

# AKANKSHA

PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT

2011-2012



**Imlee Mahua  
School**



# Akanksha Public Charitable Trust

B 404, The Atrium, 49 Kalakshetra Road, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai 600 041, India

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## Annual Report 2011-12

### About Akanksha

Akanksha was born when a group of friends started volunteering on weekends at public hospitals and homes for destitute children and women in Chennai in 1998. Akanksha Public Charitable Trust was created on July 15, 2000 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu and registered soon after when some of its volunteers decided to devote more time and energy to Akanksha to make it their primary work.

### PURPOSE

Akanksha's purpose has evolved over the years. Today, Akanksha works to reach out, learn from and nurture needy communities through initiatives in areas that include education, health, livelihoods, culture and ecology especially engaging with women and children in such communities.

### ACTIVITIES

Over the last decade, Akanksha's work has involved the following activities:

- Volunteering at state owned 'children's observation homes' to help such state owned organizations deliver better by organizing activities for their children and helping children who have strayed away from their homes to get in touch with their families and return home.
- Volunteering at state owned hospitals for women and children, helping cancer afflicted children and their families cope with hospitalization and medical treatment by organizing recreational activities and financial aid for them.
- Sponsoring medical expenses of financially needy people especially women and children.
- Sponsoring the educational expenses of financially needy children.
- Providing relief material to those affected by earthquakes and tsunamis.
- Augmenting the work of other not for profit organizations whose work is closely aligned with that of Akanksha by providing voluntary services and / or financial assistance to such organizations.
- Establishing and operating a rural school and primary health centre.

## YEAR THAT WAS

During the year 2011-12, Akanksha continued to build on the work undertaken during the earlier years.

The bulk of the work of the Trust was located in Balenga Para village in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh state and Chennai in Tamil Nadu. The highlights and key developments related to the work done by Akanksha during 2011-12 are summarized below:

### **Imlee Mahuaa Nae Taaleem Centre For Learning**

As mentioned in our previous reports Imlee Mahuaa was established as a free school in August 2007 for the children of Balenga Para and its neighbouring villages.

- During the summer holidays in May 2011, we were able to get a Jaipur foot for one of our students who had lost his right foot in an unfortunate accident last year.
- We admitted 10 children this year to fill vacancies created by migration of children to other schools. The strength of the students was 39 at the end of the year (27 girls and 12 boys). Our 39 students currently study at six different levels – three levels in pre-primary classes and classes 1, 2 and 3 in primary school. During the coming year we expect to add 5 to 7 more students. The School had to proactively engage with its parent body when the village started receiving the services of a school bus of an established private school located 15 kms away.
- During the year the parents and teachers met 4 times to discuss various matters of mutual interest.
- As a preventive and protective measure we implemented the compulsory and supervised use of soap by children and all staff before meals and cookery classes and after the use of the washroom from the beginning of the year. This brought down the rate of common illnesses drastically during the year and the School recorded higher attendance by children across the board.
- A system of continuous observation and monthly reporting of children's work to their parents was set up and implemented through the year too.
- A yoga expert and friend from Pune conducted a two week long workshop on yoga for the senior children of the School during June 2011.
- Teachers registered themselves for B Ed. and D Ed. courses and took Teacher Eligibility Tests conducted by the Chhattisgarh Professional Examinations Board in compliance of the law on free and compulsory education for children.
- On August 15, 2011 the senior children of the School enacted a street play in front of the Balenga Para community at the state run primary school in the village and presented the ill effects of tobacco use and the ways in which one can kick the tobacco habit. The play was appreciated by all. During the periods immediately preceding and following the performance, the children talked about the matter in their homes. Two of their mothers approached the School's health centre for help to kick their tobacco habit and one of them was successful in her efforts.
- The children and staff made a large and colourful Ganesh idol for the Balenga Para village Ganesh festival.
- During the Ganesh festival break our teachers learnt innovative techniques of teaching mathematics to class 5 during a week-long training course conducted by the Homi Bhabha Centre For Science Education (HBCSE), Mumbai.
- The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), an autonomous body of the Government of India, provisionally accredited Imlee Mahuaa as its study centre in February 2012. NIOS offers a flexible curriculum and a friendlier examination system. Students at Imlee Mahuaa will be able to benefit from the NIOS program going forward.

