



building skills for life

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

# Contents

From the CEO's desk .....	2
Our Model.....	3
Impact.....	4
Partnerships .....	6
Engaging with parents.....	8
Ripple Effect: Teacher Development .....	10
Intensive Workshops.....	12
The Youth Project.....	13
Service Learning: Annual Event .....	15
Not without our volunteers! .....	16
Funders and Supporters .....	17
Finances .....	19
Identity.....	22
Get Involved.....	23

# From the CEO's desk

When I first started working on Apni Shala, as a project during my Masters programme, I knew I was onto something significant. What I didn't fully realise, was that the rigour of the journey of seeing all that come into being, would be as exciting as the dream itself.

2015-16 was a year when I saw little ideas become big drivers, a small team become a force of change, but also, where hard work sometimes didn't always easily get us what we wanted. And that's why 2015-16 was a year of realities – of real progress, great challenges and a real endeavour to make things work despite all odds!

I can never forget all the nervous yet positive energy I felt, when we welcomed our new and bigger team right at the start of the year! This year, we added depth to our team with a second line of management - something that would change all our internal processes and strengthen us from the roots.

The academic year started off with several challenges – including a difficult path to obtaining permissions to working with government schools. And once permissions came through, we worked hard to make up for lost time, and successfully implemented our expansion plans, reaching out to 1485 children, 150 parents and 22 teachers through our various programmes.

We went all out to attempt new ideas and make them work. The Service Learning Programme that has children implement real-world solutions to community issues was taken to 200 children as compared to 50 the previous year. It culminated in an amazing event – the first of its kind - at the end of the year, where 200 children across all our partners showcased their projects to their teachers, parents and supporters.

We spent several days creating a more detailed and robust approach to our teacher development efforts and also implemented a planned strategy towards actively engaging parents, and building a strong volunteer base for our work.

2015-16 was a year of the new and the unfamiliar – a year we spent gearing up for what is often in store for those chasing a beautiful dream.

I am thrilled to give you a glimpse of it in this report.



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Amrita Nair  
CEO and Co-founder,  
Apni Shala Foundation

# Our Model

## Vision

All children are equipped with the skills and attitudes they need to bring about positive change in their lives and in society.

