



building skills for life

# PARTNER PERFORMANCE REPORT

March 2013 – May 2016



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# About Apni Shala: At a Glance

## HISTORY.

Apni Shala was founded in 2011 by Tata Institute of Social Sciences graduates Swetha Ranganathan, Anukriti Goyal, and Amrita Nair. Ranganathan, Goyal, and Nair realised that a sound education should ensure emotional and social development, and that children from low-income backgrounds may experience additional hardships that slow this development and contribute to high school-dropout rates among vulnerable populations. Recognising a need, the to-be founders came together to build a programme that would cater specifically to the socio-emotional needs of their target demographic. Apni Shala was officially registered in 2013.

## VISION.

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

## MISSION.

Apni Shala's mission is three-fold:

- To engage children in life skills education through fun and interactive school programmes that leverage the power of drama, games, film, and art.
- To develop a replicable model for implementation in government and affordable private schools.
- To share knowledge towards enabling independent implementation of life skills programmes in these schools.



## Facts & Figures

**TARGET GROUP:** children aged 10 – 14 in government schools and affordable private schools; teachers in similar institutions or in educational organisations / NGOs

**FOCUS AREA:** Life Skills

**LOCATION:** Mumbai area; **CONTACT ADDRESS:** TISS, Deonar, Mumbai

**NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES:** 1000

**NUMBER OF CENTRES:** Apni Shala works in 15 partner schools and centres

**NUMBER OF STAFF:** 40 teachers, 8 staff

## About Apni Shala: Programmes



The **Basic Life Skills Programme** operates directly in the environment that is the site of many of childhood's toughest challenges: the classroom. Against bullying, exclusion, etc., strong life skills like cooperation and self-confidence are among the best remedies. Weekly sessions in art, theatre, and games allow children to develop these life skills through creative play.

The **Service Learning Programme** engages children as active citizens via community service projects in their own communities. Each project is structured into three phases: first, children identify and probe an issue faced by their community. Second, they debate and analyse the topic further, with peers. Third, they design and test their solutions.

The **Apni Shala Hands-on Learning Programme** leverages the power of child-driven creation to maximise learning outcomes. Over three months, children imagine, plan, create, and complete a fun project, such as writing a comic-book-style collection of their own stories.

The **Kick Start Life Skills: Teacher Training Programme** trains teachers from partner NGOs and schools in the Apni Shala method of fun, immersive life skills education based on experiential and expressive learning.

Apni Shala operates its four core programmes within the classrooms and courses of NGO partners like Door Step School or Udaan India Foundation and schools like Sion Koliwada Municipal School and National Kannada High School in Wadala. Apni Shala also runs occasional workshops during school holidays.

# The Atma Partnership

## THE MODEL.

Apni Shala partnered with Atma as part of Atma's flagship programme, the Accelerator. The purpose of the programme is to support an organisation as it develops key systems and processes, attracts better funding and a strong talent pool, and reaches out to more beneficiaries. To this end, Atma dedicates 1200 hours to each partner annually and provides, in addition to staff support, an average of 3 volunteers per year. A Partnership Manager from the Atma Partnerships Team works closely with the leaders of the partner nonprofit or social enterprise to plan and oversee all partnership projects, act as a liaison between the partner and other Atma teams, and ensure a fruitful and inspiring relationship that is continually focused on helping the partner reach milestones of improved reach and quality.

Leading up to and in the first months of the partnership, an extensive strategic planning process helps the partner organisation to deeply reflect on its values and goals, and to clarify its programme design and the logical linkages between programme activities and intended impact. The results of this process are a stronger organisational identity and a robust framework for future work within the Accelerator and beyond.

## KEY FACTS.

**PARTNERSHIP DATES:** 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 – 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2016.

**APNI SHALA LEADERS INVOLVED IN ATMA PARTNERSHIP:** Swetha Ranganathan, Amrita Nair, and Anukriti Goyal.

**ATMA PARTNERSHIP MANAGERS:** Mary Ellen Matsui, Lisa Rodricks, and Elena D'Souza.

**NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS:** 15



# Areas of Focus and Projects Completed

During the partnership, Atma and Apni Shala completed more than **30 projects to strengthen four major organisational development areas** (Strategy, Human Resources, Programmes, and Monitoring & Evaluation). Support was also provided in Marketing, Finance, and Fundraising.

## STRATEGY.

Thanks to the seven projects completed in collaboration with Atma, Apni Shala's strategy greatly improved during the partnership. Swetha Raganathan recalls "The AIP [for 2014 – 2015] done with Lisa was an amazing exercise that was really useful and where we could get so much knowledge about how to do strategy planning." The SWOT was also helpful for identifying Apni Shala's strengths and weaknesses and when planning future funding needs.

### 7 PROJECTS COMPLETED:

- Strategic Planning
- Annual Implementation Plans
- SWOT Analysis
- Expansion Planning
- Partner Selection Process
- Vision & Mission
- Theory of Change

## HUMAN RESOURCES.

Important HR systems and process were put in place during the partnership. Swetha Raganathan highlights the importance of the divisions outline, which was very useful at a time when a very small team led the organisation. She also found the employee handbook very valuable as "it came at a point when it was really needed."

### 9 PROJECTS COMPLETED:

- Leaderships Role Divisions & Functions Outline
- Organisation Culture
- Organogram
- Job Descriptions
- Performance Appraisal (self-appraisal forms)
- Appointment Letters
- Induction and Orientation
- Employee Handbook
- Recruitment Process

# Areas of Focus and Projects Completed, con't.

## PROGRAMMES.

Eight projects were completed to support Apni Shala's programmes. Many tools were put in place to develop the volunteer programme. According to Swetha Raganathan, programme planning was particularly useful in identifying at an early stage the general approach the founders wanted to take with regards to their life skills programmes.

