



ENDEARING CAUSES



Quarterly newsletter of Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter



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Asha for Education
Bringing hope through education
Silicon Valley chapter



Message From The Coordinator

Dear Friends of Asha,

Thank you for your support towards Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter. We continue to operate our chapter activities remotely considering the Covid-19 surges and had a busy quarter with project funding activities, edu impact contest discussions and Team Asha programs. In this edition, among other updates, we have highlighted our edu impact seed funding contest review process.

This year most of our projects are due for FCRA renewal after October. In light of this upcoming roadblock, we expedited our project updates and funding activities and have nearly finished the funding disbursements for the year. We also performed virtual site visits for several projects due to current challenges with in-person visits for projects in remote locations.

Our Team Asha programs for fundraising are also wrapping up, updates on that to come in the next edition. I would like to thank all our volunteers for stepping up and adjusting to this new normal and successfully executing the chapter activities and Team Asha programs.

If you would like to volunteer, donate, or learn more about our initiatives, visit sv.ashanet.org, or write to us at sv@ashanet.org. Thank you again for your continued support towards Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter.

- Kritika Upreti,
Chapter Coordinator



2021
so far...

22,791



Children Impacted

\$427,629



Disbursed

23



Projects Supported



Edu Impact Update

Edu Impact is Asha Silicon Valley's initiative to seek innovative proposals from non governmental organizations 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 44 proposals for funding.

As described in the [Spring 2021 newsletter](#), we had invited proposals in two categories, Education Policy Advocacy and Enforcement and Educational Initiatives Empowering the Girl Child. We received 27 proposals for the Girl Child category and 10 proposals in the Education Policy category. We had also allowed submissions even if the proposal did not fit into either of these categories, just in case we missed out on deserving proposals because of strict definitions of categories. There were 7 such proposals, bringing the total to 44. The proposals came from all over the country, with a significant number from Tamil Nadu (11) and Uttar Pradesh (7).

Evaluation process:

With these many entries, it is difficult for one individual or a small group to ensure a fair ranking of the proposals. To start with, we decided that every proposal should receive at least four



Gramin Shiksha Kendra Samiti, Rajasthan



Sankalp ek Prayas, Chattisgarh



Swami Vivekananda Vidyalya, UP



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independent evaluations. This meant 176 evaluations, clearly beyond the scope of a small team. We sought volunteers from the chapter, and eventually 12 people volunteered to do the evaluations. Proposals were assigned four separate evaluators at random, while taking care to ensure that no project steward was assigned to evaluate a proposal submitted by their project partner.

One of our goals was to make the criteria for evaluation as objective as possible. The proposals were evaluated according to the following six criteria:

- Organizational Experience
- Project Focus
- Project Scalability
- Innovation
- Appropriate Success Metrics
- Budget within Range

On the first and the last criteria, the proposal could receive a 0 or 1. These criteria are binary: either the NGO has the experience required for the proposal or it doesn't; the budget is either within our declared range or it is not. The middle four criteria are clearly subjective, so we allowed evaluators to choose between assigning a score of 0, 1, or 2 for each of them, reflecting a categorical assessment of low, medium, or high. This approach means that overall, a proposal could receive a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 10. Once a proposal had been ranked by 4 evaluators, its median score



Educate Girls, (Rajasthan, MP, UP)



Digambarpur Angikar, West Bengal



Child Survival India, Haryana



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VARUN, UP

would be used for consideration along with the median scores of other proposals. The median score was used to eliminate the impact of outliers. One last feature of our process was 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.

After having performed these evaluations, we ended up with a clear winner in the Educational Policy category. In the Girl Child category, we had a tie for the top spot between two proposals. In addition, several other projects were relatively close in their normalized scores. Based upon a suggestion in a chapter meeting, we have decided to have a second round of evaluations for these proposals. For this second round we are following a ranked choice method to pick the top three proposals among seven. Stay tuned to learn more about the projects we'll support as part of edu-impact 2021.

Volunteer Spotlight



Like many in the Bay Area, I discovered Asha for education through events held by the Stanford chapter. Having had some experience volunteering with an organization in India, I knew the amount of effort that goes into one and how much work there is to be done in the world. I decided to attend a meeting to see if I could fit in at Asha SV.

My admiration for many fellow volunteers and their dedication to this cause has kept me motivated to volunteer with Asha for nearly two years now. During this time, I have had the opportunity to create media content for organizations, help evaluate proposals, represent a project, and to work on this newsletter among other things. Asha SV has tremendous impact on educational efforts in India, while the work is very fulfilling. It is a true win-win situation.

I would like to highlight for any prospective volunteers that there is a flavor of volunteering suitable for everyone at Asha, as well as opportunities to carve out their own new niches. We hope to see you with us soon.

-Niranjan T



Success Story



Ms. Urmila , beneficiary and volunteer of Samagra Seva



Urmila Kumari engaging children at the CEC

Urmila Kumari lost her father in 2012 when she was only 8 years old. Her mother tried her best to make both ends meet by working as a domestic help or agricultural laborer but she could not succeed. Urmila, along with her mother and three sisters returned to her mother's home at Dharmpur in Khairi block of Jamui, Bihar. She wanted to study but, hailing from a very poor Dalit family, could not see how to do it. It was at this point Urmila happened to meet the workers of Samagra Seva, an organization working with the Musahar community in Jamui district of Bihar. After learning her story, workers at Samagra Seva decided to help her. They got her enrolled in the local school and helped her with reading and writing material. They convinced her mother and uncle to let her continue her studies. She passed her Matriculation examination (Class 10th) in 2019 and is now a student of Intermediate (Class 12th). She wants to become a nurse and serve her community.

While continuing with her studies, she observed most of the children of her community wasting their time in wandering, working in brick kilns or grazing animals. She discussed this with her guides at Samagra Seva and to resolve this issue, they decided to start a 'Cultural Education Center' in her hamlet. While continuing her studies, she started teaching such children at the CEC. Before the intervention, 91% of children in her hamlet were out of school but as of today no child is out of school.

In her own words, "Had I not found a way with the assistance of Samagra Seva workers, I would have been married much earlier and by now rearing my children. I wish to bring all the girls in my community under the light of education so that they may be spared from the curse of child marriage and child bearing."



Projects Showcase: Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti

Apna Skool project, run by Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti [JBVS], attempts to reach the underprivileged children of migrant workers with basic primary education in an environment which combines awareness of health, hygiene, and social issues. The project also intends to protect children from child labor and malnutrition by providing a safe learning environment with nutritious mid-day meals. In the span of nearly 23 years, JBVS through the support of [Asha SV](#) has directly enabled 20000 children to have a better and brighter future. Many children have continued their education to undergraduate degree and are now contributing back to the communities they grew up in. This project is also supported by the community of IIT, Kanpur. Click [here](#) to learn more about JBVS.



\$551,144

TOTAL FUNDS DISBURSED

23

YEARS OF SUPPORT

“He who opens a school door, closes a prison.”

VICTOR HUGO