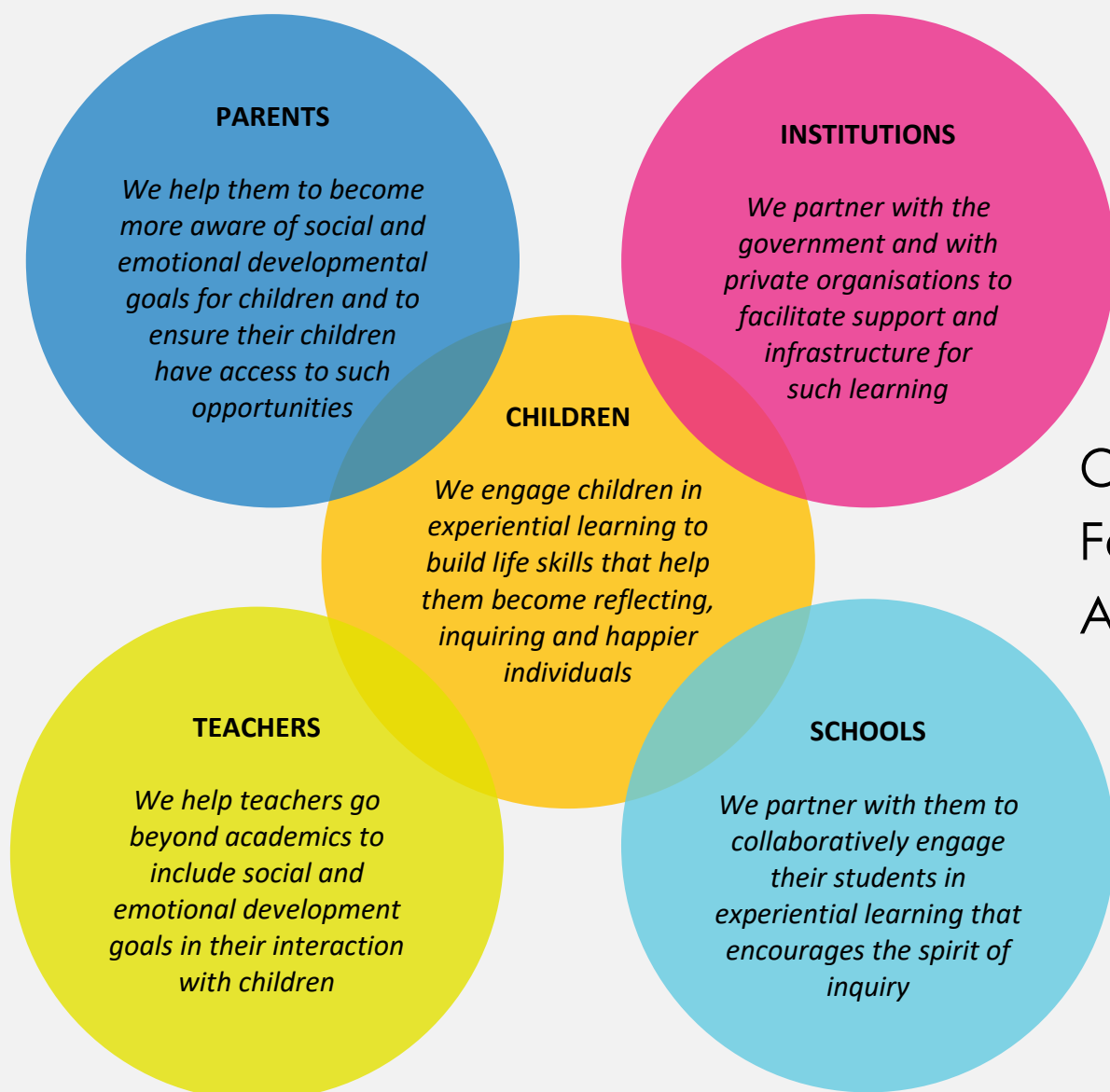
## Our philosophy

Education goes beyond academic goals. Aims of education are known to ensure each child is developing socially, emotionally and cognitively. In other words, education must ensure that children have the skills they need to be confident, to nurture healthy relationships and to lead healthy lives.

Does our education system ensure this? How does one learn all this?

At Apni Shala, we believe that our natural way of being allows us to learn from our environment, and that we have the innate abilities to make decisions, and responsibly respond to the world around us, allowing each of us to grow in the way we feel works best for us. We call these innate abilities, life skills.

Our mission is to facilitate this experiential approach to learning and make it accessible to children, while drawing from the strength of the communities and partners we work with.



Our 5  
Focus  
Areas



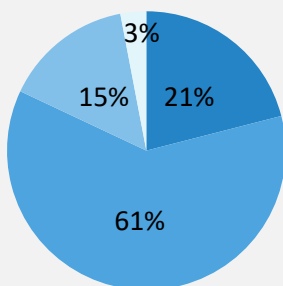


# Impact

2015-16 has been Apni Shala's most successful year so far, in terms of outreach. We worked with 1485 children across seven schools and ten NGOs.

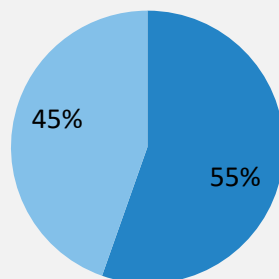
Here's what it all looked like:

