# Aastha Nishtha Foundation Annual Report

(2020 -2021)

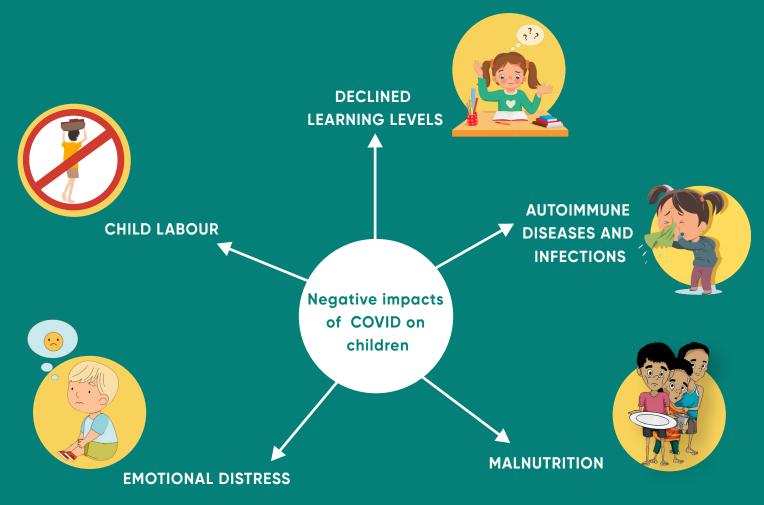


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### THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND IT'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN

COVID-19 pandemic has impacted each and every individual of the world in various unfortunate ways. While we focus more on lost jobs and economic losses, the impact on children becomes invisible and is often ignored. The underserved children are more vulnerable and susceptible to the virus.



Children living in poverty bore the expense of pandemic by risking their present and future. It has had negative impacts on health, education and emotional well-being of children. Having less or no access to healthcare resources resulted in children developing autoimmune diseases which are difficult to reverse and treat.

The learning levels of children declined significantly with schools being forced to shut during the lockdown period. The digital divide was clearly visible when the children from underprivileged communities failed to attend online classes due to lack of access to smartphones or internet connection. This resulted in children performing household tasks or child labour, helping out their parents in daily-wage work. Such children dropped out of school when the schools reopened.

It becomes the responsibility of the government and non-governmental organisations to do something to save the children from such miserable conditions.

Aastha Nishtha Foundation came forward to reach out to children living in vulnerable situations. We distributed food, dry ration and safety kits to the families of poor children.

Also, we conducted remedial sessions that focused on learning through activity and play to improve the learning levels of children during the pandemic when schools were shut.

#### FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

"In the face of adversity, we have a choice. We can be bitter, or we can be better."

The coronavirus pandemic has been harsh on all of us, it has impacted each and every individual in various unexpected ways. However, I still believe we are the fortunate ones to have lived through it along with our loved ones. There are so many out there who are not as lucky as we are. Those are the underserved families who live off the street, have no food to eat and educating their children remains a distant dream.

Here, citizens like us are responsible to reach out and help those who are living in vulnerable conditions, especially the children.

This year we have learned to grateful for what we have and what we have to offer to the society.

Aastha Nishtha Team was focused on providing COVID relief to the underprivileged homeless families and children. Several ration distributions were conducted so that children can sleep peacefully with food in their stomach. Also, to bridge the digital divide, continuous remedial sessions were given to children where foundational learning was given priority to improve the learning levels of children.

With the help of our kind donors, we did our best to improve the condition of children living on streets and in slums during these tough times.

I am thankful for the support we received and for people who stood by us!

#### Sachin Wahi

(Founder)





### DRY RATION DISTRIBUTION FOR COVID RELIEF:

The COVID-19 pandemic was harsh on the world, especially on those who were already living on the streets even before this disaster. COVID was a add on to their misery which made it much more difficult for the homeless to fend for themselves and have a decent one-time meal. During the lockdown, when the shops were shut and people were in their homes, these people were struggling on the streets to find food for themselves and their children.

During these tough times, Aastha Nishtha Foundation took the initiative of distributing dry ration kits to the homeless families living in the slums near Munirka and Andrews Ganj slum area.

The ration kits consisted of nutritional items such as chana, rice, wheat, mustard oil, salt and turmeric. We also provided masks and sanitizers to help prevent the spread of COVID.

Out team followed the COVID-19 protocols to keep others and themselves safe.



#### **CLOTHES DISTRIBUTION**

It might feel like you've lifted a weight of your shoulders in cleaning out your closet and donating your clothes to charity, but everyone should be aware that your clothes don't automatically end up in the hands of someone in need.

With the aim to bring a smile to these innocent faces, Clothes were distributed to the deprived children of Shelter home at Khora Village during the peak winters of 2020.

Our team collected old good quality clothes to distribute to the homeless vulnerable children. A small gesture by Aastha Nishtha Foundation creates a ray of hope for these children.





#### **REMEDIAL SESSIONS:**

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the shutdown of schools and induced the onset of lockdown. Millions of children were affected which resulted in school dropouts, learning loss and increase in the digital divide in our nation. Children struggled to learn new concepts through online classes, whereas most of the children, especially from underserved communities couldn't afford to attend the online classes due to lack of resources.

