



Annual Report

2021-2022



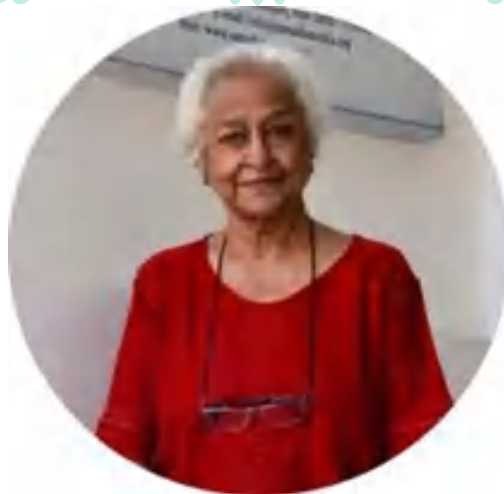


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Founder's Message



Prameela Balasundaram - Founder, SAMADHAN

Greetings to all!

The first thing people said to me when they hear about SAMADHAN is "Why did you do this" or "What made you become a 'social worker' when you could have become anything you wanted?" Why, indeed? The answer is I really don't know except that the desire to do something for children with intellectual disabilities was so strong that I, foolishly perhaps to most, denied myself the opportunity to become a journalist even after having gotten a scholarship. It all started with the birth of Manjula, fondly called Manju, the daughter of one of my eldest sisters who was born with Downs' Syndrome.

Of course, this was the family's first introduction to the condition. None of us had any clue about it or have seen a child with the condition. But as a family, we accepted her with love even though she did not look like the other children. She had a snub little nose and short stubby fingers, very different from the many children this family had seen. Now, people have their 'opinions.' There were many explanations from friends and

relatives, “my sister had sinned”, “it was ‘Karma’”, etc. Whatever the cause, all of us welcomed Manju into the family with an open heart. The one thing that all of us learnt from Manju was to accept negative situations calmly. If dinner was late; it was Okay, it will be served eventually. Feeling cold? Someone will soon wrap her up in a warm blanket. It was the ability to wait rather than becoming angry or throwing tantrums. The real test came when Manju’s elder sister began to get marriage proposals. Much against some well-meaning advice she was introduced as a well-loved member of the family.

It was really after I got married and settled in Delhi that I saw for the first time a school for the mentally handicapped. What I saw both shocked and galvanized me into doing something for children born with intellectual disabilities. The government did have schools for these children, as I am sure other cities did as well, but the stigma and myths behind their birth, and details on what and where support was available were not easily available back then. There were special schools but there are many critical issues that need immediate attention from the time of birth. Hence, I decided to focus on Early Intervention.

I did a survey on the outskirts of Delhi where the poor and marginalized families lived. Many were from neighbouring cities looking for jobs in the city. For them, Delhi held a fascination. After all, this is where the President and the Prime Minister of India lived. But for the poor families with children with intellectual disabilities, it didn’t matter. Hence, I focussed on Dakshinpuri, a resettlement on the outskirts of Delhi.

The fact that we were one of the few to focus on poverty and intellectual disability is well documented as also is our winning the World Bank Award for innovation. SAMADHAN soon became a centre

for foreign students as well as our students to gain hands- on experience in the field.

But I must give full credit to our government at that time and the ministers who stood up for us, the many donors both in India and abroad, in particular, Mr Tom Mutters from Germany and Dr Walter Eigner from Austria who visited us and also funded a learning trip for us. We also acknowledge the support from the many volunteers who helped us in different ways. We used to organize an annual fundraising event, a Christmas Show, with support from the India International Centre, Delhi. What remains etched in my memory is that on one occasion when the show had started Joseph and Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, were on-stage walking towards the inn looking for a place to rest. The innkeeper had to say to the couple that there is no room in his establishment. But our man said loudly, "Come on in. There is lots of room for you!" Yes, he changed the entire storyline.

Along this 40-years journey, many memories and bonds have been forged. The staff, teachers and medical advisors worked with such devotion and measly pay. Yet, we continued to celebrate birthdays and family events, and our reputation was such that we could even walk into surrounding homes without announcing our coming and were welcomed. Many foreign visitors found this amazing. We continue to flourish today despite the pandemic thanks to our dedicated staff, led by Sumathi, and the volunteers who continue to be our backbone.

Strong, resilient and never to be broken. That's SAMADHAN for you.



From the Executive Director's Desk



Sumathi Morgan - Executive Director, SAMADHAN

Dear Friends,

We are happy to present to you the Annual Report for the financial year 2021-2022.