Age



- 9-10 yrs
- 11-12 yrs
- 13-14 yrs
- 15 yrs and above

Gender



- Girls
- Boys

1485

Children reached

985

Children engaged year-long

700

Life Skills sessions conducted

150

Parents engaged

22

Teachers reached

20

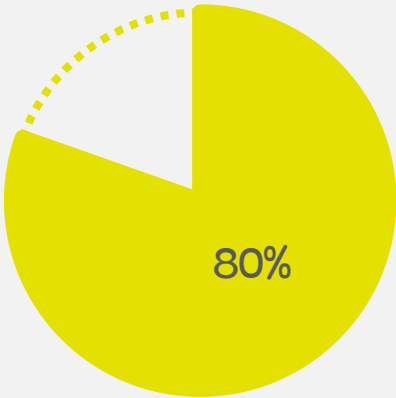
Average session attendance

17

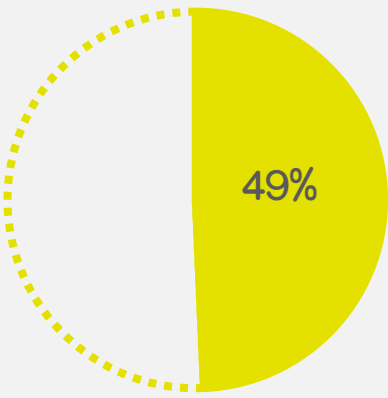
Partner Schools and Organisations

**What % of 985 children enrolled in our flagship year-long programme showed an improvement in various life skills?**

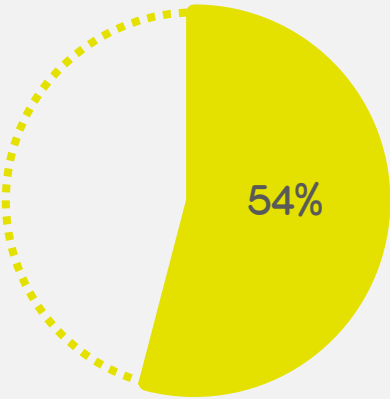
Communication



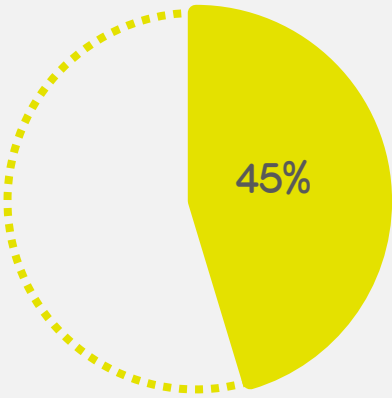
Leadership



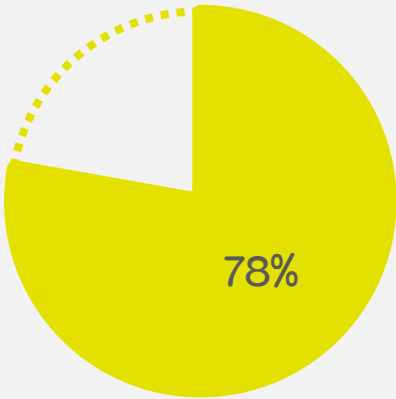
Teamwork



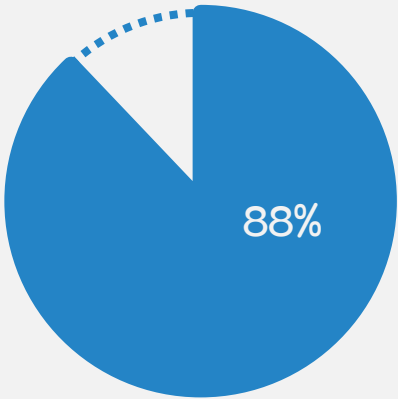
Empathy



Confidence



One or more of the above life skills







## Partnerships

Organization	Outreach
Door Step School	112
VIDYA-Mumbai	193
Guru Nanak School	93
Udaan India Foundation	94
S R Foundation	40
Chembur Naka MPS	88
Collector Colony Hindi School	78
Ghatla Hindi School	54
Govandi Station UP School No. 1	59
Shahaji Nagar Urdu School No. 1	136
Shahaji Nagar Urdu School No. 3	88
SP Jain IMR – Abhyudaya	150
Bodh Shiksha Samiti, Jaipur	125
BMCWS, Rajguru Nagar	75
Masoom Education	25
Creative Handicrafts	75

All the impact we create is made possible because of the wonderful educational institutions such as schools and non-profits that partner with us and embrace our programmes.

We partnered with 7 schools and 10 NGOs this year, including MCGM schools in Chembur and Mankhurd in Mumbai's M West and East wards – wards having the lowest human development index in the city.

## Partner Speak

Indarjit Kaur, Headmistress of Chembur Naka Mumbai Public School, is a young teacher with innovative ideas for her students' education. She tells us what she feels about our programme.

*What was your first impression of the programme?*

When I first met Mayuri [Programme Manager, Apni Shala] and Swetha [Co-founder, Apni Shala] in my school, the way they introduced themselves and their programme, made me agree to partnering with you. I thought they have very positive energy in them. Such young people like them are so dedicated towards bringing some change through education - that made me select this programme for my school.

*What have you observed about the teaching-learning methods we use?*

I give the same instructions to the class teachers, as you do – don't use blackboards, don't open the textbook. I tell them to use freestyle teaching, that will give you strength and your students an atmosphere to brainstorm in class. I tell them to think out of the box, don't use those remote methods that involve chalk, dusters and charts; they aren't that effective as freestyle teaching. Freestyle teaching empowers you, but those [didactic] methods restrict you.

*What do you like about the way ASF goes about its work?*

I like the way Apni Shala teaches in their sessions. The student is not even aware that these kinds of skills are being inculcated in them, and still we are inculcating these in them.

