

Annual Report

2020-2021

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The year has been the most unusual year in living memory. Covid-19 came into our lives and turned the world on its head. Suddenly we were restricted to our homes and all our services were forced to move online. Initially, it was difficult for some of our youngsters to participate through a screen. It was also a difficult time for families who did not have the resources that online learning required. We were fortunate that most of our youngsters settled down to participating online and that we were able to raise the funds to support families. Our Bachelors and Diploma courses were also forced to move online and trainees were deprived of practical experience which is a critical part of their training.

While there were many challenges, there were positives too. Families from across the country, who found it difficult to travel all the way to Delhi, as well as many outside the country, could avail of AFA's services including intervention, diagnostic services and counselling. Families with demanding lives, who found it difficult to visit for sessions, could now participate online. There was a rise in the number of adults seeking a diagnosis as they found it easier to interact online. A great outcome was that families were spending more time with each other and bonding better, especially with their autistic members, and learning how to support them effectively in their learning. While the number of direct contact services to autistic individuals and their families came down as an impact of the coronavirus, the demand for our trainings rose.

In the midst of the despair of migrant labour and people with disabilities left in the lurch due to the sudden lockdown, AFA stepped in to do its bit for relief work through a partnership in Project Delhi as well as in providing meals to labour who were left penniless.

Covid affected almost all organisations financially, but NGOs far more than others, with layoffs and salary cuts. Though AFA too had its share of setbacks we ensured that we did not have to do this. We were truly blessed to have colleagues who came forward and donated parts of their salary so that the organisation's work was not affected.

The hardest part of the year gone by was to not have the easy camaraderie that is so a part of the team we work with. But there was an important learning: that the online mode can also work effectively alongside physical services. Perhaps a hybrid mode will be the way to go in times to come. As we step out of this difficult year our hope is that it is followed by a better and happier one.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

AFA serves autistic people across spectrum of abilities, ages and socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. It has turned all its services, except supported-living, online. These included our Open Door Day School, the Vocational Centre, Parent Child Training Program, Employment Readiness Program, On the Job Training Program online, Educational Intervention and Counseling, as well as the various therapies.

It was a lot more work for the teaching team as not only does this require holding the student's attention and ensuring they learnt, the online mode requires a certain level of planning that has to take into account parental capacity for preparation as well as availability of teaching materials in homes. To make the implementation of these programs effective, curriculum and teaching learning materials were modified and adapted to the online format. New resources like demo videos and visuals were created. Parent groups were formed through WhatsApp and provided trainings to the parents/primary caregivers on how to facilitate the online classes.

The teaching team did a tremendous job.

OUR REACH

Diagnostic Assessments	24
Functional Assessment	32
OT Assessment	25
Open Door Day School	35
Parent Child Training Program	33
Educational Intervention and Counseling Sessions	1018
OT Sessions	388
Speech and Language Therapy Sessions	103
Aadhaar Vocational Training Centre	14
Teachers Trained under the Diploma Program	11
Teachers Trained as Bachelors of Education	23
People Trained through Webinars	6000
Employment Readiness Program	13
On the Job Training	1
Ananda Assisted Living	13

1. OPEN DOOR CLINICAL SERVICES

1.1 Assessments

Objectives:

- To provide assessments for early and complete diagnosis of customized therapy for children and adults with ASD;
- To collaborate with medical professionals and bodies in developing appropriate and timely diagnostic services;
- To assess the individual child and adult's functional skill areas;
- To provide a comprehensive sensory evaluation.

Highlights

In the initial phase of the pandemic, assessments were kept on hold as the team worked on developing an online mode of assessments and families worked on helping their children adjust to the new ways.

Diagnostic Assessments

Screening and diagnostic assessments were carried out for children and adults using internationally standardized diagnostic and screening instruments.

Persons with autism and their families were provided with information on autism and on the services available. Outstation families were referred to services in their areas.

Assessment of Functional Skills

Functional skills in the domains such as motor functioning, communication, speech, imitation, cognition were assessed.

Individualized Education Plans for each child was provided based on the assessment.

Specific activities of daily living were targeted based on the assessment.

Occupational and Sensory Assessment

An occupational and sensory profile was obtained through a comprehensive evaluation of the child using direct observation and feedback from parents.

This provided the base for all subsequent interventions.

- **Diagnostic Assessments: 24**
- **Functional Skills Assessments: 32**
- **OT Assessments: 25**

1.2 Intervention Programs

Objectives:

- To teach social and communication and cognitive skills;
- To teach adaptive living skills;
- To develop independent functioning and help children and adults with autism lead independent daily lives;
- To prepare children to join inclusive programs; To provide a structured learning environment;
- To empower parents.

Highlights

Through its various intervention programs, AFA offers an eclectic mix of indigenous methodologies alongside evidence-based practices such as TEACCH, ABA, VBA, and other forms of Assisted and Augmentative Communication including PECS and Social Stories.

1.2.1 Open Door Day School



- A total of 35 autistic individuals have attended Open Door.
- Due to the lockdown and ongoing Covid situation, all the students attended classes through the online mode.
- Teachers targeted different skill areas like communication, language, academic, self-help, pre-vocational, leisure and motor skills.
- Despite the limitations of the online mode, our learners showed a development in their skill sets.
- The Talk with Me app for communication was introduced. The app helps teachers, parents and children communicate through questions and answers.
- A 7-year old child started singing along with the teachers. He has started to respond to questions.
- A few children who were initially not able to sit for their online classes can now do so.
- A 10-year old's parents have made a communication book for him. He started using the communications cards to talk about the weather, his feelings and to greet his friends and teachers. He has also become tech savvy.
- A 14-year old student is now able to focus on what is happening in class. He has independently started doing pre-vocational activities. He is beginning to enjoy exercising. He spontaneously communicates that he has finished all his work by showing his teacher the "I am done" card. His skills with scissors have improved.
- A student who did not like to exercise earlier has started doing complex multistep exercises. He has started wearing a mask while practising food packaging activities.
- Another student has now managed to unmute himself during online classes and mute himself when he is done speaking.
- Parents of students have learnt ways to teach and interact meaningfully with their children.



1.2.2 Educational Intervention and Counseling

- Families from all parts of the world – USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal, the UAE, and all across India, took advantage of our Outreach Program.
- Beneficiaries ranged in age from 18 months to 45 years and above and were from varied economic and social backgrounds.