The end of 2021 was surely filled with excitement and hope. For about two years, the world was reeling under the challenges brought upon by the pandemic. While the successful vaccine drive across the country brought adults out of their homes, children were still left wondering when they'll get to meet their teachers and friends. When we partially re-opened our centre to conduct reassessments for our existing children and assessments for the new ones, it was an overwhelming sight. One child would come in cranky from being made to get ready in the morning while another would excitedly come running into the centre all dressed up and ready to meet their ma'ams and sirs.

We put our best foot forward to ensure that children get the interventions that are critical for their progress. Our staff and consultants adapted to the digital and online mode of education and counselling through which we could stay connected to the children and their families throughout the lockdown. The aim was to engage parents and guardians to actively participate in the virtual classroom and counselling sessions to teach, assist and guide their children at home using locally available resources for educational and therapeutic activities. We partially opened up our centres to check the progress or regression levels of the children following complete Covid-19 protocols and government directives. The staff willingly resumed their work at both centres, preparing modules, syllabi and activities anticipating the re-starting of in-person services.

A special thanks to all our donors and corporate sponsors who have kept the hope alive for us through their continued and consistent support. The constant backing from our donors has been instrumental in ensuring the continuity of the sessions for the children. New projects for children and women have been initiated with the help of different funding organizations.

I would like to acknowledge all the staff members, professionals and the families of the children for their willingness and determination to work towards the benefit of the children. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Executive Board for their support in these changing times.

As the restrictions ease, we hope to not only get back to our routine but strengthen our resources to address the gaps that have surfaced. We are constantly exploring innovative and creative ways to engage with the children and the community in order to provide the best possible

solutions to issues. The pandemic has taught us that the future is uncertain, but we move forward and reaffirm our commitment to the children we serve.





About Us

SAMADHAN is a non-profit, community-based registered organization started in 1981, with a mission towards establishing an infrastructure of accessible services for children with intellectual disabilities. A pioneer in the field of intellectual disability with a primary focus on early intervention, the centre is within the community in Dakshinpuri in South Delhi, which has a population of over 300,000 comprising over 50,000 families.



Dwarka Centre



Dakshinpuri Centre

SAMADHAN extends its services to children with Intellectual disabilities such as Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, Down Syndrome, Learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Developmental Delays. The primary activity of SAMADHAN is identifying and providing services for children who are either born with an intellectual disability or at risk for developmental delay leading to disability if relevant services are not available and who are also impacted by poverty. The age group served is 0 to 15 years. The medical team of multidisciplinary professionals consists of a paediatrician, occupational therapist, speech therapist, psychologist, nutritionist and special educators. In addition, Creative Movement Therapy, Drama Therapy, Music Therapy and Art Therapy form part of the curriculum to train the children.

OUR MISSION

To establish an infrastructure of accessible service for persons with intellectual disability living in low socio- economic areas and primarily for infants and pre-school children, using as far as possible human resources available within the target communities with active community participation leading towards an inclusive society.

MEMBERSHIP

- Registered under subsection (2) of Section 51 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- Member of the National Trust, a statutory body of the Government of India
- Member of the Local Level Committee for Guardianship Issues of The National Trust
- Affiliate members of Inclusion International, a world body advocating for persons with intellectual disability
- A full member of the Asian Federation for the Intellectually Disabled (AFID)
- An institutional member of the Asian Resource Centre (ARC), located presently in Tokyo, Japan
- Member of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD)



AWARDS

- Award of Recognition as a leader in the Collective of Leaders for Persons with Disabilities - PVRNest and Ummeed – Ray of Hope, 2020
- The Most Promising Social Programme complementing the Sustainable Development Goals Award - Coffee Because, Delhi, 2018
- The Good Practice Award - Dubai International Awards for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment (DIABP), 2005
- Innovation for successful interlinking of the three issues of disability, poverty and women's empowerment Award - World Bank, 2001
- Award of Recognition - Inclusion International (the world body advocating for persons with intellectual disabilities), Hague, 1998

LEGAL STATUS

- SAMADHAN is a registered society under the Societies Registration Act of 1981 with Registration No. 12183
- Registered under section 80G of Income Tax Act of 1961
- Registered under the FCRA with the Ministry of Home Affairs with Registration No. 231650031
- Obtained Equivalency Determination Certificate, making SAMADHAN equivalent to a U.S. Public Charity.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESIDENT | Ratan Kumar Gurtoo

