Avehi Public Charitable Trust

Avehi Abacus Project

Proposal for

2022-2023

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Avehi Public Charitable (Educational) Trust

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<th>Name of NGO</th>
<th>Avehi Public Charitable (Educational) Trust</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Establishment</td>
<td>18-06-1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Address &amp; Tel. No:</td>
<td>Avehi-Abacus Project, 2nd floor, Keshav Khadye Municipal School, K. Khadye Marg, Saat Rasta, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai - 400 011. 022-23052790, 23075231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.avehiabacus.org">www.avehiabacus.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email Address</td>
<td><a href="mailto:avehiabacus@gmail.com">avehiabacus@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>PAN Number</td>
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Avehi means ‘to know’. The Avehi Public Charitable (Educational) Trust, founded in 1981, is a non-profit dedicated to continuing education and critical social intervention through use of media resources. Avehi initiated the Avehi Abacus Project in 1990. The Avehi Abacus Project believes in improving and strengthening the public education system by making it qualitatively better, to reach out to the most marginalized sections of society and to impact mainstream policy on education.

The Avehi Abacus Project (AAP) believes in improving and strengthening the public education system. It aims to reach out to the marginalized sections of society and to impact mainstream policy on education.

**Vision**
The vision behind Avehi Abacus Project is based on an understanding that education, social justice and environmental sustainability are inseparable from each other. The Project is working for an education system that recognizes the primacy of an active learner. It also supports teachers to become reflective and transformative intellectuals, such that they actively contribute towards positive social change.

**The Mission**
The Avehi Abacus Project strives to influence the quality of teaching-learning in schools with the view to equipping children with the skills and values that will help them contribute positively to society and realize their potential to the fullest. It also aims to empower teachers to become active participants in the educational process. It seeks to work for institutionalisation of meaningful, engaging and creative teaching-learning curricula within schools and on teacher education platforms.

**Programmes: Our work at a glance**
The organization has developed various resources and has implemented the following educational programmes on a large-scale, in the formal sites like schools as well as in some slums and bastis.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
**Sangati** (togetherness/harmony): This is a thought-provoking and interactive Life Skills Enhancement and Curriculum Enrichment package comprising of a series of 6 teaching-learning kits with interlinked themes, usually drawn from sciences and social sciences. This programme is implemented in school and non-school settings with children of age group between 11 and 14 years. **Sangati** attempts to make school education relevant and vibrant. It is being used in almost all (900+) schools in the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and has thus reached more than 10,000 teachers and approximately 2,70,000 children. Since 2015 **Sangati** is also being transacted in 36 ‘Ashram schools’ of Integrated Tribal Development Department, Shahapur Project, in Thane district of Maharashtra.

Presently, the **Sangati** program is being conducted online/offline for 29074 students over 1072 classes in 633 schools. As the schools were closed, the program was started at the community level with the participation of 2579 children from 182 Bastis/communities in Urban and Rural areas.

**Manthan** (Churning): A foundation course designed to be transacted with for student-teachers enrolled for Diploma in Teacher Education (D.T. Ed.). **Manthan** reached in being implemented in 14 colleges in Palghar, Thane, Raigad and Mumbai in Maharashtra. **Manthan** is currently being used in 1 college in Raigad district and 5 colleges in Palghar, 4 colleges in Thane district and 4 colleges in Mumbai. **Manthan** sessions started online/offline in 14 D.T. Ed. with 679 student teachers.

**Saath-Saath** - Living together in harmony: This is a curriculum package that has been developed for use in schools as well as community organisations in order to contribute towards the resurgence in awareness about gender justice and equality. This module has reached schools and urban communities in Mumbai as well as to grassroots women's organizations in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, reaching about 10734 adolescent girls, boys and women.

**Sangati** program is started with students of class 5th to 7th in all schools of Mumbai Municipal Corporation. As we are participating in **Sangati** program till 7th standard, **Saath Saath** program has been started for 8th standard students as per the demand of teachers and students. The **Saath Saath** program has started online and offline with 2757 students from 157 classes in 121 schools.

