

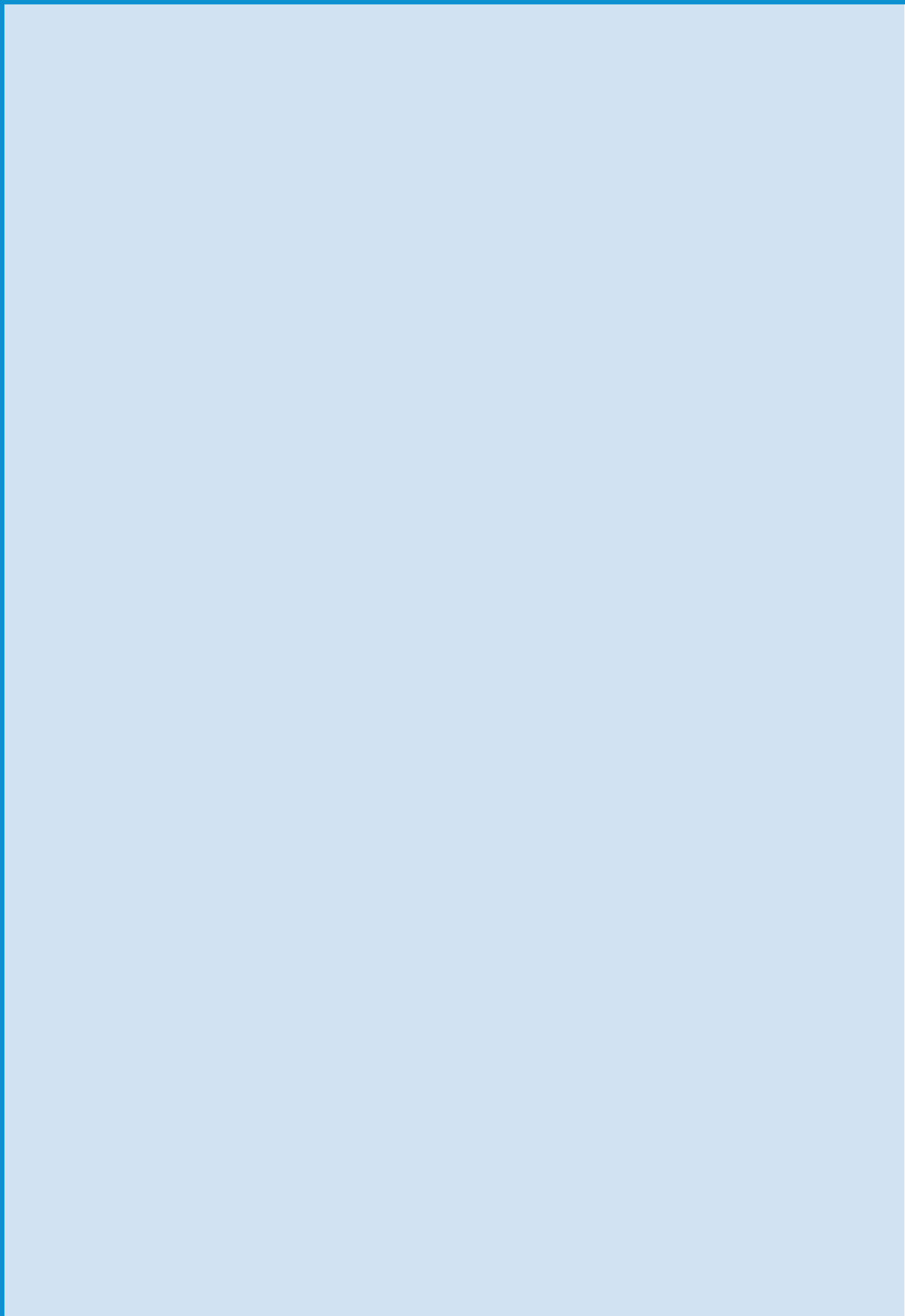


AVEHI ABACUS PROJECT

दिल पकड़े दिमाग का हाथ, आओ चले हम साथ साथ!

Annual Report 2024-25





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About Avehi Abacus Project

Avehi means 'to know'. Avehi Public Charitable (Educational) Trust, founded in 1981, is a non-profit dedicated to continuing education and critical social intervention through use of media resources. Avehi initiated the **Avehi Abacus Project** in 1990 with the aim of **improving and strengthening the public education system by making it qualitatively better, to reach out to the most marginalized sections of society and to impact mainstream policy on education.**



The Avehi Abacus Project holds a unique place in the Indian educational scenario. Its path-breaking contribution is evident in the rich and relevant content that has been appreciated and adopted by children, teachers and policy makers alike. Its sustained work spread on a large scale with teachers and children in public schools has been taken serious note of by the National and State level policy making bodies. Material developed by the organization has been integrated and/or used as reference during this process.

Vision

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

The Mission

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

Goals 1-2 year

- To improve quality of teaching in schools where **Sangati** is being implemented.
- Similarly, improve the quality of teaching in D.El.Ed Colleges where **Manthan** is being implemented.
- To expand implementation of the **Saath Saath** module in MCGM schools as well as Ashram schools in Shahapur Project.
- To work on a consolidated documentation of Avehi Abacus's journey over three decades, the learnings drawn from experiences of the original team,

current team, teachers, students, other collaborators etc. The aim will be to publish this documentation in book form for others to relate with our work and open a dialogue on relevant issues in education.

Goals 5+ years

- To complete the book and publish the journey of the Avehi Abacus Project.
- To make successful efforts to expand outreach of **Saath Saath** and **Sangati** in new geographies. Explore possibilities in Thane District.
- To adapt the teaching-learning modules (relevant content mainly from **Sangati**) to a virtual teaching-learning mode.

Our work at a glance

Our work has focused on development and use of teaching-learning resources to redefine, supplement and enrich the regular curriculum. We have implemented our modules successfully on a large-scale, in formal sites like schools as well as in informal urban and rural communities. Our work has been taken-note of by policy making bodies and have found integration in curriculum and textbooks at the National and State level.

Our three curriculum modules are:

- **Sangati** (togetherness/harmony) is a thought-provoking, interactive **Life Skills Enhancement and Enrichment Curriculum** comprising of a series of six teaching-learning kits with interlinked themes, drawn from sciences and social sciences. This program is implemented in school and non-school settings with children of the age group between 11 and 18 years. **Sangati** attempts to make school education relevant and vibrant. **Since 2006 Sangati is being used in all the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) schools and has thus reached more than 1,100 schools, 12,500 teachers and approximately 4,12,000 children. Since 2015 Sangati is also being transacted in 36 'Ashram schools' of the Integrated Tribal Development Department, Shahapur Project, in Thane district of Maharashtra.**



About Sangati

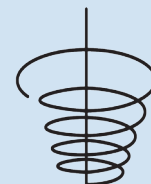
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- ***Saath Saath*** (-Living together in harmony): This curriculum has been developed for use in schools as well as communities to contribute towards the resurgence in awareness about gender justice and equality. ***Saath Saath* has reached more than 130 Community centers, 215 schools and approximately 29,000 adolescent girls and boys and 4730 women** in Mumbai as well as to grassroots women's organizations in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.



About *Saath Saath*

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- ***Manthan*** (Churning): A foundation course designed to be transacted with student-teachers enrolled for **Diploma in Elementary Education, D.El.Ed.** ***Manthan* has so far reached more than 36 D.El.Ed. colleges in Palghar, Thane, Mumbai and Raigad district and approximately 3,595 student teachers.**