- Room To Read India, a not for profit organization based in Delhi, had helped us set up the School's library last year with a contribution of 150 books. The School added several more books to its library during the year and children started borrowing these books on a weekly basis and are rapidly becoming eager readers.
- Four members of our staff and sixteen children went on an educational trip to Sevagram, Pune and Mumbai during the November vacations. The trip, the first one outside the Kondagaon area for all the children and some members of the staff, introduced the group to urban life. Some of the activities that the group engaged in during the trip were:
  - ❖ Learning to spin yarn from cotton on the 'takli' – a simple and small iron tool, making little objects of paper using Origami techniques, volunteering on an organic farm, having a close look at Ashram life and gorging on oranges in an orchard – all at the Sevagram and Paunar ashrams in the Wardha area;
  - ❖ Visiting the Mahatma Phule Mandai (market) and absorbing the sights and smells of exotic fruits and vegetables, going up a multi-storey car park, visiting the Raja Kelkar museum, playing at the Kamala Nehru Park, climbing up Sinhagad fort and partying at a friend's farm house on the banks of the Khadakwasla lake, getting their health checked by a pediatric doctor friend and his wife, learning science while making little toys at the Children's Science Centre at the University of Pune, living in an apartment and learning to use the washing machine and other gadgets common to urban homes and being pampered by friends and relatives right through their stay in Pune;
  - ❖ Travelling on crowded trains, negotiating with strangers to retrieve reserved seats, moving with the crowds in and out of packed suburban trains and buses in Mumbai, going up and down lifts, taking in the sights of the sea, playing on the beach, watching frigates anchored in the Mumbai harbor from close quarters, visiting the Taraporewala Aquarium and engaging with math and science on friendly terms in the laboratories of the Homi Bhabha Centre For Science Education in Mumbai.
- We added spinning yarn from cotton, embroidery and 'permaculture' – cultivating vegetables on a bed of dry leaves without tilling the land to our life skills curriculum this year. Children now spend approximately 65 to 70 percent of their time at school engaging with the arts and learning with their hands and bodies. Though the rest of the time is devoted to learning subjects using a textbook based curriculum primarily as a guideline, learning activities in the classroom do rely heavily on kinesthetic methods.
- During the year two teachers joined the School and two left the School while one opted to work on a part time basis for health reasons. We continued to pay members of our staff equal remuneration linked to their hours of work. Salaries are being increased across the board from April 2012 to account for the increase in the minimum wages payable in Chhattisgarh, to ensure that the remuneration was adequate to cover costs of living in the area and to help retain staff.
- Eight senior children learnt to ride bicycles this year. They will be provided with full size bicycles in April 2012. This is expected to boost their confidence, make them more independent, facilitate short educational excursions to nearby places like the police station, post office, weekly trips to the market to shop for vegetables, and help them bring their younger school mates with them to School. Three of the children have agreed to lend to the School their smaller bicycles so that younger children at School can learn to ride them.
- The Indian Army set up camps for training its personnel in jungle warfare in the Kibai Balenga area during the year and reached out to people in nearby villages through medical camps, donations in kind, constructing bus stops, de-silting ponds, digging tube wells, etc. The children and staff interacted with army officers when they visited the School and had fun holding and dismantling the AK 47 rifle and understanding the functioning of the weapon. The Army entrusted the School with the task of distributing a few solar lanterns in Balenga Para village.
- We constructed two additional classrooms this year on the tiny piece of land that we have leased in Balenga Para village. The classrooms are currently being furnished and we expect them to be operational in the next academic year.

- The School was invited to meetings of the Alternative Education Network, The Nai Talim Samiti and the Anand Niketan School at Sevagram during the year. Valuable interactions took place at all the meetings and the insights gained have helped to shape the School's work subsequently.
- In April 2012, we shortened the rather long name of the School to suit the needs of the children to Imlee Mahuaa School or Imlee Mahuaa Vidyalay (in Hindi).
- The health centre that we run in the School continued to cater to the basic medical needs of the Balenga Para and neighbouring communities using safe Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic preparations and referring or escorting patients to doctors and hospitals where there was a need.
- This is what children studying in Class 3 at Imlee Mahuaa can by and large do:

Read their Hindi and English texts fluently, speak Hindi fluently and English falteringly, respond to questions in full sentences in Hindi and English, enact plays and tell short stories confidently in Halbi, Gondi and Hindi and with their teacher's help in English, write a small letter to their friends with the help of their teacher, perform the four arithmetic operations independently, measure their School premises with a tape, listen patiently to the morning news in Hindi on Akashwani, comprehend its important pieces, link the happenings on the news with locations on the map of India, respond to questions of social relevance arising out of the happenings narrated on the news bulletin and comment on or question them, form relatively difficult yoga postures, make horses, camels and other animals with intricate designs out of a lump of clay independently, use the potter's wheel to make various objects with help from their teacher, prepare clay fit for use from dry earth, select earth that is fit to be used for pottery by examining it with their hands, spin yarn on the takli, draw a floral design on a piece of cloth and embroider the cloth aesthetically, prepare a 'permaculture' plot, nurture a kitchen garden independently, engage confidently and respectfully as a group with an adult member of the community who has taken some produce of their kitchen garden without consulting them, prepare fruit salad for the School, supervise over breakfast and lunch for the whole School equitably and independently, give the School premises a coat of cowdung, repair and replace the fence for the kitchen garden, make small toys like the 'well of death' inside a balloon or pass a spoke through a balloon without bursting the balloon and explain the principle behind the toy to an audience, negotiate with their teacher the case of one of their school mates who is unable to hold her own with the teacher and interact freely with strangers and friends who visit the School;

They are slowly learning to understand and appreciate the need to be kind to animals, plants and objects around them and are still shy but willing to experiment with cooperative as opposed to competitive ways of living.

Children in lower classes are in various stages of acquiring capabilities that their friends in Class 3 already have.

- The plan for 2012-13 for Imlee Mahuaa includes adding 5-7 children in the new academic year, finding a replacement for a teacher who has left recently, helping the teachers of the School prepare for and pass the Teacher Eligibility Tests and entrance tests for the diploma and graduate programs in education, constructing 4 new classrooms approximately (1600 sq feet), an open air hall for yoga and assemblies (1000 sq feet), a small stage, playground equipment for the children, a compound wall, taking the children on a tour of organizations doing relevant work in North India, a yoga workshop for the children, training programs in mathematics, sciences and social sciences with help from HBCSE and Ekalvya, Hoshangabad, making further changes to the curriculum to make it more robust and relevant including a stress on learning using the local languages, continuing the work of the health centre, exploring avenues of engaging the local community in Balenga Para in areas of electrification of the village and exploring the setting up of a community owned support centre for children who go to the state run primary school in Balenga Para.

### **Other Projects**

- We continued to provide financial support for the education of four girls in Chennai. All of them progressed well in their academic work. The eldest girl finished her Masters in Arts during the year, is working as a school teacher and has also got married; her younger sister qualified as an electronics and telecommunications engineer this year and started

working with a reputed software services company in Chennai. The two other children currently study in class 2. During the current year we would like to take up the responsibility of supporting financially the education of 50 needy children in Chennai and seeing these children through their school and college. These are likely to be children of street workers such as hawkers, dhobis, sweepers, etc., single women, domestic workers, newspaper delivery boys and girls and people working at the lowest levels in various organizations such as peons. Towards this end we have already identified 10 children in April 2012.

- We continued to support a young man from Kibai Balenga village who is in need of a kidney transplant, liaising with his doctors and seeking alternative approaches to resolving his medical condition without much success. The Trust also assisted with the medical treatment of two other individuals both of whom were chronically ill and unfortunately succumbed to their illnesses.

### **Organizational Work**

- We had set up our website last year with help from Gudalur.net, an associate of ACCORD, a not for profit organization working among tribal people in Tamilnadu. The website is linked to our page on Facebook too. Photographs and notes on the various activities of Imlee Mahuaa and Akanksha are being regularly uploaded to the Facebook page. This year we uploaded all our key documents such as the trust deed, key registration letters, audit reports and audited financial statements and reports on activities from the inception of the Trust, on the website. From the current year onwards we will also be uploading the minutes of meetings of our Board of Trustees . We have taken these measures to make available all information about Akanksha and its decision making processes to all its stakeholders and members of the public to the maximum possible extent. Unfortunately, a dear friend Manoharan who helped us set up the website passed away this year.
- The Board of Trustees noted that while all members of the Board desired to attend every meeting of the Board, it was getting increasingly difficult to convene meetings at short notice or to ensure that all members were able to attend the meetings. In order to facilitate attendance at meetings of the Board by all its members, it was decided by the Board that if a member of the Board was unable to attend a Board meeting by being physically present at the meeting place but was able to participate in the discussions of such meeting over the telephone or by using video conferencing technology then such act shall constitute presence in the meeting and an appropriate indication regarding the use of telephone or other tool by such member for participating in the meeting shall be made in the minutes.
- The Board of Trustees reviewed its Travel Policy and approved a new uniform travel policy for all its stake holders keeping in mind factors such as the not for profit nature of the Trust's activities, costs of travel, the need for equality among all stakeholders, conveniences and inconveniences of travel at different times of the year, safety, etc. The policy has come into effect from the year 2012-13 and is documented in the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- Last year, Akanksha's application for listing with GiveIndia, an online portal that allows donors to donate directly to listed nonprofit organizations was accepted and in March 2011 we received our first two batches of donations through GiveIndia. We had invested significant time and energy in completing the rigorous listing process and had benefitted immensely from the exercise. The listing process introduced a much required rigor to our reporting processes and made Akanksha more transparent and sharing to its stakeholders.