To know more about Avehi Abacus Project, visit: [www.avehiabacus.org](http://www.avehiabacus.org)

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**Sangati Programme**

**Supplementary Curriculum for upper-primary schools**

*Avehi Abacus Project Proposal*
Background:

Avehi Abacus Project’s syllabus formulation started in one of the Mumbai Municipal Schools in 1990 on an experimental basis where the prototype was developed till 1995. The field testing was done from 1995 to 2000 in 25 Municipal Schools by regular teachers and in about 15 Non formal Education classes by the volunteers. From 2000 to 2005 Sangati was used on a wider platform in G- South and F-south wards in the Mumbai Municipal Schools and in about 180 Zilla Parishad schools in one Block each of Yawatmal and Chandrapur Districts as part of UNICEF’s Learning Enhancement Programme. Implementation of Sangati program started on a wider scale in 2006 in all the Upper Primary Schools of Mumbai Municipal Corporation several external evaluation studies by experts it is being implemented in all the Upper Primary Schools from 2006.

Avehi Abacus Project’s Sangati is a three-year curriculum enrichment package – comprising of a series of six teaching-learning kits having inter linked themes and drawing on content taught in general sciences and social studies. It is intended to be transacted with children in the age-group of 10 to 14 years. Sangati is thought-provoking and interactive, attempting to make school education more relevant and vibrant.

Currently Sangati is being implemented in all GBMC middle schools in Greater Mumbai (mainly urban schools and a few schools catering to the tribal population adjacent to Mumbai) and Ashram schools in Thane district (residential schools for tribal children). Since June 2006, five batches of Std V to Std VII in BMC schools have benefitted from Sangati as a supplementary, enrichment curriculum. Mumbai Municipal Corporation’s Education Department has extended excellent support during the implementation of the programme.

Presently, the Sangati program is being conducted online/offline for 29074 students over 1072 classes in 633 schools. As the schools were closed, the program was started at the community level with the participation of 2579 children from 182 Bastis/communities in Urban and Rural areas.

Objectives of Sangati programme:

- To enhance the academic quality of education in schools by enriching and supplementing the regular curriculum.
- To kindle and develop the inherent Life-skills in learners (such as; communication, critical thinking, planning, informed and sensitive decision-making, conflict-resolution, analysis and problem solving, time-management).
- To build vital cognitive skills of meta-thinking, analysis and making active-choices, and to encourage children to consider different opinions while forming and expressing their own.
- To enhance the children’s academic performance (particularly in Social Science) by making learning relevant and enjoyable.
- To enable teachers to refresh their teaching skills, to encourage multi-disciplinary teaching, and make teaching participatory and enjoyable.
- To provide stimulating reading materials that will help develop children’s reading skills and cultivate a thirst for reading beyond academic material.

Requesting Funds for current situation

Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
Brief Impact of COVID 19 pandemic on education:
The COVID19 pandemic has taken us all by surprise and while the better-off have borne the brunt it is the marginalized – daily wage labourers, self-employed skilled/unskilled workers, domestic workers and others belonging to socio-economically weaker sections who are facing untold miseries. The impact of the pandemic is felt both in the metros like Mumbai with the suddenly announced prolonged lockdown resulting in economic distress, haplessly driven to migrate to villages where they had to struggle to survive. Most have lost their meagre savings, many have lost livelihood, children have lost on education and future. We are specifically addressing issues affecting children of such marginalised. These children are doubly voiceless – for being children and for being children of the oppressed. With this in background let us look at the situation in education.

- The immediate impact on education of school children enrolled in Mumbai Municipal schools is extremely serious. As per MCGM’s report about 28.12% children from class I to VIII have left with their parents joining the exodus. In the category of IX and X out of 33,403 students 8,143 have left. As a result the current online enrolment it’s reduced by half. MCGM estimates about 30% students not coming back – at least this academic year. (An India-wide report by the Azim Premji University can be found here: https://azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/field-studies-in-education/loss-of-learning-during-the-pandemic).

- In today’s times there is a spurt in ICT-based or what is popularly called online education. However; this mode of education needs to be viewed with caution. Firstly; there is a deep chasm of ‘digital divide’ and it is expected to deepen. For example; the MCGM report states that only about 47.78% students have access to smart phones and out of about 2 lakh 14 thousand students in its elementary schools only 46.74% remained connected to studies through various online learning initiatives of the department and the state government. The issue of digital-divide has been even more grievous with tribal children and our immediate experience shows that barely 1.79% in the areas we work in could access online education.