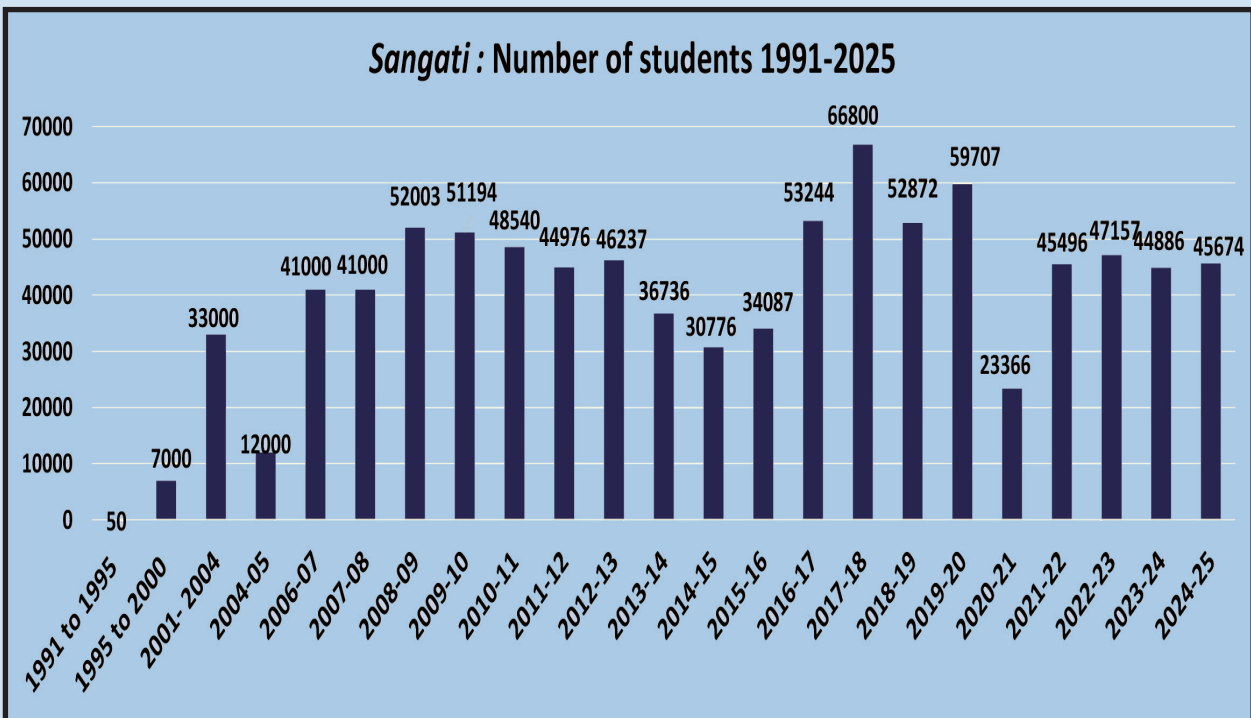
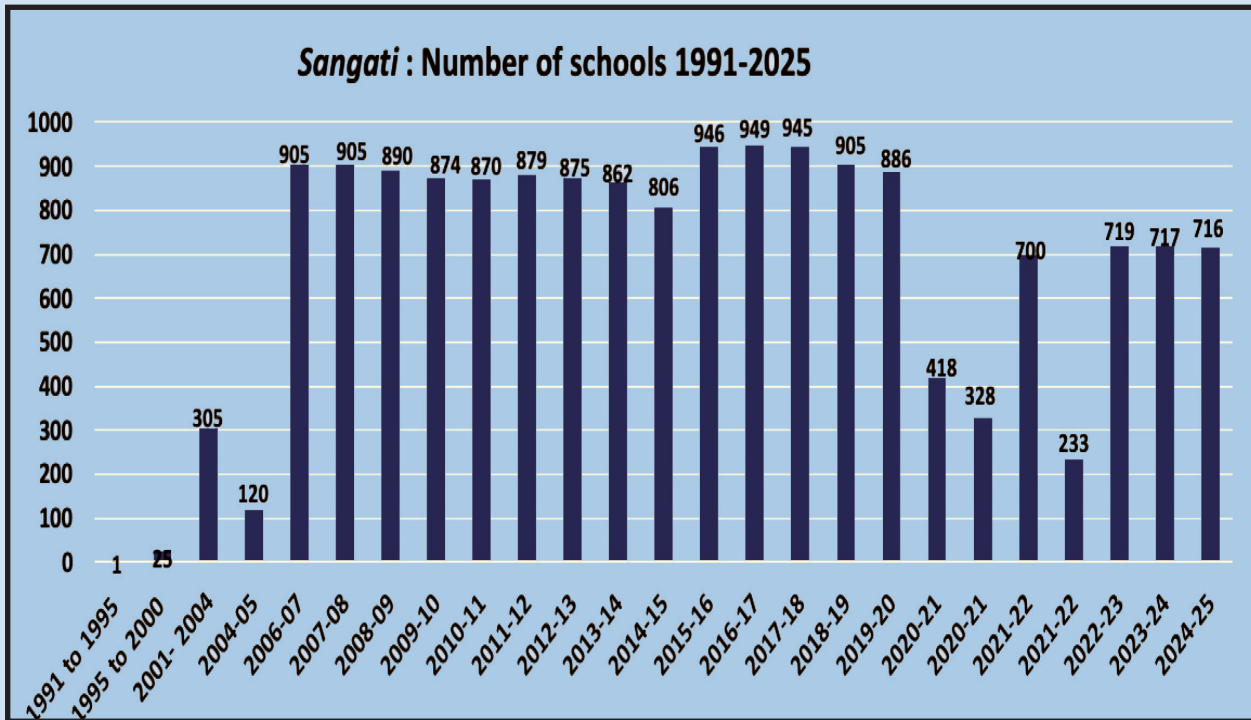
About *Manthan*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vkcx1br5AKOfaeEe8AtTSLGrYQ2-TszX/view?usp=sharing>

Total Outreach 2024-25

	<i>Sangati</i>	<i>Saath Saath</i>	<i>Manthan</i>	
Schools	716	124	D.El. Ed colleges	15
Classes	1232	154	Classes	19
Students	41057	4617	Student Teachers	616

At a glance 1991-2025



Sangati Supplementary Enrichment Curriculum

Background:

Sangati (togetherness/harmony):



In the beginning of each academic year, training workshops are organized by the Avehi Abacus Project to orient school teachers to **Sangati**. This is followed by distribution of kits and children's material in schools. Depending on the school's preference and medium, the Teacher's Manuals are available in Marathi, Hindi and English, while the student's material is available in Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, English, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu. **Sangati** sessions are conducted by the teachers for 1 clock hour per week. Field Representatives visit schools regularly to understand the response from students and teachers and provide inputs to make the sessions more effective; the workbooks filled by students are also overseen by them. The **Sangati** process is documented and serves as a rich source of understanding the teaching-learning processes in classrooms, and changes in children and teachers.

The Avehi Abacus Project is the only organization to implement an intensive curriculum program enlisting the active involvement of in-service teachers in all middle schools (900+) over a stretch of nearly 18 years. In order to ensure smooth integration, better monitoring and sustained use of the **Sangati** program, the Avehi Abacus Project has been involved in working closely with Supervisory Officials of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation since they perform the key roles of administration and monitoring.

Since its inception, the Avehi Abacus Project has worked closely with **underprivileged children in Mumbai Municipal Corporation Schools and rural Zilla Parishad Schools. The program has now also spread to the Ashram Schools (residential schools for tribal children) run by the Integrated Tribal Development Department. From the educational year 2015-16, the Sangati Program was introduced in Ashram schools. Currently the Sangati program is being implemented in Greater Mumbai (mainly urban schools and a few schools catering to the tribal population) and in Thane district.**

In the academic year 2024-25, **Sangati is being implemented with 41,057 students belonging to 1,232 classes in 716 schools. A total of 20,313 girls and 20,744 boys participated in the Sangati program during this time. Sangati reached 679 MCGM schools 1,054 classes, 1,054 teachers and 31,353 students and in 37 Ashram schools it reached 178 classes, 178 teachers and 9,704 students.**

Sangati Programme in MCGM schools Std. V to VII and Ashram Schools std. V to IX						
Schools	Standards	schools	classes	students	Girls	Boys
MCGM: Upper Primary and Secondary Schools	Std. V to VII	679	1,054	31,353	15,626	15,727
Ashram schools (Residential Schools for Tribal Children), Thane	Std. V to IX	37	178	9,704	4,687	5,017
Grand Total		716	1,232	41,057	20,313	20,744

Sangati in MCGM schools

Sangati has been used in all the MCGM schools. The current outreach of **Sangati** standard-wise in **679 MCGM schools** is given below:

Sangati in MCGM schools					
Standards	schools	classes	students	Girls	Boys
V	679	950	28,229	14,098	14,131
VI	28	38	1,161	556	605
VII	51	66	1,963	972	991
Total	679	1,054	31,353	15,626	15,727

Implementation in MCGM Schools

- Consent Letter from Headmasters**

For the academic year 2024-25, the Education Department of the MCGM required the school head teachers to provide written feedback on whether they wished to continue **Sangati** and **Saath Saath** programs in their schools. Accordingly, Aveshi representatives collected consent letters from the school headmasters during April. We received highly positive feedback from 656 out of 681 schools.

Except for 25 schools, all other schools' teachers and headmasters explicitly stated in writing that they wanted the programs to be conducted in their schools. Out of these 25 schools 4 schools submitted letters expressing a negative response and 21 schools did not submit letters but verbally conveyed their reservations owing to reasons like; lack of sufficient teachers, multi-grade classes with low enrolment and time constraints.

- **Meeting with the Education Officer (EO) MCGM, and obtaining the Permission Letter**

The senior team members met with the Education officer of MCGM on 22 April 2024 to discuss extension of the permission for implementation of *Sangati* in MCGM schools for the academic year June 2024 - April 2025. During this visit, the written feedback from each school about whether they wanted *Sangati* to continue was sought. In all the municipal wards, i.e. A to T, 99% school teachers and principals have communicated that they wanted the program to be continued in their respective schools. The EO highly appreciated the response to *Sangati* and assured that the permission will be granted.

The official permission letter from the MCGM Education Department for the academic year 2024–25 was granted (Ref. No. PPC No. 213, dated 23 August 2024).

- **Meetings with the Deputy EO, Superintendents, Administrative officers (AO) and Beat Officers (BO)**

Visits to all the supervisory and administrative officers who are part of the Education Department, MCGM, were made at the start of the academic year in order to give information about implementation of *Sangati* and to ensure that the sessions could be conducted smoothly in schools. The concerned officers were briefed about the curriculum, its implementation and the renewed permission letter was shared. The concerned officers expressed their support.

