Sai Kripa

Jaipur

Digantar

Agra

GB School

VVS

Lucknow

Patn

Migrant Workers

Nankari

Abhiya

Dhaturi Tala

Reoti

Ved Mata

Little Stars

Lok Samiti

Rajghat

annual report 2001

Bhopal

AID

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Asha for Education

Ripples of Hope

"Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others... he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

-- Robert F. Kennedy (1925 - 1968)

We at Asha for Education are trying to send forth ripples of hope by supporting quality education projects for under-privileged children in India. Our goals are focused on what matters to the children and what makes a difference in their lives.

Awareness that a problem exists is the key to unlocking its solution. By volunteering with Asha for Education, many of us have cleared through the smog of our own rigid beliefs, misconceptions, and apathy towards the situation in India. Asha provides a medium for individuals to step out of the quagmire of day-to-day routines and come together in addressing these issues.

With your continued support, Asha has been able to support education of India's underprivileged children. We hope that you, the patrons of Asha - will continue to support the cause and take an active role in our projects.

Cover: Asha volunteers with the local community of Lalpur village.

contents

foreword

Dear Asha Friends,

In these divisive times, when this blue ball of a world seems to be spinning out of control, it is worth stopping and asking, " What can we do to stop all these atrocities being committed against innocent civilians and communities around the world?" The problem seems so overwhelming that any ordinary citizen of the world can hardly be blamed for feeling hopeless.

At times like this, it is useful to remind ourselves of the words of Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has". You can find such small groups of dedicated people across the world, who have been matching their actions to their beliefs, and working quietly at improving the conditions in which an alarming portion of humanity lives.

We usually do not get to hear about the activities of these people. They do not make waves across the headlines of mainstream media. We hope that this Annual Report provides a glimmer of hope in the midst of the barrage of sad news that surrounds us every day.

The violence of New York and Gujarat hit close to home for many of our volunteers. But instead of discouraging us, these events have strengthened our resolve to make the world a better place to live for everyone.

In 2001, Asha volunteers joined together to raise over $1.1 million despite a weak economy. And, encouragingly, we disbursed over $850,000 of these funds towards projects spanning about 20 states in India. Last year, to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the formation of Asha, we organized a worldwide workshop where volunteers came together for 3 days to discuss social issues and Asha activities and direction.

Not being content with just providing financial support, Asha volunteers are becoming deeply involved in our projects and activities in India. For example, last year for the first time, Asha was directly involved in an attempt to affect education policy in India. Through petitions and dialogue, we expressed concern at the introduction of course material of questionable factual accuracy and the mixing of communal biases in the curriculum of the children of India. Asha called for adherence to due process and for immediate public review of the altered NCERT textbooks by a council, with participation from different sections of society.

Currently, we are petitioning the Chief Minister of West Bengal to procure the dismissal of what we believe are false charges against Kunal Deb, founder of Uthnau, whose education projects have been supported by Asha. Kunal Deb was arrested in an attempt to silence the

voice of the Santhals, a tribal community, and stop all development work that Uthnau is pursuing.

In the midst of all these activities at the ground level, we are also going through a change of our own. Recently, Asha volunteers elected a new team of volunteers to coordinate Asha activities across the world.

After two years serving as the president, I am excited to welcome a new team that will lead Asha for Education for the next two years. Melliyal Annamalai, the new Asha President, has been volunteering with Asha since 1994. Over the last four years, she has been deeply involved with the Boston chapter activities. Additionally, she has been active across several Asha chapters, leading our efforts to work with government schools.

We welcome Yash Warke as the Asha-wide Secretary. He has already been coordinating the formation of Asha chapters around the world. Ram Tekumalla takes over the responsibility of Treasurer from Pankaj Gupta, who helped establish efficient and transparent record-keeping procedures that meet U.S. IRS guidelines. We also welcome Arun Vadlamani, Jayashree Janardhan, Milind Mehere and Sundar Iyer to our Board of Directors.

As we look to the future, it is important for Asha to continue to increase the closeness of our involvement with the projects we work with. We are making a concerted effort to reach out to communities in remote areas of the country. As the number of projects increases, we are organizing larger fundraisers to meet the needs of our projects. Asha volunteers are also a driving force behind increasing interactions between different non-profit development organizations in the U.S. Though our respective fields of focus may be different, we are working towards the same long-term goal - social and economic development of India.

Operationally, as the number of Asha chapters and the scale of their activities increases, we are developing new ways of working together to ensure that we continue to hold true to our core values. We are distinguished first and foremost as an action group. We are united by a strong education focus. We are driven forward by passionate volunteerism. We support a secular & apolitical approach in all our activities. We operate through a flat and decentralized structure and maintain transparency in decision-making.

I am proud to be part of this incredible team of volunteers. Indeed, Asha means hope in many Indian languages. Asha volunteers are committed to bringing hope to the underprivileged communities across India. We are confident that we will succeed, with your support.

Sincerely,

Richa Govil,
President

introduction

*A*sha's mission is to catalyze socio-economic change in India through education of underprivileged children

Asha for Education was founded in the summer of 1991 at the University of California Berkeley by Sandeep Pandey, Deepak Gupta and the late V.J.P. Srivastavoy. These individuals had a simple vision - to educate underprivileged children in India - borne of the strongly held belief that education is critical in bringing about social change. They named the group Asha, meaning hope, to signify the hope they wished to bring to India's children.

The objectives of Asha are:

1. To provide education to underprivileged children in India.
2. To encourage the formation of various local groups, both in India and abroad, to reach out to larger sections of the population.
3. To support and cooperate with persons and groups already engaged in similar activities.
4. To provide opportunities to individuals outside India to participate in developmental activities in India.
5. To address, whenever possible, other issues affecting human life such as health care, environment, socio-economic aspects and women's issues.

Thanks to many dedicated volunteers and the financial support of our donors, Asha has grown quickly over the past decade. Today, there are 35 chapters in the U.S, 5 in India, and 3 international chapters: in London, Zurich and Melbourne.

These chapters work individually towards our collective goals. They do this primarily by supporting the activities of groups in India that work to improve the lives of people through education. The groups supported by Asha are diverse in their location, target population and approach to education. However, in one way, they are all similar. Asha supports only groups that demonstrably have no political or religious affiliations and do not discriminate on any basis, including those of gender, religion, background, caste or race. Although our projects have touched the lives of thousands, there is still much work ahead.

Asha has from the start been a volunteer driven organization. It is unique in

having no paid employees. Its volunteers come from all walks of life - students, professionals, scientists, artists, the young and the aged. This annual report highlights the work of our devoted volunteers, projects that have benefited from Asha's assistance, and our plans for the future.

Asha for Education, along with the beneficiaries of our partner groups in India, would like to sincerely thank the many individuals, families and organizations that support our work and help us realize our shared aspirations for a better India. ◆

asha chapters

*E*ach of our chapters is unique and volunteers bring their own set of perspectives and skills to Asha. The first chapter was formed in Berkeley, California by a handful of volunteers. Today, Asha has not only spread throughout the U.S., but across the world. Thanks to the Internet, Asha has become a borderless organization with over 1000 active volunteers across the world, and several thousand supporters. There has been an increased emphasis on the formation of more chapters in India (called Asha centers) so as to draw upon the collective energy and experience of part and full-time volunteers in India and to build closer bonds with our projects. The Asha centers also serve to network like-minded individuals, in addition to pioneering bold new initiatives in the field of education.

This section of the annual report provides a glimpse of 'a day in the life' of a few Asha chapters.

London: Off to a Strong Start

The London chapter of Asha was started in February 2000 by a small but committed group. They spent much of the first year getting the group registered and learning about projects in India in order to decide whom to support. Asha for Education was officially registered as a non-profit organization in the United Kingdom in August, 2001. Since its inception, the chapter has grown to a group with over 20 enthusiastic volunteers and has had a successful debut year. It has raised over $15,000 by organizing multiple fundraisers and setting up various schemes through which donors can contribute.

The projects that Asha-London is supporting are:

- The Timbaktu Collective, Andhra Pradesh: The Collective operates several day schools as well as a residential school for children who have dropped out of the local government school. They strive to make education a joyful and meaningful experience for the children. The Timbaktu Collective will receive £4000 in 2002. Shankar visited the group in January 2002.

- All Bengal Women's Union, Calcutta: The All Bengal Women's Union maintains a Welfare Home and Primary School for under-privileged children in Calcutta. The union provides clothes, food, counseling and education to the children, helping them become self-reliant, socially-responsible citizens. The ABWU will receive £4000. Amit conducted a site visit in December 2001.

- Vidya and Child, NOIDA, Delhi: Vidya and Child, helps underprivileged children merge into society's mainstream by guiding them towards appropriate educational opportunities. The group aims to provide these children access to certified schools, providing quality education. Vidya and Child will receive £950. Shankar visited the project in January 2002.

The funds for these projects were raised through three events. A lottery draw conducted by Mahesh in an intra-office gathering, a pub quiz put together by Sandhya in central London and a dinner function organised by Dipa and the entire chapter. The dinner elicited a very good response and was covered by a local Indian publication.

The Young Punjabis Association, a popular association in London, also made a large and well-appreciated donation. The YPs held a Christmas dinner the proceeds of which were donated to Asha. Barclays Bank matched the donation by an equal amount so as a result, Asha received a total of £6000 from the event.

The London volunteers are eager and young, and the chapter is very active. Asha members meet at least once a month, with an average turnout between six to ten members. Asha-London has set itself a larger fundraising goal for 2002. It intends to meet its targets by attracting more volunteers, by increasing the awareness of Asha in the U.K., by organizing at least one large fund-raising event, and by selling Asha merchandise.

Urbana Champaign: The Year In Recap

The UC chapter of Asha was formed in January 1999. Today, it has about 20 active volunteers and 60 members. The volunteers include students and faculty of the University of Illinois.

Vasant Bahaar was the first Asha-UC event in 2001. This spring cultural event, held on April 21st, 2001, received an enthusiastic response from the Urbana-Champaign community. Over 300 people enjoyed an evening of Indian dance, music and cuisine. The event showcased enjoyable performances by various artists of the local community, most of whom were students.

Hindustani Classical Music, classical dance items, a skit and refreshing light music were the toast of the evening. Close to $4000 was raised from the event.

Sharad Saavan, the fall cultural event held on November 3, 2001, was also a roaring success. The event showcased enjoyable performances by members of the troupe Gitanjali, based in Detroit, Michigan. Close to $5000 was raised through this event.