- Secondly; there are issues related with pedagogy, active engagement between teacher and children, increasing passive, pure text-based teaching-learning, issues related with addressing children’s doubts, most importantly the possible blind-spots about child’s social context in teaching and interaction between peers. These can certainly be addressed through ICT but appropriate teacher education and teacher support is needed to use the technology in sound and competent manner.

- While these and other issues plaguing ‘online’ education and while these need to be taken on board it is also essential that students remain in touch with their academic life and retain educational purpose, aims, and academic-involvement. Students missing out on academic year have very serious implications for their future – being sucked into child labour or the world of crime or girls forced into early marriage. Thus in today’s times it may be inevitable that we use the ICT/online learning to a certain extent but by ensuring that individual children's issues are taken on board.

Given the situation briefly elaborated above we wish to take a multi-pronged approach this year.

A nationwide lockdown was declared beginning in March 2020 to prevent the spread of Corona infection.

Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
Announced initially for 21 days, the time was gradually increased and it is almost a year now. During this year of Covid-19 and lockdown, everyone had to face many problems. The disease has had a huge impact not only on the economy but also on education. There were many problems with regard to nutrition, employment and health.

In this situation, the work of interacting with the children started with the students of the municipal schools and Ashram schools, regarding the problems they had faced.

Achievements

Specific achievements of Avehi-Abacus Project

Since 31 years Avehi Abacus project has been working with schools to implement the programme via regular teachers, but due to the pandemic we began our implementation at community level. Despite lack of direct community connect and experience we could make this shift very easily, successfully. This is indeed heartening for us. This has been mainly due to the affinity students feel about the content of Sangati as well as due to the way our team has built relationships with students. Not only did we could experience enthusiasm from students currently studying in schools but also past-batches of students who have now grown-up and are young-adults, able to motivate others, convince community members. Our workbooks often have activities that rely on collecting information from home/community and thus even for the parents Sangati is not an alien idea.

Not only that; witnessing our team’s efforts to reach-out to children during these challenging times many school principals and teachers have facilitated our interaction at community level.

It is indeed remarkable that our team has worked with resilience in a new set-up without fear of the pandemic and these experiences have generated newer insights and skills in the team members.

Work During pandemic: 2020-21

Until the schools reopen and children are allowed to come to school, we will continue to coordinate with the school teachers/authorities and local level agencies to be in touch with the children either virtually or physically (following all the safety protocol), but before that, the most important work that has been started is to remain in touch with children and provide counselling support.

- **Continuous Follow-up with parents and children:** A continuous follow-up is underway, keeping track of parents and children already contacted and efforts are being made to reach-out to more. The details of some students who have gone to the village or have left the state are being kept. This is being done so that we can track-them and assist the Education Department in order to prevent drop-outs.

- **Children’s counseling:** The students have to face many problems during this Covid period, so they get very irritated, quarrel over small issues, don’t get to play, stay on mobile, etc. The economic situation has led to even more different and difficult experiences. The children expressed the view that Avehi was the first to contact them.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
● **Student feedback: impact of Covid-19 and Our School After Covid**: Due to the Covid-19 situation, everyone has had to face many problems, including school children. The students discussed their experiences during this period on the phone, after which the children wrote down their thoughts, took photos and sent them via mobile. We have received around 4000 of these responses. Some have written and shared their experiences, while others have sent pictures.

● **On-line Sangati sessions with children**: In the academic year 2020-2021, due to the spread of Corona virus, online education started from July / August 2020. We contacted a few groups, teachers and head teachers from various schools and planned our interventions with their collaborations and consultations.

● Meanwhile we have already connected with 15395 students from the BMC schools. Till the time we get the formal permission from the department we are planning to roll-out online sessions with the available students and expand the network of students. With a strong support team of school representatives (50 persons) we will be able to stay connected with students on individual basis for follow-up, counselling support, problem-solving, etc.

● It was decided that we should focus on the sessions that are most relevant in the current situation. Accordingly, we started with standard 7th Sangati Kit 5- ‘Understanding Change’, Sangati Kit 6 - ‘Preparing For The Future’. Sangati Kit 5 - Understanding Change was started in 612 classes and was completed in 582 classes and Sangati Kit 6 - ‘Preparing For The Future’ was started in 533 classes and was completed in 469 classes of Std VII in Upper Primary and Secondary schools.

● **Workbooks for Self-Study on themes of Physical and Mental Health, and Life-Skills** was developed, printed and distributed particularly to those children who are unable to connect to digital platforms so that they will find relevant information connecting both – formal textbook content in Science and Social Science. A total of Marathi (4000) and Hindi (6000) workbooks were distributed.