TREASURER | George Koshi

MEMBERS

- Janak Kumari Gandhi
- Smita P Hopper
- Sanyam Maratha
- Uday Balasundaram
- Prabodh Bhambal

FOUNDER-MEMBER | Prameela Balasundaram

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER | Sumathi Morgan





2021-22 At a Glance

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



37 PwDs enrolled in Niramaya Scheme



9 children enrolled in Disha Scheme



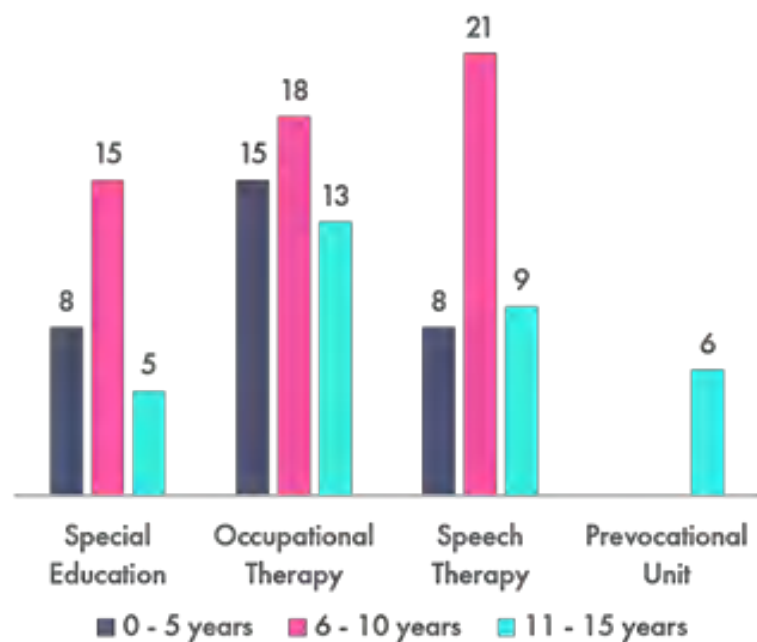
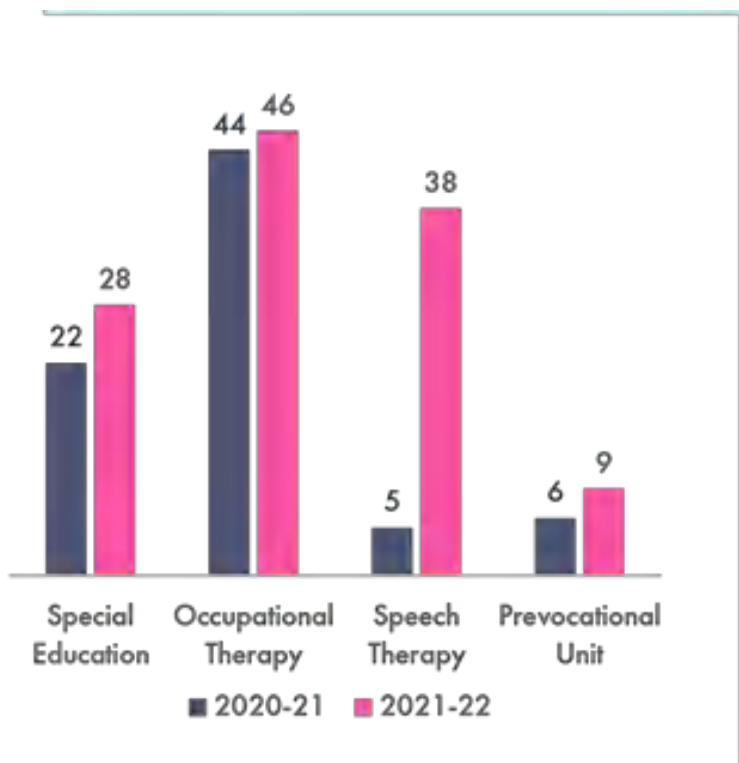
17 children enrolled in mainstream schools



23 New Assessments
34 Reassessments



28 New Admissions



No. of beneficiaries reached (Left); and Age-wise break-up of children in each unit in 2021-22 (in numbers, Right)



Our Programs & Projects

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

In March 2020, the Early Intervention Unit at SAMADHAN's Dakshinpuri centre had to be temporarily closed down because of the government order related to the nationwide lockdown. Adapting to the changing times, the Early Intervention Team added each child's caregiver to a specific group based on their needs and demonstrative videos of exercises using simple resources at home were shared with them through WhatsApp. Additionally, reassessments were conducted to determine the regression level in children post-lockdown. The team, including our therapists, also engaged with the caregivers regularly over phone calls and video calls to discuss the challenges and suggest improvisation techniques. We also provided counselling sessions for the families on the management of children during the lockdown. Appropriate therapy techniques are selected based on a child's progress, parents' feedback and weekly case conferences between the professionals and the early intervention team.



SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM



SAMADHAN's Special Education Unit at Dakshinpuri has 28 children enrolled in its admission list. The unit has been successfully transforming the lives of its students by enabling them to reach their maximum potential through play-way educational methods. The combined efforts of the special educators, counsellors, and the families of the children ensured the continuity

of learning through pre-recorded instructional videos of the activities and lessons that could be easily practised at home. The family members of the children played an instrumental role in supporting the child to learn the lessons taught. Although the progress has slowed down a bit for them, the continuity in activity-based learning has not been broken and the re-assessments helped in planning and modifying lessons to address the lapses and regressions. Appropriate educational and skill-development techniques are selected based on a child's progress, parents' feedback and weekly

case conferences between the professionals and special educators.

PRE-VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING UNIT

As we look forward to expanding our reach to include children between the ages of 12 and 15, we have successfully set up a pre-vocational skills training unit in each of our centres. The objective of the unit is to provide training to each child, according to her/his abilities, on various vocational skills - such as block printing, card making,



bookbinding, digital lamination, gardening and housekeeping - to prepare them for skill-based employment in shops, hotels, printing centres, etc. that will generate sources of income for them. Both units are well-equipped with a variety of training materials and a functional computer lab. This year, nine children have been admitted into the program.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

The project aims to reach out to women from low- income communities, focusing primarily on mothers with intellectually disabled children living in and around Dwarka in South West Delhi. The project was established to break the still existing traditional perceptions of women, especially in the low-income communities where women are looked upon as mere “wives and mothers.” With limited educational qualification and skills, it seemed impossible to pursue their dreams. SAMADHAN has trained a group of women in the complete processing of spices, preparation of nutritious laddoos, papier-mache handicrafts and kitchen gardening. We also believe in empowering women from the community. First preference is given to women from the community who are unemployed but have a passion to work and become independent. We provide training (such as office assistance, therapy aides, etc.) and employment within the organisation to these women to enable them to have some financial independence in their lives. Once these women started coming out of their homes and got exposed to a world of opportunities by learning about the variety of employment





Beyond Challenges

DIWALI



On the occasions of Diwali and Christmas, we at SAMADHAN organized a low-key celebration, following all safety protocols, to cheer and encourage our staff during these trying times. With the contribution from Friends of Samadhan, we were able to make the moment more special by distributing little gifts of joy for the staff members and all the

children. On Diwali, colourful rangolis were created, and sparkling diyas were lit with the hope that things would go back to the way they were.

Friends of Samadhan wanted to light up this Diwali and bring joy and cheer to the children. And indeed they did.

A SPECIAL MENTION

The Heart and Hand for the Handicapped, USA, is a long-standing supporter of SAMADHAN and its projects. They have been constantly aiding us for more than 15 years and this support has gone a long way in our progress. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the organisation.



Over the years, more than 1000 children have received early intervention therapy with support from The Heart & Hand for the Handicapped, USA

The Nutrition Programme, a new initiative funded by The Ford Foundation, focuses on improving the nutrition levels of children under the guidance of expert dieticians and nutritionists. The project is currently underway and the preliminary results would be available towards the end of 2022. We would like to thank The Ford Foundation for understanding and immensely supporting our work.

The constant support and encouragement from The Ford Foundation helped us serve the children without ever compromising on the quality of services offered.

EDUCATION THROUGH ART

SAMADHAN, in collaboration with Art for Change Foundation (AFC), conducted a workshop with parents, students, staff and interns. This was the second session of a three-part art workshop series planned to focus on creating a learning



environment for children with intellectual disabilities in their day-to-day lives through art and art-related projects. The resource person for the session, Mr Isaac Gergan - Director of AFC, taught colour concepts and simple drawings for children to express themselves using their own creativity. He also taught the special educators how to use art as part of the curriculum. The session gave the participants a meaningful insight into the basics of art and colour.