- **Pre-Test**

Since the *Sangati* program starts from std V, a pre-test questionnaire was filled out by selected students in July 2024. A total of 3,070 students from 104 MCGM Schools completed this questionnaire. Additionally, the same students will fill out a post-test questionnaire when they reach std VII.

- **Printing and Distribution of *Sangati* students' workbooks**

The *Sangati* workbooks are given to all the students usually around June, at the beginning of the academic year. Accordingly, **31,500** copies of workbooks were printed and ready for distribution. However, due to the inordinate delay in securing the permission letter for the MCGM Education Department, these could not be distributed to the schools in a timely manner and could be given only in September after the permission letter was received on August 23, 2024.

- Distribution of the material across all schools was carried out smoothly. The headmasters personally inspected the materials, and signed and stamped the receipt with the school seal. Many headmasters and teachers were pleased with the materials and acknowledged the positive impact the program has had on student over the years.

- The teachers immediately distributed the workbooks to students. Many teachers read the workbooks closely and appreciated the content and quality. Several headmasters also specifically requested copies of the ***Sangati*** workbook and looked at them closely. They remarked that the content was excellent and the print quality was impressive. They also requested periodic updates with photos of workbooks completed by the students, expressing curiosity about students' responses, and opinions.
- The distribution of educational materials was successfully completed across all locations. However, a few schools in the A, B, and F/S municipal wards did not receive the materials because the ward Administrative Officer prohibited conducting ***Sangati*** in schools under her jurisdiction. Apart from these exceptions, the distribution process was seamless across all other schools.

• **Student Reactions after receiving the workbooks**

- The ***Sangati*** kit 1 workbook, with its royal blue color, has a high-quality design, and attractive appearance. The students were excited to have the workbooks and were eager to start using them. Receiving their own copies in their languages brought visible joy to the students.
- Since all the questions in the book were about their own lives, personal experiences, and opinions, and provide scope for reflection, some students eagerly started writing their answers right away. Others needed some clarification after reading the some of the questions.
- In many instances, students completed the activities with the help of their family members. As a result, family members also became indirectly engaged with ***Sangati***. The students neatly pasted their own their family members', and their friends photographs in the relevant worksheets. Some students who did not have such photographs drew pictures to illustrate their responses.
- Overall, the students showed great enthusiasm to complete the workbook and were proud to share them with others. They did not feel hesitant about making mistakes and their comfort facilitated confidence, and remarkable improvement in their skills of writing and self-expression towards the end of the year.

• **Planning *Sangati* sessions in schools**

Like in the past, the school Heads and teachers welcomed the program, and responded positively in their interactions with the field representatives. The teachers and field representatives jointly discussed scheduling to accommodate ***Sangati*** in the school timetables. A designated hour was kept for the class once a week in a majority of schools. All school teachers were cooperative and the sessions were conducted smoothly.

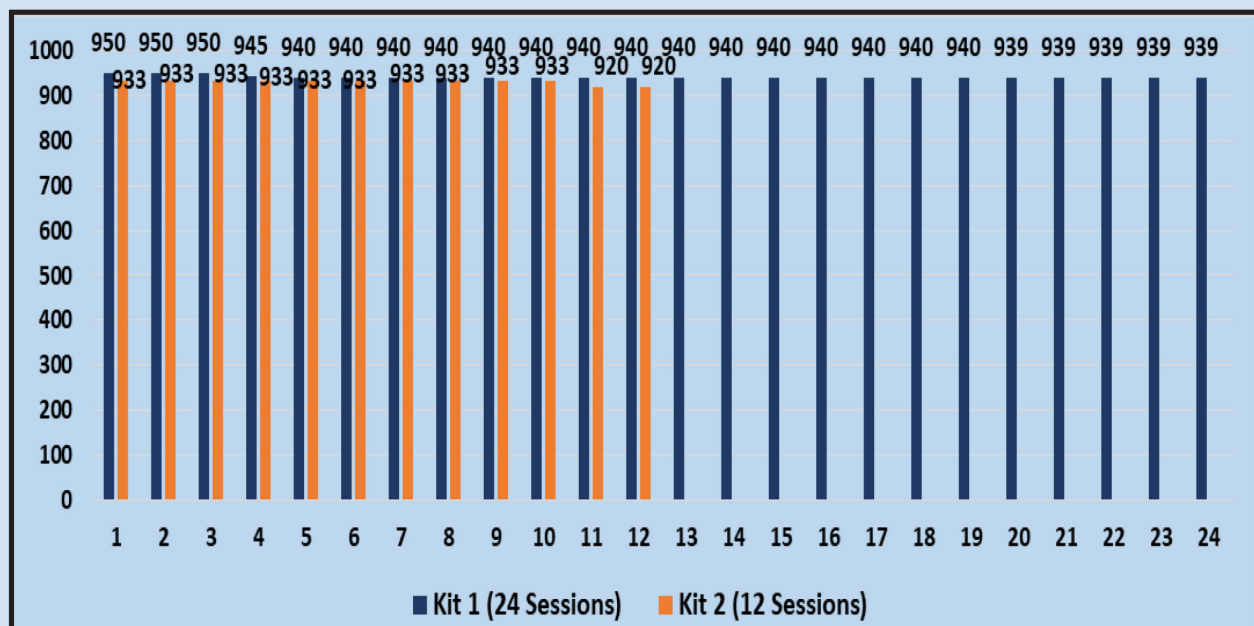
- **Details of Implementation of *Sangati* kits**

Standard: MCGM Schools	Standard: Ashram Schools	<i>Sangati</i> Kits	No of sessions
V	V	Kit 1: Myself, My Body and Our Needs	24
	VI	Kit 2: Our Earth and the Web of Life	12
VI	VI	Kit 3: How Societies Developed	16
	VII	Kit 4: The Way We Live	19
VII	VIII	Kit 5: Understanding Change	20
	IX	Kit 6: Preparing For The Future	17

- **Details of Implementation of *Sangati* sessions for std. V to VII**

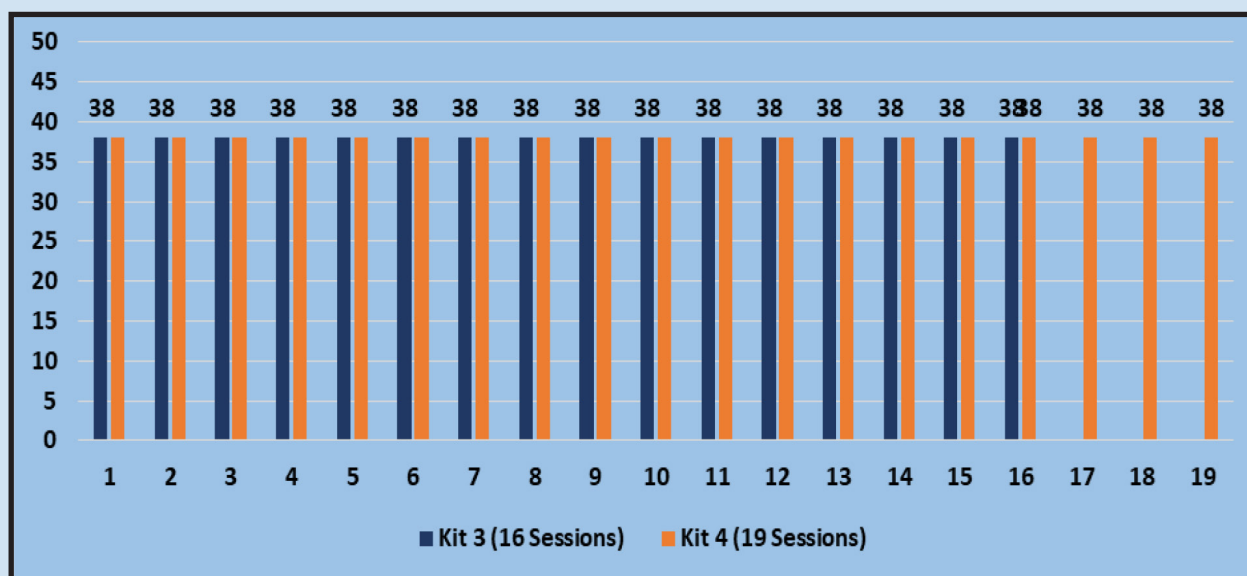
During the year 2024-25 the focus of the team was on the new batch of std. V students and in other standards the sessions were conducted mostly by the class teachers. Thus, the number of classes reached/completed for std. V is substantially higher.