A unique aspect of the UC chapter has been its involvement in promoting literacy in the community in Urbana-Champaign. Several volunteers participate in a summer teaching workshop organized for Latin American immigrants, to help them improve their communication and writing skills in English. All volunteers have emerged enriched from this experience and are raring to get themselves involved again this summer.

The UC chapter funded four new projects in the year 2001: Odanadi in Mysore, Holy Mother School in Coimbatore, Bhagavatula Charitable Trust near Vishakapatnam and SEED in Chennai. Five new projects are currently under consideration of which three will be approved. So far close to $30,000 has been disbursed among eleven projects since the inception of the chapter.

Colorado: Over the Years

The Colorado chapter started its journey in spring 1995, when a group of individuals from the Denver-Boulder-Fort Collins area came together with a common belief, that education is essential for development. During the first year, the chapter worked at stabilizing itself and and initiating fund-raising efforts. Funds were raised through food drives (held in collaboration with the local Indian Association), puppet shows for children and personal donations. These funds were used to support the Center for Development of Disavantaged People (CDDP) in Tamil Nadu, India. Over the next couple years, three more projects were supported. However, by 1998, most of the founding members of the chapter had relocated, and the chapter fell into

a state of dormancy for nearly a year.

In autmn 1999, Pankaj, Soumitra, Shravan, Sandeep, and Rohini came together to revive

Geetanjali: A Musical Extravaganza

the chapter. They began by selling Asha merchandise to spread awareness and to raise funds to support their first project, Vanasthali in Maharashtra. However by late 2000, Pankaj and Rohini were the only ones still active with the chapter and they needed more volunteers to join them.

As luck would have it, the December 2000 meeting turned out to be a watershed for the chapter: three enthusiastic new volunteers, Priya, Hari and Naresh, joined the group. Hari, a musician, proposed the idea of a musical extravaganza, Geetanjali, as a fundraiser. The team plunged into the endeavour with enthusiasm and the rest, as they say, is history. Geetanjali was an immensely successful fundraiser and prompted the invigorated chapter to organise another fundraiser - Nigah. Nirupama and Rajendra, a dancer couple from Bangalore, enthralled classical dance-lovers on November 11th in Denver. The piece de resistance of the evening was the last item choreographed by Nirupama and Rajendra themselves, in memory of the victims of the September 11th terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York. The piece, incorporating musical elements from Indian and Spanish music as well as Jazz, offered prayers

to to fill people with love and peace.

Funds raised through Geetanjali and Nigah have helped the chapter support four projects- Sadbhav Mission in Delhi, Arz in Goa, DSSCOD in Tamilnadu, and JNMI school for the Blind in Sikkim.

Kaithi Center: In the field

Most of the current Asha chapters in India are primarily involved in grassroots activities. Here is a profile of the Asha team in Kaithi, near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

The Pragatisheel Madhumakhi Palan Kendra is an effort by the Pandey brothers, Vallabh and Nar Nahar, in creating a research, documentation and training center at Kaithi, which is 27 kms from Varanasi. The center was started with the aim of imparting training in the areas of beekeeping and the cultivation and processing of medicinal and aromatic plants. The goal was to help individuals work towards self-reliance or "Swavalambhan" by equipping them with vocational skills.

The Kendra was started on land donated by the Pandey family. The training given at the Kendra is based on work done by the two brothers in perfecting techniques of beekeeping and processing medicinal plants. Vallabh left a lucrative medical representative job in the early 90s to begin his experiments in beekeeping and other activities. Soon his work grew to such a level that his brother Nar Nahar joined him. Today, the brothers are the largest producers of honey in the Varanasi area. They also extract crude oil from aromatic plants and supply this to the soap and insecticide industry. It was with the intent of making their knowledge and experience reach other interested people that they established the Kendra.

As the center grew, the existing infrastructure was used to set up tailoring and embroidery classes for women. Gradually, several short duration workshops of interest to the local community were also added. The Kendra is now slowly becoming a center to provide training in multiple vocations to members of the local community.

Bee-keeping

The bee-keeping training sessions last for a week and are conducted at the Kendra. Since February 2001, five sessions have been conducted. After the training, the trainees are provided on-going support while they get established independently. The trainees also receive a periodic newsletter detailing what activities they should carry out over the next couple of months. The brothers also provide free consultation and advice along the way.

The last training session was conducted from January 5th to the 11th 2002. The session was sponsored by the "Eco Vikas Samithi", which is a grouping of the forest department and villages adjoining the forests, set up by the U.P. state government. The samithi has been encouraging villagers to take up beekeeping by offering them subsidies on the materials they would require, as well as by buy back offers for the honey produced. In the last session, 19 villagers from five forest ranges in the districts of Mirzapur and Sonbhadra participated in the training.

Seven trainees who have benefited from the Kendra are now involved in their own independent efforts. They are slowly beginning to see profits. The problem that is faced by many of them is the high cost of the beekeeping boxes. In a few special cases, Vallabh has loaned boxes to some trainees to help them make profits sooner and help them break even.

Tailoring & Embroidery

Tailoring classes were started at the Kendra to draw the local community into the Kendra. The nearest classes that existed before were 15 kms away and expensive for most of the locals. Tailoring has turned out to be a very popular program and 43 women have learnt the skill since the classes started in February 2001. The classes are for a duration of 75 days and most students come from low-income families and a few from the lower middle class.

Embroidery classes are held for a duration of 45 days. There are no other embroidery classes in the area. Four different sessions have been held at the Kendra over the past year and the average number of students per session has been 15.

Short duration workshops

A stuffed toy-making workshop was organized for seven days. This was very popular and there has been demand for another class. A six-day workshop on fabric painting was held in which 24 girls participated. Greeting card making, which has turned out to be a good source of income for the Kendra, is also being taught. Mehendi workshops were held in which 15 girls participated. A pottery painting class was also held.

There are plans to hold workshops on food preservation, Jardozi embroidery, rakhi making and South Indian cooking. Many students are also keen on learning to use the computer. Almost all students are exposed to computers when they visit the Kendra and there has been growing interest in this.

Documentation

Documentation work has been going on to create information and handouts on growing and using medicinal and aromatic herbs. Three trainees have learnt the use of such plants so far. Extraction of essential oils is also taught, with the crude oil sold to the soap/pesticide industry. Vallabh has also been participating in a cooperative farming effort at Ballia, where another Asha center is functioning.

Overall, the Kendra is functioning well and has become a center for local vocational research and training. It serves the local needs well and puts resources available to it to the best possible use. The hope is that this Kendra will continue to grow and become a center for developing various entrepreneurial trades. Many of the students are now comfortable enough with the Kendra that they are ready to start teaching others, thereby multiplying the benefits of the Kendra to the community.◆

projects

One of the characteristics that makes Asha unique is that we are not merely a fundraising organization, but take an active role in identifying, reviewing, approving, and monitoring the projects we fund. Individual volunteers in each chapter study potential projects in India and visit them before the decision to support their work is taken. Though the projects supported by the various chapters vary considerably in many respects, they all conform to certain the basic guidelines. All projects supported by Asha work for a positive change in society, through education. Asha only supports groups that have no political or religious affiliations, and do not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, gender or background.

A positive development within Asha in recent times is an increased emphasis on volunteers working closely with projects to learn from them and in turn help them in ways other than monetary. A great many lasting friendships between Asha volunteers and groups in India have grown out of such direct interactions with groups in India. Results indicate that wherever such personal bonds develop between the project organizers and Asha volunteers, the effectiveness of the projects is enhanced.

Asha has also recognized the fact that education is a very broad area and that it has to be appropriate to the local context if it is to be effective in producing real socio-economic change. This understanding is reflected in the broad range of the works we fund: from infrastructure building to teachers' salaries to mid-day meals to providing teaching aids to curriculum improvement initiatives. The methodology of instruction spans both formal and non-formal education and caters to children with special needs (physically or mentally challenged children and slow learners), children from special circumstances (orphans, street children, children of prostitutes and working children) and unique socio-cultural backgrounds (rural children or adivasi children).

A few of the groups we work with are highlighted below.

Seva Chakkara Orphanage

The Seva Chakkara Orphanage is a project that the NYC/NJ chapter has been working with for over a year. It is a small orphanage located in the heart of Chennai and is home to seventy-two children. Mr.Velayudham started the organization with the desire of uplifting poor, downtrodden, disabled and

destitute children through residential education. He started by taking care of five disabled orphans at his home. Over time, his work began to receive recognition in local Tamil newspapers resulting in the present increased number of children at the orphanage.

The orphanage runs a primary school for the children in grades one through five. The main reason for running the school is that these children are too young to venture out onto the busy streets without supervision. It also enables the orphanage to provide a caring schooling environment for the orphans in their tender age.

To be recognized by the government, schools are required to own their own land. The orphanage does not own any land and operates in a part of a rented house. For this reason the school run by the orphanage is not government-recognized, so after successful completion of grade five, the children cannot just be transferred to local schools. Instead, they write open examinations in the local schools to get admission to grade six. The children then study

Children of the Seva Chakkara Orphanage

in these schools, but continue to live at the orphanage. There are thirty-eight children studying in grades one to five at the orphanage and thirty-four who are in higher grades.

As the children grow older, the orphanage tries to provide them with higher education or vocational training on a case-by-case basis. Over the years, fifteen children have found some livelihood and moved out of the orphanage.

Since last year, the orphanage has tried to generate regular income by developing a computer-training center with loans from the State Bank of India. After they applied for the loan, the SBI also donated some used computers and typewriters to help them with the institute.

The locality they are situated in, near the Central Railway station in Chennai, is expensive and the place they have been able to afford is quite small. As it is also a highly populated and industrial area, the younger children are completely restricted to the orphanage in all their activities: eating, studying, playing and sleeping within the four walls of the orphanage. The orphanage does not feel it is possible to relocate, however, as the help they receive from the local Rajasthani community has been necessary to sustain them and they cannot afford to potentially lose this support base.

Asha started with a mini-step in supporting the requirements of the primary school while making an effort to understand clearly the situation of the orphanage. With Asha's help, part of the terrace has been converted to a classroom for the fourth and fifth grades and the children are all no longer cramped in one single hall for all their classes. They have also been provided with uniforms and small writing desks. The eventual plan is to create a 'support a child' project for the orphanage to meet all the basic requirements of the children, primarily food, healthcare, and education.

In time, Asha might assist in moving the orphanage out of the current cramped location into a space of their own. This would enable them to improve the school, extend the classes and get government support. A variety of vocational skills will also be taught to the children, which will also bring in supplementary income to the orphanage.