● **Work with some communities** The workbook was distributed to students in about 328 bastis in Mumbai and 51 Villages in Ashram School from Shahapur The workbooks will be distributed to students in about 277 bastis in Mumbai and 51 Villages in Ashram School from Shahapur Project. After handing over these workbooks, the representatives of Avehi team will contact the groups of children within 7 to 15 days. We are working with 328 Bastis/communities in Urban and Rural. Around 10000 students from class 5th to 9th have been involved with us. The Avehi team residing in that area, school teachers, local activists helped prepare these lists.

● In the period starting from July 2020-21 Sangati reached out to nearly 23366 students (Online 13496 students and Offline classes 9870 students). The team has continued similar efforts as mentioned earlier by implementing Sangati kit 6, ‘Preparing for the Future’. During this period ‘online’ were conducted 418 schools with 13496 students. While the schools closed formally for summer holidays our programs continued at the community level with the participation of 9870 students in 328 urban rural and tribal communities.

**Field Outreach of Sangati Programme:**

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
Avehi Abacus Project works with underprivileged children in Mumbai Municipal Corporation Schools and residential schools for tribal children (Ashram schools) run by the Tribal Development Department. 100% of students attending these schools belong to low socio-economic strata characterized by low income, low occupation, and low education.

- In fact, the children coming to Mumbai Municipal Corporation schools are from the of the most vulnerable populations. Avehi is also working in all the schools of Mumbai Municipal Corporation under A to T wards, the 24 administrative divisions of Mumbai.

| Sanga Programme in MCGM (BMC Schools) Std. 5 to 7 and Ashram Schools std. 5 to 9 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Schools                         | No of schools | No of classes | No of students |
| MCGM: Upper Primary Schools     | Std. 5 to 7   | 811           | 2085           | 47893          |
| Secondary Schools               | 39            | 105           | 2185           |
| Total                           | 850           | 2190          | 50078          |
| Ashram schools (Residential Schools for Tribal Children), Thane | Std. 5 to 9 | 36            | 174            | 9629           |
| Grand Total                     | 886           | 2364          | 59707          |

How Sanga is implemented in schools

In the beginning of each academic year, orientation/training sessions are organized by the Avehi-Abacus Project to orient the school teachers to Sanga. This is followed by distribution of kits and children’s material in schools. Sanga sessions are conducted by the teachers twice a week for 1 clock hour. The project representatives visit schools regularly to understand the feedback/response from students and teachers and provide inputs to make the sessions more effective. The worksheets filled by students are also overseen by the Field Representatives.

Sanga Kits: About Sanga Kits Implemented in 2022-23

Sanga is a three-year enrichment curriculum package, comprising of a series of six teaching-learning kits with inter-linked themes addressing issues in Science and Social Studies. It addresses the gaps between topics in the prescribed syllabus, encourages inter-disciplinary learning and connects school knowledge to everyday life.

The Sanga series focuses on the content of school education. The attempt is to make school education relevant and interesting, by improving the quality of what is taught and how it is taught.

The emphasis of Sanga is on certain specific themes and the links between them, rather than on isolated

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pieces of information. These themes are organized in a way that will provide a different perspective for children to understand and analyze the world around them. These interlinked themes (indicated here in capitals) are:

Knowing about **MYSELF** means understanding that I am unique and yet share something with every other human being. It means understanding the potential and limitations of **MY BODY**, and realizing that regardless of our differences all human beings have the same **NEEDS**.

It is **OUR EARTH** that provides the resources that make it possible for us to fulfill our needs. We share the earth with other living beings and are part of the **WEB OF LIFE** because we use the same resources.

For thousands of years, human beings have been producing things using the earth’s resources. In this process, technology has advanced and different **SOCIETIES HAVE DEVELOPED**.

Continuing changes in technology and different social, economic, political and cultural institutions influence **THE WAY WE LIVE** our lives and our relationships with one another.

There has been a great deal of change in human society and in the relationships that human beings have developed - with one another, with other forms of life, and with the environment. It is only by **UNDERSTANDING** these **CHANGES** and analyzing their impact that we can learn to deal with them and to create the kind of society we want.

