

## Samerth Talim Kendra progress report

1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Submitted to Asha for Education

Submitted by Samerth Charitable Trust



### A. Background

Asha for Education has been a huge supporter of for Samerth Talim Kendra (Day care centre for intellectually challenged kids) since 2017 . Currently Asha supports the base program ( support to therapists, rent, electricity, support to special teachers , excursion for kids and teachers training).

#### A.1 Asha Impact till date

1. Doubled the number of trainees it caters to ( from 42 in 2017 to 87 today),
2. Have been able to provide daily physio/speech & sensory therapy – which was only weekly before. Since the last three years, we have also started other services such as psychotherapy, checks by neuro physician, ENT etc.
3. The team now has specialised teachers trained in nurturing children with special needs – vis a vis community trained teachers before

4. Have been able to start a vocational centre – for adults who were now independent upto an extent and needed support to financially stabilised themselves. The training at vocational centre helped 13 adults to find employment in the community
5. Have initiated a community based program – CBR where we are catering severe cases those who cannot visit the centre. Currently 12 trainees are covered under the CBR program.
6. Have been able to move to more spacious and better accessible premises, thus better community reach.
7. Initiated a dedicated Early intervention program for children between the ages of 3 to 8 years. These are the formative years of a child and the interventions in this period have gone a long way in impacting the overall quality of life of the child.
8. Due to a robust base program, we have been able to attract funding for other support interventions, such as nutrition from Baal Dan USA, and individual funders who have supported with machines for the vocational centre and others who have donated during Ramzan for Zakat, which has gone towards better equipment and furniture for therapies.

**B. Fundraising efforts:** In the past few months, we have intensified our fund raising efforts for STK. Currently the Nutrition component has been supported by Baal Dan. Two have our funders who supported STK with focus on vocational centre have bowed out. These were Gruh Finance – which is now taken over by Badhan Bank and GCSRA ( Gujarat Corporate Social Responsibility Authority) as there focus has now shifted to Government programs. On a positive note, we have been able to attract 7, 59000/- from an NRI Mr. Narendrabhai Popat. Narendra bhai hails from Kutch and presently is settled in US. He has been a supporter of our Kutch program. On one of his annual visits to India this time, we asked him to make a stop at STK and explained the current funding crunch. In response, he pledged 7,59000/- for the vocational program. There are a few individual donors who we approach during festivals like Ramzan, Diwali, Christmas etc to donate, usually in kind with furniture or equipment for vocational centre or a treat for the STK children.

**C. Covid and STK :** India went into a lockdown from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the alarm bells had started ringing much before and we had closed our centre from 20<sup>th</sup> onwards. Post the pandemic the first week was a mayhem, and people didn't know what had hit them. Especially families of our STK children – who were mostly daily laborers, auto rickshaw drivers, vegetable vendors etc. They all lived a hand to mouth existence surviving on daily earnings. After everything shut down in a week's time we started receiving calls from frantic parents and community members. In the initial days, Samerth pooled in money from well-wishers and family and started distributing dry ration kits. We also started fund raising dedicatedly for them. Our staff were given PPE kits and followed all safety measures during distribution. We then had a few individual donors as well as an Indian organisation called WRT4U who helped us support our program beneficiaries with food security. Most from 84 of STK families were provided ration kits four times during

lockdown. The first was a small ration kit that would last a family of 4 for 10 days, later we gave monthly kits.



Samerth's corona warriors – initial days

During kit distribution, we also started taking phone numbers of family members with a smart phone, or if they had a friend or a relative whose number could be borrowed for a short period during the day. Thus started our own version of online classes or whatsapp classes – twice a week Physio and Speech therapies one on one as well as classes with our special teachers over whatsapp. More details on it follows later in the report. After the physio and speech sessions began ( the therapist would ask the caretaker to help the child do a certain exercise or stretch with help of available furniture without causing discomfort to the child. The caretaker would follow the lead) the therapists started complaining that the children looked weak, particularly a few seemed to be regressing (like earlier had started using a few words for communication, now went back to sign language)! Upon investigation it was observed that one of the reasons could be low nutrition and soft foods like *Khichdi* ( mix of lentils and rice - convenient to eat, fills stomach quickly) were offered often. Since the times were scarce and with focus was on ensuring food for all – the nutrition quotient was missing. So we devised a separate nutrition pack for each child, over and above ration support to families. This pack contained eggs, jaggery, flattened rice ( poha), dates and roasted chickpeas. There is an understanding that this would probably be shared with other kids of the family, we tried to ensure that our trainees from STK definitely received it as nutrition during one snack.

This ensured nutrition to STK trainees along with food security for the entire family. Post Lockdown, things are still bleak and the earnings have reduced to one third compared to pre covid times. The families are still trying to find a balance. We have continued nutrition kit for STK trainees and discontinued ration kits for the time being.

Attaching a link where our managing trustee has been covered by Wipro Foundation on our efforts to combat the challenges of Covid in Ahmedabad program including STK.