Std. V: kit 1 - 'Myself, My Body, Our Needs' and kit 2 - 'Our Earth and the Web of Life'



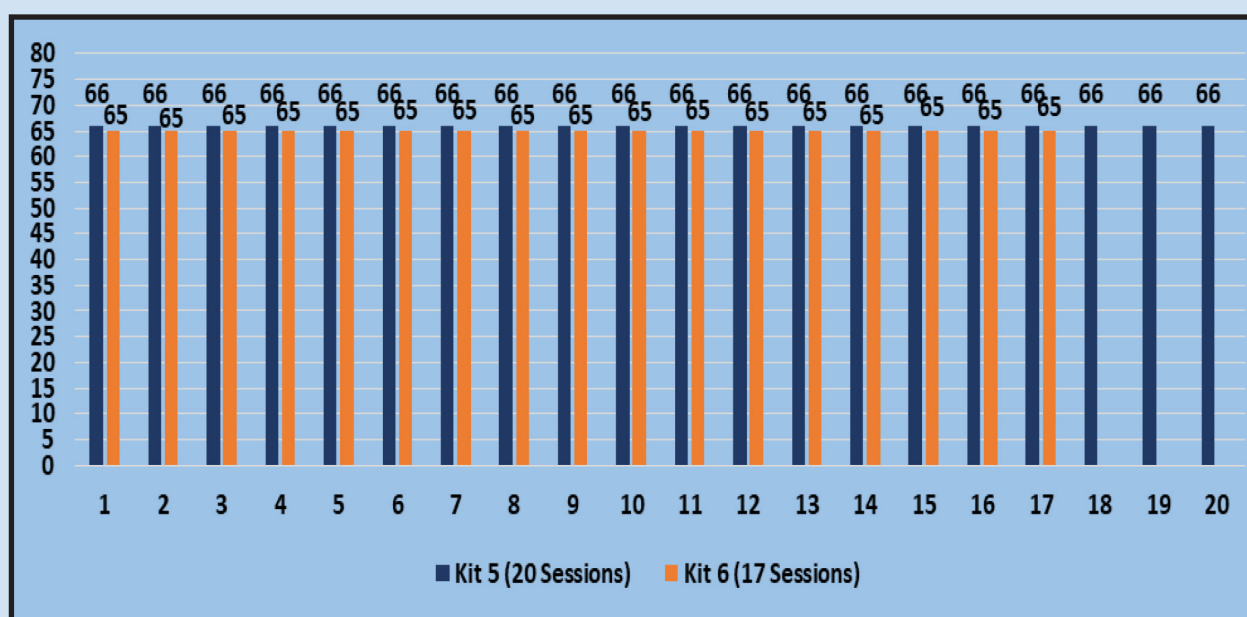
***Sangati* kit 1 - 'Myself, My Body, Our Needs'** was started in 950 classes and completed in 939 classes and ***Sangati* kit 2 - 'Our Earth and the Web of Life'** was started in 933 classes and completed in 920 classes of std V in MCGM schools.

Std. VI: kit 3 - 'How Societies Developed' and kit 4 - 'The Way We Live'



Sangati kit 3 - 'How Societies Developed' and *Sangati* kit 4 - 'The Way We Live' was started and completed in 38 classes of std. VI in MCGM schools.

Std. VII: kit 5 - 'Understanding Change' and kit 6 - 'Preparing for the Future'



Sangati kit 5 - 'Understanding Change' was started and completed in all 66 classes and *Sangati* kit 6 - 'Preparing for the Future' was started and completed in all 65 classes of std VII in MCGM schools.

• Written feedback from students and teachers:

Written feedback from students and teachers were collected to understand their response to the program.

Experiences during *Sangati* sessions

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mikiXwmAx2uX9ttyLdd2R-kTbzsst6d3/view?usp=sharing>

Students' Feedback to *Sangati*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16Y7THAVDbPSAgMaAhQtrA9elcnUXLhRr/view?usp=sharing>

Head Teachers' and Teachers' Feedback to *Sangati*

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- **Sessions on 'Growing Up'**

The phase of adolescence or the process of growing-up is challenging for the children passing through this phase as well as for the adults in their family. Despite general awareness about the changes the adolescence phase remains opaque or at best is addressed by giving piecemeal information about sexual-reproduction, often reinforcing gender discrimination. *Sangati* has made an attempt to look at this phase not just as a physical transition but also as socio-emotional one, and this has been appreciated by teachers and students. Teachers from many schools requested that a special session on 'Growing Up' be held in their schools. Therefore, a special session was conducted in 57 classes of std. V to VIII. The school principals and teachers overwhelmingly supported the team, extended their cooperation and expressed appreciation. The ideas, misconceptions, confusion that the students have at this crucial stage entering adolescence are addressed in this session, enabling them to share the turmoil in their minds. Topics like healthy, open interaction between adolescent boys and girls, sexual harassment, the atmosphere of trust in homes and communities particularly from the lens of gender, information about menstruation, and 'wet dreams' are discussed in the session by giving scientific information. Most importantly, the session also draws attention to the socio-emotional aspects of growing up, especially the way 'relevant adults' in the family treat boys and girls differently, how adults themselves find it confusing to respond to the changes they see occurring in their children and particularly the process of gendering. This session has been greatly appreciated by all the schools.

- **Special Session on 'Children's' Rights'**

On occasion of 14th November 'Children's Day' our team conducted a special session on Children's' Rights in 90 schools with 150 classes. Detailed information about children's rights was shared with help of material from *Sangati* which led to extensive discussions in the classrooms. While the students had a vague idea that children too have rights, they were not aware

of the specific provisions, rights of special groups of children, that there are different provisions for different age-groups, and what can be/should be done when rights are violated/threatened. Students also shared their life experiences on the topic.

- **Internal Impact Assessment of *Sangati***

In order to gauge impact of the program, written feedback was collected in the month of March 2025. For this 10% schools and students from these 10% schools were selected as per sampling norms. Responses were collected from total of 1010 students and 101 teachers from 102 schools.

Internal Impact Assessment of *Sangati*

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- **Schools Visits for Monitoring- Implementation**

School Visits by field representatives and field coordinators were carried out on a regular basis. The eight field Coordinators and 28 school representatives regularly monitored implementation of *Sangati*. The representatives and coordinators visited schools at least once in eight to ten days. During June 2024 to March/April 2025, 17961 visits were made to 679 MCGM schools. Efforts have been made to ensure that *Sangati* sessions were conducted regularly, quality was maintained, and the core tenets of the curriculum understood and appreciated by teachers and students.

Sangati in schools for Special Children

The Avehi Abacus project has also begun implementation of *Sangati* in 17 Special Schools (for Special-needs children) in Mumbai run by the Municipal Corporation from 2016-2017. The initiative came from the Officer In-Charge of these schools and the response from the teachers is overwhelming since they were able to connect substantial content from school books with *Sangati* curriculum. The various pedagogic devices have helped the students understand concepts and feel confident about learning.

Sangati had been implemented in 17 Special Schools (for Special-needs children) run by MCGM before the COVID-19 pandemic. Although contact with special schools could not be made during the COVID period, in many schools, teachers voluntarily conducted some sessions of *Sangati* kit 1 'Me, My Body and Our Needs' with the students. Since this academic year, visits were made to a total of 17 special schools of MCGM schools and in 11 of them teachers recorded highly positive response. As such 7 schools have been conducting *Sangati* sessions that are relevant for children with mild to medium learning difficulties.

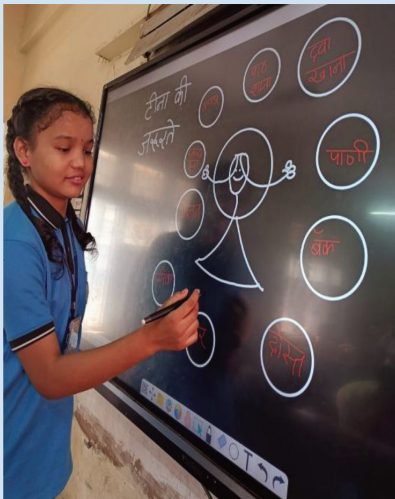
Teachers' feedback about the *Sangati* program – some highlights:

- Use of attractive, meaningful, engaging visuals has led to a noticeable improvement in their observation skills. Children are always curious to see the pictures in the flipcharts. They are also eager to know what is written at the back of the visual aids.
- Students try to narrate the stories from *Sangati* briefly, in their own words. Some even attempt to draw pictures based on what they see in the flipcharts.
- Through the flipchart 'Ramu's Roti', students understood the importance of not wasting food, eating properly with their own hands, and not spilling food on the ground. This component has brought a noticeable change in the students habits.
- The sessions in 'My Body', helped understand the integrated way in which the different systems in our body, and the different parts of our body work smoothly together. They also helped understand how to take care of our health and maintain hygiene.
- Students did not fully understand 'Rahul's Story', but they gained awareness about avoiding addiction, substance abuse, and irrational behaviour. The session also led to discussions on the consequences of the lack of opportunities to education, lack of health-care infrastructure and lack of support from society to those belonging to marginalised families.
- From the story of 'Helen Keller', students learned how despite so many impediments Helen progressed and did not lose her determination and perseverance, and thus they too can succeed if they make efforts. They

looked at Hellen Keller as an inspiration, a disabled person with agency and dignity and feelings generated respect and empathy in students vis-à-vis the disabled.

- Through the flipchart 'Listen to Me', children easily understood that one should be sensitive to the signals our body gives us, and try to follow healthy habits.