Sumavanam

Sumavanam is a rural school outside Madanapalli in AndhraPradesh. It was started by the couple Usha and T. M. Narasimhan in 1982. Usha is a trained secondary school teacher and Narasimhan is an Aeronautical engineer who left his career to help Usha set up and run the

school. The school, at present, has three teachers and 19 children from second to tenth grade. All the children come from the neighboring villages and from families where the parents usually work as seasonal laborers in agriculture. None of the families have members who have had more than two or three years of education. All the families could be classified as living below the poverty line and are unable to send their children to other schools in Madanapalli due to financial constraints.

In a typical school in rural India, the children are made to learn by rote and are not given individual attention, as the classes often have in excess of 50 children. The children are not taught to think for themselves, nor are they taught skills and crafts. Their language, science and math competency is usually very low and the teachers generally have no interest in seeing to the needs of the children. This results in a drop out rate of perhaps 80 per cent.

The school system in Sumavanam is very different from that in a typical school. Their drop out rate is almost zero. The children are taught at their own pace and learn both their mother tongue and English. The elder students help in teaching the younger ones and an atmosphere of trust and friendship makes the children blossom into self-confident members of the community. The teaching of science experiments, environmental issues, water resource management and related rural skills make the school unique. The children are also taken to places like Madras and Bangalore once a year and to many museums and places of learning there. The most important aspect of the school is that the children all feel they are part of one big family and frequently remain in school in the evenings for as long as possible.

The Seattle and Houston chapters of Asha have been working with Sumavanam since 2000. An amount of $3000 has been provided to partially cover expenses such the salary of the Sumavanam teachers and for consumable items. Capital expenses relating to setting up a drip irrigation system to water the plants and trees in the school grounds is also being provided for.

Muskaan

According to a 1996 report of the Government of Madhya Pradesh, 25% of Bhopal's population of 12,00,000 lives in slums. Given the reliance of the local economy on the cheap labor they provide, the slum dwellers constitute the majority of the city's workforce. However, they have to make do with abject living conditions, struggle with irregular income, overcrowding, poor sanitation, lack of regular water supply and inadequate drainage and toilet facilities. Alcoholism and domestic violence are the norm in these families. The children contribute to the household income through begging and rag-picking. Education is pretty much unheard of. Well, at least it was, until three years ago when Shivani Taneja and her organization Muskaan set out to change the very face of Bhopal's slums.

The youngest daughter of a successful businessman, Shivani had already completed her Masters in Social Work when a chance encounter during an evening walk in 1998 brought her into contact with some children in the slums of

Bringing 'Muskaan' to the Slum Children

13

Ganga Nagar colony. She returned to meet them again and again over the next few days, chatting, playing, teaching and eventually winning their hearts and gaining the trust of their parents. Soon, Shivani was joined by a couple of her college friends in her evening trysts in the slums and Muskaan was born.

Muskaan is an initiative by people committed to the rights of children, and development through the participation of the people being 'benefited'. Registered in December 1998 as a society, Muskaan proclaims belief in:

- the inherent capacity of individuals

- the rights of every person to a decent standard of living

- That faith in oneself and opportunities provide the platform for one's entire being to grow and bloom

- That their role, therefore, lies in developing an environment that is conducive to maximizing one's potential, and of bringing the confidence to take one's life in the direction one desires.

Today, Muskaan is working in three slum settlements in Bhopal - Ganga Nagar, Rajeev Nagar and Gautam Nagar.

Ganga Nagar has been home to Gond migrants from Raipur for about 18 years. With around 70 families, of which six are migratory, none of the 120 kids in the school-going age had ever been to any formal school when Muskaan began to work with them three years ago. Men work as daily waged laborers, earning Rs.50 - 70 daily on an average of 15 days a month. Social customs do not permit women to work, therefore they work only when they are the primary breadwinner, or in the rare circumstances of getting regular work on contract.

Rajeev Nagar has three prominent communities: Mochi, Pardhi and Rajasthani. Muskaan is presently working with the Pardhi community, which comprises about 50 families with 150 children. They are a denotified tribe from Gujarat, because of past associations of a criminal nature. The men and women are constantly harassed by the police for small robberies in the area. The children and women rag-pick and beg, and are significant contributors to the family's income as the men do not usually go out for work. When they do, it is to sell the black threads, tabeez, and other superstitious/religious trinkets during melas. Marriages in the age bracket of three to ten years are common, with a heavy dowry to be given by the groom's family.

Gautam Nagar has small slums in the free spaces between various official buildings and houses. Muskaan has been working with a group of 45 children from 30 tribal families from Betul settled in such a manner. Living amidst inhumane conditions, they survive on making tin articles and rag-picking. Three children of the community go to a mainstream school.

Muskaan staff runs classes so that the children are equipped with the knowledge necessary for them to join a level appropriate to their age and class, enabling them to join the formal school without any handicap. Of the 90 children that Muskaan began working with, 43 have successfully completed their first year of formal schooling in grades kindergarten to five. They are doing well in their studies and have successfully integrated with children from other backgrounds.

In addition to their educational work, Muskaan is also working to promote hygiene and health-related values in the community. Muskaan is facilitating conscious decisions about the size of the family and arranges periodic visits by doctors to take care of health problems. Women and youth are given facilities to learn skills in specific fields, such as carpentry, embroidery and crochet, which has helped them to support their family needs and earn extra money. The products made in these workshops are marketed through Muskaan, and fair wages are paid for their labour.

Today, for those children who had not visualized anything beyond two meals a day, the very act of going to school is an achievement. Muskaan's efforts are only a drop in the ocean, but in an ocean where every single drop, every child matters. Muskaan is bringing about a positive change in the lives of these children - children who are being deprived of a childhood at this very moment, the childhood many of us have taken for granted.

The Detroit, Madison, MSU and Seattle chapters

14

of Asha are currently working with Muskaan.

Gujarat Earthquake Relief Effort: 2001-Present

On January 26, 2001, at 8:46 a.m., an earthquake devastated the state of Gujarat, India. Most hard hit were the villages of Bhuj, Anjar and Bhachau. The death toll rose to at least 20,000 people, with damages overwhelming the region. While the area received a lot of immediate aid from around the world, it became obvious that rebuilding would take several years. It was and continues to be imperative that this area of Gujarat receives support and attention in the long term.

In early February, the Arizona and Seattle chapters of Asha started working with the India Association of Phoenix and the Gujarat Cultural Association of Phoenix to identify areas in and around Bhuj in which to concentrate their efforts to rebuild infrastructure.

Four projects were identified that would benefit from the help of Asha and the Phoenix Indian community. Three of the projects have been visited by volunteers and approved and the funds have been or are in the process of being distributed. The fourth project is a proposal for the Rabari tribe who were displaced by the earthquake. This proposal is still pending evaluation. Here is a brief update of the progress already being seen in these projects.

Kutch Mahila Kalyan Kendra

Kutch Mahila Kalyan Kendra (KMKK) is a co-educational orphanage. It is located in Bhuj, close to the airport. KMKK was primarily created to provide shelter and a family atmosphere for destitute young women and orphaned children. Their educational programs is designed to help the young women, boys and girls stand on their own two feet by providing them vocational education.

Prior to the earthquake in January, the orphanage housed 50 girls. As a result of the devastation, KMKK was faced with the task of accommodating more than 100 orphaned boys and girls. KMKK is situated on a 45,000 sq. ft piece of land and consists of several living quarters, a community kitchen and hall, a dispensary and main office. All of these structures suffered considerable damage during the earthquake. Additionally, there was a large need for the construction of new buildings to accommodate the growing number of earthquake victims. Asha and the Phoenix Indian community is therefore helping the orphanage reconstruct its damaged building and expand by two or three rooms to better serve the children orphaned as a result of the earthquake.

Indirabai Girls High School

Indirabai Girls High School (IGHS) is a private girls high school located in Bhuj. Prior to the earthquake, IGHS employed 62 teachers to provided schooling for more than 1800 girls. The high school was leveled to the ground when the earthquake hit.

Though IGHS is a private high school, it initially received some funding from the government for reconstruction of the building. In March, the foundation was laid for the new school building. Although the school planned to have the reconstruction of the school completed by June, obtaining building permits and confirming earthquake proof designs have significantly delayed the reconstruction. At present, the school is being run in pre-fabricated rooms, donated by the Jain Sangatha of Pune.

IGHS was in dire need of support to refurnish the school with benches, chairs, teacher's desks and bookcases. Since the construction of the school has not yet been completed, students are being taught out of tents, without benches and desks.

Asha and the Phoenix Indian community are helping refurnish 20 classrooms with benches, chairs and bookcases. The task force is continuing to evaluate the other needs of the school.

Ma Ashapura English Medium Secondary School

Shri Shiv Shakti Study Circle Trust (SSSSCT) was established in Kutch, Gujarat, in 1972 with the objective of helping downtrodden and poverty stricken people by providing them with a solid education. The trust established the Ma Ashapura Primary School and Secondary school in 1993. The school currently caters to 600

15

students from surrounding areas such as Rampar Vekra, Sarli, Dahisara, Naranpar, Meghpar, Mankuva, Sukhpar, Mirzapur, Madhapar, Kukma, and Bhuj.

After the earthquake hit Kutch, students were forced to move their classrooms. The Bharatiya Jain Sangatha and TIFAC provided the students with 13 pre-fabricated classrooms while the reconstruction of the school was completed.

Asha and the Phoenix Indian community is supporting the reconstruction of 5 classrooms in the Secondary school. The task force has been working with the school officials to ensure that the reconstruction is earthquake-proof. Upon approval, $10,000 will be distributed to this project. ◆

volunteer experience

Site-visits to our project partners and interaction with the children turn out to be life-changing experiences for many volunteers. Below is a report by Swati Sircar, a volunteer with the Seattle chapter, on her visits to projects in West Bengal.

This is a note on my visit to several of our partner groups in India during September 2001. I visited four groups in various districts of West Bengal - Uthnau in Birbhum, then Baikunthapur Tarun Sangha (BTS) in Sunderban, a group in village Khatra in Bankura and the Champa mahila Society (CMS), again in Sunderban. I also visited three groups working at different places in Kolkata.

Uthnau is working for the upliftment of Santhals in some of the most remote and isolated villages of West Bengal. Currently, the Silicon Valley chapter is funding their work towards the sustainable development of the region. This was my very first visit ever to rural India, so I found it very exciting. The trip was full of adventures, such as crossing an over-flowing river in a jeep at night or riding a 2-wheeler through the highways and very rough, uneven village roads after monsoon!