I am also very fond of such kind of teaching methods. When I was a teacher, I used to



think "How can I teach this lesson differently?" This is because municipal school classrooms are the only classrooms where teachers are given full freedom. Even I [as a headmistress] cannot tell my teachers "Why have you taught this lesson like this? You must teach like this. This is our school method". In other schools there are restrictions of following preset methods, but in municipal schools – where I've been working since 2007 – I [as a teacher] have full freedom in my class. I can teach however I want to. That makes my class more interactive.

"Using experiential teaching methods creates an atmosphere for students to brainstorm in class"

- **Inderjeet Kaur,**  
**Headmistress,**  
**Chembur Naka MPS**





## Engaging with parents

2015-16 saw Apni Shala debut its Parent Engagement Programme. The programme was created to ensure that Apni Shala was facilitating life skills development by reaching out to the most important stakeholders in their lives – their parents.

Usually, children spend about 6-8 hours of their day at school, and the rest is spent at home or in the community. This programme helped us understand, as educators, the environment of the child at home. It also served as a barometer for us to gauge the changes the parents saw in their children after going through our programme.

We engaged 150 parents across 24 groups of children.

### Structure and Agenda

The first meeting was to be conducted in the beginning of the year to help our facilitators introduce Apni Shala to the parents and set expectations (for both programme facilitators as well as the parents).

The second meeting was planned to be held in the middle of the year to give the parents an update about the status of the programme with their children, share experiences we had with their children, get feedback on any changes they might have observed in their children, and finally, to set expectations for the rest of the year.

At the third and final meeting, which was scheduled at the end of the year, the parents were to be presented with a review of the entire year.

### **Little moments, big impact**

In one of our sessions, we asked the parents about the challenges they faced at home with their children. Soon, the parents began complaining about how their children did not listen to them, refused to eat their meals on time or spent too much time playing.

In a move that was completely unplanned, our facilitator invited the children to the session and had them sit opposite their parents. She then asked both groups to communicate with each other. Conversations began slowly and soon parents and children brought up their issues with each other.

By the end of the session the children had made one thing very clear: they cared a lot about their parents and about what their parents thought of them. What an eye opener for all the parents there!

### **The challenge**

While we built a strong rapport with the parents through interactive activities, we conducted fewer meetings than planned, and observed that the average parents' attendance across all groups was lower than we expected. Sometimes parents couldn't attend the entire meeting as they had to report to work. We also observed that parents found it difficult to open up about their feelings and express what they thought.

### **The way forward**

In order to ensure at least one parent per child participates in the programme, next year we will hold more workshops per group of children to give their parents the opportunity to attend and stay connected with their children's education.

By the end of the session the children had made one main thing clear:  
They cared a lot about their parents and about what their parents thought of them. What an eye opener for all parents present!





## Ripple Effect: Teacher Development

A crucial aspect of our journey towards taking life skills to more children, has always been working with teachers, schools and other educational institutions to share our learning and help them support life skills education in their communities and schools.

Our work with VIDYA, an education non-profit based in Powai, led to the next step in our collaboration: working with their teachers.

As a facilitator, who am I? Of what value is the word 'facilitation'? What kind of power relations do children have with me?

Can children overpower me? Does that impede teaching-learning methods in class? What can I, as a facilitator, do to create open conversations with no judgement? What do I already do that I think makes me a great facilitator?

And most importantly, why do life skills matter to my children? Is it because they are relevant to my life as well? How do I design a life skills session to ensure the topics are relevant and inquiry is encouraged?

Our intensive 6-month long programme helps us explore these themes and have enriching conversations with participants. We aim to further strengthen the programme and reach out to wider audiences across the country.



“Until yesterday, I was focussed on skills. But today I learnt it is our experiences that make us who we are. I want to now create experiences for my children in my classroom – by playing games, taking them outside or showing [them] video clips. This will be an important part of my session.”

– Teacher, VIDYA Mumbai

“In the workshop, there wasn’t much theory – but lots of activities and we ourselves had to get up and do things! It was enjoyable especially because the focus was not just on life skills but on me as a teacher or facilitator.”

– Teacher, VIDYA Mumbai



## Intensive Workshops

When we're not busy with our flagship life skills programme we're trying our best to work with children whose schools or centres couldn't sign up with us for the long-term.

Our approach entails short intensive 3-day or 10-day workshops that focus on relevant and complex themes like leadership, bullying and respecting differences.