Glimpses from *Sangati* in MCGM schools



Sangati in Ashram Schools

Implementation of *Sangati* in Ashram schools (residential schools for tribal children) in Thane district.

From the academic year 2015-16 the **implementation of *Sangati*** began in 36 Adivasi Ashram Schools in Shahpur project of Thane district. These schools are fully-partially supported by the **Integrated Tribal Development Department, Government of Maharashtra** and are spread over five blocks namely, Shahapur, Kalyan, Bhiwandi, Ambernath and Murbad. Today *Sangati* has developed into a strong and important program for the students studying in standard Vth to IXth. Currently, the program is effectively being implemented with 178 teachers and 9704 students in 37 Ashram Schools. (A new school under the scheme of Ekalavya Model Residential School, a Central government scheme focusing on educational excellence catering only to tribal children, which uses the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum has been opened in Shahapur block, Shendegaon, Batsanagar, and we have also began working with this school, since June 2024).

Standards	Schools	Teachers	Students	Girls	Boys
V	37	36	1573	769	804
VI		37	1988	956	1032
VII		37	2079	1011	1068
VIII	34	34	2059	996	1063
IX		34	2005	955	1050
Total	37	178	9704	4687	5017

Implementation in Ashram Schools

- **Meeting with the Project Officer, Tribal Department Dept. Shahapur Project**

On 26/06/2024, the concerned team met the Project Officer of the Tribal Development Project at Shahapur. During this visit he was updated about progress of the program since its inception in the Ashram schools. The draft report of work in Ashram schools during the year 2023-24 was also shared with him. The project officer suggested that *Sangati* could also be taken-up in the recently launched CBSC schools in the Shahapur project. He also suggested that *Sangati* could also be conducted for older boys and girls staying in the hostels. Overall, the meeting turned out to be very positive.

- **Obtaining the Permission letter from the Integrated Tribal Development Department**

The Department of **Integrated Tribal Development** granted permission to implement **Sangati** in all the Ashram schools during academic year June 2024 - April 2029. (Reference no. ShaAasha-2024/Pra.Kra/Ka .4(5) date 03/07/ 2024). The same letter was also circulated to all school principals.

- **Pre-Test**

The **Sangati** program begins in standard V, and a pre-test questionnaire was administered to randomly selected 884 students from 25 Ashram schools in July 2024. These same students will complete a post-test questionnaire when they reach standard IX.

- **Printing and Distribution of *Sangati* kits and Workbooks**

In Ashram schools, the **Sangati** workbook is given to students from standards V to IX. In July, 10,000 copies of the workbooks were printed. On August 14, 2024, the materials were distributed to 36 schools.

- **Teachers and Students' Feedback about *Sangati* Workbook**

The student workbooks play an important role in **Sangati**. The workbooks are available in eight languages. These were distributed to students of standards V to IX across all schools in the month of August. While distributing these workbooks, some representatives had special experiences to share.

In the beginning, when the **Sangati** sessions were being introduced, most students eagerly asked the representatives, 'When will we get the **Sangati** workbook?' They felt that learning from **Sangati** was somewhat incomplete without it.

When the workbooks were finally distributed, the students were genuinely excited—there was visible joyful atmosphere in the classes since the Ashram school children have no other resources except textbooks. Each student eagerly began browsing the workbook, reading the additional information and stories, and looking at the illustrations inside. They flipped through it back and forth with great interest. They felt like they had received a book that truly belonged to them – to express themselves by writing, reading interesting things, drawing and coloring and sometimes finding additional information from home and other sources.

Some students even began filling-in information with details from the sessions right away and proudly showed it to others. The teachers too, were very happy to receive and distribute the workbooks.

- **Details of Implementation of *Sangati* sessions for std.V to IX**

Sangati sessions began in timely manner in all Ashram schools under the Shahapur project. Permission for the program was obtained from the Shahapur project, and the sessions started in the class from the first week of July. Since *Sangati* has been implemented in Ashram schools for several years, there were no difficulties in starting it this year as well.

When the representatives visited the schools, they were warmly welcomed by the teachers, and the annual plan for the year's *Sangati* sessions was shared with the headmasters and teachers. Sessions began for std. V to IX. Students from std. VI to IX were already familiar with the curriculum, and most of them were eagerly awaiting the *Sangati* classes to resume.

For the std. V students, *Sangati* was a new experience. However, through games, discussions, and stories, a lively and engaging environment was soon created in the classrooms. The students looked forward to the *Sangati* sessions as they found them engaging, full of enjoyment.

Overview of *Sangati* sessions (kit 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) in Ashram Schools

Std.	<i>Sangati</i> Kits	Sessions	Sessions completed in number of schools
V	Kit 1: 'Myself, My Body and Our Needs'	24	37
VI	Kit 2: 'Our Earth and the Web of Life'	12	37
VI	Kit 3: 'How Societies Developed'	16	37
VII	Kit 4: 'The Way We Live'	19	37
VIII	Kit 5: 'Understanding Change'	20	34
IX	Kit 6: 'Preparing for the Future'	17	34

Sangati kits have been fully completed in all classes from std. V to IX across 37 schools.

- **Written feedback from students and teachers:** Written responses from students and teachers were collected to understand their feedback.

Experiences/Feedback during *Sangati* sessions

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NKvTL5GVv-uRohJk8wrjbf9DUi8EwCCZ/view?usp=sharing>

Students Feedback to *Sangati*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CeK_KxF5biPk021_wjXTUgiP6VQJNLWr/view?usp=sharing

Head Teachers and Teachers Feedback to *Sangati*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f6CUHEEgcp6_6YPwp-CPfZIEr-9ItjHC/view?usp=sharing

- **Sessions on 'Growing Up' in Schools**

Similar to the demand from MCGM, the Ashram school teachers too asked for a special session on 'Growing Up'. While this session is part of *Sangati* kit 1 and 5 teachers requested that the session should also be conducted in classes that were not doing these kits during the academic year.

The context of the Adivasi culture is of particular importance. On one hand in the Adivasi ancient traditions there are less taboos related to intermingling of boys and girls and more acceptance of the fact that adolescents have sexual needs. However both the onslaught of outside cultures and unchecked development has changed the Adivasi societies rapidly both culturally and materially. Loss of livelihood due to aggressive inundation of forests and rivers has led to poverty and seasonal migration. As a result, children are married-off early or enter into sexual relationships and cohabitation without marriage, and child-bearing at an early age. Thus, it was felt that discussions about the crucial phase of growing up would help the young adolescents be aware of the agency they should cultivate in matters of choices about marriage. Accordingly, the 'Growing-Up' session was conducted in 106 classes from Std. V to IX across 22 Ashram schools, reciprocated by overwhelming support and appreciation from school principals and teachers.

These sessions provided a safe space for students to discuss the challenges of adolescence, addressing their misconceptions, confusions, and concerns during this crucial phase of life. Key topics included healthy and open interactions between adolescent boys and girls, sexual harassment, the importance of fostering a trusting environment at home and in the community—particularly from a gender perspective, menstruation, and 'wet dreams,' all explained with scientific information. Beyond the biological aspects, the sessions also highlighted the socio-emotional dimensions of growing up, focusing on how adults often treat boys and girls differently, their own struggles in responding to these changes, and the overall process of gendering. In the context of Ashram schools, the economic angle of early

marriage and implication on life-choices was also brought out. The initiative was highly appreciated by all participating schools.

- **Special Session on ‘Children’s Rights’**

On the occasion of Children’s Day (14th November), a special session on Children’s Rights was conducted in 106 classes from Std. V to IX across 22 schools. Using materials from *Sangati*, the session provided in-depth insights into children’s rights, sparking meaningful discussions in classrooms. While students had a general awareness that children have rights, many were unaware of the specific provisions, the rights of marginalized groups with particular reference to Adivasi community’s rights in the Indian Constitution, age-specific entitlements, and the steps to take in cases of rights violations. The session enabled students to share their own experiences, their life in the Ashram schools, making the discussion more relatable and impactful.

- **Internal Impact Assessment of *Sangati* in Ashram schools**

In order to gauge impact of the program, written feedback was collected in the month of March 2025. Responses were collected from total of 1089 students and 106 teachers from 23 schools.

Internal Impact Assessment of *Sangati*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uXz1vYuoVgC3Faa_tqExpgezJi-80ifie/view?usp=sharing

- **Monitoring Visits: School Visits by Avehi Abacus Representatives and Field Coordinators**

Eight Field Coordinators and 37 School Representatives regularly monitored implementation of *Sangati*. The representatives and coordinators visited schools once in 15 days. During June 2024 to March/April 2025, 407 visits were made to 37 schools. Efforts have been made to ensure that *Sangati* sessions were conducted regularly, quality was maintained, and the core tenets of the curriculum understood and appreciated by teachers and students.

Glimpses from *Sangati* in Ashram Schools



Saath Saath - living together in harmony

Saath Saath - Living together in harmony:

This curriculum package has been developed for use in schools as well as communities to contribute towards the resurgence in awareness about gender justice and equality. **Saath Saath has reached more than 130 Community centers, 215 schools and approximately 19,535 adolescent girls and boys and 4,730 women** in Mumbai as well as to grassroots women's organizations in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.