1.2.3 Parent Child Training Program



- Given the Covid pandemic, the PCTP was delivered through the online format from April 2020 onwards.
- With appropriate modifications, the 'hands on', intensive training aspect of the program was replicated, each goal of the program was successfully achieved and in fact the online format brought to the fore certain unique advantages vis a vis the physical format.
- This included the reach of the program widening to a truly global level, with participants from the UK, Germany, the UAE, Singapore and Australia accessing the program. In addition, the program was accessible to families, where constraints like having an infant/aged parent and/or other family/work responsibilities may have made it impossible for them to devote the time required for the physical format.
- All the cohorts comprised of participants from across the country (and the world), with diverse backgrounds and varied ages, needs and ability levels of the children.
- Each cohort was extremely successful, with each participating child learning varied vital skills in their time at the PCTP and the participating parents feeling empowered, in charge of, and deeply vested their children's learning for now and for the future.
- The primary learning was the realisation that despite being designed to be a 'hands on' model, with intensive physical interactions with parents and children alike, the PCTP can be delivered just as successfully through an online format, producing similar positive outcomes as in the physical format.

There were many wonderful instances of learning and progress in each cohort:

- An 11-year-old in a constant battle with the mother over mobile phone use learnt to self-regulate mobile usage.
- A child wedded to his device learnt to voluntarily keep it aside to do academics.
- A 5-year-old learnt to indicate his need to do potty.
- A 6-year-old learnt to sleep without his feeder.
- A child who did not even sit during mealtimes, was sitting for assembly, music, as well as snack time where he fed himself independently.
- A non-speaking child introduced to AAC started speaking a few words. Another learnt to regulate voice from a loud, high pitched tone to a gentler volume and voice.
- A little one had a happy haircut versus the distress and unwillingness she had earlier.
- For one family, family outings have become relaxed and fun.
- A mother was able to travel alone on an international flight with her children and without any difficulties, unlike before PCTP
- A child who did not like attending his school online sessions says that he only wants to attend PCTP and looks forward to the sessions every day.



PARENT CREDENTIALS

"No one can provide such an intensive training. Hats off to you guys!"

"PCTP has made me understand my child much more than I really did. The feeling of acceptance is there now."

"My husband, who had hardly any idea about Autism, attended PCTP and the result was amazing. His learning has made my life much easier. Thank you so much for gifting me a new support system."

"The kind of life skills I have learned in PCTP has helped me to understand my daughter in a better way. No therapist or doctor can equip anyone so well."

"Wanted to really thank you for (for helping me understand the 'Culture of Autism' to taking pride in being a parent of an autistic child."

"This programme has empowered me as a parent to better understand my child, incorporate scientific teaching techniques in his daily routine and give him enough opportunities to grow as a healthy individual."

"This program has given me the clarity and the confidence to accept autism. It really helped me a lot to understand my child and his needs, independently. Now I feel like I have a new family."

"PCTP has changed my perception – to look at things positively."

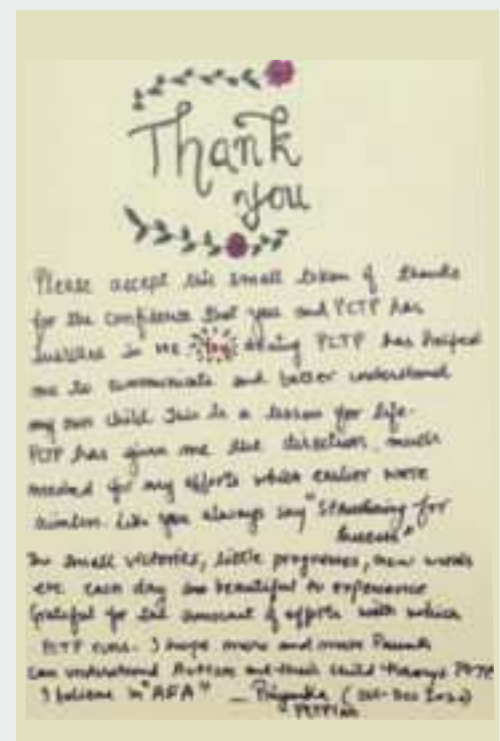
"This has changed my outlook regarding Autism and also about my son. Now I feel more empowered and confident."

"PCTP is a wonderful program organised by AFA and I'm very thankful for the same."

"The teachings and techniques has made me believe that my child can do anything!"

"The guidance of AFA has transformed me into a responsible and responsive mother. The best part of the program was the clarity and flow."

"PCTP is such an empowering program! One actually has to experience to really understand the beauty of it and needless to say, the confidence it gives you. I always wanted to get trained at AFA and the online mode was just perfect for someone like me. I highly recommend PCTP to all the parents who want to start understanding and teaching their child."



PARENT CREDENTIALS

"Best learning experience right from understanding the 'culture of autism' to getting trained in working with my child confidently. It will help me in making him a productive and more independent member of the family."

"Initially it was all very difficult for us to understand the depth of Autism but slowly and gradually we attended different sessions, met different teachers and cleared our doubts. This regained our confidence in our child and most importantly we learned to have hope, patience and commitment. Thanks to the wonderful AFA team and special educators who not only boosted our morale but encouraged us to live each day with our child and enjoy and make the most of it."

"The lockdown period was really stressful for my son. He started to miss school routine. The online classes was a new concept for us and the smile my son had when he saw his teachers and classmates was a delight. His demands to go to school were reduced while he slowly started to sit for the online classes. The teacher's motivation helped us to attend all the classes. The materials used in the classes were well thought and easily available at home."

"It is indeed our pleasure to be associated with the experienced and qualified staff of AFA. The zoom classes are definitely a boon in these tough times. The efforts and hard work AFA has put in makes every activity so easy and enjoyable for our children which I am sure everybody agrees. It's also making us parents learn a new and innovative way to teach our children and make them more aware of the basic life skills. I will be looking forward for more in the coming weeks. A special thanks to all the educators for guiding us throughout."