To ensure that exploring these topics deeply doesn't exhaust participants, we're as usual mixing up fun, games and drama with periods of reflection and debate. This year we worked with almost 500 children across different organizations, including Bodh Shiksha Samiti near Jaipur, and SP Jain Institute of Management Research's Abhyudaya project in Mumbai.

“The workshops got the children working on higher order thinking skills, and they ended up doing a lot more than they thought they could.”

- **Deepa Krishnan,**  
**Chairperson,**  
**Abhyudaya (SPJIMR)**



## The Youth Project

Apni Shala piloted its first project aimed at serving the youth of India – the Apni Shala Youth Project. This project caters to youth from the age of 14 to 18 and is based on Paulo Freire’s idea of praxis - action and reflection - for a person’s critical engagement with self, society and environment. Here, we intend to use the student’s real-life experiences - what he or she might face on a daily basis – to help them reflect.

The life where they get bullied and they bully, where decisions of careers are made, where parental neglect or abuse are affecting the child on a daily basis - this life is “action”. However, we find there are very few spaces where youth can engage in meaningful reflection upon these experiences safely. The Youth Project aims

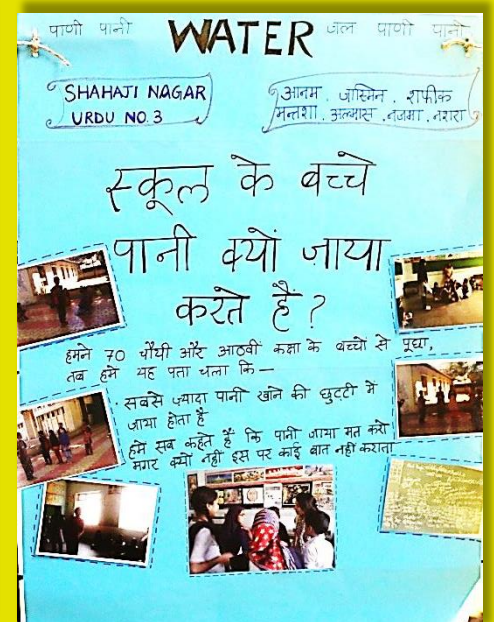
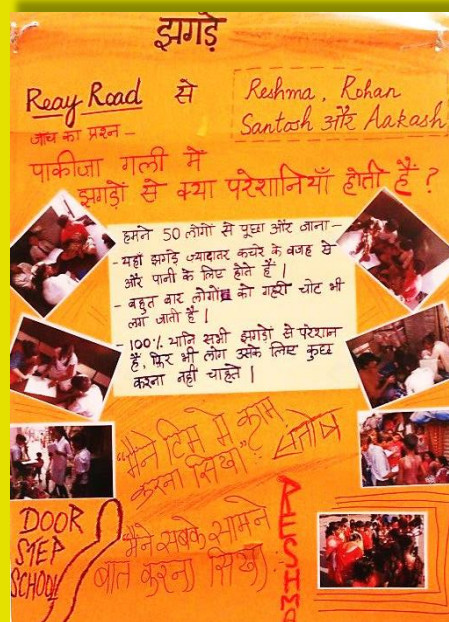
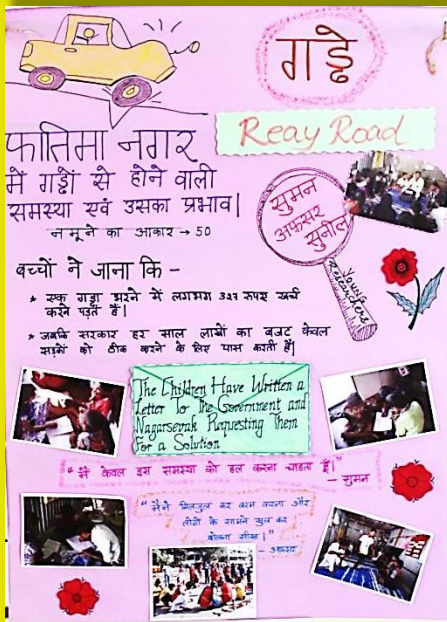
to use this daily action to help the youth make deeper sense of their lives.

The participants covered topics like emotional literacy, Iceberg Theory and uncovering beliefs and mindsets. They also explored their aspirations, strengths and identified their weaknesses.

One of the highlights of the programme though was that even though it started out as a three-month programme, students demanded it to be extended to six months!