Saath Saath Implementation in MCGM schools.

Saath Saath - Living together in harmony (total 12 sessions): The **Saath Saath** program was initiated from 2020 for VIIIth standard students as per the demand of teachers and students. The **Saath Saath** modules are being used with 4,617 students from 154 classes in 124 MCGM schools. In all 2,258 girls and 2,359 boys participated in **Saath Saath** sessions.

Saath Saath in MCGM Schools				
Schools	Classes	Students	Girls	Boys
124	154	4617	2258	2359

Implementation of Saath Saath in MCGM Schools

- The implementation of the **Saath Saath** program began with Field Coordinators and representatives engaging with school principals of selected schools having std. VIII classes. They provided detailed information about the **Saath Saath** curriculum and its significance in fostering gender equality and awareness among students. In collaboration with teachers, the scheduling of **Saath Saath** sessions was carefully planned to integrate seamlessly into the school timetable. The Saath Saath program has been successfully initiated in 154 classes and has been completed in all the classes.
- As the program progressed, school principals, teachers, and education officials observed the sessions firsthand. This exposure helped them recognize the importance of the topics covered, particularly those related to gender equality. Educators unanimously acknowledged the need to communicate these crucial concepts to students, fostering a deeper understanding and awareness.
- With the full support of school leadership and teachers, **Saath Saath** sessions have been conducted as per the finalized schedule. Teachers have shown remarkable cooperation and enthusiasm, actively engaging students

in discussions. Students are encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences, leading to meaningful conversations about essential issues such as equal access to nutrition, health, education, employment, and freedom of expression for both girls and boys. Through these discussions, students are gaining a holistic understanding of the interconnected themes presented in the ***Saath Saath*** curriculum.

- ***Saath Saath*** Workshop with Team

A two-day workshop was held on 22nd and 23rd July 2024 to orient the team conducting ***Saath Saath*** sessions in schools with std. VIII. Each session was presented and discussed to underscore its perspective, the core-issues, the appropriate pedagogy, issues of concern from the field, particular responses to specific contexts, etc.

Saath Saath started in 100% classes and was completed in 100%

Experiences /Feedback during *Saath Saath* sessions

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D03ueiXUFHbWc8Me-sOV7yucXM5ppGCF/view?usp=sharing>

Students Feedback to *Saath Saath*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qQiTRpii of2wF94ilON1pps_ZPv212KZ/view?usp=sharing

Teachers Feedback to *Saath Saath*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fAe2zWq1VF0-jj5_EDWH7PachNz5Fho0/view?usp=sharing

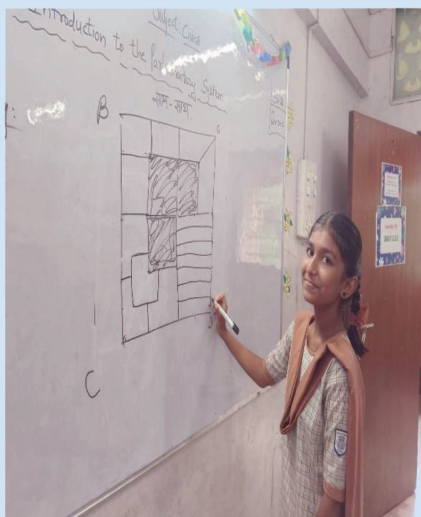
- **Internal Impact Assessment of *Saath Saath***

In order to gauge impact of the program, written feedback was collected in the month of March 2025. Responses were collected from total of 271 students and 26 teachers from 27 schools.

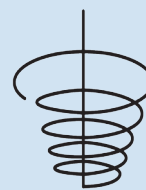
Internal Impact Assessment of *Saath Saath*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/140w_we6mVXH zKL4KNn8spluA7xwkCYwC/view?usp=sharing

Glimpses from *Saath Saath* in MCGM School



Manthan Pre-service Teacher Education Module



Manthan curriculum development took-place organically as **Sangati** began implementation in 25 MCGM schools in its initial years, and as we developed our understanding of the teachers' role in education. We understood that it was essential for teachers to go beyond their role as mere delivery agents of given content. We could see that most of the in-service and pre-service teacher development programs aimed at merely looking at performative skills for efficiently delivering the textbook knowledge. Pedagogy or rather methodology was isolated from content and contexts of children and teachers. Through our experiences in the pilot phase while developing **Sangati** we began to realize the centrality of teachers in transforming education aimed at justice and democracy – analyzing and redefining the relationship between society and education. External experts who evaluated the impact of **Sangati**, particularly the State Centre for Educational Research and Training, (SCERT) recommended that we explore working at the pre-service teacher education level and thus the seeds of **Manthan** were sown. Initially piloted in two pre-service teacher education colleges (1998-2000), **Manthan** spread to 35 colleges in 1998-2025.

Implementation of **Manthan** in Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) colleges

Manthan is currently implemented in a total of 15 colleges spread across Raigad, Thane, Palghar and Mumbai districts reaching out to 616 student teachers. These include, 1 college in Raigad district, 6 colleges in Palghar, 4 colleges in Thane district and 4 colleges in Mumbai. Vanita Bajipur Teacher's College in Vasai has also begun implementing **Manthan** in the academic year 2024.

Manthan has been initiated with first year students and will be continued with the same students as they enter second year.

Manthan Outreach in D.El.Ed. Colleges

Districts	D.El.Ed. colleges	Student teachers
Palghar	6	215
Thane	4	244
Mumbai	4	100
Raigad	1	57
Total	15	616

Manthan's second-year students (Batch 2023–2025) are continuing the sessions from the first year as they move into the second year. From October 2023, the first-year new batch (2023-2025) of D. El Ed. course was started and **Manthan** starts in all 15 colleges with the new batch. The new students received the program with great enthusiasm and support from the principals and teacher-educators.

- Due to the success of **Manthan** for D.El.Ed. the Principal SDT Kalani college, Ulhasnagar requested initiating it also with the B.Ed. students.
- **Manthan** sessions began in 15 D. El Ed colleges and will be completed in all 15 classes by the end of the July-August 2025.
- All college principals and teacher-educators extended support and cooperated by scheduling **Manthan** sessions within their time-tabling.
- The student teachers value the content and pedagogy of the different session's particularly different games, debates and discussions in the sessions.
- Overall, the response from all the D.El.Ed. Colleges to **Manthan** is encouraging and enthusiastic.
- **Manthan Program: First-and Second-Year Syllabus Implementation 2023-25**

	Name of D.El.Ed. College	First Year Module	Second Year Module
Palghar District			
1	Anutai Wagh D.El.Ed. College, Kosbad, Dahanu	Completed	Completed
2	Kishore Sankhye D.El.Ed. College, Boisar, Palghar	Session 10	
3	St John D'britto D.El.Ed. college, Vasai	Completed	Completed
4	Thomas Baptisa D.El.Ed. college, Vasai	Completed	Completed
5	St Aloysius D.El.Ed. college, Vasai	Completed	Completed
6	Vanita Bajipur, D.El.Ed. college, Vasai	Completed	Session 10
Thane District			
7	Swayam Siddhi D.El.Ed. college, Bhiwandi	Completed	Completed
8	Salahuddin Urdu D.El.Ed. college, Bhiwandi	Completed	Completed
9	SDT Kalani D.El.Ed. college, Ulhasnagar	Session 12	
10	Ideal D.El.Ed. college, Kalyan	Session 12	
Mumbai			
11	Anjuman D.El.Ed. college Kurla	Completed	Completed
12	Imamwada D.El.Ed. college, Byculla	Completed	Completed
13	R. C. Mahim D.El.Ed. college, Mahim	Completed	Session 6
14	Khilafat D.El.Ed. college Byculla	Completed	Completed
Raigad District			
15	Shri.Bapusaheb D.D. Vispute D.El.Ed. college, Panvel.	Completed	Completed

- **Written feedback from student teachers**

Written feedback from student teachers were collected to understand their responses.

Student Teachers Feedback on *Manthan*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N43hT-RNX9HjxD8x5wbIgEP-icQcD4V4/view?usp=sharing>

Feedback from D.El.Ed. College Principals

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yMBSIjxrNTLtf5jJGjb8Wjhbl6lCXRxc/view?usp=sharing>

Internal Impact Assessment of *Manthan*

In order to gauge the impact of the program, written feedback was collected. Responses were collected from a total of 251 student teachers from 12 D.El. Ed colleges.

Internal Impact Assessment of *Manthan*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10N9OVRUxaBYPch3soDg8rkvFlvGsVP59/view?usp=sharing>

- **Certificate Distribution to Student Teachers Completing *Manthan***

As the current academic year marked the final year of the *Manthan*, second-year student-teachers were awarded certificates upon successful completion of the course. The format and design of the certificate were highly appreciated by both student-teachers and teacher-educators.

