

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**Asha for Education**  
Bringing hope through education

**Silicon Valley Chapter**

# LETTER FROM THE CHAPTER COORDINATORS

Dear Asha community,

At the outset, from the bottom of our hearts, a huge thank you for 2021! This year would not have been possible without your unending support and commitment to educate and uplift the underprivileged children and their communities in India.

We are wrapping the year knowing that our coordinated efforts have enabled nearly 23,000 underprivileged children in India to dream of a better life. This was possible through 23 project partners across 12 states, receiving over \$500,000 in grants from Asha Silicon Valley. We also continued our effort to identify and fund novel ideas through our seed funding contest, Edu-Impact, which saw a great participation from truly remarkable projects across India.

However, the year was not without any challenges. With the pandemic continuing to rage, our project partners faced more challenges than previous year in ensuring continued education of the children while keeping them and the staff safe. We supported our partners financially and otherwise in ensuring they are equipped to handle these challenges. We also had challenges in remitting funds to our partners since their FCRA approvals [which are required to receive contributions] were all due to expire in 2021. With sufficient planning and communication, we were able to ensure the funds reach our partners either in time or ahead of time.

With easy access to vaccinations and reduced regulations here in Silicon Valley, Team Asha fund raising programs, which were suspended in 2020, were restarted this year. We saw impressive participation in all our programs - running, biking, tri, and climbing programs here in South Bay and running programs in East Bay. Thanks to Team Asha, corporate/personal fundraisers, and our long term well wishers, we were able to raise over \$650,000 this year for Asha Silicon Valley, leaving the treasury in a strong position for 2022 and beyond.

We have put together a capable and committed team to kick start 2022. We wish them all the best and request the continued support of the Asha community in ensuring we keep doing the important work of ensuring education for all.

Thank you.

Asha SV Coordination Team 2021



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# 2021

## At a glance

Funds disbursed  
**\$ 503,341\***

Children impacted  
**22,899**

Funds raised  
**\$ 424,235+<sup>#</sup>**

Projects supported  
**23**

States reached  
**12**

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\*As of Dec 20, 2021 #As of Nov 30, 2021. Final 2021 numbers to follow

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - TEAM ASHA PROGRAM

2021 continued to be a challenging year for organizing in-person team events due to the pandemic. Despite this, team Asha volunteers have successfully completed yet another record-breaking year of the program, while keeping the health of the participants in mind and navigating state/county rules.

### Anup Som - Asha Biking Coordinator



Anup (front) with 2021  
TA riders

Anup first joined the TA biking program in 2014, having never owned a bike in the US before. Touring the San Francisco bay area and its many scenic routes on his bike captivated him and he volunteered to be a biking program captain a couple years later, and a coordinator in the 2021 season.

During his time as a volunteer, Anup's interest in Asha projects grew as he witnessed the impact of Asha's efforts personally during his site visits to Udaipur, Jammu and Kashmir and Kanpur.

This year, Anup and fellow biking coordinators have led participating bikers through two successful seasons of rides. In season 1, even though the original target ride (Giro Bello) was cancelled due to the pandemic, TA organized its own ride through the serene Monterey bay and Carmel by the Sea areas.

In season 2, TA coords faced a new challenge in the form of poor air quality due to the devastating forest fires in September. The organizing team had to constantly monitor AQI forecasts and adapt their riding routes in real-time to successfully pull off the season. 67 bikers completed their target ride (Giro d'Wine Country), of which 27 completed 100-mile rides - a new TA record. Anup and fellow TA biking coords have had **a record breaking year for enrollment, active riders and total fundraising per rider** in one of the most testing years in TA history.

### Bharati Ramajayam - Asha Running Coach

Bharathi joined Asha in 2010 to cope with the sudden loss of her father and to honor a cause close to his heart - that of education for underprivileged children. Since then, she has volunteered with a great passion and has donned the hats of Mentor, Operations and Fundraising Coordinator, and Coach for the TA East Bay program.

This season of the TA running program had to undergo many changes in execution, including new safety standards, smaller groups and the added complexity of securing trail permits. Overcoming all these odds, the 2021 Season of TA running was conducted successfully.

Bharathi finds volunteering with Asha one of her most fulfilling experiences and as a small chance to return the countless blessings she has received in life. As she puts it, "**volunteering with Asha has made me tremendously aware of life and its blessings...the cause transformed me into a better version of myself. The program changed me in such a way that every day I woke up with the thought and persistent question - "What are you doing for others?"**". Fellow volunteers and coordinators never miss a chance to applaud Bharathi's efforts.