"हम खुशी की माता पिता आप सभी अध्यापकों से कुछ शेयर करना चाह रहे थे। आपसभी ने जिसतरहसे इस लॉकडाउन की स्थिति में ऑनलाइन क्लासेज़ के माध्यम से अपने सभी शिष्यों को जो शिक्षाप्रदान की, उससे हम और हमारा परिवार आपको बहुत धन्यवाद देते हैं, की आपने हमारे बच्चे को कभी स्कूल की कमी महसूस नहीं होने दी। और हमे भी सभी अध्यापकों से बहुत कुछ सीखनेको मिला है। और हम बच्चे के साथ कर पाए तो हम उनमें अच्छे बदलाव ला सकेंगे। और हमारे साथ २ बच्चे भी है, वह भी ऑनलाइन क्लास देखते है और इनसभीको क्लास अटेंड करके खुशी मिलती है। और क्लास खत्म होने के बाद भी उन एक्टिविज को करनेकी कोशिश करते है। और हमें भी बच्चे के साथ टास्क करनेमें मज़ा आता है और हमे सीखे। कभी मौका मिल रहा है। हम आपसे यह विनती आशा करते है, की आप जबभी अवसर मिले इसी तरह से हमे कृपाप्रदान करते रहिएगा। आपलोग जिस तरह से एक्टिविटीज लेते है, इंटेरेस्टिंग बनाकर आप सब बच्चो को सिखाते है बच्चोको भी मज़ा आता है और सीखते है। और जो स्कूल की छुट्टी होनेवाली है अगर उनमें अगर बच्चे को कुछ होमवर्क घरपर करवाने के लिए कुछ हेल्प आपसे मिलजाए तो बहुत अच्छा रहेगा हमारे लिए और बच्चो को लिए। जोकुछ सीखा है आपसे सीखा है।"

"The Behavioral Session was very helpful. The practical approach on how to go about each problem was discussed at length. The therapist tried to understand the behaviors around each issue and came up with suggestions. Thank you for the session."

- The Open Door Day School: 35
- Parent Child Training Program: 33
- Educational Intervention & Counseling Sessions: 1018
- OT Sessions: 388
- Speech and Language Therapy Sessions : 103

2. ADULT SERVICES

Objectives

- To train adults in vocational skills based on their strengths, interests and abilities;
- To provide a sheltered workplace for adults with high support needs;
- To place individuals with autism in supported and open employment;
- To provide an assisted living facility for adults with autism and other conditions

2.1 Employment Readiness Program



- Trained 13 candidates in three batches of the Employment Readiness Program.
- The online training helped us widen our geographical presence. We had candidates from Mumbai, Haryana, Kolkata, Chennai and UP.
- The program gave candidates the opportunity to practice working online and also helped them to understand the concept of work-from-home.
- The program helped them learn to utilise their lockdown time productively.

2.2 On the Job Training Program

- Sensitised three employers as a pre-internship exercise.
- Successfully placed four candidates for internship at Nestle, McCann Craft Advertising Pvt Ltd and Process 9.
- One candidate was placed in Royal Bank of Scotland (Natwest)



2.3. Supported Employment

- Four individuals from the Supported Employment Program had to take a break from their positions at Lemon Tree Hotels due to Covid. Job coaches updated them on COVID-19 safety precautions in preparation for joining back.
- Trained HR team at RBS on autism-friendly recruitment and interview processes.
- One individual who had to take a break from her position at Taj SATS Air Catering Ltd due to Covid was able to join back at her position.
- Two of our autistic colleagues at AFA have joined back at work physically,
- Continued to support and counsel online autistic individuals who were working from home.

2.4 Aadhaar Vocational Centre (AVC)

- Through online sessions prepared interns to deal with their disruption of routine and to stay at home during lockdown.
- Trained interns unfamiliar with IT to use electronic gadgets while attending online sessions.
- Trained parents on providing structure to their wards at home during lockdown.
- Focused on the learning of independent living skills, soft skills and functional conversation skills via online sessions.
- Interns learnt culinary skills and participated in production of items through online sessions.
- Received orders online and delivered finished products.
- AVC participated in Ekam Fest organized by NHFDC, showcasing products of our centre.
- Celebrated all major festivals and birthdays of interns through online sessions.
- Enthusiastic interns performed an online drama – '*Covid wali Raamleela*'.
- Due to Covid related reasons, the number of participants in AVC went down.



2.5. Ananda – Assisted Living for Persons with Autism and other Developmental Conditions



- Our assisted living grew to being a home for 11 residents.
- Started a sheltered workshop at Ananda in April, 2020 for the residents and the young adults residing in and around Gurugram. However, as the second wave of Covid took over, the day interns discontinued.
- The residents at Ananda learnt a great many independent skills.
- Learnt to attend online classes during Covid.
- Learnt to use face masks.
- An important learning was to be comfortable about having their outings restricted over an extended period of time.
- Introduced permaculture at the assisted living campus in March, 2020, to enrich the soil which is arid and lack essential nutrients, and develop a sustainable and productive farm which not only produces enough food for those living on campus but in the long run makes a profit that will help sustain the functioning of Ananda.
- The Ananda family went on an annual holiday to Jaipur while following the social distancing norms.

- An online session for autism sensitization was organized by AFA for the hotel staff.
- Following the trip, the adults learned to patiently wait for quite a while, without knowing for how long. They have learnt to deal with changes and, above all, many of the residents learnt what it means meeting new people.



PARENT CREDENTIALS

"Last year in March, 2020 I got a call from AFA offering my son a job interview. I would have never known his ability. He showed the interviewers his software skills. I received a call that my son was selected for the internship. I was so happy. His internship training with AFA and internship with the company both are the best things that happened to my son in the pandemic. The team at AFA are mentoring him in office skills and soft skills. I still had so much more to learn about autism from them. They have also helped him be more aware of his emotions and regulate his feelings and manage his anxiety. His confidence, conversation skills, social skills, executive function skills have all improved hugely in the last four months. He has started sharing and discussing his anxieties and fears with Team AFA. I feel so happy and relieved to see him in safe hands. Thank you so much, Team AFA."

"It was a little difficult to let go of my child because she has been with me all these years but it has been a beautiful experience at Ananda."

"My son has settled very well at Ananda. I like the environment, food and we are all very satisfied with the services provided to our son. We are very happy."

- **Employment Readiness Program: 13**
- **On the Job Training: 2**
- **Ananda Assisted Living: 11**
- **Number of Companies Sensitized: 3**

3. TRAININGS

Objectives

- To empower parents through training which is the most effective long term, and economically viable means of maximising reach;
- To create a body of informed and trained professionals to propagate effective and proven teaching methods;
- To develop specialized training for therapists as continuing rehabilitation education.