FRONTLINE WORKERS FROM SAMADHAN



The number of active cases of COVID-19 has been high in the areas around our Dakshinpuri centre ever since the start of the pandemic. Some of our staff members are also Accredited Social Health Activists, or ASHA workers*, who have been continuously assisting the government in various teams to help the families in the

community affected by the virus. SAMADHAN provided special PPE kits and financial assistance to these brave women who continue to put themselves at risk as frontline workers for the safety of others.

**ASHA - An accredited social health activist is a community health worker instituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as a part of India's National Rural Health Mission.*

OTHER UPDATES

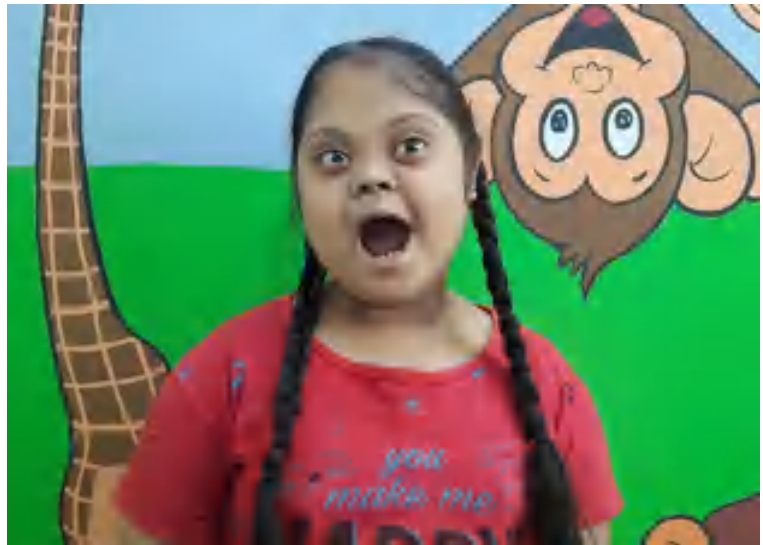
- A Public Engagement opportunity was provided by the Fount of Grace Creatives. Rebecca Vijay, the Founder & CEO, recognised SAMADHAN's work and decided to support us with proceeds from their Amazon Bestseller *Fired Up*
- The transition to online documentation through the Goonjan software is now taking place. We are training our staff and teachers on the programme.
- Mr. Onkar Singh, Member of Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee, distributed grocery items to the families in need during the lockdown.
- Food-care packages were distributed to the most vulnerable



Government Schemes & Regulatory Compliances

NIRAMAYA HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME

This scheme of the National Trust, a statutory body of the Government of India, provides affordable health to all persons with disabilities holding a valid Disability Certificate. It provides an annual insurance cover of up to ₹1,00,000 to the beneficiaries for various health-related treatments in any hospital,



including reimbursement of transportation costs up to a prescribed limit. With the support of The Ford Foundation, we were able to pay the premium amount for 35 children from the community and enroll them under this scheme.

DISHA - EARLY INTERVENTION AND SCHOOL READINESS SCHEME



The Disha scheme aims at setting up early intervention centres for persons with disability between the ages of 0 and 10 years under the National Trust Act. On meeting all the requirements, the National Trust funds the therapies, training and support availed by the beneficiary through registered organizations.

Throughout the year, the organisation had been constantly supporting us with timely monetary disbursement and distribution of brand new TLM Kits. A total of 9 children from SAMADHAN are availing this scheme.



Our Donors

Ford
Foundation

Heart &
Hand
Foundation

The
National
Trust

Friends of
Samadhan

UK
Volunteers
Group

Japanese
Volunteers
Group

Aditya
Gupta

Sunita
Shakdher
Menon

Shalini
Gandhi

Avtaar Singh

Poonam
Batra

Janak
Kumari
Gandhi

Uday
Balasundaram

Nisha Lal

A Arul
Dhas

Nina Mehra

Vimal
Gandhi

Manju Sethi

Kamal
Khurana

Shivani
Abrol

Renu
Chugh

Anand Lal



Going Forward

- Reach out to more families around project areas Strengthen pre-vocational units
- Diversify women's empowerment activities to include more opportunities
- Network with mainstream schools on knowledge- sharing of special education practices

Get Involved

At SAMADHAN, we strive to provide the best services for families. It is our dream to enable every child who enters our gates to lead an independent life, according to their capabilities, and live it to the fullest. To make a difference in their lives, there is always something that you can do. Through donations and child sponsorships, you can help in transforming the lives of these children with your support.

CONTACT US

SAMADHAN (NGO for children with Intellectual Disabilities)

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