed through instructions and examples that incorporate values, fosters and reinforces ethical behavior and builds respectful relationships.**
- **Physical potential – developed through a program of athletics and instruction promoting health, safety, fitness and good sportsmanship.**
- **Leadership potential – developed through focusing on the knowledge and practice of character, leadership and service mindedness. Leadership training for the women is a new venture to uplift the womenfolk and bring them into the main stream of political and social life.**

### **Our Vision**

The core competence of **START** is holistic training focused on the cultivation of mind based on the principles of liberal education. It aims at creating in the young men and women “a habit of mind which lasts through life, of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation and wisdom” as Cardinal Newman saw it. It follows Newman's prescription that whether one becomes a soldier, a statesman, a lawyer or a physician one will need the ability to articulate one's ideas so as to deal effectively with the question at hand. The course of study followed here therefore places great emphasis upon the development of a balanced personality rooted in values, the courage of conviction and social commitment that responsible leadership calls for in a developing society like India and on promoting robust intellectual equipment and skills in communication that are required to convert the individuals as change agents in society and competent leaders in their chosen fields of activity.

**What we need to continue with the proposed training programme for women.**

**A place to stay:**

Facilities for Class rooms: We need at least two class rooms.

Facilities for Stay: we need a hall or 3 rooms with bath and toilet facilities for at least 45 women.

Facilities for library: a small hall is needed to use as study room and library.

### Training materials

Table and chairs for the class rooms

Cupboard and other facilities for the library

Faculty with permanent professors

Faculty with visiting professors

### Other expenses:

Water, Electricity, phone, Food, Honorarium for the professors and workers like drivers and kitchen staff.

We would like to continue this training for the women. See below estimated the expenses for an intensive residential course, lasting for 30 days.

### Budget

1. Estimated expenses for establishing permanent facilities for imparting ongoing training to women.

Expenses	Indian Rupees	Euros
Building facilities Two class rooms	8.55.000	€15.000
Boarding for 45 women with bathrooms	25.65.000	€45.000
Library hall and study hall	5.70.000	€10.000
Plumbing and Electricity works	627.000	€11.000
Permanent study materials	250.000	€4385
Library books for all subjects	700.000	€12280
<b>Total</b>	<b>55.67.000</b>	<b>€97.665</b>

2. Expenses for a one month residential course for 45 persons.

Expenses	Indian Rupees	Euros
Internet for six months	5000	€87
Food, Boarding and lodging (45x 1 month)	2.85.000	€5000
Honorarium for the professors	2.50.000	€4385
Electricity, phone, petrol, honorarium for the staff, drivers, kitchen workers, travel etc.	80000	€1403
Study materials, Library books	195000	€3400

<b>Total Expenses per six months</b>	<b>8.15.000</b>	<b>€14275</b>
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**By implementing the above project we hope to bring a good number of women into the main stream of public life in India and they would in turn the further the society especially the children and womenfolk in India. For more details about this project please do not hesitate to contact us. We hope that you would appreciate our initiative and you will help us with your valuable suggestions, financial and moral support.**

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours Sincerely  
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