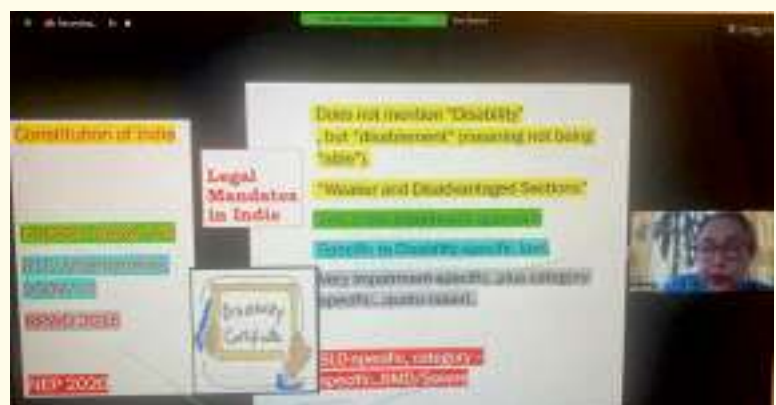
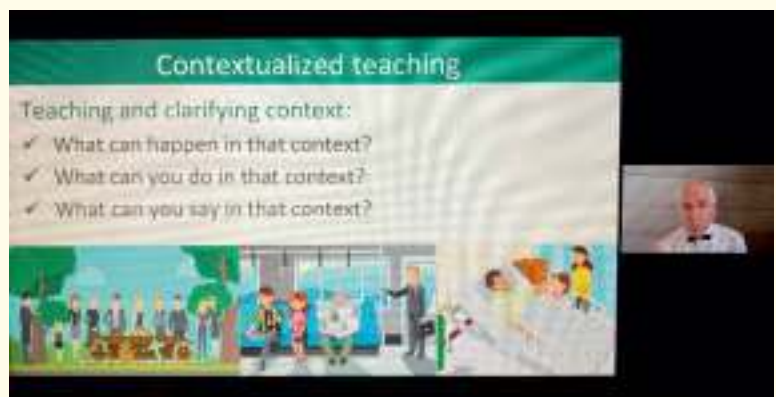


Highlights

AFA ran the following trainings through the year:

- B.Ed in Autism, affiliated with GGSIP University, recognised by Government of India
- Diploma in Autism, affiliated with NIEPMD University, recognised by Government of India
- Multiple Short Training webinars
- Customized Trainings

While some trainings were organized by AFA, some were organized by other agencies where our team members served as experts. In addition, AFA ensured that team members were also enabled to attend the seminars and trainings for team capacity building.



Date	Organized By	Resource Person	Event Title
Feb 2020	Staff Capacity Building by Indo-Canadian Autism Network Symposium	Dr Nidhi Singhal, Sudhanshu Grover, S Kalpana and Sujata Banerjee	Building capacity through training and developing an international network for clinicians and researchers focusing on priority areas of diagnosis, early intervention, complex presentations and family support.
April 2020	India Autism Centre	Merry Barua	Supporting children through the Covid-19
April 2020	SOS Children's Village of India	Merry Barua, Indrani Basu and Sudhanshu Grover	Training for Capacity Building of SOS Mothers & Coworkers
April 2020	IRODA and Early Start Network of Tajikistan	Merry Barua	Vocational training and job opportunities for youth with ASD and NDD, Down Syndrome etc. and Deinstitutionalization and Support Living Programs of people with ASD and neurodevelopment disabilities, problems and perspective – Independent living
May 2020	Manovikas Charitable Society	Merry Barua	Supporting families during Covid-19
May 2020	Staff Capacity Building by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy	AFA Professionals	Towards a framework for inclusion in education: Right to education of children with disabilities during a pandemic and beyond
May 2020	Keystone Institute	Merry Barua	Establishment of All-India SRV Network – First Forum
May 2020	Autism Centre for Excellence	Merry Barua	Autism and the Pandemic
May 2020	Azim Pemji Philanthropic Initiatives	Merry Barua	Options for Training on Inclusive Education/Special Education
June 2020	SOS Children's Village of India	Indrani Basu and Sudhanshu Grover	Capacity Building training for SOS Village
June 2020	Forum For Autism	Merry Barua	Introduction to Autism

Date	Organized By	Resource Person	Event Title
June 2020	D Wish Multidisciplinary Therapy & Vocational Training Centre	Indrani Basu	How to write a social story
June 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan	Universal Sensory Diet for 3-8 year olds
June 2020	All India Women's Education Fund Assoc.	Merry Barua	Covid-19 sustainable solutions for Persons with Disabilities
June 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan	Universal Sensory Diet for 9+ years
June 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Teaching Social Behaviors: The Power of Social Stories
June 2020	Staff Capacity Building by UCLA Centre for Research and Treatment (CART)	Dr Nidhi Singhal and Merry Barua	Brief Observation of Symptoms of Autism Trainings (BOSA)
June 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Toilet Training
July 2020	Vidyasagar	Merry Barua	Vidya Sagar SOP Guidelines – Interactive Consultative Sessions
July 2020	Keystone Institute India	Dr Nidhi Singhal	Hindi SRV training session
July 2020	Manovikas Charitable Society	Merry Barua	Family Counselling during Covid-19
July 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Understanding the Individuals with Autism
July 2020	Action For Autism	Merry Barua	Towards a Common Lens
July 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan	Making Sense of the Senses
July 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Nurturing Independence in Autism
July 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Communication Made Easy
July 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Deconstructing Behaviour
July 2020	National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities	Sudhanshu Grover	Diverse Learners and Their Needs