BTS, like Uthnau, also works in very remote areas. We were on a motorboat for 2.5 hours each way to the island Kultali. This group is working on all round development of that area. It was interesting to see how they had cut off part of a river and converted that to a sweet water lake. They now use the water for agriculture. It was also nice to see solar-powered lights at every cross street. The Seattle chapter funds the school run by BTS.

My next visit to village Khatra was quite unplanned. My grandfather had put me in touch with a journalist who works extensively on adivasi issues in West Bengal and has several books to his credit. He invited us to see the Santhal village he works in. The youth in that village had tried to start several developmental activities, but had to stop due to lack of funds.

Finally, I visited CMS which was the Seattle chapter's first partner group. Starting in 1994 we have been working together at various levels related to children's education. In many ways, this was the most rewarding of all. I learnt and saw a lot, out of which women's empowerment through self-help-groups was the most noteworthy!

In Kolkata, I visited two groups near my home - one working with mentally challenged and hearing-impaired children and the other, Tomorrow's Foundation, taking care of children from the red light area, slums and

pavements of Kalighat. The second one, also known as Street to School, is supported by the LA chapter. The final visit was to Hriday Akash, also working with slum children in part of east Kolkata.

As you see, two of the visits, Uthnau and Khatra, were in adivasi areas. Two were located in Sunderban (BTS and CMS) and two worked with slum children. This was very helpful because visiting two groups that face similar challenges gave me a deeper insight that might not have come out of any single one.

For example the unique problem Sunderban area faces came up neatly as follows:

Sunderban is a mono-crop area. In order to supplement their meager income from the single crop, people go to the forest for wood, honey, wax or to the river for fish and crab. There, they get attacked by tigers in the forest or crocodiles and sharks in the river. We also heard incidents of the riverbank caving in on people. Therefore, there is a growing number of orphans and semi-orphans in that region. I also got a sense of how distant some of these villages are from any basic medical facilities. Snakebite is pretty common here and it may take up to three hours before the victim gets any medical attention!

In Khatra, I met a young adivasi lady, who used to write in a newspaper. We had an interesting discussion on issues facing adivasis such as social and gender inequalities. She bemoaned the sad tendency for educated adivasis to leave the adivasi way of life and do nothing to help in the development of their society.

One observation I have is that whenever the teachers have some training, it reflects very positively on the students. This was very clear in the three urban projects. The kids in Street to School were fabulous in terms of their enthusiasm, forwardness, and eagerness to come up to the board. In the Center for Disabled Children as well, the slightly older kids with hearing problems had no difficulty understanding us and expressed themselves very clearly.

Also in CMS, kids at the government school as well as at the several non-formal education

centers were very smart and bright. It was clear they are truly learning, and not just by rote. In fact, when asked "who gives us milk?" they came up with all possible answers like cattle, goat etc and one surprised us with "mother"!

It was thrilling to find all of the kids very smart and bright regardless of where they are from. It was also interesting to note that the only difference between the rural and the urban kids was their fluency in English. The kids at Street to School were as comfortable with English rhymes as the CMS kids were with Bengali ones. It also became quite clear to me that to do really good work, you have to team up. You cannot just go alone to a village and start everything single-handedly. I met some people who were never comfortable with others and tried doing things alone. They ended up doing nothing or very little. On the other hand, when people teamed up, they achieved a lot. There is absolutely no substitute for working together as a team.

I also saw the snowballing effect success has. As soon as people see good things actually happening at a nearby village, they come forward to implement similar things in their areas as well. That is how any good developmental work, awareness and mass-mobilization works best: when the people themselves come forward.

On a personal note, this series of site visits brought me in contact with a lot of groups and individuals working in the development area. It was great to meet the actual people in various projects who have been familiar names for a long time. The most rewarding aspect was talking to them, listening to their experiences on how their groups grew, the ups and downs they faced and making new friends - not to mention the warm welcomes, the cultural programs, sight-seeing and the great food!

A lecture by Dr. Vinod Raina

Raising awareness among the local community is taken as seriously by chapters as raising funds. In this spirit, Asha chapters have had numerous events to educate their volunteers and the community about issues related to

education. Several chapters organized lectures by distinguished individuals such as Dr. Vinod Raina.

Dr. Vinod Raina from Ekalavya, visited the Asha and AID chapters of Boston in August 2001. Dr. Raina was trained as a theoretical physicist, but resigned his position at the Delhi University in 1982 to work full-time at the grassroots in the area of education and rural development. He co-founded Ekalavya, in the Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh. He has helped to evolve the People's Science Movement, a unique movement that attempts to empower people to plan and implement their own need-based developmental programs, in contrast to the prevalent trickle-down paradigm of development.

Dr. Raina began his lecture by discussing three examples to illustrate the kinds of challenges in science education and Ekalavya's solutions to them.

How can an eighth grade student understand the concepts behind a motor? Ekalavya used local resources and demonstrated that the children can build a small motor by themselves for less than 50 paisa. The children learned the basics of magneto dynamics by doing, rather than by just reading. Although they did not know the full details, they understood the crucial elements.

All schoolbooks describe nutrition by discussing how much protein, carbohydrates and fat one must eat to maintain a balanced diet. However, there is no understanding or discussion of locally available food and the nutrients in them. Ekalavya's children undertook a study of their younger siblings to learn about malnutrition. The survey helped them understand the level of malnutrition in their communities and the reasons behind it.

The concept of density for an eighth grade student is hard to grasp due to the fact that in Hindi, the word 'density' evokes a characteristic of forests, i.e., forests are dense, but to ask for the density of water or cotton is meaningless.

These examples illustrate the various aspects of teaching science to children. Scientific concept formation is related to language. It is the mediator between scientific concepts such as density and the children's understanding of the concepts. One cannot ignore it, as often done in science classes. Science also has a social relation to human beings; it is not isolated from them. It can lead to empowerment - the kind of understanding that kids have by doing a survey on malnutrition or building a motor cannot be obtained by studying statistics or reading about motors. Dr. Raina mentioned that the current education system is completely detached and unrelated to the child's life. We must start with the fact that children are curious and have knowledge in the first place. We must relate this knowledge to scientific concepts, thereby expanding their initial knowledge.

The challenges of primary education for 200 million children in India include

- Access to educational resources: about 75 million are out of school everyday.

- Quality of learning: only 20% of the remaining 125 million meet the minimum achievement standard. There is a large dropout rate due to lack of interest and relevance.

Given this, Dr. Raina questioned whether there is any sense in expanding access to education without improving its quality. Simply expanding the current system without improving the quality can only lead to greater waste and will not result in any real change. He also emphasized that only the state, rather than any NGO or charity organization, can tackle the problem of educational access since it alone has the resources to solve this problem.

Over the last 10 years, a more optimistic situation has been created by the National Literacy Campaign. In 1988, when the country was rocked and divided by the issues raised by the Mandal commission, All India People's Science Network (AIPSN) was formed. AIPSN is a federation of 46 voluntary groups formed to counteract the fragmentary nature of these groups. AIPSN took up the campaign of literacy, and was a key element in bringing about the drastic improvement in Kerala's literacy. These campaigns have created a demand for primary education at the grassroots level.

Despite all the positive changes brought about by Ekalavya, Dr. Raina mentioned two major

19

shifts in Indian education today. One is the influence of external large-scale loans from the World Bank. Dr. Raina holds that taking loans for education is a serious abdication of responsibilities by the state. The presence of large money is distancing the community from an involvement in educational matters. It is creating a techno-managerial class that serves only the elite, and their 'educational' goals seem to only create a disciplined work force, i.e., a consumer class for their products. Secondly, education is being politicized. Neo-fascist religious groups in India are using education as a tool to indoctrinate future generations with their views, using state resources. This is a clear and present danger to critical understanding, and cannot be ignored. Literacy itself has become a political issue, and has to be fought via political means: not by throwing stones at each other, but by debating openly and taking a pro-active political stand.

Finally, Dr. Raina emphasized that the problem of education cannot be solved by a fragmented approach taken by a charitable organization or by adopt-a-child/school program, but only by a collective people's movement. ◆

special initiatives

Apart from supporting projects that directly provide education to children, Asha is also playing an increasingly active role in special initiatives that address the quality and content of education, and larger systemic problems. These include development and dissemination of a curriculum that promotes social justice and secularism, addressing indifference among Indian Youth towards social issues, working towards making a functional government school system which remains the only source of affordable education for the majority of India's children, and encouraging closer and direct involvement of patrons in development projects in India through the Asha-Stars initiative.

Curriculum Improvement: Avehi-Abacus

Avehi, an audio-visual resource center, is a voluntary, non-profit initiative of the Avehi Public Charitable Educational Trust. Born out of a belief that knowledge empowers, Avehi works within the existing educational structure to raise the level of education and social awareness, promote values of equality, social justice, gender sensitivity, secularism, communal harmony and human rights through the use of engaging audio-visual aids and alternative media.

In the formal school system, the Avehi program works as a three-year course spanning grades five through seven. In the non-formal setting, it provides post-literacy education for children between the ages of eight and twelve. The foundation course for teachers seeks to strengthen their ability and motivate them to go beyond the prescribed syllabus and become active participant in the search for a more meaningful system of education.

Over the past year, the project has worked with 3800 children and 70 teachers in 25 Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC) schools, 35 non-formal education centers and 2 private schools. A new series of curriculum materials titled 'Sangati' was recently launched for wider circulation. During the period 2001-2004, Avehi will reach a total of 42,000 children in grades five to seven in 180 MMC schools. Currently, all classes of grade five in these schools are using the material. The program will be expanded to include students and teachers in grades six and seven during 2002-2004.

Other activities in 2001 included the initiation of a UNICEF-supported cell in

From an Avehi education kit exploring perpetuation of unequal gender roles.

the MMC Education Department to facilitate discussions among NGOs on issues related to children's education in Mumbai, and the completion of a critical analysis of Maharashtra state text books from grades one to five. These activities are conducted with the goal of providing tools to improve textbook content in Maharashtra.

The Avehi Abacus program was evaluated by a team of educationists consisting of Dr. Narayan Rangraj, Dr. Rahul Pandey, and Dr. Anjula Gurtoo from IIT Bombay, Dr. Jitendra Shah from VJTI, Dr. Yogesh and Dr. Laxmi Rangraj. The Research unit of MMC has initiated a process of evaluation as well. Base-line studies of teachers' responses have been carried out. The Avehi-Abacus Project also maintains observation records of classroom interactions.

The Seattle chapter of Asha is working with Avehi on the expansion of their program and the mass production of their education kits.