If we truly want to bring about change, then we need to **PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE**. This means exploring alternatives for a better future for ourselves as individuals as well as for our society and our earth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Sangati Kits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Kit 1: Myself, My Body and Our Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Kit 2: Our Earth and the Web of Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Kit 3: How Societies Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Kit 4: The Way We Live</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Kit 5: Understanding Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Kit 6: Preparing For The Future</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The programme in schools is implemented as follows

The **Sangati** series consists of six interactive learning kits - two each for Classes V, VI and VII. Each kit consists of a Manual for Teachers and a set of Visual Aids. The titles in the series are:

**Planned activities: 2022-23**

When the schools resume in June 2022, we will work with the school authorities, teachers by considering safety issues, but before that, the most important work that has been started (and will continue) is to remain in contact with children and provide them emotional and academic support.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
<table>
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<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Planned activities</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Period</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Securing MoUs and Meeting with Authorities</td>
<td>Meeting with Education Officer and Project Officers (Regular exchange meetings), for obtaining permission for implementation of Sangati, signing MOU.</td>
<td>April-May 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Material Printing and Distribution</td>
<td>Production (printing/ assembling) of teachers’ and children’s materials (worksheets and fact-sheets) for kits</td>
<td>April-May 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Follow-up to prevent drop-outs</td>
<td>An effort to remain in touch with as many students as possible particularly those who are not able to connect to classes by on-line means. This is needed to emotionally support these students and organize any follow-up to prevent drop-outs.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Capacity Building workshops, meetings for staff</td>
<td>Regular meetings are being held with the team to review the work done as well as to plan further work</td>
<td>April 2022 to March 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Implementation of Sangati in schools</td>
<td>Implementation of Sangati programme in all upper primary schools of Mumbai and Thane by school teachers from new academic year 2022-2023.</td>
<td>June 2022 to April 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dialogue with teachers</td>
<td>The teachers themselves have voluntarily enlisted participation of Avehi representatives in their school's ‘whatsAapp’ groups.</td>
<td>June 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Work with some communities.</td>
<td>Work with communities: We are working with Bastis/communities in Urban and Rural. Even if schools start, work will continue in some neighborhoods for out-of-school children.</td>
<td>Ongoing 2022-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Meeting with authorities</td>
<td>Working consistently intensively (meetings/ visits) with Education Officials for updating them about the work and for effective monitoring and implementation of Sangati programme</td>
<td>June 2022 to March 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Impact of COVID: In house study of Ashram schools</td>
<td>A small study will be done to see how many children have dropped out as a result of school closure due to the pandemic. To understand the extent and factors behind students discontinue of education. This data/understanding will be shared with the officials and it will help in jointly devising means to track those who have ‘dropped-off’ and mainly</td>
<td>July - August 2022-2023</td>
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Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
The monitoring system includes external and internal mechanisms

- **Field Monitoring and Process Documentation of sessions:** The project representatives visit schools to understand students and teachers’ responses. These visits are crucial in ascertaining the overall response to the programme, the regularity in conducting sessions, effectiveness in conducting sessions and the response of the students. This process documentation serves as a rich source of understanding teaching-learning processes in classrooms, changes in children, teachers and officials and their response the inputs.

**For Quantitative Data**
- The number of classes with various degrees of implementation/completion of Avehi Abacus Project programmes and student attendance is maintained by the Project Field Representatives for further documentation.
- Completion and quality of students’ worksheets.

**For Qualitative Data**
- Reports of class observation by Project Field Representatives is maintained on a daily, weekly, monthly basis and complied on monthly, quarterly, annual basis by Field Coordinator and Chief Project Officer.
- Case studies of students, teachers are also kept by the Project Field Representatives
- Written feedback from students and teachers are documented
- Weekly files of home activities related with the Project courses are maintained by students. These help in understanding changes in student performance and involvement on a continuous manner.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
Expected results:

Sangati Programme:

In order to assess the impact the following mechanisms/processes will be followed:

A sample of stakeholders from all categories will be exposed to questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions along with weekly class observations by field representatives.

Regular feedback will be shared with middle and senior level officers. It is envisaged that greater involvement of officers will help towards obtaining quality feedback and add to sustainability.