During the year Give India communicated to Akanksha that it had detected large scale fraud in the use of donations that it had mobilized for certain NGOs other than Akanksha. Therefore as a measure of caution, Give India had decided to put on hold all further donations to most organizations listed with Give until it made a physical verification of the NGO concerned and satisfied itself about the veracity of the organization and its work.

Give India shared with us that Akanksha had been classified as a high risk organization by Give, but they were unwilling to share with us the reasons for such classification in spite of formally requesting them to share the reasons with us. Give also communicated to us that it was primarily accountable to its donors (suggesting a relatively unimportant accountability relationship with organizations such as Akanksha who are listed with it for accepting donations). During

the dialogue with Give India, we also clarified that the amount of donations that we were seeking through the Give channel was not material, but it was the widely spread individual donor base and the investment and commitment that we had made to the relationship with Give that was important to us.

Give has been unable to make any commitment about when it can carry out the physical verification of Akanksha and its work, though we encouraged Give to visit Akanksha and Imlee Mahuaa at the earliest possible.

During the year Akanksha submitted reports of utilization of donations received through Give India in March 2011 within the stipulated time limit and made suo moto downward revisions in the amount of its donor option and the number of donations units that Akanksha was asking for after considering current data of our expenses. However in the light of the fraud that Give India was facing with other NGOs listed with it and the decisions that it had taken to deal with such fraud, no donations were received through Give India during the year.

A strong protest was lodged with Give India management for the manner in which Give India was treating its relationship with Akanksha. Subsequent to the above dialogue with Give India, they requested us to respond and review a list of measures that they proposed to take to strengthen their internal processes for reviewing the accountability of organizations that mobilized donations through Give. We responded to their request with candid feedback and comments.

➤ Distribution of donations received across donors including donors to the corpus (FY 2011-12)

<b>Amount of donation (Rupees)</b>	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Foundations and Trusts</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Resident</b>	<b>Non- resident</b>
< 5000	102	-	-	102	-
5000 – 100,000	7	1	1	9	-
> 100,000	-	1	-	1	-
Donations in kind			1	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>-</b>

The average value of monetary donation received during the year ended on March 31, 2012 was Rs 4747.

➤ Members of the staff and volunteers as of March 31, 2012

**Employees**

Birajbatti Marawi

Gautam Ram Sethiya

Milan Ram Baghel

Reeta Baidh

Susheela Manikpuri

**Volunteers**

Nandini Joshi

Seema Joshi

Suvarna Vaze

# Abridged Financial Statements

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2012

	Schedule	As at March 31	
		2012 (Rupees)	2011 (Rupees)
<b>Sources of Funds</b>			
Corpus	1	88,000	5,000
Surplus		2,532,520	2,544,122
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,620,520</b>	<b>2,549,122</b>
<b>Application of Funds</b>			
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Solar Lantern		11,600	11,600
Scooter		43,944	43,944
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Tax deducted at source		6,552	1,373
Cash and Bank Balances	2	2,558,424	2,492,205
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,620,520</b>	<b>2,549,122</b>
<b>Significant Accounting Policies And Notes to the Accounts</b>	6		

Refer my report of even date

For Velu Muthu Associates For Akanksha Public Charitable Trust

Chartered Accountants

Velu Muthu Oswin Thayal Prayaag Joshi

Proprietor Chairman Trustee

Membership No. 22976

Place: Chennai

Date: April 5, 2012

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2012

	Schedule	For the year ended March 31	
		2012 (Rupees)	2011 (Rupees)
<b>Income</b>			
Donations Received		453,397	1,310,585
Interest on Bank Accounts	3	500,797	33,531
Excess of Expenditure over Income		11,602	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>965,796</b>	<b>1,344,116</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Expenditure in connection with the objects of the Trust	4	965,796	1,138,856
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>		-	<b>205,260</b>
Add: Balance brought forward from the previous year		2,544,122	2,338,862
<b>Balance carried to the Balance Sheet</b>		<b>2,532,520</b>	<b>2,544,122</b>