Finally, being a running coach, Bharathi would also like to remind anyone thinking about running for a cause that the rewards are priceless - "new friendships, a great path to fitness, feeling of accomplishment, the thrill of crossing the finish line and a completely new attitude about life and running."



Bharathi at a Team  
Asha event

Volunteers like Anup, Bharathi and countless others keep the wheels of Asha SV running. [Click here](#) to know more about joining the cause or to help spread the word.

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES/EVENTS 2021



Asha SV volunteers met in-person after more than a year for a small picnic at Baylands park in Sunnyvale in June 2021.

Here's hoping for more fun activities, guest visits, in-person chapter meetings and events in 2022.

## TEAM ASHA 2021



TA Climbing



TA Triathlon



TA Running East Bay



TA Biking



TA Running SV

## SUCCESS STORIES FROM OUR PROJECTS

### Seva Mandir

Seva Mandir project has been supported by Asha for education with an aim to provide quality education to out-of-school children in remote areas of Southern Rajasthan since 2008.

Bali and Sunil lost their mother in 2016 due to unforeseeable health issues. Their father - who is a daily wage farmer, could not bear the trauma of his wife's passing and suffered mental illness. There was nobody to support the children. When need and hunger came, they started cooking and were somehow sustaining themselves.

When a student from a Shiksha Kendra saw Bali and Sunil trying to fend for themselves, He informed Mr. Jagma Pargi, a Shiksha Kendra instructor who gave shelter to these kids.

Finally in July of 2018, after convincing their father they both were enrolled in level C (unable to read and write) of Shiksha Kendra. After months of persistence from instructors, and tremendous hard work from Bali and Sunil, they both stepped up and are now currently in Level A (able to read, write and basic mathematics).

Asha supported Shiksha Kendra is continuing to be the bridge school for Sunil and Bali until they graduate and eventually enroll in mainstream education. The Shiksha Kendra is backing their continuous learning against all the challenges and further follows up on their students even when they have been mainstreamed.



### Sankalp Ek Prayas



In the second wave of the pandemic in India, around 60% of families in the villages served by Sankalp in rural Chhatisgarh had one or more members infected by COVID-19. A majority of these families were daily wage laborers or small time farmers. With an earning member of the family getting infected by covid-19, the family as a whole was unable to make ends meet.

With very limited medical facilities available, patients often had to make the hard decision to travel for hours to reach a hospital. And in many cases are unable to afford this care or pay for medicines. Sankalp requested for funding to procure face mask, sanitizers and other medical gear for volunteers and medical workers in the districts of Bhilai and Durg. In addition they requested for funding to distribute free rations for families where a earning member was deceased due to COVID -19 or unable to work for long durations.

The pandemic has also exposed a stark digital divide in rural India. With government school closures entering the second academic year and with online education being deemed infeasible, Sankalp has had to quickly adapt to ensure continuity of education. Since June 2020, Sankalp has been running mini-schools in 30 villages, held in COVID-safe locations with students and teachers belonging to the same-village social bubble.

Asha's intervention has helped more kids receive learning material through Sankalp's teaching staff, and children continued to learn even through school closures. There is greater awareness and adoption of mask wearing, hand hygiene etc due to sankalps intervention. Besides this, many more families are receiving food aid from Sankalp through funds received from Asha Silicon Valley.

## EDU IMPACT 2021

Edu Impact is Asha Silicon Valley's initiative to seek innovative proposals from NGOs working in the area of children's education. The idea is to fund 2-3 new projects each year which are innovative and scalable. 2021 is the fourth year in succession for the initiative. We are gratified to have received a tremendous response from various NGOs over the years, with dozens of proposals pouring in. In 2021, despite the impact of the second wave of COVID-19 in India during the months of April, May, and June, we received a total of 37 proposals for funding.

For the 2021 edu impact program, organizations focusing two main categories were invited to participate : **Education Policy Advocacy and Enforcement** and **Educational Initiatives Empowering the Girl Child**. Volunteers and patrons were also welcome to submit proposals from organizations which are doing exceptional work in entirely novel ways or targeting problems not in our current project portfolio in a special sub category of their own.

Yet another improvement in this iteration of edu impact was the new evaluation process. Each proposal was ranked by 4 evaluators and a median score assigned to the project was used to compare with that of other proposals. an adjustment to the final score for what we called an evaluator tilt. This adjustment was made to ensure that particularly generous or particularly strict evaluators did not unduly influence the chances of a proposal being selected. The "tilt" was calculated as the difference between the average score assigned by the evaluator to several projects and the average score across all evaluators.