Specific Expected results of Sangati:

- 85% of students demonstrate improvement in reading, writing and comprehension skills compared to base line status.
- 80% students demonstrate increased participation in class.
- 80% Sampled children demonstrate increased attendance by 75% on schooldays when Sangati classes are conducted.
- 80% students demonstrate increased analytical ability, problem solving and decision making skills as compared to base line status.
- 80% Teachers conducting Sangati demonstrate increased effectiveness in teaching and in deeper understanding of content-pedagogy compared to base line status.

Sangati Strategy for sustainability of the project:

In order to ensure smooth integration, better monitoring and sustained use of Sangati programme, the Avehi Abacus Project has been working with the State Council for Education Research and Training also to further strengthen the base in schools by integrating the core-curriculum in the State syllabus, learning material and teacher development.

- More efforts will also be made to concentrate on involving the Supervisory Officers for effective monitoring in GBMC.
- An easy to use, transparent, verifiable, appropriate mechanism for Monitoring and Evaluation the results of impact of Sangati will also be made and applied during this phase to demonstrate Evidence-based efficacy of intervention.
- The aim of the programme is also to ensure successful and sustained integration of teacher education mechanisms both for in-service and pre-service.
- Partnerships with other organisations with their independent field-base in different geographies also helps in wider-spread and creating a network of like-minded groups.

Impact of the programmes

1 Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
Highlight of Sangati 2020-21

- The academic year 2020-2021 was marred by the ‘lockdown’ that was declared due to the pandemic. As a result, schools were forced to shift to online mode of instruction. Sangati sessions were initially being conducted online. However, as soon as the lockdown were relaxed, we started conducting Sangati at Basti level classes (community settlements) so that direct interaction with students could take place.

- Students in both the groups were happy with the resumption of physical Sangati sessions, the response of Ashram school students were overwhelmingly positive as they had been facing maximum difficulty in attending online sessions and were forced to be disconnected with any kind of schooling due to the lockdown restrictions.

- The academic year 2020-2021 started during the lockdown period. Schools remained closed but education resumed online. Students had to face many hurdles / difficulties in teaching-learning process conducted through the online mode.

- From November 2020, teachers started inviting students to schools occasionally. The students felt a little better about this option. Yet, especially among the Ashram school students, teaching-learning through the Sangati classes conducted in their neighborhood/selements/villages was the most enjoyable and preferable mode of teaching-learning. Most of the students also felt happy to be able to play with and meet their friends during the Sangati sessions conducted at the community level.

- Sangati program helps students in developing and showcasing their skills and qualities. Through various games, discussions, stories etc., students get ample opportunity to understand as well as express themselves. Thus, students try their best to develop their abilities sometimes through discussions, reading, writing and participation in various forms.

- The teaching-learning tools that are an integral part of the Sangati program play an important role in helping the students hone their abilities. The table here is an indication of what kind of strategies and activities interest the students the most.

- During the lockdown period, Sangati workbooks were an effective means of reaching out to students. Therefore, in November 2020, workbooks were distributed to the students in Sangati community classes. The students were very happy to receive these workbooks. The workbooks provided information about how our self-image is constructed, our body-anatomy, our health (physical and social), as well as our needs. The workbooks also contained information about protecting oneself from the Coronavirus.

- The pandemic situation caused as much mental distress as it did physical harm to humans. The stress was not limited to the adults, but the children were also adversely affected by the same. Ashram schools students faced mental stress due to the Covid situation. They explained that they were suffering from constant hunger, irritability, sudden sadness, loss of appetite and sleep deprivation, constant anxiety, sudden crying, constant quarrels at home, poor financial situation, issues related to disruption in teaching-learning etc.

- The students felt stressed by the crisis caused due to the onset of the pandemic. There may be many reasons for this including issues related to finances, family, physical and mental health etc. Sangati program understood this and started physical classes in the neighbourhoods/settlements/villages as well as home visits, to help students manage this stress. Sangati representatives started keeping in touch with the students through phone, listened to their opinions, helped them share their thoughts, guided them in various ways, etc.

Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
The Sangati program is getting very positive response from students and teachers.

**Manthan Programme**

*Manthan*- Pre-service Teacher Education Module

**Situational Analysis and Context of implementation of the Manthan Programme**

Despite occasional acknowledgement by the government of the need for reforms, teacher education in India has remained virtually unchanged since colonial times, reflecting largely the colonial view of the teacher as simply a transmitter of a set curriculum, where knowledge is a ‘given’. The emphasis has remained on pedagogy, on teaching methodologies, rather than on engaging the teacher actively in shaping the content of the curriculum to make it relevant and use it as a tool to achieve larger educational objectives.