Date	Organized By	Resource Person	Event Title
Aug 2020	Manovikas Charitable Society	Merry Barua	Good practice at Care Homes
Aug 2020	Action For Autism	Preeti Siwach	Adolescence & Growing Up on the Spectrum
Aug 2020	Action For Autism	Viniti Puri	Connect & Communicate: Building Effective Communicators
Aug 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan	Developing Fine Motor and Pre-Writing Skills for Handwriting
Aug 2020	Red Cross Hindu Institute, Sonapat, Haryana	Preeti Siwach	National Webinar on support mechanisms for children with Autism during Covid-19 pandemic
Aug 2020	Action For Autism	Sudhanshu Grover and Divya Shikha Verma	Teaching Academics to Early Learners
Sept 2020	Action For Autism	Shubhangi Vaidya	Lockdown Learnings: Life in New Normal
Sept 2020	Action For Autism	Self-Advocates	In Our Voices: A Panel Discussion by Self-Advocates on the Spectrum
Sept 2020	NIMHANS	Merry Barua	A Lot of Help and Even More Hope
Sept 2020	Assisted Living for Autistic Persons	Merry Barua	Women Safety in Residential Homes for PWD
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Understanding Autism: A Way of Being
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Merry Barua	Choosing Happiness
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Merry Barua	Our Journey to set up a Residential Home for Persons with Autism
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan	Whys and Hows of Sensory Integration
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Structure & Visual Support: The Life Span Approach
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Building Blocks for Learning: Motivation and Communication

Date	Organized By	Resource Person	Event Title
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Positive Behaviour Support
Oct 2020	Action For Autism	Dr Peter Vermeulen	Context Blindness and Learning
Oct 2020	India Autism Centre	Merry Barua	Mapping the Landscape of ASD from Research to Intervention
Nov 2020	Action For Autism	Rakshanda Khan and S Kalpana	Independence in Self-care Skills
Nov 2020	Autism Society, West Bengal	Merry Barua	Guide to Assistive Living for Adults with Autism
Nov 2020	Action For Autism	Preeti Siwach	Independence in Life Skills and Getting Ready for Employment
Dec 2020	Action For Autism	Dr Peter Vermeulen	Building Friendships and Relationships
Dec 2020	Action For Autism	Indrani Basu	Developing Play and Leisure for Individuals with Autism
Jan 2021	Action For Autism	Anand Kumtha	Exploring Parenthood
Jan 2021	Action For Autism	AFA Professionals	Autism Training Series
Jan 2021	Asian Literacy Society	Merry Barua	God's Own Children – Different But Not Less
Feb 2021	Pallavanjali	Merry Barua	Webinar on Social Story
Mar 2021	International Centre for Autism Research and Education, New York	Merry Barua	ICare4Autism Annual Autism Conference 2021
Mar 2021	Keystone India Institute	AFA Professionals	SRV Trainings
Mar 2021	Sethu Parents Group Developmental	Merry Barua	Autism Spectrum Disorder: Planning for your Child's Educational and Financial Future
Mar 2021	Paediatrics Unit, CMC, Vellore	Merry Barua	Making Environments Accessible for Individuals with Autism

- **Trained under the Diploma Program: 11**
- **Trained under Bachelor of Education: 23**
- **Trained Through Webinars: 6000**

4. RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Objectives:

- To carry out scientific, applicable research on autism in India that is interdisciplinary, ecologically valid, and facilitates improved understanding of the condition and promotes development of services;
- To develop a training site for Indian and international students and fellow researchers to carry out research activities on autism in India;
- To maintain a Resource Library and Information Service of current and relevant Indian and international books, journals, and videos that are accessible to the user;
- To write, publish and share current information with the autism community;
- To make available reliable and practical information on autism through a webpage.

Research Highlights

- With support from the Department of Science and Technology, developed a comprehensive curriculum to teach Activities of Daily Living to young children with autism and developmental disabilities.
- The curriculum provides an understanding of the learning styles in autism, the steps to teach and is accompanied by visual aids.
- Designed to help parents and professionals teach a variety of skills in the areas of toilet training, hygiene, grooming, dressing and mealtime skills.

Publications Highlights

- Merry Barua and Shubhangi Vaidya contributed a chapter to the book *Disability Inclusion and Inclusive Education*, published by Springer.
- Indrani Basu, Dr Nidhi Singhal and Merry Barua wrote a manual *Including Children with Autism Spectrum Conditions in Regular Schools*, for NCERT.
- AFA contributed to a report on *Towards a Framework for Inclusion in Education: Right to Education of Children with Disabilities During a Pandemic and Beyond*, published by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.
- Team AFA participated in an exploratory research study titled *Unpacking Legal Capacity with a Qualitative Research to Explore the Concept of Decision Making in Relation to Persons with Disabilities*, with CREA.
- Merry Barua contributed two articles on Lockdown Voices with the title *The Sunshine After the Storm* and *Ananda in the Time of COVID-19*.
- Vishu Vaidya contributed an article titled *Lockdown Learnings in Lockdown Voices*.
- AFA contributed an article on *Empowering Youth to Change the World for the Better*, for Youth Connect.
- AFA contributed to the development of Guidelines for the Development of e-Content for Children with Disabilities launched by the Union Education Minister to initiate the creation of high quality content for digital education of disabled children.

5. ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

Objectives

- **To spread awareness about autism;**
- **To secure equal rights for persons with disability;**
- **To advocate for the right to receive appropriate accommodations.**

Highlights

- Merry participated in a short video for Mercedes-Benz magazine at India International Center.
- Ankur Mithal attended Social Academy of Learning by Toyota Bangalore in a collaborative endeavor between KPMG, Toyota and Common Purpose.
- Merry was invited to speak on the challenges, victories and the advice she would like to give to today's youth from Girl Up Janaki, a Girl Up campaign club.
- AFA was featured in an educational website, India Study Channel.
- Merry Barua attended a meeting on Learning and Living Committee meeting organized by India Autism Centre.
- Preeti Siwach and Sudhanshu Grover participated in an online session on Sensitization of the staff on Autism and how to make inclusive workplace organized by Royal Bank of Scotland which was attended by 30 persons.
- Merry attended a meeting on Locked Down and Left Behind – A Report on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in India during the COVID-19 crisis organized by NCPEDP.
- Indrani Basu contributed a video by partnering with Wedding Wishlist for fundraising and creating awareness.
- AFA contributed to the report of COVID-19 Disability Inclusive Response: Demands from Persons with Disabilities by NCPEDP.
- AFA in association with NCPEDP approved and issued demands and recommendations on the crisis and the grave challenges COVID-19 has created for the persons with disabilities. The demands were shared with MPs, MLAs, policy makers, duty bearers, media, etc.
- Merry Barua attended a Discussion on continuing programs in COVID-19 times crisis organized by Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative.
- Team AFA requested for economic relief to underprivileged families with Autism/Developmental Disabilities affected by COVID-19 to the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Merry Barua attended a video conference meeting under the chairpersonship of secretary, DePwD regarding the examinations that were being conducted by various academic institutions during COVID-19 – addressing concerns of PwDs which was attended by 25 people.
- Reeta Sabharwal attended the Launch of FICCI-FLO 'Empowering the Greater 50% initiative' organized by FICCI.