We are now certain of its relevance in their lives and will run it on a larger scale next year!





Through primary research and data collection in their neighbourhoods, children studied and addressed various community realities including violence, waste management, poverty, alcoholism and substance abuse



# Service Learning: Annual Event

In a year of many firsts for Apni Shala, we hosted our first SLP Annual Event in April 2016. The event was hosted by Collector Colony Municipal School in Chembur on April 16, 2016. The event marked the culmination of all projects covered in the year-long Service Learning Programme. Students who worked on projects that covered topics like waste management, poverty, alcoholism and substance abuse showcased their learning.

The event served as a bridge for all students, facilitators and volunteers that were part of the SLP projects in various schools and NGOs. It was attended by 150 people and was put together with the help of volunteers from WeKare Society, independent volunteers and the Apni Shala team.

The event hosted around 120 students, over 40 guests and a host of volunteers. It was designed in a conference format where students presented their learning on the topics they had chosen. Students in their groups presented their research, design and implementation ideas. All groups were assigned panellists (experts from the field of education) who gave them feedback and asked relevant questions to help the students reflect on their experiences.

There was also a gallery walk where charts summarizing the projects were put up for participants and guests to take a deeper look at the projects and interact with the students whose presentations they could not attend.

The event was marked by a special appearance from 'The Chavat Boys' a dance

troupe that presented an interactive performance with the kids at the event.

The SLP event was a culmination of the entire year's work of community research, understanding complex issues better and implementation to drive change. We had the support of our partners, volunteers and most importantly, several experts in the field of tobacco treatment, waste management, vermiculture and the likes, who willingly lent their time and knowledge to enrich children's understanding of these complex fields. We thank each of them!

Teacher:

"Please tell me about your community project."

Children:

"If we tell you now, what will you learn during our presentation? Do wait for that, it's happening after this one!"





## Not without our volunteers!

“Volunteering helped me overcome my fears and voice out my opinions.”

- Brenda, SLP Volunteer

It's always good to know that people are willing to spend time and effort for a cause they believe in. But what's better is when that journey helps them learn about themselves as well. That's what happened when we rolled out our volunteer engagement activities this year and witnessed 22 volunteers engage in experiences that they say, helped them grow as individuals!

We had 2 batches of volunteers joining in to take active part in the Service Learning Programme. Here, we had 11 volunteers come week after week to our 10 project sites, take responsibility for a group of children to mentor and guide them while they went about their community projects. Our volunteers, including employees of Capgemini Pvt. Ltd., helped us plan and organise the annual event for Service Learning programme that took place in April 2016. It was absolutely amazing to see their enthusiasm and hard work. The event would have been impossible without having them there, by our side, the whole time.





## Funders and Supporters

The confidence with which we have been able to walk towards our dream in our first three years has a lot to do with the support we received very early on. As Apni Shala turns three this year, we officially complete our periods of support from DBS Foundation, Atma Education and UnLtd India, and last but not the least, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). We extend our thanks to them, acknowledging how each of them have impacted our growth and strengthened our foundation in a unique way.

Being UnLtd India Fellows has helped our co-founders have access to their vast networks and the excellent avenues of

learning they provide to social start-ups like ours. Through Atma's continuous support, we have been able to nurture our strengths while identifying the gaps in our systems and fine-tuning our processes. On the other hand, the financial aid we received from DBS Foundation every quarter ensured we didn't worry too much about resources, and instead focused more on delivery of quality programmes even as a young organization.

Finally, towards the end of the year, we were faced with the reality that our 3-year period of incubation at our alma-mater, the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at TISS, had almost come to an end. The TISS camps has been our home, and all our successes, failures and learning these initial years happened within the walls of this campus. It's not surprising therefore that we will stay indebted to and connected with them always.

We successfully completed three years with UnLtd India, DBS Foundation Atma Education and TISS.

## Forging new partnerships

### Bombay Community Public Trust

BCPT acts as a nodal agency and supports projects in all fields – right from education to women's empowerment and community development. They are also committed to strengthening programme design. BCPT provided Apni Shala financial support for our projects this year, while they also engaged us in an initiative to build life skills assessment tools.

### WeKare Society

WeKare Society is an initiative by employees of Capgemini India Pvt. Ltd. with the aim to improve the lives of impoverished people. They helped us through their year-long financial support and extended the help of their volunteers to strengthen our programmes.