- **Monitoring Implementation Visits by Field Coordinators**

Four Field-Coordination are involved in ensuring that *Manthan* sessions are conducted regularly, that the quality of the program is being maintained, and the core tenets of the curriculum are understood and appreciated by student teachers and teacher educators.

Glimpses from *Manthan* in D.El.Ed.



Education for Democratic Citizenship

Project Synopsis

This initiative began owing to a felt need to respond to the larger circumstances prevailing in our society today. Avehi Abacus's work over the last 35 years, particularly the creation of the ***Sangati*** curriculum and its implementation in Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC) schools, rural and tribal schools, as well as in non-school settings, and integration in national and state curriculum revision exercises forms the basis of this initiative. Based on the positive outcomes of the program, Avehi attempted to expand it to a wider audience, with suitable modifications. The idea is to integrate learnings from previous experiences to create a compact new module enhancing development of democratic citizenship. The ***Sangati*** curriculum is spread over 6 modules and covers a wide-range of themes in social sciences and physical sciences. The basic thrust of ***Sangati*** is on developing values centering on the Constitutional vision. Accordingly, the new module mainly draws-upon content from relevant ***Sangati*** sessions (complemented by the ***Saath Saath*** and ***Manthan*** modules of Avehi). Another important dimension of this new module is integration of digital pedagogy and IT based educational resources in order to keep pace with the 21st century skills and increase the chance of scalability. IT for Change was thought of as a partner in this exercise owing to their shared understanding of social and educational concerns, their stance on technology in education, as well as their access to schools in Bengaluru, Karnataka where the pilot could be tested. The Tata Trust after consideration of the proposal of 'Education for Democratic Citizenship' (EDC) approved the project from December 2024 to November 2027.

The Rationale

While democracies existed in some ancient societies, and while shades of democracy are visible in most tribal societies, in the modern world this political thought emerged relatively later as a bi-product of 'industrial capitalism' and is seen as a preferred rule globally. Over last three hundred years monarchies have given way to modern democratic nation states, each with their distinct socio-cultural character shaped by specific historical and economic processes. Democracy as a political system has always straddled two opposing forces – efforts to establish people's rule based on values of freedom, equality, social justice, fraternity on one hand and dominance of profit-seeking market forces on the other. How this contest shapes-up depends on the tug of cultural, religious, and social factors, which are themselves in

¹ In the 2024 budget speech, the Karnataka CM announced a new program 'Naavu Manujaru' (We are Humans), focused on social harmony, scientific temper, and coexistence in all schools and colleges to include thoughts of social reformers, elimination of inequality and dialogue on constitutional values of equality, liberty and fraternity. This could provide an opportunity for the EDC project curriculum to be integrated in schools through collaboration with the Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT).

conflict with one-another. Ideas about education are an important player in this process of building and re-building democracy. Debates about education and democracy are ongoing and draw upon what has taken place in the past from global as well as specific cultural context. Formal education has been seen as a channel for construction of a certain kind of citizenship. Democracy requires recognition and fulfilment of individual and collective rights in an equitable way, provisioning to rectify historic wrongs, provisioning for affirmative measures to reduce the gap between the socio-economically powerful and the weak, so that all have a comparable starting point. It means all, irrespective of their social and economic positions have an equal voice in a nation's decision-making. But reality reveals this is often not the case. As a result, it is argued that the current economic and political systems that carry the label of democracy require transformation and changing the way we educate the young is an important starting point. (Dhuru, 2024).

Despite its short-comings, democracy remains a valued, aspirational societal ideal. By and large democracy is seen as a process not a product, as a way of life, as 'work in progress'. "Democracy is something, we are always trying simultaneously to maintain and reconstruct, and education is essential to this process". (Stanly 2005). It is assumed that democratic thinking and behaviour (citizenship) must be learned, and schools are sites where the young are exposed to this formal training of citizenship. Within an education system it is the social sciences that carry the mantle of citizenship education. Given that there are many conceptions about democracy, there are also a plethora of ideas about 'citizenship education for democracy' and these viewpoints impact what happens in our classrooms. The debates about 'citizenship and democracy' will perhaps never cease and "no single formulation will triumph". (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004). Different perspectives about democracy and 'citizenship education' will continue because 'the stakes are too high' – because perspectives about 'good citizenship' are linked with perspectives about "good society". (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004).

Understanding the nation's Constitution is an essential starting point, both to demystify it as well as to appreciate and enact it. Citizens' engagement in this exercise can lead to actualization of the vision of the Constitution by understanding the reasoning; the core-principles it stands on to evaluate where we stand as a nation, to see if we are straying away, to watch our steps as we go ahead. Independent India's Constitution is given by the people of India to themselves, as sovereigns, as keepers and creators of our democratic nation to ensure justice, liberty, equality, fraternity. In the arena of formal education this task needs to be done in an organic, integrated way avoiding sermonizing or deifying the Constitution.

In relation to the context above Avehi Abacus Project's work over last three decades and its curriculum modules ***Sangati***, ***Manthan*** and ***Saath-Saath*** are an extremely viable and important starting-point. These curriculum

modules have been widely tested in real-life situations in public as well as diverse school and non-school educational settings. One of the main areas of exploration is adaptation of the material for use on digital platform (in blended mode – with reference to the TPACK framework) with a view to develop a prototype that can be used on a massive scale.

Role of Technology in Education

In the Indian context while technology has existed in some schools since the late 1970s its use was initiated by the educators. But today while our everyday life is often controlled by digital media, teachers are yet unclear about use of technology in education. 'For most teachers today technology is imperious, not enabling' (Dhuru, 2024).

Digital technology is fast reaching levels beyond human control – it has ceased to be a choice we make, instead it is controlling the choices we make. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world of education and technology closer than ever before, opening a variety of possibilities and challenges. Debates about technology in education are of varied types and span a spectrum of highly contending opinions. But teachers and students are not part of these debates, they are the subject-matter, being rendered the passive-role of receptors. They are usually the hands that use the given technology, not the hearts and mind that think about why, when, how to use different applications of technology in education. Teachers are often 'trained' in using certain digital products, applications, software and it is believed this training will enable them to make their classrooms SMART. The theoretical basis of the relationship between digital technology and education is kept out of this exercise. They are not exposed to the affordances and limitations of certain technological choices in relation to specific context and subject-domain.

Technologies are neither neutral nor unbiased particularly when they play out in education which is a socially rooted process. We need to think about technology in education from ethical, political, epistemic, pedagogical dimensions. We need to prepare ourselves to take positions, inform ourselves theoretically, develop our capacities particularly focused on the teaching of social sciences; (Dhuru, 2024) with the hope of nurturing and strengthening democratic citizenship.

Creating an online blended module

In order to be able to disseminate these programs more widely it is imperative to explore whether we can use technology as an enabler and create a blended version that would try and preserve the classroom experience while using the strengths of digitization to both enhance the student experience as well as facilitate wider dissemination.

Broad Objectives

1. To develop and pilot the module on 'education for democratic citizenship' in the context of the Indian Constitution, leveraging the meaningful integration of digital technologies.
2. To study the effectiveness of the implementation to assess the scope for program scalability and sustainability.

Scope and Methodology

The implementation of the EDC pilot project will span three years aiming to work with teachers and students of classes 6 and 7 in total of 40 Municipal Corporation schools in Bengaluru North and South districts, Karnataka. Undertaking a three-step process

Step 1: Reviewing and adapting relevant *Sangati, Saath Saath* sessions

Step 2: Creating digital resources, tools and sourcing OER and adapting for online/blended TPD and

Step 3: Piloting the module

Tasks Completed

The project approval letter was received on the 9th of January 2025 for the period from December 2024 to November 2027.

- One of the first tasks was appointment of team-members. A highly qualified and experienced team of Senior Faculty (Curriculum review adaptation and teacher training), Faculty-Curriculum design development and teacher training' as well as 'Curriculum Designer and Writer' has been working on developing the new module supported by the production manager.
- Development of framework for the two-year EDC course.
- Visits to Bangalore and Mumbai by both partner organizations to understand each-others' work.
- Mapping of *Sangati, Saath Saath* and NCERT, KSCERT textbooks with reference to the framework.
- Development of ten draft session plans.
- Development of workshop plan for facilitators/teachers' workshop for introduction to the EDC course and the first six sessions.
- Purchasing computer equipment.

The process of developing framework/sessions/TPD workshop plan:

We give below the general process of developing the course material:

- Reviewing the overall aims and flow of the framework to place the session's appropriately in context of the main ideas and learning objectives
- Developing outlines of the sessions.
- Reviewing the outlines in terms of the resources mapped (*Sangati*, Saath-Saath modules, NCERT, KSCERT textbooks)
- Additional reading, looking at IT resources to inform ourselves about the possible content-pedagogy (including Constitutional debates, other validated historical sources such as academic work and OERs/public resources on web.2)
- Developing the session plan with details of content-pedagogy
- Internal group-review of the draft session-plans
- Re-visiting the session-plans with Karnataka specific contemporary concerns and enhanced possibilities of integration of digital technology in coordination with ITfC
- Modifying the draft session-plans based on team's feedback
- Sharing the modified drafts with ITfC

The process as envisaged has greatly enriched us. We are looking at democracy as an idea, rather than looking at democracy merely as a process of governance, Highlighting democracy as a process we need to be consciously part of and not passively accept inert structures and rules, and instead view it as a set of vital value-systems, a commitment our world today needs. While the team is in possession of this objective, we will ensure that we navigate the ideas and resources carefully in keeping with the evolving needs of the field and strive to develop the EDC module that will have both immediate field-specific application as well offer broader scope, with a ring of hope and practicability.