Stanford Chapter Internship Program-2001

In January 2001, the Stanford chapter of Asha launched an Internship Program in India with the objective of sensitizing youth to various developmental and socio-economic issues, by providing them 'in the field' exposure to the efforts of groups addressing such issues.

Most urban Indian youth with formal university education are not involved with the tremendous development problems facing society. It is important to encourage the participation of these youth because it is they who will largely determine the pattern of economic growth and social development. The lack of involvement of these youth can in part be corrected by providing them exposure to both the problems and to the various efforts that are being undertaken to address them. The internship program was aimed at such an audience and tried to change their seeming indifference to activism.

The chapter covered the stipend costs for interns as well as the costs of setting up and monitoring the Program. In its first year, students from Delhi and Trivandrum were selected for participation in the Program. In

January 2001, the idea behind the Program was discussed with the faculty of various departments of the University of Kerala at Kariyavattom, and presentations were made to students of Economics, Sociology, History, and Geology. Internship posters were prepared and put on notice boards in various departments on the campus. Similarly, the Program was discussed with some faculty members in IIT-Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and Delhi University. Again, as in Kerala, the response was encouraging.

Eleven students from Trivandrum applied for internship through the Program. All applicants were pursuing Masters degrees in Economics at the University of Kerala. 47 students applied from Delhi - approximately 13 from Delhi University, 30 from JNU, and four from IIT. All the students who applied were interviewed to learn more about their interest in social work, their ability to understand and explain ideas, inter-personal skills and general awareness. Motivation, commitment and long-term goals were given added weight in the selection process.

Five students from Trivandrum and 16 students from Delhi were finally selected for the internship. During the selection process, it became apparent that students had only a rough idea of development sector activity, and would benefit from an orientation program. An orientation program was designed to cover issues on social work in India and provide guidelines for fieldwork and field stay.

The Delhi orientation program was held at JNU in the first week of May. Academic experts from JNU handled sessions on 'knowledge and activism', and 'NGOs and civil society'. A question-answer session was arranged with activists. The Trivandrum orientation program was held at Loyola College of Social Sciences. Faculty members who had experience in research and activism handled the sessions. The topics covered were 'India's development context', 'development and social work', 'non-governmental organizations', and 'practical tips'.

Each of the selected interns was then placed with NGOs in different parts of India. The Program coordinators used their personal

contacts to get in touch with various NGOs. Thirteen groups, from six states, responded with their willingness to host the interns. Interns were required to participate in whatever activity or task the NGO assigned them, whether it was data processing, field investigation, helping in community work or teaching. The Program was clear about not dictating what work the intern should do within the NGO. There was a risk that the intern could end up as a tourist, with the Program unable to influence interns' activity in the NGO. However, all this was discussed earlier with the interns, and as it turned out, they had a most enriching experience.

Eventually, two interns from Trivandrum and nine from Delhi successfully completed the Program. Some of the selected interns dropped out at varying stages of the Program. We are still engaged in evaluating the Program in order to decide whether to repeat it in 2002. Some of the observations and suggestions based on this year's experience are as follows:

- The feedback from interns was positive. Hence institutionalization of the program should be considered. This would help in clearly defining the scope of the Program and the nature of relationship with NGOs.

- Closer association with Universities and their top administrators would give greater legitimacy to the Program and ease some of the bureaucratic hurdles.

- Certain teachers had demonstrated keen interest and the potential to assist the Program fulfill its objectives. Such people could be invited to be active partners in the Program, and act as "ambassadors" to attract students through open lectures and other means.

- NGOs had limited incentives to be associated with the Program. Hence, before the 2002 Program is launched, it is important to consider ways of getting more NGOs interested in the Program, and aligning NGO expectations and Program goals. The Program, in its inaugural year had first selected students and then tried to find suitable NGOs for them. This could be reversed to an extent.

- To increase the usefulness of the program rural youth (including the urban-educated among them) should be encouraged to enter the Development sector especially in rural areas.

Currently, this program has been taken up by NFI (National Foundation for India) who will be conducting it with Asha.

For additional details, please contact Suraj Jacob (suraj@stanford.edu).

Working with the Government

Over the past couple of years, Asha volunteers have come to a better appreciation of the importance of the Indian government's role in education. This has led to a serious study on the issue of why government schools fail, and what can be done to improve them. The statistics are revealing: government schools are the only schools available to a large number of children (greater than 80%) but the quality of education in these schools is abysmal. Rampant teacher absenteeism, poor infrastructure (not enough classrooms, leaky-roofs, poorly-maintained playgrounds, chipped-blackboards, non-existent libraries, laboratories, teaching-aids) and a complete disconnect between urban upper class/caste and rural students all contribute to a very uninspiring educational experience for the child. Even in districts with 100% enrolment in the first grade, by fifth grade only 40% are left in class, the rest having dropped out.

In absolute terms, government expenditure on education (both from the budget and external loans) is several hundred times more than that of all non-governmental agencies put together. For example, just the World Bank funded District Primary Education Program averaged $150 million per state. However, the effects of all this spending are not visible on the ground due to government bureaucracy, inefficiency and corruption. It is clear to people working on education that to bring about large-scale change, a concerted effort to improve the government's performance in the field of education is required. The reach and impact government schemes can have is difficult to replicate by individual groups working by themselves.

Realizing this, several non-governmental groups have been working on changing the

functioning of government educational institutions, or are taking advantage of government schemes that make available buildings and other infrastructure. Eklavya's work in Madhya Pradesh on curriculum improvement in government schools (described elsewhere in this report) is an excellent example of such attempts at making a positive change. Such work is hard, tedious and slow, but much needed for large-scale change. Eklavya is able to reach many more students than they would, had they tried starting their own schools.

In the last couple of years, Asha has made an active effort to bring about changes in government schools. We started by identifying states with programs that made them amenable to this approach. Madhya Pradesh's program, where a village can demand a school, is one such scheme. Karnataka's Adopt a School program is another such scheme. Recognizing the inability to bring about serious changes in the government school situation because of the resource crunch, the Karnataka government encourages donors to adopt schools. The donor has to make a two-year commitment and is encouraged to make changes ranging from infrastructure improvement (toilets, compound walls, drinking water, fixing leaks) to improving teaching quality through teacher training programs.

The Boston and Madison chapters have partnered with the Vivekananda Foundation in adopting 52 schools. The Viveka-Asha Yojane was started in the 2001-2002 school year. Central to this joint effort were motivated social workers who were carefully selected, trained and assigned to clusters of six or seven government schools. These social workers visited schools regularly and worked with the schools on solving their problems. The 'solution' would depend on the situation. For instance, in one school, the social worker mobilized the community to whitewash the school. In another case, the social worker organized meetings between parents and the headmaster and convinced the community to contribute a drinking water container. When there is serious teacher absenteeism, the social worker brings it to the attention of senior officials, or in some cases, steps in and teaches the class. The overarching goal is to work with the teachers, the community, and government bureaucrats to improve existing schools.

One major activity of the Yojane has been organizing training programs for the teachers. Social workers have been working with the coordinator of the Viveka-Asha Yojane, Mr. Jayadev of Deenabandhu in Chamarajanagar to conduct workshops on science teaching, environmental education and value-based education. One very pleasant and perhaps somewhat unexpected observation has been the teachers' interest in this Yojane. They have come forward to learn and work with the social workers to improve the situation in the schools; this illustrates the trust and good working relationship the social workers have been able to establish with the teachers and headmaster.

This project is progressing so well that Mr. Jayadev has been approached by schools and officials in nearby districts to extend the program there. This is something Asha and the Vivekananda Foundation plan to look into once the current project stabilizes. Currently Mr. Jayadev and the social workers are attempting to incorporate their teacher training workshops into the Cluster Resource Centers (CRCs) run by the government for teacher training and supplying teaching aids. If we are successful in getting the CRCs to adopt some of our ideas, it will go a long way in reaching many government schools through the CRC training programs. More details on this endeavor are available at http://www.ashanet.org/mit/Public/www/Projects/viveka/viveka-govt-school.html

Asha-Stars Initiative

Asha's experience over the last decade has confirmed that personal involvement is key to the success of a project. For Asha to be able to move towards its vision of catalyzing "socio-economic change in India through education of underprivileged children", the following are necessary:

- Sustained support to education based projects in India until they strike roots in the community;

- Opportunities for people from all walks of life to be able to participate in such projects; and

- A scalable model to create a silent, progressive mass movement for the resurgence of India.

One way to achieve these is through Asha Stars Projects. The idea was conceived by the Los Angeles chapter in 1995 and has since developed and spread across Asha chapters. Currently volunteers across the world are involved in 28 Asha Stars Projects spread over 13 states and union territories in India.

Once a grass-roots group or project is identified in India, a group of volunteers led by a coordinator comes forward to take ownership of the project within Asha. These volunteers can be physically located anywhere in the world. They work with project partners in India to formulate specific long-term goals, as well as a plan to achieve it. A project proposal is then submitted to an Asha chapter for approval. The project is approved and monitored by an Asha chapter according to the same criteria as for any regular project.

The Asha Stars team (typically 5 volunteers per project) own the responsibility for the project and do what is needed to make it successful. They go beyond just funding it and get personally involved with the projects to the extent possible, for instance, in its planning and implementation. They think of ways they and Asha can help improve the situation in the communities where the projects are located (through libraries, scholarships, vocational training, helping develop text books etc.).

The Asha Stars remain involved with the project by regular phone conversations with the project representatives in India. Each Asha Star by turn calls the project as often as necessary, typically once every two months. Thanks to telecommunication infrastructure set up by the Indian Government, this method of contacting

projects is a reality today even in remote areas. The Asha Stars meet via phone conferences (remember they can be anywhere on the globe) every one to two months. This helps build a solid working relationship among the Asha Stars. Tools of the cyber age such as web sites and eGroups have been of great help in improving communication, publicity efforts, fund raising and educating others about the projects.

Asha Stars contribute at least US$300 (GBP200 in the UK, Rs.1000 in India) per year towards the project. This usually is a good point to get the Asha Stars project started, but obviously does not end there. More funds are almost always required by the projects This is raised by the Asha Stars by various imaginative fundraising events. As with any regular project, funds sent to the project needs to be approved by the chapter and followed through - part of the checks and balances evolved by Asha to monitor projects.

Asha for Education can be a source of hope for any child in India in need of support. To make this a reality, the organization needs to have a presence in every region of the country and be accessible to the community and the child. Asha Stars Projects, which have community involvement, can be this source of hope. That is why we want to ensure Asha Stars Projects in all parts of the country. Our long-term goal is to have at least one Asha Stars Project is each of the 462 districts in the Indian states and union territories by the end of this decade - 2010.