[https://issuu.com/wiprofoundation/docs/samuhik\\_pahal\\_vol\\_1\\_issue\\_2/s/10708977](https://issuu.com/wiprofoundation/docs/samuhik_pahal_vol_1_issue_2/s/10708977)

*“NGOs fill the gap as the needs of Children with Disabilities get overlooked during the lockdown”- article in the Samuhik Pahal by the WIPRO foundation talks of Samerth Charitable Trust along with a few other NGOs that work in different cities with one of the most vulnerable population, ‘children with disabilities’.*

*Samerth has closed its centre catering to these children from early March to safeguard these children. However, as the lockdown continued and children weren't being able to access the much needed services. After the early days of lockdown, Samerth started ensuring that children do not lose their sense of daily routine. At the time of delivering dry rations, children were handed over exercise books and writing material.*

The following is a more detailed on the activities during the program. It begins with basic quantitative information of the program followed by activities. The activity section is split in two parts, Jan – March 15<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>. The activities remained the same, but their mode of implementation changed.

#### D. Quantitative Information

##### D.1 No. of children and their disability

No.	Type of Disability	June		
		Girls	Boys	Total
1	Mentally Retarded (MR)	15	38	53
2	Down Syndrome	5	5	10
3	Cerebral Palsy	6	6	12
4	Low Vision & MR	-	1	1
5	Hearing Impairment & MR	-	1	1
6	Intellectual disability	-	4	4

7	Dwarfism	-	1	1
8	Developmental Delay	-	2	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>84</b>

**This includes 12 CBR children**

#### **D.2 Gender wise bifurcation**

<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
26	58	84

#### **D.3 Average attendance of students till March 80.3%**

#### **D.4 Average attendance of staff**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Teacher's Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
1	Afroz Baig	Program Coordinator	78%
2	Pooja Patel	Special Teacher	75%
3	Rukhsar Pathan	Special teacher	70%
4	Chirag Parmar	Special Teacher	86%
5	Shahin Nilgar	Special Teacher	80%
6	Mahenur Shaikh	CBR educator	83%
7	Aasmin teacher	CBR educator	84%
8	Sahista teacher	Second/support staff teacher	84%
9	Fatema Chopda	Part time art and craft teacher	87%

#### **D.5 List of Regular therapists at the centre and their attendance**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Therapist</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Average</b>
			<b>e</b>

			<b>Attend ance</b>
1	Tarannum puthawala	Physiotherapist	81%
2	Riddhi Shah	Speech therapist	82%
3	Dinesh Patel	Physiotherapist	87%

**E Physiotherapy:** Currently the program has two physio therapists, a female therapist especially for girls and younger boys and male therapist for older boys and men. Between them they treat close to 20 students daily. Currently there are 70 children who undergo physiotherapy and each child receives therapy thrice a week. This is a goal based program, where each quarter goals for each child are designed with their caretakers, special teachers by the therapist. At the end of each quarter, the goals are revisited.

**Details :**

<b>No. of children between 3 -12 years undergoing physiotherapy</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	13	32	45
<b>No. of children above 12 years undergoing physiotherapy</b>			
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
2	10	15	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>70</b>



#### **F. Speech therapy :**

Riddhi – our Speech & sensory therapist visits centre every day for 3 hours. She works with 10-15 children every day and 64 children through the week. She does various exercises with them as well as works with special teachers and parents to help them understand the purpose and correct way to do exercises so those can be repeated at home too.



Details :

<b>No. of children between 3 – 12 years receiving speech therapy</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	10	33	43
<b>No. of children abover 12 years receiving speech therapy</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
2	09	12	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>64</b>

### **G. Nutrition**

Baal dan supports the nutrition component of the program and it has proved to be extremely beneficial for the trainees. It is a small snack, that is provided in the first hour of their arrival. The children still get their own lunch, the snack that focuses on iron and calcium from day to day easily available food sources. Snacks include dates, chick pea and jaggery, milk, seasonal fruits, poha (flattened rice) etc There are many examples of children who did not eat certain foods but started eating by imitating others. Similarly parents did not try certain kinds of foods that needed more chewing, which they were then happily surprised to find that their child could eat. Over a period of time, it resulted in strengthening their bodies and an activity that all of them looked forward to.



#### **H. Home Visit :**

42 children were visited at their homes during this period. Home visit is a routine that is followed with each trainee that is enrolled at the centre. The idea is to visit trainees whose parents are not regular at the centre, or if there is something that needs to be discussed in privacy of their homes. Sometimes, if there is a drastic regression that is observed in the child in spite of no sickness and regular therapies, the teachers make home visits to gauge and discuss the same with parents.

## I. Celebrations



Uttarayan celebrations Each year Uttarayan is celebrated with great fanfare and this year, the anticipations had doubled as an Ex Asha volunteer Mr Pratik Patel had visited the centre in the last week of December and had gifted our trainees with lots of kites and thread. Each year we have few kites between all the children, while this year there were many of different shapes, sizes and colors! The trainees and teachers had a wonderful time and we remembered Mr. Patel and his family!