### 8 PROJECTS COMPLETED:

- Programme MOU
- Fee Structure
- School Assessment (NGO school tracking format, sessions record)
- Programme Planning
- LSE Operations Manual
- Volunteer Programme Operations Manual
- Volunteer Handbook
- Volunteer Programme Tools

## MONITORING & EVALUATION.

Together with Atma, Apni Shala put in place several M&E systems during the partnership. The data management systems provide a strong basis for data collection and will be easily modifiable in the future as changes in programmes occur. Overall, Swetha Raganathan highlights that "the logic models and indicator list were really helpful" to identify how to track the impact of Apni Shala.

### 6 PROJECTS COMPLETED:

- Logic Model
- Indicator List
- Data Management Systems for three programmes
- M&E Manual

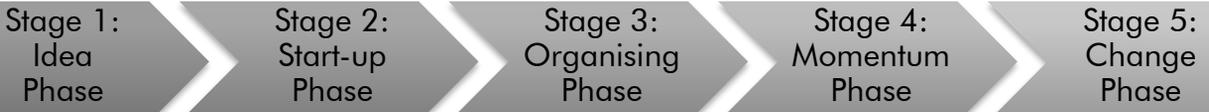
Atma also provided support in three additional areas:

- 1) Under **Fundraising**, Atma helped with proposal-writing and strengthened Apni Shala's overall communication with potential funders.
- 2) The work in **Finance** was reported as very impactful: budgets were put in place and Atma helped develop the founders' knowledge in the area.
- 3) Finally, Chirag Sutar (Atma Communications Manager) provided support with the **Marketing** strategy through brainstorming sessions and discussions.

# Growth: Life Stages Survey

## FRAMEWORK.

The Life Stages Survey defines the five broad stages through which a nonprofit organisation typically progresses.\* An organisation in the final stage will have achieved self-sufficiency and sustainability while continuing to evolve.



\*Adapted from: Judith Sharken Simon, *The 5 Stages of Nonprofit Organisations*, (Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 2001).

## METHODOLOGY.

The Survey comprises of a set of 15 questions assessing capacity in each of 10 *organisational development areas* (OD areas) which together cover all facets of a nonprofit's internal operations. The results are given as a score from 1 to 5 in each OD area. Atma administers this survey prior to beginning any partnership, and its results help determine the project areas that will be a focus during the partnership. End-line survey results offer a systematic way to measure progress in organisational competency and compare progress across different organisations.

## RESULTS.

Note that several OD areas were not covered in Atma's survey at the start of Apni Shala's partnership.

Organisational Development Area	Life Stages Scores 2013	Life Stages Scores 2016
Administration	1.5	4
Finance	2	4
Fundraising	NA	2
Governance	1	2
Human Resources	1.5	3
Leadership	2	3
Marketing	2	2
Monitoring & Evaluation	NA	4
Programmes & Services	2	4
Strategy	NA	2

# Growth: Quantitative Indicators

## Beneficiaries

2013 – 2014	379	
2014 – 2015	675	
2015 – 2016	1000	

## Budget (lakh INR)

2013 – 2014	12	₹ ₹ ₹
2014 – 2015	16	₹ ₹ ₹ ₹
2015 – 2016	21	₹ ₹ ₹ ₹ ₹

## Schools & Centres

2013 – 2014	6	
2014 – 2015	9	
2015 – 2016	15	

Over the course of the partnership, Apni Shala increased its beneficiary reach 2.6 times and is now operating in 2.5 times more schools / centres. Its budget was multiplied by 1.75 and 40 teachers and 8 staff members have joined the three founders.

## Growth: Partnership Testimonials

« Atma helped Apni Shala get organised. Although organisation was [one of our] strengths, thanks to Atma the process happened much faster than if we had been alone. »

« It was really great to be able to build systems at an early stage. »

« I always felt I had an advisor so I was more confident as a leader. Atma helped us make more confident steps when we were trying to achieve a goal. »

Swetha Raganathan,  
Apni Shala Co-founder



« It was wonderful working with such a passionate team which consistently placed the child and programme quality as the focal points of its work.

Apni Shala has overcome numerous challenges and has grown tremendously in such a short time. I wish them all the best as they enter into another exciting phase. »

Elena D'Souza,  
Senior Partnership Manager

## Next Steps

The co-founders Swetha Raganathan, Amrita Nair and Anukriti Goyal aim to continue raising awareness about the importance of life skills.

Their goal is to make Apni Shala the one-stop shop for life skills education across India.

In the coming years, Apni Shala plans to reach as many Mumbai schools as possible and hopefully expand outside the city!



# About Atma

Atma is an Accelerator for Education NGOs and Social Enterprises in Mumbai. We empower grassroots education NGOs to become bigger, better and stronger. Founded in 2007, Atma has worked with 35+ education NGOs and reached out to 60,000 + beneficiaries in Mumbai & Thane region.

## What sets us apart

We are a movement of thinkers and doers; entrepreneurial and change minded organizational consultants with a professional background in business or education.

We are passionate about transforming the Indian education landscape into a place where every child really learns. We do that by empowering grassroots educational initiatives to grow, amplify and multiply their impact. And gradually change the future of education and India.

We achieve these results by adopting a systematic management approach which leads NGOs to scale-up, expand their reach and dramatically increase student learning outcomes.



For more information, please visit [www.atma.org.in](http://www.atma.org.in)

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