Recent attempts at innovation in curricular structures and methodologies at the school level—of which the most significant is the National Curriculum Framework 2005—also call for improvement and enhancement of teachers’ skills. Similarly, the Right to Education Act of 2009 has thrown up new challenges.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
While working with the MMC school teachers to develop and spread the *Sangati* programme we felt the need to work closely with teachers. We realised that teachers need to be encouraged to learn to look at at their own roles afresh A serious need was felt to build awareness amongst educators and teachers to examine attitudes towards education and society. Equally significant was the understanding that such an effort must form part of the professional pre-service training that student-teachers undergo, from the earliest possible stage. In other words, a Foundation Course for pre-service training – a course that would focus on the teacher’s role and their vital contribution towards making education truly meaningful. Avehi Abacus Project thus responded by developing *Manthan* curriculum (for trainee teachers at Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.))

**Manthan- Pre-service Teacher Education Module:**
A foundation course for student teachers enrolled for the Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.), is currently being used in 14 colleges in Thane, Palghar, Raigad and Mumbai districts state of Maharashtra.

**Manthan Outreach:**

No of Colleges: 14, No of teacher educators: 14, No. of student teachers : 679

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>D.El.Ed. colleges</th>
<th>No of Student teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palghar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumbai</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raigad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Manthan Curriculum:**
The *Manthan* curriculum and the methodology are inseparable. If teachers are expected to engage children in interactive and participatory methodologies in the classroom, they themselves need to experience a variety of teaching-learning methods as part of their professional development. The course therefore relies mainly on a plethora of strategies towards 'learning to learn'.

The *Manthan* curriculum contains

- a handbook for teacher educators
- a set of supplementary visual materials

*Avehi Abacus Project Proposal*
reading materials and worksheets for assessment of trainee teachers.

How *Manthan* is implemented in teacher education colleges:
A preliminary meeting with all the Principals is held and workshop for teacher educators of these colleges is conducted. After that, the Teacher Educators conduct the sessions regularly once a week.

**Planned activities for *Manthan* 2022-23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Planned activities</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Material Printing and Distribution</td>
<td>Production (printing, assembling) of material for Teacher Educators of colleges, Distribution of course material and follow up of implementation of module in field.</td>
<td>May 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting with Principal of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Inspector, Department of Education, Mumbai</td>
<td>For permission and implementation – meeting the Principal of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) regarding progress and future plans.</td>
<td>April 2022 to March 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Meeting with all the Principals</td>
<td>A preliminary meeting with all the Principals of the 14 colleges for a detailed orientation of the <em>Manthan</em> programme.</td>
<td>July 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Implementation of <em>Manthan</em> programme</td>
<td>Implementation of <em>Manthan</em> programme in all 14 colleges by teacher educators/Avehi Coordinators. There after the Teacher Educators are expected to conduct the sessions regularly every week.</td>
<td>Aug 2022 to March 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Monitoring visits</td>
<td>The Field Coordinator for <em>Manthan</em> programme to conduct introductory/demonstration sessions.</td>
<td>Aug 2022 to March 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Collect written feedback form Teacher Educators</td>
<td>March 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Manthan programme**

**Expected Impact on Student Teachers and Teacher Educators**

- Enhancement of Teaching Learning Skills
- Develop understanding of changes in economic policies and political atmosphere that is impacting formal education.
- Forming/sharpening habit of analysis with reference to constitutional value framework and current pedagogical framework.
- Enhancement of teaching skills through appropriate and effective use of audio visual aids and multi-sensory teaching-learning.

**Avehi Abacus Project Proposal**
• Evolving an integrated teaching-learning pedagogy that will facilitate relating school learning to the everyday context of learners.
• Developing the skills to make learning a fulfilling and stress-free experience for both teachers and learners.
• Developing a habit of seeing education as a process and knowledge as a contextually achievable aim rather than an isolated commodity evaluated by examinations.
• Aiming at evolution of the teacher into a reflective practitioner rather than a mere transmitter of information.

Strategy for sustainability of the project: Manthan programme:

In order to ensure smooth integration, better monitoring and sustained use of Manthan programme, the Avehi Abacus Project has been involved in working closely with the State Board of Teacher Education (SBTE) of the Maharashtra State Council for Educational Research and Training and faculty and Principal of the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)

The Project is ready to extended and integrate the programme in State level Teacher Education system. The efforts will then concentrate on involving the Supervisory Officers for follow-up with stress on integration in the system. The final aim of the programme is successful and sustained integration of the Programme in Teacher Education mechanisms.