## Community support

The community has been and continues to be the biggest stakeholder of our work. Parents, teachers and citizens of the neighbourhoods we work in are always engaged in our programmes one way or another. However, this year we have also had a number of well-wishers step forward to raise resources and funds for our work. Through successful online crowd funding campaigns during Christmas, Bengaluru Marathon 2015 and the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon 2016, we saw our message reach people from across the globe and eventually draw their support.

Countless individuals have also helped us directly through financial support, and in their own way have helped us reach our goals.

### Our supporters



tag vinnatti



BCPT | The Bombay Community Public Trust

# Finances

## Balance Sheet

The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950

SCHEDULE - VIII  
( Vide Rule 17 (1) )

Name of the Public Trust :- APNI SHALA FOUNDATION  
Balance Sheet As At :- 31ST MARCH, 2016

Registration No. E-29950 (Mumbai)

FUNDS AND LIABILITIES		Rs.	Rs.	PROPERTY AND ASSETS		Rs.	Rs.
<b>Trusts Funds or Corpus</b>				<b>Immovable Properties (At Cost)</b>			
Corpus of the Trust			5,44,100.00	Balance as per last Balance Sheet		-	
<u>Apni Shala Children Education Fund</u>				Additions during the year		-	
Opening Balance		2,50,000.00		Less: Sales during the year		-	
Add: Transferred during the year		6,00,000.00	8,50,000.00	Depreciation up to date		-	-
<b>Loans (Secured or Unsecured)</b>			-	<b>Investments</b>			
<b>Liabilities</b>				Fixed Deposit with Yes Bank			5,63,391.08
Audit Fees Payable		5,000.00		<b>Other Current Assets</b>			
Contractual Fees Payable		66,043.00		TDS Receivable for Ass.Yr. 2015-16		2,446.35	
TDS Payable		666.00	71,709.00	TDS Receivable for Ass.Yr. 2016-17		15,053.10	17,499.45
<b>Income and Expenditure Account</b>				<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet		3,45,492.28		Computers		39,579.00	
Add : Surplus of Income over Expenses		5,07,055.28	8,52,547.56	Project Books		2,520.00	42,099.00
				<b>Loans ( Secured or Unsecured ) : Good / doubtful Advances</b>			-
				<b>Cash and Bank Balances</b>			
				Cash in hand		6,692.00	
				Yes Bank		16,88,675.03	16,95,367.03
<b>Total Rs.</b>			<b>23,18,356.56</b>	<b>Total Rs.</b>			<b>23,18,356.56</b>



# Income & Expense

The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950

## SCHEDULE - IX ( Vide Rule 17 (1) )

Name of the Public Trust :- APNI SHALA FOUNDATION

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31ST, MARCH 2016

Registration No. E-29950 (Mumbai)

EXPENDITURE	Rs.	Rs.	INCOME	Rs.	Rs.
<b>To Expenditure in respect of properties</b>			<b>By Rent</b>		
Rates, Taxes, Cesses		-			
Repairs & Maintenance		-	<b>By Interest</b> (accrued and realised)		
Salaries		-	On Securities	-	
Insurance		-	On Loans	-	
Depreciation (by way of provision of adj)		-	On Fixed Deposits	45,971.04	
Other Expenses		-	On Bank Account	68,165.22	
			On Recurring Deposit	-	1,14,136.26
<b>To Establishment Expenses</b>		1,18,437.98	<b>By Donations in Cash or Kind</b>		9,08,659.00
(As per Schedule E)			(As per Schedule A)		
<b>To Remuneration to Trustee</b>		-	<b>By Grants</b> (As per Schedule C)		3,24,936.00
<b>To Remuneration</b> (in the case of a math)		-	<b>By Income from other sources</b>		3,89,454.00
to the head of the math, including his			( in details as far as possible )		
household expenditure, if any			(As per Schedule B)		
<b>To Legal Expenses</b>		488.00			
<b>To Audit Fees</b>		5,000.00	<b>By Transfer from Reserve</b>		-
<b>To Contribution and Fees</b>		-			-
<b>To Amount written off :</b>					
a) Bad Debts	-				
b) Loan Scholarship	-				
c) Irrecoverable Rents	-				
d) Other Items	-				
<b>To Miscellaneous Expenses</b>		-			
<b>To Depreciation</b> (As per Schedule F)		18,042.00			
<b>To Amount transferred to Reserve or Specific Funds</b>		6,00,000.00			
<b>To Expenditure on Objects of the Trust</b>					
a) Religious	-				
b) Educational (As per Schedule D)	4,88,162.00				
c) Medical Relief	-				
d) Relief of Poverty	-				
e) Other Charitable Objects	-	4,88,162.00			
<b>To Surplus carried over to Balance Sheet</b>		5,07,055.28			
<b>Total Rs.</b>		<b>17,37,185.26</b>	<b>Total Rs.</b>		<b>17,37,185.26</b>