- Further information on Asha Stars Projects and its progress may be obtained from http://www.ashanet.org/projects/asha-stars/

- If you are interested in participating in this movement to transform India by community participation, please join the Asha Stars team by sending an email to asha_stars_projects-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Education for a Democratic Society

Asha supports several partner groups that are developing innovative teaching methodologies. Among them is Digantar, a resource center in

Rajasthan. Described below is the philosophy that Digantar has been experimenting with in their schools and disseminating to the rest of the country through teacher-training programs.

There is a near unanimity on the issue of universalization of primary as well as elementary education. But why do we want universalization of primary/elementary education? All government documents emphasise (1) the necessity of a literate populace in achieving national goals, (2) the need to be an economically contributing adult, and (3) the need for everyone to earn her lively-hood. By far that is the crux of the matter according to the general view.

An increasing number of people, especially educationists and concerned citizens, feel that though the above goals are important they are by themselves inadequate. They omit things vitally important to a pluralistic and democratic society.

Education in a democratic and egalitarian society
- The twin ideals of democracy and egalitarianism cannot be divorced from each other. Democracy is an acceptance of the principle that all human beings are essentially equal. Even if a society has not achieved equality in practice, the ideal of democracy demands a commitment to make unceasing efforts to achieve it.

- Every human being has the right to live with dignity. And in an egalitarian and democratic society all have equal right to participate in socio-political decision-making.

- Many sections and individuals in our society are deprived of democratic participation in deciding matters that affect their lives.

- Many find it difficult to live with dignity due to poverty - they suffer a lack of control over socio-economic and political factors affecting their lives.

- The reasons behind this deprivation can be seen as: (1) lack of control over the means of production; and (2) lack of opportunities to develop capabilities.

- Education cannot directly affect the distribution of means of production. It is true that education eventually changes this distribution but it takes a long and complex social process.

- Education directly affects the personal capabilities of individuals, and thereby, of sections of society. Indeed, that is what education should aim at.

The over-arching aim of education should be to help the learner become a rationally autonomous individual and concerned citizen. We have to teach her something so basic and important that it helps her in further independent learning, motivates her to keep on learning, and gives her confidence.

Independent learning is not possible through rote learning. It becomes possible only when the child herself gets involved in enquiry. In other words, the child has to experience the formation of knowledge rather than just storing information. Motivation for learning can become part of one's character only if learning is enjoyable and has been associated with the thrill of discovery.

The above points can provide us with guidelines in designing a curriculum and pedagogy.

Teaching methodology
Children can develop independent thinking and the ability to critically analyse their socio-economic context only if they get an opportunity to ask questions, express dissent and interpret texts according to their own understanding. Therefore, teaching methods should be flexible in order to accommodate these requirements.

Before teaching new things, the teacher should take into account the child's understanding. Pressure, competition and fear of punishment should not be used as motivating factors as they will be detrimental to independent learning. Experiences of learning with ones own efforts help in building self-confidence and in understanding how human knowledge is created. Learning with the help of other children and helping them in learning emphasizes the social basis of learning and also develop a positive attitude towards co-operation.

Relationship with the community

The community should be an active partner in decisions taken about schooling. Here we make a few points about the academic side of that relationship.

- A child is part of her environment and

Children at the Digantar School in Badhiyali

community.

- A school capable of influencing the child's world-view should necessarily have close interaction with the community ethos. Events and activities in the community should become part of the learning process in the school.

- The teachers should take the community's comments on the school and its activities seriously and should establish a dialogue on curriculum and teaching methods with the community.

The Teacher

We have tried to give a very brief account of our (Digantar) vision of education starting from the desirable society, aims, some hints at the curriculum, teaching methodology and school-community relationship. This vision depends on the teacher, to be realised. Some of the qualities of the teacher required to bring about our vision are listed below:

- The teacher should understand education and its relevance for a democratic society.

- She should be democratic and egalitarian in her values and social concerns.

- Should understand how children learn.

- She should be capable of wining the confidence of the community and should be sensitive to the community's critique of the school and it's functioning.

- Should know the primary curriculum content well and should understand the place of subject areas in human knowledge. Should also understand the basic structure of science, mathematics, geography etc.

- Should be able to use the available teaching/learning material creatively, relating it with the child's existing understanding. Should be able to develop learning programmes for children.

- Should be able to learn independently and be interested in learning.

- Should take her work seriously and be able to critically analyse her own work.

The Seattle chapter of Asha has been supporting the educational expenses of the Elementary Education project of Digantar.◆

workshops

Asha-10 Conference, Berkeley

Asha for Education completed a decade of existence in 2001. To coincide with this, a world-wide Asha conference (aptly called Asha-10) was held on the Memorial Day weekend (May 26-May 28) in Berkeley, where Asha was born.

Berkeley-based volunteers spent five months organizing the three-day conference, which included appproximately 20 sessions and panel discussions. Over 150 Asha volunteers attended this conference to revisit Asha's goals and mission and discuss operational issues such as our interaction with our projects, fundraising methods, publicity, Asha-India's activities and a host of other topics of importance. Volunteers from around the world (including Asha's founding members Sandeep Pandey and Deepak Gupta) met one another and were thrilled to finally put faces to the names they had been interacting with on a daily basis over email!

Participants at Asha-10

Veteran investigative journalist and activist P.Sainath gave a moving keynote speech on the first night of the conference. While Sainath clearly supported and admired Asha Volunteers for their commitment and optimism, he warned them that it is impossible to ignore the many factors that affect India's education system. Out of the 70 per cent of Indian children who are enrolled in the first grade, Sainath said, only five percent will graduate from high school. Eighty-five percent of India's poor are farmers or landless agricultural workers. In Haryana, there are only 821 females to every 1,000 males. These statistics are not merely numbers, Sainath warned. "You have to deal with the linkages and politics of the education system whether you like it or not. Sex ratios, casteism, and public health do impact education."

Shanmuga Subramaniam, a volunteer with Asha-Princeton, talked about his detailed visits during the course of 2000 to various project partners and other organizations involved in development work in India and identified areas where Asha's approach towards her projects needed improvement. Specific initiatives such

as the Asha-Stanford Internship program, working with the government and measuring the impact of projects, were discussed. Breakout sessions were also held around the work of World Computers Exchange, the Bhagavatula Charitable Trust and World Trade Organization. A unique initiative, the Asha-Mirror, was led by volunteers of the LA chapter. They conducted an opinion survey of Asha volunteers around the world to get their viewpoints on what Asha's priorities and focus should be, and what keeps them going as volunteers.

Volunteers received excellent feedback on improving publicity and fundraising methods from members of the South Asian Journalist Association, New York and volunteers of experienced chapters. Although the group has shown real results in its American fundraising efforts and Indian projects, it was agreed that there was room for improvement. "Just focusing on education is myopic," said one member. "We need to get to know our projects and issues better," said another. To give expression to this broadened perspective, the mission statement of Asha for Education was formulated anew as: "To catalyze socio-economic change in India through education of underprivileged children".

Visit the conference web site http://www.ashanet.org/Dbase/asha-10/ to view the agenda, presentation, posters, minutes and photos.

Manthan-2001, Madison

In Summer 2001, Asha-Madison initiated a new forum where organizations based in the Midwestern U.S. that work on issues related to social development in India could meet, exchange ideas, share best practices, establish personal bonds, and increase collaboration. This resulted in the mini conference, Manthan 2001, held on Aug 25th to 26th in Memorial Union in Madison. In addition to volunteers of the host organization, Manthan 2001 was attended by a total of 24 volunteers from the Minneapolis and Milwaukee chapters of Association for India's Development (AID), the Chicago chapter of Asha for Education, the Cincinnati chapter of India Development Service (IDS), the Chicago chapter of Shikshantar, and Sankalp, based in Ames, Iowa.

The broad focus of the conference was to foster collaboration and information sharing between the attending organizations and also to initiate discussions of broader issues affecting volunteer-based organizations. Attendees shared their experiences with fund raising, attracting volunteers, and handling projects.

AID-Minneapolis drew attention to their innovative Shramdaan and Aksharotsav fundraising programs. Emphasis was placed on making one's presence felt in the local community and of projecting a social image that can attract volunteers and donors. Attendees

A Manthan Presentation Session in Progress

also felt that volunteer retention and turnover were major problems and that mentoring, developing personal bonds, and encouraging participation in events would help in fostering a strong volunteer base and the spirit of volunteerism.

Mechanisms for approving projects and evaluating their progress were also discussed, especially regarding the role of site visits. Attendees realized the importance of sharing information about NGOs and supported projects to increase collaboration and get a better picture of the project's activities. There is an ongoing effort to establish a comprehensive database of NGOs and projects in India that are being supported by organizations in the US (see www.serveindiaforum.net and the sif2002 yahoogroup for more details).

Relating to the future goals of volunteer-based organizations, it was pointed out that there should be a space for social activism beyond fundraising and supporting projects, especially connecting to mass movements and struggles in India. There was a debate on whether we can create such a space within organizations like AID or Asha. The consensus was that there should be a network of people who are interested in such issues and who can bring different expertise to the table. This network can then work together either by spreading awareness here or by directly taking part in movements in India.

Discussions on globalization tried to present a comprehensible picture of the complex network of institutions such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank that are slowly acquiring more global powers in the name of liberalization and free trade. Attendees very quickly came to the realization that the issues were very complex and that further research needed to be done to get a full understanding of the implications of globalization and how it affects countries like India.

Finally, there was a discussion led by Shikshantar on the nature of the education system in India. Shikshantar is a research group that focuses on a transformation of the education system in India to increase self-reliance, creativity and sustainability. The group told the attendees about its learning center in Udaipur in Rajasthan that serves as a test-bed for their ideas. There was also a vigorous debate on how education in India can be improved and be made more meaningful and relevant.

For more details about Manthan 2001, including the detailed agenda, minutes, action items, and photos, please visit the Asha-Madison website at http://www.ashanet.org/madison

Asha Winter Conference, Kanpur

The winter 2001 meeting of Asha was held at the Manaviya Siksha Sanskar Sanstha (MS3) in Mandhana, a hamlet in the northern outskirts of Kanpur from December 23rd to 26th.