After a full round of evaluation and a tie-breaker round, four projects from the 'empowering the girl child' category were chosen. **VARUN** aims to provide a safe space for girls in Naugarh by providing a hostel for them (encouraging them to stay in school and to bring down drop-out rates). **Sankalp's GARIMA project** will help 1500 at-risk girls navigate a difficult pre-adulthood in rural areas of Chattisgarh. **Jagriti Bala Vikas Samiti** will provide quality education to the girl children enrolled at Swami Vivekananda Vidyalaya near Kanpur. Finally, **Foundation to Educate Girls Globally** aims to increase enrolment and retention of out-of-school girls with a very promising impact ratio.

Read more about the 2021 edu impact results in the ASHA SV [winter newsletter](#).

## TEAM ASHA 2021

Team Asha is a premier endurance sports training program providing personalized coaching, motivation and support for individuals with a goal to run a half/full marathon or bike 100 km/100 miles, or do a sprint/olympic triathlon. More recently, a climbing/hiking program has also been added to the TA activity list.

Like many other activities during the span of this pandemic, the TA program too saw a myriad of challenges, some of which were highlighted in the volunteer spotlight section of this report as well in our quarterly newsletters. Despite many hurdles, the 2021 seasons of TA programs have been successfully planned and executed by volunteers and coordinators, laying a path for a more energetic 2022 season.

The TA biking program tried a new fundraising experiment this year and removed the target dollar amount for funds raised by a participant. The surprising results was the many trainees went well beyond the usual targets and this year's seasons set a new records for enrollment, active riders and the dollar amount raised per rider. The TA East Bay running program of this year was able to train four new women athletes to complete their first full marathons, which is also a new record. The running programs also were able to exceed their fundraising targets.

A per-program breakdown of funds raised is available in the winter 2022 edition of the Asha SV newsletter but the summary is as shown below. As of Dec 01, 2021, \$132,769 of donations were confirmed.

### Programs

5

### Trainees (participants)

251

### Logged donations

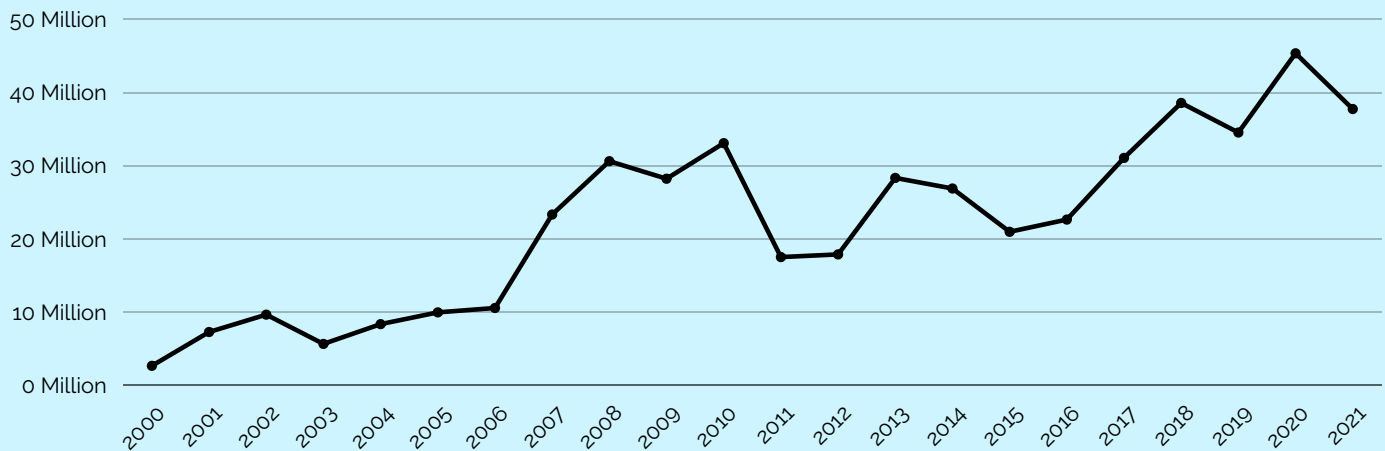
\$312,543

# 2021

## Financial summary

### 2021 disbursements consistent during a very challenging year

#### Disbursements in INR Millions\*



\*2021 numbers calculated @ 1USD=75INR for illustration only

## Silicon Valley Chapter Impact



Nearly \$8.8  
Million Disbursed

100k+  
Children  
Supported



23  
Years of  
Service