Impact of the programmes: Highlight of Manthan 2020-21

• Student teachers’ interest in the program and their happiness and relief that Manthan sessions were continued even during the lockdown period. This is also indicative of the kind of value this program is adding to the student teachers’ learning and training.
• Student teachers have developed a mature perspective to look at society and education and hence we get to see that the approach to several contentious issues. Their receptive attitude to Manthan despite it being an additional work-responsibility is an indication of the change.
• Manthan enhances critical thinking skills and thus student teachers’ analytical abilities have been activated. Student teachers also find the new information to be useful in everyday teaching and the methodology brings certain informality into the classroom. Participants explore their hidden talents through discussions, conversations, presentation and games. The sessions help in developing new insights and abilities.

Some of the Key Achievements and Partnerships

Avehi-Abacus has been collaborating with various agencies since its inception.

• Education Department of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai: Avehi Abacus Project is the only organisation to implement an intensive curriculum programme with in-service teachers in all middle level schools (900+) over a stretch of nearly 12 years.
• National Council for Educational Research and Training: The Director was key member of the committee to draft the syllabus and textbooks for 'Environmental Studies' for std III, IV, V and content developed by

Avehi Abacus Project Proposal
Avehi Abacus has been integrated in the textbooks.

- **Maharashtra State council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT-Maharashtra):** During revision of State syllabus 2012, ( std I to VIII) the Project Director oversaw the development of the syllabus in her capacity as the Chairperson for Environmental Studies and was part of the core-committee for revision of the Diploma in Teacher Education course.

- **Tata Institute of Social Sciences:** The Director of the Avehi Abacus Project teaches a course in Pedagogy of Social Sciences for Masters in Elementary Education programme at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and has also developed teacher education syllabus for Bachelor of Education programme for the institute.

- The **Sangati** curriculum is used by reputed schools across the country and has been successfully implemented in rural and tribal schools.

- **Network of NGOs at Mumbai level:** Comprises of organisations working on issues of education and child rights. Avehi-Abacus considers it essential to contribute as a resource organisation in this process and collectively with other organisations work out effective implementation strategies based on its experiences.

- **Avehi Abacus Project** has been playing resource organisation’s role mentoring grassroots partners in north India (Mahila Janadhikar Samiti (MJS), Alawar Mewat Institute of Education and Development (AMED), Alwar, Rajasthan and Sahajni Shiksha Kendra (SSK) in Uttar Pradesh with support from AJWS.

- **Avehi Abacus Project has been playing the role of a resource organization**
  - Avehi Abacus Project has been playing the role of a resource organization for WIPRO’s Earthian Initiative’s Continuous Engagement Programme along with the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) where elements of **Sangati** and **Manthan** have been used to develop and strengthen components to meet goals set for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

  - **Partnership with Tata Trust:** As a joint venture between Tata trust and Avehi Abacus project, **Saath Saath** program is being introduced at Bahraich. This project is aimed at gender equality and for dealing with gender discrimination. **Saath Saath** has reached around 1981 adolescent girls and boys from 18 schools, community base centres spread across three blocks of the Bahraich district.

  - **Partnership with M-Power project, TISS:** Avehi Abacus Project has entered into a partnership with M-Power project, Tata Institute of Social Science, for implementation of its **Sangati** program to strengthen quality learning and overall development of children. **Sangati** program (Kit I) has been implemented in 5 Centres from M ward in Mumbai. 266 Students from classes V to VIII participated in the program.

  - **Partnership with UNICEF Mumbai:** UNICEF, Maharashtra approached and entered into a contract with Avehi Abacus Project as a resource organization, to review, analyse and map **life skill and equity issues** in Maharashtra State.
Board textbooks for Grades I to X. This collaboration was undertaken to help the Department of Education, Government of Maharashtra analyse school textbooks with a view to making them more contemporary. The report is finalized and submitted to UNICEF. It was presented to Additional Chief Secretary, School Education, Government of Maharashtra, Maharashtra State Council for Educational Research and Training and Balbharti (the textbook making body) officials and has been much appreciated. The report was also translated in Marathi.