- Merry Barua attended an open discussion on 'The Philanthropy Partners' Forum on Gender and Disability', organized by Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives.
- Merry Barua contributed an article, '*Maybe I Know Someone with Autism*', to a teen community journal.
- Merry Barua participated in a Webinar on 'Accessible Stairs – Basic Features', organized by Enable Me.
- AFA in collaboration with HKS, for the month of September, presented a concept and design for the upcoming residential apartment at Ananda Assisted Living Facility. HKS is a team of more than 1,350 architects, interior designers, urban designers, scientists, artists, structural engineers, anthropologists and other professionals working together across industries and across the globe to create places that delight, heal and stimulate peak performance. They have nurtured a culture of extraordinary people with curious and creative minds who are passionate about delivering elegant solutions to their clients.
- Preeti Siwach participated in an online session on sensitization of the staff on Autism and how to make an inclusive workplace, organized by Process Nine Technologies Pvt. Ltd., which was attended by 20 people.
- Merry Barua was invited as an expert on a panel discussion as a part of Mental Health Day at the Department of Psychology, Kamla Nehru College (DU). She also interacted with students and faculty members of the college which was attended by over 80 participants.
- Preeti Siwach participated in an online session on sensitization of the staff on Autism and how to make an inclusive workplace, organised by McCANN Craft.
- Kathakali Das Pandey attended a session with Global Giving to learn from peer experts at Atma Education about the new amendments and getting equipped to comply with the new rules on the latest FCRA 2020 Amendments.
- Preeti Siwach participated as an external examiner at Red Cross Society through NIPMED.
- AFA was a part of co-creating the Atypical Advantage website.
- AFA helped to mobilise self-advocates participating in youth consultations on the WHO UNICEF Global Report on Developmental Delays and Disabilities.
- Preeti Siwach participated in an online session on sensitization of the staff on Autism and how to make inclusive workplace organized by Nestle, which was attended by 5 persons.
- Kathakali Das Pandey participated in the meeting of the proposal Training of ANMs and Asha Workers on the basic identification of Disability I proposed in compliance to the provisions of the RPWD act. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Joint Director, Department of Social Welfare, GNTCD.
- Rumpa Banerjee attended the meeting of the Advisory Committee with the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities. The recommendations of the advisory committee have been sent to the concerned departments of NCT of Delhi.
- Sudhanshu Grover participated at a live discussion program '*Managing Special Learning Needs Related to Autism in the Classroom: Ask the experts*'. The program was for half an hour which was telecast on DTH-TV channel for class 1 and 2 and on the official YouTube channel of NCERT, organised by CIET-NCERT having 674 views and 17 likes.
- Preeti Siwach participated in a vocational training program for children with neurological disabilities with staff and team members in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, organised by SPARC which was attended by 15 persons.
- Sudhanshu Grover participated in an interview with the students of University of Petroleum and Energy Studies for their mobile application – Autistic Services.

Doing Our Bit In Times Of Covid

As Covid swept the nation, AFA stepped in to do its bit, participating in relief work and supporting our vulnerable population through multiple activities through the lockdown and beyond.

- Provided dry rations to 172 underprivileged families of persons with disabilities in Delhi NCR.
- Provided cooked food daily to families of 140 migrant labourers through lockdown and two months beyond.
- Provided essential medicines to families of disabled individuals who were unable to obtain them during the lockdown.
- Provided monetary help to several of our underprivileged families who were in further economic distress due to Covid.
- Tablets were provided to underprivileged children to make online classes accessible.
- Addressed multiple awareness workshops on Covid-19 to help families having individuals with autism to understand and cope with it.
- Provided guidance for Covid treatment to the families through WhatsApp and Zoom calls.

**ENABLING PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES THROUGH THE
PANDEMIC**

PROJECT DELHI



**MILAP JI AND ADITI
WE SALUTE YOU AND YOUR COMMITMENT
TO THE CAUSE**



ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

AFA is a parent-directed NGO. To ensure delivery of quality care and services to individuals with autism and their families, AFA has encouraged active participation and feedback from beneficiaries by creating non-hierarchical structures and open channels of communication to aid the efficiency of its programs. Participatory decision making is reflected in the ways of working at AFA. A team of highly dedicated professionals and active volunteers remain a source of strength and support, enabling AFA to accomplish its goals and objectives.

STAFF DETAILS

Employee Name	Designation
Aarushi Mathur	Educator
Achyutanal Guha	Accounts Executive
Alpana Arha	Lead Assist
Amrita Baruah	Coordinator- Educational Services
Amitesh Chaudhary	Assist Adult Services
Ankur Mithal	Chief Operating Officer
Ajeet	Cleaner
Aradhana	Library Assist
Ashok Kumar	Security Guard
Asra Riyaz	Special Needs Educator
Barja Bahadur Gurung	Cook
Badal Baidya	Teacher Aide
Debindr	Gardener
Deepak	Gardner
Deepali Taneja	Coordinator Research
Dharam Pal Singh	Gardener
Dipanshu Kumar	Educator
Divya Shikha Verma	Special Needs Educator
Dojaram	Security Guard
Farha Jabeen	Educator
Geeta Devi	Caregiver
Ishu	Assist Adult Services
Jaipal	Cleaner
Jyoti Rani	Assist Adult Services
Kamlesh	Senior Supervisor
Kathakali Das Pandey	Project Manager
Khyati Kohli	Faculty
Krishna Gurung	Cleaner
Kuldeep Bharti	Driver
Lakshmi Patra	Caregiver
Lata Das	Caregiver
Lata Devi	Cleaner