# Audit Report



**KEDAR LAGHATE & ASSOCIATES**  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

A/29, Anand Nagar, Forjett Street, Mumbai - 400 036. • Tel.: 022-6556 3140 • E-mail : kedarlaghate@gmail.com

## AUDIT REPORT

We have examined the Balance sheet of **APNI SHALA FOUNDATION** as at **31<sup>st</sup> March 2016** and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date, which are in agreement with the books of account maintained by the said Trust. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the generally accepted auditing standards in India. These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatements. We have obtained all the information and explanations, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of the audit. In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the office of the above-named trust visited by me so far as appears from my examination of the books and proper returns adequate for the purposes of audit have been received by me.

In my opinion and to the best of my information, and according to information given to me the said accounts give a true and fair view: -

- (i) In the case of the Balance sheet, of the state of affairs of the above named trust as at **31<sup>st</sup> March 2016** and
- (ii) In case of the Income and Expenditure Account, of the surplus of its accounting year ending on **31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**.

For Kedar Laghate & Associates



CA. Kedar Laghate  
Firm Reg.No. 134155W  
Mem. No. 137850

Place: Mumbai  
Date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

# Identity

Apni Shala is registered as a charitable trust under the Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950). Registration No. E-29950 (M) as of 8th November 2013.

We are registered under section 12 AA of the Income Tax Act (1961), No. 46681 and under section 80G of the Income Tax Act (1961).

## Address

Registered:  
201, Anand Villa, Buddha Mandir Road,  
Parel (E), Mumbai – 400 012

Contact:  
96/B, 1st Floor, Kamgar Nagar,  
S G Barve Marg, Kurla East,  
Mumbai – 400 024

## Financial Details

Bank:  
YES Bank, Ground Floor, Shrikant Chambers,  
Adj R K Studio, Sion Trombay Road,  
Chembur, Mumbai – 400 071

Auditor:  
M/s Kedar Laghate and Associates, Office  
No. 113, Bldg. No. 1, Navjeevan Society,  
Lamington Road, Mumbai – 400 008

PAN: AAETA 0041 P

## Trustees:

Dr. Disha Devi Prasad Nawani  
Age: 46  
Occupation: Coordinator, School of  
Education, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Mr. Anand Sudhakaran Nair  
Age: 35  
Occupation: Director (Operations), TAG  
Vinnatti Pvt. Ltd.

Ms. Amrita Sudhakaran Nair  
Age: 29  
Occupation: CEO and Co-founder,  
Apni Shala Foundation

## Advisory Board Members

**Kavita Anand**  
Executive Director,  
Adhyayan Quality Educational Services

**Dr. Chetna Duggal**  
Asst. Professor,  
Centre for Human Ecology, TISS

**Caroline Nagar**  
Director, Student Enrichment  
The Akanksha Foundation

**Dr. Ravikala Kamath**  
Researcher and  
Independent Higher Education Professional

## Executive Team

Full-time employees: 11  
Part-time employees: 3  
Volunteers: 22



# Get Involved

Be a part of our growth story and help us make a real impact in the lives of thousands more children. You can get involved in several ways.

## Volunteer

Apni Shala is a young organization, constantly learning and growing. Whatever your interests and hobbies are - whether photography or writing, teaching or digital design - we are constantly looking for volunteers who can help us get better at we do. Call +91 9833 512 412 to apply!

## Make a donation

You can make a direct contribution to our children's fund. All donations made receive tax benefits under Section 80G. For more details on direct donations, please visit: [apnishala.org/donate](http://apnishala.org/donate)

## Help raise funds

Build our community of supporters - help us raise funds through a marathon run or absolutely anything you love doing - we're always open to new ideas!

## Get In Touch

Visit us at [www.apnishala.org](http://www.apnishala.org)

Email us at [contact@apnishala.org](mailto:contact@apnishala.org)

Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/apnishala](https://facebook.com/apnishala)

Follow us on Twitter as [twitter.com/apnishala](https://twitter.com/apnishala)

Subscribe to our newsletters at

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Catch stories from the field, on our blog:

[apnishala.wordpress.com](http://apnishala.wordpress.com)



building skills for life