On the first two days of the conference, various NGOs and people working in the field of education presented their work. There were four sessions, each with four speakers. Each of the sessions were followed by discussions. Chandravel from To Reach You (Chennai) spoke about the organization's work with children of sex workers. Krishna Dutt discussed the efforts of his group, Amista, in providing learning opportunities for slow learners in Lucknow. Mahendra Verma and Mahendra Dewidi described Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti's work with children of migrant laborers employed in the brick-making centers in and around Kanpur. Ayub Khan from Urmul Marusthali Bunkar Vikas Samiti presented the education work done by the organization in 90 villages of Jaisalmer and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan. Vetrivijay and Durga (Bharati Trust, Chennai) discussed the efforts of the Bharathi Trust with the Irula community of Thiruvalur district near Chennai. Sushanta Giri from BTS described the conditions of the adivasis in Madhya Pradesh and the efforts of BTS to incorporate aspects of local culture, dialect and aspects of the adivasi life in the learning process.

The third day of the conference featured a discussion on the philosophy of education and

imparting education in general. The Jeevan Vidya philosophy was discussed, along with Shikshantar's philosophy that holds that we must move away from the present mainstream system of education and question what

Participants at the Mandhana Workshop

education is. Pawan Gupta from Mussorie gave an eloquent description of the current state of our education system, what it has done to our society and what we may need to do in the future.

On the evening of the 24th and 25th, various NGOs supported by Asha and those interested in working with us met with the Asha volunteers present in Kanpur. Following this, various Asha for Education operational matters were

discussed. It was decided that new chapters in India will be recognized at the six monthly meeting of Asha and that an Asha India website will be developed by a team at the MS3-Asha center in Kanpur. It was emphasized that volunteers and Trustees should reflect the diversity in Asha, and society in general, and efforts to involve more grassroots workers and women should continue. The issue of how to increase interaction between Asha volunteers outside India and those in India was also discussed. Some of the suggestions that came out of this include:

- Increasing visits to the Asha Centers by all volunteers.

- Involving one Asha-India volunteer on the monthly Asha coordination phone calls (recognizing that many volunteers in India do not have frequent email access).

- Working closely with the Asha-India volunteers before, during, and after a site visit and while making decisions on projects in the vicinity.

After the discussions were finished, a number of the volunteers visited a learning center run by the MS3 for children of migrant construction workers and spent time with the children, which included a game of Kabaddi!◆

fundraising

One of the ways that chapters express their creativity is through fundraising. This not only raises money for our projects in India, but more importantly, increases awareness about Asha and the importance of educational issues within the local community. In 2001, Asha chapters raised over a million dollars through a variety of fun and educational fund-raisers. Almost all Asha chapters hold some form of fundraising event annually.

Notes of Hope Summer Series

Asha's Summer 2001 Notes of Hope was one of the most awaited Indian classical music summer concert series in the U.S. It featured legendary Sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan, his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash , and Rashid Mustafa on tabla.

The series included concerts in Boston, New York, St. Louis, Phoenix, and Dallas and attracted a strong 3,000 audience. The event reached over 30,000 people with the help of press releases, posters, newspaper articles, TV ads, postcards etc. It was sponsored nationally by Sulekha.com and eShakti.com. Zee TV was the media sponsor for the series. They showed the NOH ad on their network over a period of 5 weeks overlapping the series. The organization of the event was also helped by Sangam(MIT), Passage to India (Boston), Rediff.com (New York), Shriji Enterprises/India Bazar, Missouri Arts Council, Regional Arts Commission (St. Louis), City of Scottsdale, Arizona Commission on the Arts, and National Endowment For The Arts (Phoenix).

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan with Sons performing at a Notes of Hope concert

The maestro and his sons enthralled the audience with ragas such as Shuddh Kalyan, Durga, Kirwani, Raag Marwa, Bageshri, Darbari Kaanada, Rageshwari and some Bengali/Assamese folk songs.

Asha was able to raise $45,000 through this successful series. The series was

not only successful in terms of raising money but also in creating a wonderful virtual team of Asha members that was productive and efficient on so many counts. This was the first time that a group of Asha chapters worked together to organize a fundraising event of such scale. It has given us the confidence to organize more such high quality events in the future.

Notes of Hope Fall Series

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia lifted up his bamboo flute to play the first notes of Raag Bageshwari, on a balmy night in late September. For all volunteers at Asha-Cornell, these were notes of hope, in more ways than one.

The Cornell chapter of Asha has always had a close relationship with the South Asia Program

Pandit Chaurasia with the Cornell Volunteers

at Cornell University. Our collaboration on the concert began in March, when Durga Bor of the Program suggested a concert by Pandit Chaurasia. We were so enthusiastic about the idea that we roped in other Asha chapters to host Panditji. He performed at Chicago and Cleveland to raise funds for Asha chapters there, under the banner of Notes of Hope-the Fall Series.

Planning the concert took more out of us than we expected. Volunteers of Asha began to plan publicity and ticketing months in advance. We received exemplary support from the

community. The program for the concert featured ads from local businesses, and we raised almost a thousand dollars from that alone! Various organizations at Cornell University also stepped in with generous donations - the Student Activities Finance Commission, the Cornell Council for the Arts, and the Events Fund at the Einaudi Center for International Studies. We were also fortunate to receive the support of Prof. Martin Hatch of the Music Department.

Weeks of meetings and hundreds of emails later, we thought we were done with organizing the series. Then the tragic September 11th attacks threw airline schedules out of gear. Worse, Panditji's family was concerned about his traveling to what seemed like the most dangerous place on earth - New York. However, after several phone calls, we had reconfirmed his schedule and commitment to do the series.

Panditji, as it turned out, was phlegmatic about the risks he was running in coming to the U.S., being more impressed by the charming fall foliage. Finally, the long-awaited evening of the show arrived. The lights went down and we observed a moment's silence for the victims of the September 11 attacks. We then introduced Asha's activities to the audience and Durga gave a warm, funny and personal introduction to Panditji. And the concert began...

We had a full house at the Statler auditorium that night (more than 800 people. We made a profit of $4000 from ticket sales, the sale of food at the venue and ads from local businesses in the programme. In addition, we got a grant from the Student Assembly Finance Commission at Cornell University of $3000. But more important than the substantial funds we raised was the satisfaction of contributing to the cultural life on this campus, and of raising awareness about Asha's mission Thanks to Panditji's fame as an artist, Asha was able to reach out to people interested in Indian culture in the region, outside Ithaca. Thanks to untiring efforts by volunteers, campus walls and listservs were bombarded with posters with the Asha logo prominently displayed. Part of the proceeds will help us continue our funding of two projects in the Greater Kolkata region, through the Institute

for Social Work. One project-Look for Light-serves children in the semi-urban area of Barasat, and the other project is located in the dock area. Asha's support will go towards teacher's salaries and textbooks.

Harbingers of Hope

The "Harbingers of Hope" Marathon Program is an innovative fundraiser initiated in 2000 by the Silicon Valley chapter. It took the message of Asha to a wide circle of supporters that transcended nationality - one that would not have been reached by a traditional Asha fundraiser.

In this program, participants of all age groups and backgrounds come together and experience

The Silicon Valley Harbingers of Hope at the Royal Victoria Marathon

the unique challenge and inspiration of training for and running a marathon, while raising funds for education in India. In October 2001, participants of all abilities completed the Royal Victoria and Silicon Valley marathons and raised over $100,000! They went through a professional training program under the guidance of seasoned coaches who were themselves accomplished runners.

The Marathon coordination team, Girish and

Shobana, provided schedules for every day training - a well paced training program consisting of hard training days, easy training days and cross training programs. Comprehensive information about fundraising was also provided. Their unbounded enthusiasm and commitment towards the runners was a major reason for the great success of the program. Team Asha finished sixth overall in the Victoria Marathon-a commendable achievement. All the participants had a great time. As one of them remarked, "Victoria was a great experience. The people were awesome in their support. The best part, however, was running for Asha along with other runners. Getting to know all of the volunteers was a great experience!"

Work An Hour 2001

Work an Hour is one of Asha's most popular fundraisers. Since 1998, WAH, as Work an Hour is popularly known, has been consistently achieving the high fundraising targets set while spreading awareness about Asha. WAH debuted in 1998 by raising $30,000 to support 3 projects. In 2001, Work an Hour raised $100,000 towards 6 projects spread across India.

What makes Work An Hour stand apart from other Asha fundraisers is the worldwide audience it targets and the remarkable organizing effort put in by volunteers from various chapters. Every year, one chapter takes up ownership of WAH for that year. Volunteers from this chapter co-ordinate the various WAH tasks such as project selection, website design, processing donations and disbursement of funds. In 2001, Berkeley signed up for the task.

The six projects supported by WAH-2001 were chosen from among a larger group of potential projects after being reviewed by all Asha chapters and volunteers.

'APSA' was the top WAH 2001 project. Based in Bangalore, Karnataka, it involves the establishment of ten centers to help prevent child labor. Each center will serve 40 to 50 children, the objective being to prevent slum children from dropping out of school in order to

join the labor force.

'Anandwan', is run by Vikas Amte, son of Leprosy and Narmada Bachao activist Baba Amte. It provides the means for the self-reliant existence for a large community of the disabled and handicapped. A part of this large project is "Yuvagram", a vocational center for disabled, underprivileged students that WAH funded.

'Rural Development Institute (RDI)' is based in the Garhwal hills of the Himalayas, where education is a scarce commodity. RDI has been working to empower adolescents, to initiate self-management programs and conduct technical training camps to equip them with the skills for earning a livelihood.

The 'Irula' Project is targeted at the Irula tribals of Tamilnadu. Afflicted with nearly 100% illiteracy, the Irulas have been repeatedly exploited by landlords and subjected to tremendous economic hardships. WAH provided funds for running motivational centers in different villages, benefiting more than 450 Irula children.

'Vanavasi Ashram' is a residential adivasi school in Wayanad district, Kerala, that provides education and training to children until the seventh grade. Its short-term objective is to extend classes to the tenth grade and ensure that the students do not abandon their studies after the 7th.

With the economic downturn in 2001, the WAH target of $100,000 seemed to be an insurmountable challenge. However, when WAH 2001 closed on September 5, over 1300 donors had come together to raise over $101,000. It is the because of the unfaltering enthusiasm of our volunteers, coupled with the generosity of patrons all over the world, that WAH has been a resounding success year after year.