Employee Name	Designation
Maya Sarkar	Caregiver
Mohd Riyaz	Occupational Therapist
Mousumi Borah	Assist Adult Services
Mohit Deshwal	Special Needs Educator
Monika Devi	Baker
Neeraj Kumar	Cook
Nidhi Singhal	Director Research & Trainings
Nishu Kshetry	Special Needs Educator
Nafeesa	Special Needs Educator
Nitin Bhushan	Photocopier
Omkar Mishra	Coordinator Administration
Pan Singh Negi	Driver
Pappal	Cleaner
Pappu	Gardener
Prashant Jaine	Teacher Aide
Pranav Kumar	Faculty
Preeti Siwach	Head Work & Employment
Prem Prakash	Security Guard
Pronob Das	Assist Adult Services
Rajesh Kumar	Supervisor
Rajpal	Security Guard
Ramakant Sharma	Accounts Assist
Rakshanda Khan	Occupational Therapist
Ram Avtar	Security Guard
Ramakant Rajput	Cleaner
Ramji Varma	Cleaner
Rekha Devi	Cleaner
Riya	Special Needs Educator
Rumpa Banerjee	Communication Coordinator
Salini Bijesh	Manager HR & Administrations
Sanjay Kanji	SrFinance Executive
Santosh Kumar	Faculty
Shafi Ur Rehman	Special Needs Educator
Sharmila P G	Faculty
Shikha Das	Caregiver
Shubhoneet Chatterjee	Special Needs Educator
Shweta Pathania/Shweta Singh	Special Needs Educator
Silvia Devi	Canteen Cook
Soubhik Kansabanik	Assist Adult Services
Sudhanshu Rajesh Grover	Head Educational Services
Shruti Gupta	Assist Adult Services
Sujata Banerjee	Special Needs Educator
Swati A	Assist Adult Services
Sylvester Sarang Massey	Front Office Executive
Tanvi Behl	Head Trainings
Tayzeem Rasool	Assist Adult Services
Vani	Assist Adult Services
Viniti Puri	Therapist

SALARY OF STAFF MEMBERS

Slab of gross salary/stipend (in Rs) plus benefits paid to staff (full time and part time) per month	Male staff	Female staff	Total staff
Less than 5,000			
5,000-10,000	11	4	15
10,000-25,000	20	23	43
25,000-50,000	6	13	19
50,000-1,00,000	0	3	3
Greater than 1,00,000	1	0	1

SALARY AND BENEFITS OF HEAD AND HIGHEST AND LOWEST HONORARIUM OF STAFF MEMBERS

	Designation	Remuneration (in Rs) [Gross yearly + benefits]
Operational Head of the organisation (including honorarium):	Director	Nil
Highest paid person in the organisation (staff or consultant):	COO	14,00,000
Lowest paid person in the organisation (staff or consultant):	Support Staff (part-time)	84,000

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Due to Covid-19, no international travel happened during 2020-2021.

GOVERNING BODY

Name/ Designation	Occupation	Address & Mobile	Education
*Ramamani Sundar PRESIDENT	Social Economist	Sector B1, Flat No 1609, Vasant Kunj New Delhi-110070 +91 9810507840	MA
*Merry Barua MEMBER	Disability Activist	A1/51, Panchsheel Enclave New Delhi-110017 +91 9810225923	MA
*Reeta Sabharwal SECRETARY	Interior Designer	S-300, Greater Kailash Part 2 New Delhi-110048 +91 9811103702	BA
Madhu Chawla MEMBER	Business	C-228 Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024 +91 9810043435	BA
*Gopal Kale TREASURER	Service	C-197, Kendriya Vihar, Sector 51 Noida-201301 +919899787358	BE
*Indrani Basu MEMBER	Special Needs Educator	AFA Living Unit, 3rd Floor, Sector 7 & 8 Jasola Vihar, New Delhi-110025 +91 9971083615	B.Com, ICWA DSC-ASD
*Beena Prithiveeraj MEMBER	Special Needs Educator	32GB, Dakshin Apartments, 4th Seaward Road, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai-600041 +91 9444469316	MA Business Economics
Rajat M Nag MEMBER	Economist	B3/602, World Spa West Sector 30, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001 +91 9811906363	B Tech, IIT Delhi; Msc and MBA, University of Saskatchewan; Msc, LSE
*Dr Shubhangi Vaidya MEMBER	Professor	H-8, Mahanadi Extension IGNOU Campus Maidangarhi, New Delhi-110068 +919911355870	MA, M.Phil, Ph.D
*Celine George MEMBER	Organisation Development and Change Management Consultant	52, Aspen Green, Nirvana Country Sector-50, Gurgaon, South City II Haryana-122001 +919810273596	MA Business Economics Chevenings Gurukul Scholarship to London School of Economics, UK
Dr Vibha Krishnamurthy MEMBER	Developmental Paediatrician	27 Thakur Niwas, 6th Floor J Tata Road, Mumbai-400020 +91 9820155484	MD Paediatrics Mass Gen. Hospital Fellow American Academy of Paediatrics

**Parent/Autistic family member*

No member of the Governing Body receives honorarium. None of the members are related to each other in any way

THANK YOU!

Action For Autism has come this far because of the support we receive, financial, material, and otherwise, from our partners, funders, members, supporters and volunteers, many of whom continue to help us from afar even after they have moved on. We thank you all for making the work we do possible, and look forward to your continued support.

Individuals

Aditi Diya Nag, Aditi Mehta, Akshansh Malik, Aditya Kumar Dubey, Akkeshavan, Akku, Aloka Guha, Ankit Gupta, Ankur Mittal, Anjana Mittal, Anushree Sharma, Archana Nehru, Arjun Basu, Arun Prasad Rao, Arpita Roy, Asha Mehra, Ashish Talwar, Anuradha Balaji, Ayesha Muntaj, Bhuvanesh Singhal, Bindu Badshah, Brij Kampani, Celine George, Chanderyati Kapoor, Chitra, Davenger, Debashree Das, Dharun, Gopal Kale, Ena Manjit Singh, Falguni Banerjee, Harish Chandra, Indeera Chand, Indra Sen, Janak, Jyoti, Kalpana S, Kamlesh Duggal, Kaushik Basu, Kruna, Madhu Chawla, Manju Senapaty, Mathew Kenneth Belmonte, Merry Barua, Milaap, Mona Prabhakar, Native User, Neeru Pal, Nidhi Singhal, Nishu Kshetry, P Ramgansh, Padma Lawler, Pankit, Pratibha Shah, Prita, Rajat Mohan Nag, Rajdipa Behura, Ranjan Das, Rao Poleswara, Reeta Sabharwal, Rekha, Riddhi, Ruchira, S C Duggal, S K Kapai, Sailu, Saish Mukesh Chamorshikar, Sandhya Agarwal, Sanjay Kanji, Shashi Adhulva, Shrutika Rastogi, Shubhangi Vaidya, Shweta, Shyam Gupta, Sisir, Sumit Agarwal, Swati and Ritesh Talapatra, Tejasvi Raj, Upasna, Vidur Prabhakar.