Other Interventions

- **Performance Appraisal**

An annual performance appraisal review was conducted for all the team-members of the Avehi Abacus Project. To facilitate this review process, the team was given self-assessment preform forms to be filled by them well in advance. On April 23, 2024 the team-members were divided into three groups assigned to the Director, Trustee and Core-Team member and Chief Program Officer. Each team-member individually discussed their experiences during the year. They reflected on their work during the year, and shared challenges they faced. This process proved to be highly impactful in building confidence and a sense of ownership in the team-members toward improving the quality of their work in the future.

- **Reflections about Personal Growth – Writing and Compilation: ‘Avehi and Me’**

Most members of the Avehi Abacus project team have been associated with Avehi for about 15–20 years. Over this time, they have undergone significant personal growth and transformation. Recognizing the importance of documenting these changes, team members penned down their personal journeys and experiences since they began working at Avehi. This compilation, titled Avehi and Me’ was created to preserve these experiences and reflections. A few representatives read excerpts from their writings during the Annual Review session.

- **Annual Review of the Project**

On April 30, 2024, an annual review of the team’s work for the year 2023-24 was conducted. The session was attended by all core team members, some trustees, and the entire team. A review of all the programs **Sangati**, **Manthan**, and **Saath Saath**, along with financial and administrative aspects, was presented. Future plans were also discussed during the meeting.

- **Refresher workshops with Field Representatives**

The team expressed the need to have refresher training for all the team members in all the **Sangati** modules that are to be implemented in the Mumbai Municipal Corporation schools and Ashram schools. Accordingly training for each **Sangati** module was held for 3 to 4 days at the beginning of the academic year in June and July. This ensured that the team gained a thorough understanding of all six modules.

Prior to the workshops, representatives were divided into groups for deeper reading of sessions and noting their past experiences in the field, their difficulties etc. Drawing from these inputs, the workshops included presentations of sessions with updated information. Each session was

explained and discussed in detail to clarify the core objectives of the modules and the particular session. To make the workshops more engaging and livelier, various games and songs were included.

- **Workshop on Information about Sakhi Savitri Committee**

- The Government of Maharashtra issued an order in 2022 to establish **Sakhi Savitri Committees** in all schools. However, in **August 2024**, an incident of sexual abuse of a minor girl occurred in a school in Badlapur , which involved violent acts.
- In response to this, and with the objective of raising awareness among students about sexual abuse, the Maharashtra government once again instructed schools to establish **Sakhi Savitri Committees**. These committees are to play a crucial role in taking appropriate action and working toward preventing such incidents.
- To gather more information regarding this initiative, a workshop was held on **24 August 2024** with the team. During this session, representatives were provided with detailed information about the **government decision** and the **Sakhi Savitri Committee's** structure and function. This workshop helped clarify the roles and responsibilities of the committee and how it can effectively contribute to raising awareness and ensuring the safety of students in schools.
- Representation in **Sakhi Savitri Committee**: 13 representatives from Avehi Abacus Project, have been included in the Sakhi Savitri Committee of 36 municipal schools.

- **Workshop on Sexual Harassment**

- A workshop on the topic of **Sexual Harassment** was conducted on **26 August 2024** by the team to provide greater clarity on these issues. The session focused on discussing the **POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment)** policy along with other related matters.
- The workshop aimed to raise awareness and educate participants about the significance of understanding sexual harassment, its impact, and the steps to address and prevent such issues in various environments. Key topics discussed included the legal framework, the role of policies like POSH, and how organizations can ensure a safe and respectful space for all individuals.
- The team highlighted the importance of fostering a culture of respect and understanding, and emphasized the need for clear communication, accountability, and support for victims of harassment. The session concluded with interactive discussions, providing participants with the opportunity to ask questions and clarify doubts regarding the subject matter.

- **Screenings of Documentaries**

Three documentary films were screened for the team

- Writing with Fire, by Sushmit Ghosh and Rintu Thomas – June 6, 2024. This film was shortlisted in the first five documentary films in the Academy Awards in 2022. This powerful film follows the rise of Khabar Lahariya, India's only newspaper run entirely by Dalit women, as they challenge patriarchy and redefine the meaning of journalism in rural India. It was shortlisted among the top five documentaries at the Academy Awards in 2022.
- Mala Bi Shalela Yeu Dya Ki (Let Me Also Come to School), by Simantini Dhuru – July 13, This documentary highlights the struggles of marginalized children in rural India who are denied access to quality education, emphasizing the importance of inclusive schooling.
- A Few Things I Know About Her, by Anjali Punjabi – July 13, 2024 The film explores the lives of adolescent girls in India, delving into their dreams, challenges, and the impact of gender norms on their everyday experiences.
- The team held a discussion after the film and wrote brief reflections about the film and the issues they highlighted.

- **Student for internship**

Three students of the Integrated B.Ed-M.Ed program (2024-27) studying at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, successfully completed their Field Attachment with the Avehi Abacus Project from November 28 to December 13, 2024, gaining valuable hands-on experience in the field of education.

- **Visit of Asha for Education Representatives**

On August 29, 2024, representatives from Asha for Education, Preeti Gopalan, and Simantini Dhuru from Avehi Abacus, visited Dosti Acres School Complex at F/North Ward's Pracharya Vamanrao Mahadik Hindi School. Headmaster Subhash Yadav discussed the **Sangati** program with them, highlighting its benefits for students. The program engages students through games, stories, songs, and discussions, making learning interactive and enjoyable. Teacher Chandrakala Jaiswal also shared her positive feedback, emphasizing how **Sangati** helps students understand physical and emotional changes during adolescence with a scientific approach.

A discussion was held with students from std. V to VII about their experiences with **Sangati**. They sang 'Hum Honge Kamyab' (We shall overcome) in Hindi and English and participated in discussions on topics like 'Emperor Akbar Learns a Lesson', story on friendship, and interesting information about our

city Mumbai – as well as about their family and the influence of mass and social media. The students had neatly completed their **Sangati** workbooks, and some from std. V even made welcome greeting cards, which delighted the visitors.

For std. VIII, discussions focused on the **Saath Saath** program, covering topics like gender equality, discrimination, harassment, and societal perceptions of women. Students found the sessions insightful and indicated that **Saath Saath** was an important and engaging initiative.

- **Site visit by Isabel Martín Foundation, Spain**

Isabelle Martin Foundation's Chief Trustee Ignacio Lafarga and Project Manager, Sara Gutiérrez, visited the Samta Nagar Mumbai Public School, Kandiwali East, Mumbai on the 28 of February 2025, to interact with the students and teachers and understand their response to the **Sangati** program. They were accompanied by Avehi's core team member Noella D'Souza and Director Simantini Dhuru.

They were received with much enthusiasm by the students and teachers. The students were thrilled to interact with Ignacio and Sara and conveyed their responses about **Sangati**, how it has changed them and shared their future plans. The teachers also interacted with the visitors and talked about their response to **Sangati**, how it has benefitted the students in their academic life as well as in development of their personality.

- **Appointment of new Trustee Nayantara Sabavala**

Due to age-related reasons, one of the Trustees of Avehi, Dr. Ms. Saroj Jha, resigned from her position. In her place, Ms. Nayantara Sabavala has been appointed as the new trustee. The change has been duly reported to the Charity Commission, and we received the Change Report on 16th January 2025.

- **Nirantar Fellowship Visit to Avehi**

Nirantar, a Delhi-based organization, runs the Jeevat Fellowship Program with the aim to strengthen the initiatives of young people engaged at the community level in the field of education for fostering feminist leadership.

As part of this initiative, Nirantar organized the fourth fellowship workshop in Mumbai from January 27 to 31, 2025. On January 29, 2025, a group of 15 fellows, visited the Avehi Abacus Project.

The objective of the visit was to gain a deeper understanding of Avehi's work and its approach to educational intervention. In particular, the visit focused on learning about the philosophy behind the **Sangati** program and how it successfully complements the school curriculum.

The fellows felt that; the visit to Avehi offered them a valuable opportunity to explore innovative methods in education and provided fresh direction and energy for their own work. Through various interactive activities, the fellows were also able to engage in aspects of critical pedagogy, enhancing both their understanding of linkage between society and education and how these could be brought into praxis. The visit offered Avehi a valuable opportunity to share the philosophy of the word and the insights gained over more than three decades with passionate grassroots educators, while also gaining fresh perspective through their reflections. It helped strengthen networks and opened possibilities for future collaboration in feminist and critical pedagogy.

Audited Accounts 2024-25

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M2B2rj7UBwHpKkyj0ecBKy0IQJUXsTso/view?usp=sharing>



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