Please visit http://www.workanhour.com for more details. ◆

(Clockwise from top)
1-Arts and crafts at the Rural Development Institute.
2-Adivasi children sharing a smile at Vanavasi Ashram.
3-Students at an Irula motivational center.
4-Child labour prevention centers of APSA.
5-Overcoming disablity with dignity at Anandwan.

finances

Consolidated Statement of Financial Condition (Financial Year 2001)

	End of Year 2001	End of Year 2000
Assets:		
Cash - non-interest bearing	12,450.00	15,000.00
Savings and temporary cash investments	1,215,983.00	960,167.00
Land and building	0.00	0.00
Other assets	24,580.00[1]	0.00
Total Assets	**1,253,013.00**	**975,167.00**
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	0.00	0.00
Grants payable	0.00	0.00
Other liabilities	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	**0.00**	**0.00**
Net Assets or Fund Balance	**1,253,013.00**	**975,167.00**

[1]200 Shares of IBM Corporation were donated which had not been liquidated as of the close of 2001. These are recorded at FMV as of Dec 28, 2001.

Consolidated Statement of Income (Financial Year 2001)

Fiscal Year	2001	2000
Revenues:		
Direct public support	626,698.00	735,260.00
Indirect public support	80,472.00	67,438.00
Government contributions (grants)	0.00	0.00
Total contributions, gifts and grants	707,170.00	802,698.00
Membership Dues	0.00	0.00
Investment Income	21,422.00	25,175.00
Gross revenue through special events	577,887.00	328,468.00
Less: Fundraising expenses	183,225.00	128,958.00
Net income from special events	394,662.00	199,510.00
Gross sales of inventory, less returns	35,582.00	35,905.00
Less: Cost of goods sold	28,572.00	15,102.00
Gross profit from sales of inventory	7,010.00	20,803.00
Other revenues	0.00	1,315.00
Total Revenues	**1,130,264.00**	**1,049,501.00**
Expenses:		
Grants and similar amounts paid	848,899.00	
Professional fees and other payments	0.00	
Printing, publication, postage and shipping	2,619.00[2]	
Other expenses	900.00[3]	
Total Expenses	**852,418.00**	
Net Income	**277,846.00**	

[2]Includes newsletters printing and posting.
[3]Includes banking fees of approximately $900.00 and other general and administrative expenses

appendix

Asha chapters and contacts

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Chapter-wise Asha projects for 2001

AFE - Arizona		AFE - Berkeley	
Abhiyan	2,500.00	Abilities Project	4,500.00
Deen Bandhu Trust	2,750.00	Beekeeping Project (Kaithi)	1,500.00
Ishan's Free Primary Sch.	3,200.00	CAST	5,400.00
NASEOH	4,000.00	ISDGEI	2,700.00
PATS Ragavendra Primary Sch.	1,500.00	Jyotirgamaya	1,050.00
Sai Kripa	1,800.00	MSE	2,400.00
SVES	1,000.00	Path of Light	2,000.00
Total	**16,750.00**	Project Pride	1,940.00
		Sarvodaya Parivar Trust	4,000.00
AFE - Athens		VJPS Fellowship (Mahesh)	1,200.00
None	0.00	**Total**	**26,690.00**
Total	**0.00**		

AFE-Central NJ		AFE-Detroit	
Sewa Chakkara Samajam	2,500.00	Muskaan	1,500.00
Total	**2,500.00**	Shanti Sadhana Ashram	2,500.00
		Total	**4,000.00**
AFE-Chicago			
Aralu Project	5,850.00	**AFE-Heartland**	
Gramya	1,703.00	Athiri Kala Nilaya	1,200.00
Navjyoti Project	5,000.00	**Total**	**1,200.00**
ROPA	750.00	**AFE-Houston**	
Asmita	550.00	None	0.00
Vidyananda Gurukula	1,000.00	**Total**	**0.00**
Total	**14,853.00**	**AFE-Indiana**	
		Gurukulam	7,000.00
AFE-Cleveland		**Total**	**7,000.00**
Saathi	1,850.00	**AFE-Irvine**	
Sewa Chakkara Samajam	1,000.00	Ananya Trust	1,500.00
Total	**2,850.00**	**Total**	**1,500.00**
AFE-Colorado		**AFE-Kentucky**	
Arz	2,200.00	None	0.00
DSSCOD	1,000.00	**Total**	**0.00**
Sadbhav Mission	600.00	**AFE - Los Angeles**	
Total	**3,800.00**	Star English High Sch.	1,000.00
		Saath Charitable Trust	350.00
AFE-Cornell		Youth Dreams	5,800.00
AID	8,500.00	**Total**	**7,150.00**
Institute of Social Work	3,900.00		
Irula Project, Bharathi Trust	1,500.00	**AFE-Madison**	
Kaingkarya	1,000.00	Each One Teach One	3,621.00
Langarberia Sch.	1,000.00	Rani Kajal Jeevanshala Sch.	2,000.00
SEED	1,000.00	Shiksha Niketan	2,000.00
Total	**16,900.00**	Vivekananda Foundation	1,200.00
		Total	**8,821.00**
AFE - Corvallis			
None	0.00	**AFE-MIT**	
Total	**0.00**	Deen Bandhu Trust	5,000.00
		IOI	2,500.00
AFE-Dallas		Jaher	1,500.00
Beena Handa	1,200.00	Nutanhat	950
Saath Charitable Trust	8,968.05	Prerna Niketan	1,600.00
Total	**10,168.05**	SLADS	1,220.00
		SODWAC	1,090.00
AFE - DC		SEE Dalits	5,777.50
AID	5,281.00	Sumangali Seva Ashram	2,000.00
EDPY	2,600.00	SVYM	5,000.00
Forward	1,400.00	TNSF	100
Nalamdana	1,800.00	To Reach You (TRY)	1,450.00
RDI	5,800.00	Vivekananda Foundation	3,000.00
RIDS School.	1,500.00	VOICE	2,500.00
Total	**18,381.00**	WARM	500
		Total	**34,187.50**
AFE-Delaware			
Astitva	4,000.00		
MICDA	5,000.00		
Total	**9,000.00**		

AFE - MSU	
ISDGEI	1,100.00
Muskaan	4,800.00
Total	**5,900.00**

AFE - NYC/NJ	
Bustee Welfare Center	2,000.00
Door Step School	5,950.00
MSSS	1,600.00
Pratham	3,556.00
Sarada Kalyan Bandar	5,000.00
Sewa Chakkara Samajam	1,500.00
Sri Sarada Sangha	1,500.00
Sumangali Seva Ashram	4,000.00
Timbaktu Collective	6,100.00
VESC	2,500.00
Total	**33,706.00**

AFE - Portland	
Mahila Action	1,500.00
Total	**1,500.00**

AFE - Princeton	
AKP & SK	8,000.00
FODRA	3,833.00
KNUC	7,820.00
Vasundhara	7,276.00
Total	**26,929.00**

AFE - Redlands	
Bhaichara Vidyalaya	1,025.00
Pothamkandam School	550.00
Total	**1,575.00**

AFE - SE Florida	
None	0.00
Total	**0.00**

AFE - Seattle	
Anugriha	45.00
Asha	6,000.00
Astha	6,100.00
Avehi Abacus	16,900.00
BTS	13,700.00
BHSS	43,900.00
Champa Mahila Society	12,788.00
Chetanaa	5,700.00
Digantar	3,000.00
Each One Teach One	2,520.00
IOI	3,500.00
JBVS	16,100.00
Jyothi Nilayam	2,500.00
Kaithi	3,200.00
Prasanna Jyothi	1,680.00

Project Youth Dreams	4,000.00
Ravi Aluganti Fellowship	1,660.00
REDAG	500.00
RHEDT	12,300.00
Rudra & Santosh	2,000.00
Sahanivasa	6,084.00
SDIC	2,000.00
Sankurathri Foundation	5,000.00
Shanti Sadhana Ashram	2,500.00
Shastri School	6,940.00
SSK	3,000.00
SSUP	6,150.00
Street To School	3,000.00
Sumavanam	3,100.00
SUPPORT	30,000.00
Sutradhar	4,000.00
Udhavum Karangal	15,540.00
Vidya Bhawan Society	2,130.00
Vikasana	4,000.00
VOICEE	3,000.00
Total	**254,537.00**

AFE - Silicon Valley	
Asha (Assam)	5,870.00
Bhagavathula Trust	2,560.00
CDDP	5,000.00
CAST	3,300.00
Fellowship	800.00
Him Darshin Kutir	2,050.00
IOI	3,000.00
Irula Project	10,000.00
Jeevan Gnanoday	7,900.00
Jeevan Jyot Mandal	5,100.00
Jnana Prabodhini	2,400.00
MSSS	16,267.00
MDCCT	4,500.00
MICDA	21,700.00
Pathri	9,800.00
Project Pride	2,148.00
Ruchika	5,850.00
RRC	1,500.00
Samrakshan Trust	7,900.00
SSUP	912.50
Sowbagya Educational Trust	2,374.00
SVYM	2,000.00
Udhavum Karangal	15,000.00
Vanavasi Ashram Trust	6,500.00
Vidya	4,000.00
VOICE	3,600.00
Total	**152,031.50**

AFE - St. Louis

Maharogi Sewa Samiti	1,100.00
Puttur Education Society	3,000.00
RSSC	2,500.00
VAK	4,495.00
VOICE	5,500.00
Total	**16,595.00**

AFE - Stanford

Bharat Vidyalam	15,000.00
CAST	1,500.00
Internship	2,500.00
Jagriti Vihara	2,200.00
Kislaya Vidya Mandir	1,500.00
MICDA	2,500.00
Nalamdana	2,500.00
PMSK	5,243.00
PEPS	2,200.00
Purulia	3,952.00
SSUP	1,866.00
Vanavasi Ashram Trust	6,500.00
Total	**47,461.00**

AFE - Syracuse

Ananya Trust	3,200.00
RMKM	1,632.00
To Reach You (TRY)	650.00
Total	**5,482.00**

AFE - Urbana-Champaign

Bal Anand	1,410.00
Sunaad	2,030.00
Holy Mother Trust	3,130.00
K.F.I.	1,030.00
Odanadi Seva Samsthe	1,230.00
SEED	4,500.00
Vivekananda Ashram	2,030.00
Total	**15,360.00**

AFE - Yale

None	0.00
Total	**0.00**

Asha Master

Asha India	22,196.00
Asha 2000 (Shanmuga Subramanian)	2,500.00
Project Pride	2,000.00
Total	**26,696.00**

Work An Hour

IOI	5,500.00
Sahanivasa	5,350.00
UMBVS	8,500.00
VOICE	3,250.00
APSA	9,600.00
HIHT	12,863.00
Irula Project	9,763.00
Maharogi Sewa Samiti	7,650.00
Vanavasi Ashram Trust	12,900.00
Total	**75,376.00**

42

Contact Information

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The Annual Report Team

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