Organisations

Albatross Fine Chem Pvt Ltd, Amazon, American Express, Avad India CSR Advisory Services LLP, Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives, Benevity Causes Portal, Big Bazaar, Charities Aid Foundation, Credibility Alliance, Doilies by K & K, D S Group, Frontline Capital Services Ltd, Ganga Acrowools Ltd, General Fabrics Pvt Ltd, Give Foundation, Global Giving, Guide Star India, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, IBUSER, India Habitat Centre, Kingz and Priests Pvt Ltd, Lemon Tree Hotel, McCann Advertising, Ministry of Science and Technology, GOI, Nasscom Foundation, National Trust, Nestle, New Modern Bazar Departmental Stores Pvt Ltd, Process Nine Technologies Pvt Ltd, Redfox Hotel , Rehabilitation Council of India, Rotary Club of Safdarjung Community, Royal Bank of Scotland, Sahara Means Support, Sai Expo Fab Pvt Ltd, Simmi Embroidery, Simons Foundation, Smile Foundation, Taj SATS Air Catering Ltd, The India Sponsor Foundation, The UK Online Giving Foundation, Unified Credit Solutions Pvt Ltd, Your Cause LLC.

Volunteers

Aditi Muranjan, Aditya Gotan, Devika Sahni, Dharan Bharti, Indrani Basu, Jayesh Kharbanda, Kalpana S, Merry Barua, Nidhi Dutta, Reeta Sabharwal, Ritika Bhaduria.

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

FUNDS & LIABILITIES	As at 31.03.2021	As at 31.03.2020
I SOURCES OF FUNDS		
Capital Fund	18,32,28,120	19,10,49,381
Corpus Fund	2,85,76,743	2,74,39,743
Reserve Fund	1,41,26,154	99,40,015
Specific Purpose Grants	72,61,109	(9,96,240)
TOTAL	23,31,92,126	22,74,32,899
II APPLICATION OF FUNDS		
Fixed Assets	18,32,28,120	19,10,49,381
Investments in Fixed Deposits	3,93,04,150	3,27,00,317
<u>Current Assets, Loans and Advances</u>		
Cash and Bank Balances	1,42,99,258	70,34,522
Loans and Advances	5,26,310	7,89,716
Other Current Assets	6,48,034	8,12,594
	1,54,73,602	86,36,832
<u>Less: Current Liabilities and Provisions</u>		
	48,13,746	49,53,631
Net Current Assets	1,06,59,856	36,83,201
TOTAL	23,31,92,126	22,74,32,899

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st March 2021

PARTICULARS	For the year ended 31.03.2021	For the year ended 31.03.2020
I INCOME		
Program Receipts:		
Income from Advocacy, Awareness, Rehabilitation, Research & Training Activities	1,60,27,119	1,75,94,960
Income out of Specific Purpose Grants (to the extent utilised during the year)	96,58,916	83,06,130
Donation Income	38,26,299	17,84,511
Interest Income	23,65,021	22,85,059
Other Income	2,030	92,165
TOTAL	3,18,79,385	3,00,62,825
II EXPENDITURE		
Program Expenses:		
Expenditure on Advocacy, Awareness, Rehabilitation and Research & Training Activities	2,29,58,677	2,42,23,273
Administrative Expenses	12,41,660	13,61,732
Depreciation		
For the year	1,03,86,962	1,06,37,756
Less: Met out of Capital Fund	1,03,86,962	- 1,06,37,756
Transfer to Capital Fund (Assets purchased from own sources)	25,23,651	4,30,398
TOTAL	2,67,23,988	2,60,15,403
III Surplus / (Deficit) for the year carried to Reserve Fund	51,55,397	40,47,422

Statement of Receipt and Payment for the Year Ended 31st March 2021

PARTICULARS	For the year ended 31.03.2021	For the year ended 31.03.2020
I SOURCES OF FUND		
Opening Balance		
Cash in Hand	2,18,248	1,06,134
Bank Balance		
in Saving Bank Account	68,16,274	1,00,39,259
in Fixed Deposits	3,27,00,317	2,47,84,053
Received during the Year		
Income from Advocacy, Awareness, Rehabilitation, Research & Training Activities	1,60,27,119	1,72,62,475
Receipts for Specific Purpose Grant	1,69,79,573	38,60,639
Donation Income		
Donation Corpus Fund	11,37,000	18,57,334
Donation Specific Purpose	-	48,010
Donation Non-Specific Purpose	38,26,299	27,25,944
Income Tax Refund Received	4,14,310	3,56,890
Interest Income (Net of TDS)	23,32,685	19,92,725
Other Income	2,030	2,06,205
Security Deposit Received (Net of Payments)	13,25,000	11,48,000
TOTAL	8,17,78,855	6,43,87,669
II APPLICATION OF FUND		
Program Expenses		
Expenditure on Advocacy, Awareness, Rehabilitation and Research & Training Activities	2,43,68,086	2,26,98,934
Administrative Expenses	12,41,660	13,61,732
Purchase of Fixed Assets	25,65,701	5,55,511
Advance to staff/suppliers	-	36,653
Closing Balance		
Cash in Hand	69,368	2,18,248
<u>Bank Balance with Schedule Banks</u>		
in Saving Bank Accounts	1,42,29,890	68,16,274
in Fixed Deposits	3,93,04,150	3,27,00,317
TOTAL	8,17,78,855	6,43,87,669



Action For Autism is an accredited member of Credibility Alliance and this report complies with the desirable norms of the Credibility Alliance for enhancing credibility in the voluntary sector in India.



We have been awarded the prestigious GuideStar India Transparency key and have joined India's largest pool of credible NGOs after undergoing the rigorous due diligence process.



Registered Office Address: Sector 7 & 8, Jasola Vihar, New Delhi - 110025
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All contributions are tax deductible under S80G of the Income Tax Act 1961

Action for Autism is a Registered Society
Regd. Date: 29.11.1994. Regd. No. S27006