For this, Aastha Nishtha Foundation took the initiative of organising remedial sessions to children at the Munirka rain basera shelter for the homeless. The team focused on strengthening foundational learning through activity and play. Special age-appropriate modules and worksheets were designed for children to make concepts easy to understand and fun at the same time.

All the COVID-19 protocols were followed while conducting these sessions to ensure the safety of children and our team.

The children enjoyed coming to the sessions as they were tired of being at home. It became a space for them to learn, interact and enjoy with their peers.



Education alone is not enough in today's world; it needs to be combined with skills. Aastha Nishtha Foundation believes that it is our duty to help children prepare for their future. Vocational Education has become new necessary. Underprivileged children are often left behind from this, India is en route to turning into the country with the biggest and the most youthful labour force, but also more than 50,000 street children in Delhi, who are out of school, lack skills that will help them get an employment. On the line of new education policy, we started a program for vocational education for the vulnerable street children by providing them vocational education that aims to enhance their skills and potential.

To bridge the digital divide, a basic computer course was given to the children and the systems were provided by our NGO. The children were exposed to technology so that they have a basic understanding of necessary programs that are required when one applies for a job.

This will make them job ready when they grow up and also reduce marginalization.





Education is a basic right of every child, but lakhs of children don't get an opportunity to go to school due to severe financial constraints. The effect of poverty on India's underprivileged children, particularly in the sense of their schooling, is worst. There are many children who are unable to obtain education or have to drop from schools because of their financial incapacity and basic stationary items. As internet takes over the education sector, children who have the potential to grow like anyone else, are forced to work in order to earn a penny and sustain their living. Children in urban slums and villages also experiences a lack of schooling without secure internet connectivity and a shortage of wireless learning technologies. The initiative by Aastha Nishtha Foundation to provide the basic necessities of education to underprivileged children is to make education accessible to all of them, as education is every child's right, that has further more intensified by the financial crisis the pandemic has caused to the lives of poor people. We aim to provide books and stationaries to those children who are dropping out of the mainstream education due to lack of adequate facilities.



#### **EDUCATIONAL KIT DISTRIBUTION**

Access to education should never be an issue when it comes to the future of a child. We try to provide the children with access to education material so that it doesn't hinder their learning journey.

We distributed educational kits to 80 children which included bags, notebooks, sketch book and stationary kit. Children were filled with joy to receive their kits and were excited to take them to their schools.

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Food is the basic right of all human and living beings, and the worst form of poverty is food deprived. With our commitment towards relief to poor, this summer we distributed dry ration along with summer kits.

The dry apportion units having fundamental things will be appropriated to the recognized families. With our Relief to Poor Program Aastha Nishtha Foundation committed in reaching out and supporting the poor with the Dry Ration Kit to 34 families in the month of March 2021 including daily wage workers, elderly people, and to widows, we completed our commitment of distributing rations to 34 families. One Ration Bag consisted 5 Kgs of Wheat, 5 kg of Rice, 1kg Sugar, 1 Packet of Iodized Salt, 1packet of Edible Oil (250gms), 1kg of Potato.

These kits were distributed in four phases throughout the financial year as it was the need of the hour during the pandemic. We targeted such slum areas where there was a dire need of ration to feed the families.





**EVENT- EARTH DAY** 

Our Earth is our responsibility. The cutting of tress to create concrete jungles and over utilization of resources has led to rapid climate change and ozone depletion. It is best that children learn to be responsive citizens who are sensitive towards mother nature.

On the occasion of Earth Day on 22nd April, 2021, a best out of waste themed workshop was conducted which bought out the creative side of the children and helped them understand how waste material can be utilised in beautiful ways. They were asked to look around and pickup such waste items from their surroundings that they believe can be make something meaningful and beautiful.

Children created many items such as paper bags, lamps, kites and pen stand. They were shocked yet excited to see how something waste can turn out to be useful.

Some children also created posters and colourful drawings of the mother earth and nature.

This was something new for them and it made them happy!



#### **POLLUTION IS HARMFUL**

When we step out of our homes, we can feel the dirt and smoke all around us in the air. We can all feel it increase day by day. There are several types of pollution that affect the environment in a harmful way like air, water and noise pollution. Out of these, the most common is air pollution which can cause low birth weight, asthma, reduced lung function, respiratory infections and allergies in children and adolescents, as well as increased risks of adult chronic diseases.

It is important to make our future generations understand the importance of preserving nature and adapt to such lifestyle where the damage can be minimalised.

We conducted a general awareness session with the children of the community to discuss about the various kinds of pollution and ways to prevent it from happening.

They were taught through examples from their daily lives which was led to a productive interaction between children and our team.

#### **NOTE OF THANKS**

COVID-19 pandemic has been a tough ride, especially for the underserved families. It was through the help and support of our generous donors; we were able to help an approximate of 500 families living in the slum areas of Delhi.

We thank every individual who realised their responsibility of helping out those who are not as fortunate as us.

We hope of receiving your support in our future projects for underprivileged children and women.

Your kindness is truly appreciated and acknowledged!

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