## J. Workshop on awareness building with parents and teachers



**Creating awareness amongst school teachers and parents, Samerth with support from BPA organised two workshops addressing the RPwD act 2016 in February 2020**

## K. Post Covid

As mentioned earlier in the report, things changed rapidly post covid and the national lockdown. In the first few weeks our focus was on relief, and parents also thought it to be a

short term situation and were waiting for things to return to normal. After the announcement of the second lockdown the team started planning strategies to reach out to our trainees in the given situation. From mid-April till May end we could reach out to close to 68 trainees , through Physio, Speech and extracurricular activities. This was done through whatsapp call ( since that was the most convenient medium for parents). But as time passed people started running out of their mobile data and had no money to recharge, once the lockdown eased most went out of homes in search of work and the smart phone went with them. Currently most of the therapies happen post 7pm and extra curriculars in the morning hours. We are now reaching out to about 58 trainees regularly. The following is the quantitative data on the various therapies.

### L. Physiotherapy



Out of the 70 who need training, 58 trainees were given therapy in the last three months. Intense physio exercises were avoided and the therapist focussed on keeping trainee appropriate exercise so that they do not regress and their limbs remain active.

### M. Speech therapy

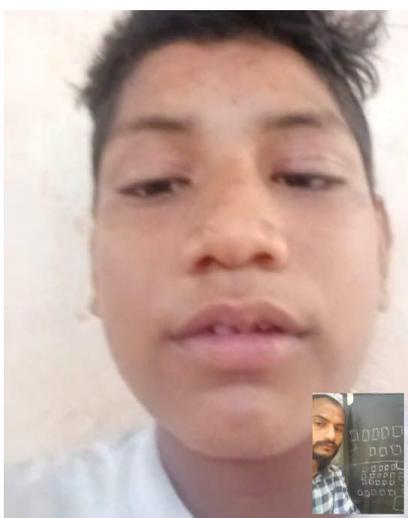
No.	Therapist name	May			June		
		Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
1.	Riddhi Shah	14	36	50	13	32	45



Out of the 63 who need speech and sensory therapies, we could reach out to 45 trainees. The speech and sensory exercises were a big hit, they could be continued without much difficulty and the parents took great pleasure in connecting with her weekly.

#### **N. Extra Curriculars**

Special educators from Samerth team connected with 8 to 10 trainees every day and worked with them pre reading, reading, writing, time, money concept etc. They could connect with 68 out of the 84 trainees and tried to continue learning by new means of communication!



#### **O. Food and Nutrition support to STK Families**



Each monthly dry ration kit was provided to STK families ( Ensuring food security to not just STK children but also their families) This was supported by individuals, a US based firm called Selinc as part of their Covid outreach program and a Ahmedabad based group call WRT4U.

Particulars	Quantity
Rice (kolam)	10 kgs
Tuvar daal (lentil)	2 kgs
Black gram (lentil)	500 gms
Atta (Wheat Flour) Vanraj whole wheat flour	5 kgs
Sugar	1 kg
Salt - Ankur	1 kg
Oil - cotton seed fortune lite @ 2 litre	2 liters
Chilli powder (spices) Kewal spices	200 gms
Dhaniya powder (Spices)Kewal spices	200 gms
Turmeric powder (spices)Kewal spices	200 gms
Jeera (spices)	200 gms
Tea Leaves - Tata tea agni	250 gms



**Nutrition kit was provided to all STK trainees from May to July 2020. This was supported by Baal Dan US.**

<b>Flattened rice (poha)(kohinoor)</b>	1 Kg
<b>Jaggery : 200 gms ( for iron)</b>	200 gm s
<b>Roasted chickpeas (high in protein - used as a healthy snack) (Mahadev brand )</b>	1 kg
<b>Dates (high in iron content) (Tilak dates)</b>	1 kg

### **Way forward**

Now, as the unlocking begins in phases we plan to start calling about 16 trainees every day to the centre and work with them on an individual level ( each trainee will come to the centre once a week and twice a week will undergo therapies and extracurricular through online learning , in total reaching out to 80 trainees at the centre). The current facility has four rooms , each room can accommodate 4 trainees maintaining social distancing. One special teacher can be assigned for one room, who will dedicatedly work with each child. This will ensure social distancing, everyone’s temperatures will be checked before entering the premises, and any one with symptoms of cough, cold or tiredness will be asked to take rest till the symptoms subside. People with higher symptoms will be tested for Covid. We hope to reach out to about 20 trainees (trainees who have severe disability and cannot come to the centre) whom through home based interventions.

We hope to start by August end, first with trainees who we have not been able reach regularly out in the last 3 months and later others – and assess progress against their earlier goals. That assessment will give us directions to plan their next goals.