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2012

	Schedule	For the year ended March 31	
		2012 (Rupees)	2011 (Rupees)
<b>Sources of Funds</b>			
Donations Received		453,397	1,310,585
Interest on Bank Accounts	3	500,797	33,531
Donations to Corpus Fund	1	83,000	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,037,194</b>	<b>1,344,116</b>
<b>Application of Funds</b>			
Expenditure in connection with the objects of the Trust	4	965,796	1,138,856
Increase in Net Current Assets	5	71,398	205,260
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,037,194</b>	<b>1,344,116</b>



# Credibility Alliance Norms Compliance Report

## IDENTITY

- Akanksha Public Charitable Trust ('Akanksha' or 'the Trust') was created as a public trust under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882 and registered (Reg. No. 1003 of 2001 of Book 4 dated September 3, 2001) with the Office of the District Registrar Madras South.
- Akanksha is registered as a Public Charitable Trust under sections 12 AA and 80 G of the Income Tax Act, 1961 (Reg No. DIT(E) No.2(182)/2000-01) and its Permanent Account Number is AAATA6371J.
- Akanksha is registered as an Educational Association under section 6(1)(a) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976 (Reg No. 075901259).
- Scanned copies of this annual report, trust deed and the letters of registration, audited financial statements from the inception of the Trust, minutes of meetings of the Board of Trustees are being exhibited on our website. These documents are available for inspection at the registered office too.

## Name and address of our Main Bankers

ICICI Bank Limited, Chennai Branch, 459/1, Anna Salai Road, Teynampet, Chennai 600018

## Name and address of our Auditors

Velu Muthu Associates, Chartered Accountants, 1 B, Prabha, 17 Bishop Wallers Avenue (East), Mylapore, Chennai 600004

## PURPOSE

Akanksha works to reach out, learn from and nurture needy communities through initiatives in areas that include education, health, livelihoods, culture and ecology especially engaging with women and children in such communities.

## GOVERNANCE

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees ('the Board') whose details as on March 31, 2011 are given in the table below.

Name	Age	Sex	Position on Board	Occupation	Area of Competence	Meetings Attended
Khodadad Moradian	58	M	Trustee	Business and financial consulting	Business reengineering	0/3
Oswin Thayal	41	M	Chairman	Medical practice and business	Medicine and medical diagnostics	3/3
Prayaag Joshi	47	M	Trustee	Learning and teaching	Finance and education	3/3

- Akanksha's Board of Trustees met thrice in FY 2011-12 on April 8, July 10 and November 24 in 2011. Minutes of the Board meetings are documented and circulated. At least two members were present at each meeting of the Board.
- None of the members of the Board are related to each other by blood or by marriage. A Board Rotation Policy exists and is practiced.
- The Board ensures that all the activities of the Trust are in line with its stated purpose and approved objects, key decision making is consultative and roles and responsibilities are defined for staff and volunteers. The Board approves programs, budgets, annual activity reports and audited financial statements and ensures the organization's compliance with laws and regulations.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- No remuneration, sitting fees or any other form of compensation has been paid since the inception of the Trust to any trustee or member of the Board.
- No reimbursements were made to any Board Member during FY 2011-12.
- All staff members are issued letters of employment and draw equal remuneration, linked to their hours of work. The remuneration drawn by each of the three highest paid staff members as on March 31, 2012 was Rs 4000 per month respectively and that drawn by the lowest paid staff member who works part time was Rs 2000 per month. There is a personnel policy in place.
- Staff details (as at March 31, 2012)

Gender	Paid full time	Paid part time	Unpaid Volunteer
Female	1	2	3
Male	-	2	-

All members of the Board are volunteers and have given their time pro bono. They are not included in the table above.

- All paid members of staff draw monthly gross salary and benefits that are less than Rs 5000. The average salary is Rs 2540 and the median salary is Rs 2000. The remuneration drawn by the Executive Head is zero.
- The total cost of National Travel by all members of the Board was Rs 50638, by all staff (including volunteers, independent consultants, etc) was Rs 4935 and by beneficiaries was Rs 37752. The total cost of Air Travel was NIL and the total cost of International Travel whether paid by Akanksha or by external sponsors was NIL.
- The financial statements indicate the method and basis of accounting. There are no serious adverse notes on any material point in the statements. The Trust has not entered into any material transaction that involves a conflict of interest between the Trust and any member(s) of the Board or between the Trust and any member(s) of the staff.