



## Three Decades of Advancing Child Health at Shanti Ashram



Shanti Ashram

Gandhian center for development, learning and collaboration



ICPH  
INTERNATIONAL  
CENTER FOR CHILD  
AND PUBLIC HEALTH

30th year initiative of Shanti Ashram

For over 35 years, Shanti Ashram, an international Gandhian Institute for learning, development and collaboration, has

- served over **106** villages,
- cared for a cohort of children living with HIV (since 2000),
- immunized over **33,000** children,
- issued growth charts and verified birth certificates for over **38,000** children studying in government schools,
- screened adolescent girls for anemia,
- screened vulnerable women for non-communicable diseases,
- facilitated cataract prevention surgeries for elders and
- expanded sanitation coverage in over 500 families living in poverty



## Our journey thus far : A timeline of achievements

**1986** Shanti Ashram was founded inspired by the vision of Mahatma Gandhi

**1991** Bala Shanti Program (pre-school education interventions) launched for vulnerable children in rural villages of Tamil Nadu

**1991** Our founders Dr.M.Aram & Mrs.Minoti Aram contributed to the formulation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the UN

**1995** A holistic model of development including education, nutrition, health and peace education adopted as framework for all children's programmes at the Ashram

**1997** Referral services for primary & secondary care established between the service villages and partner health care institutions



## **Our journey thus far : A timeline of achievements**

- 2001** Community Health Programme established as a programme division in Shanti Ashram
- 2003** Outreach clinics for children inaugurated
- 2004** Asha Immunization programme initiated for vulnerable children
- 2006** Joint programme initiatives for HIV/AIDS established in partnership with UNICEF & Faith based organizations at the global & local levels
- 2008** Practicum's & Internships established for national & international students. First batch of HSPH students come to Shanti Ashram
- 2010** A pilot research study conducted with the Planning commission, Government of Tamil Nadu to inform policy and practice in making local Panchayats ( local governments) child-friendly
- 2012** Endowment for 'Public Health interventions for Children' & 'Care for the Elderly' (above 60 years) created
- 2013** Non-communicable Diseases screening for vulnerable women (30-60 years)

## **Our journey thus far : A timeline of achievements**

**2013** Ideation of a proposed health centre with Trustees of Shanti Ashram led by Mrs. Minoti Aram & Dr.M.Ramaswamy, pioneering paediatrician and Advisor on Child health interventions to Shanti Ashram

**2015** Initiation of research and conceptual work for a Centre, led by Dr.Kezevino Aram and Ms.Rajshree Panicker, Harvard School of Public Health & Johns Hopkins graduates specializing in Public Health with expertise in Child health & Health systems

**2016** Raising funds, building partnerships, deepening programme areas, initiating research and developing courses

**2017** **Inauguration of the 'International Centre for Child and Public Health' (ICPH) to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shanti Ashram**

**From 2017 to today, ICPH has served over 70,000 children.**

# Our Focus in Public Health

- **For children living in poverty:** Well child outreach clinics
- **For rural children:** Extended immunization
- **For vulnerable women and girls:** Non-communicable disease screening
- **For Adolescent girls:** Health Servicer Screening & Health Education
- **Vulnerable communities:** Sanitation and Hygiene
- **For at risk population:** Vaccination awareness and clinics



# AN OVERVIEW



The International Center for Child and Public Health (ICPH) and Shanti Ashram have taken active steps to **respond to, develop and implement comprehensive interventions** for vulnerable children and their families in the midst of the pandemic.

From April 2020, based on our ongoing work, a rapid participatory needs assessment and inputs from governmental agencies, we prioritized the wellbeing and development of people living in **extreme poverty, single mothers, elders, people living with HIV, vulnerable families in home quarantine and frontline workers** who provide last mile connectivity.

An innovative **hybrid model** was developed and implemented both on the field and online, and has reached over **35,000** vulnerable children and their families. This was accomplished with partners from **112 organisations** across **28 countries** in the government and the private sector that share Shanti Ashram's vision and focus.

# LIST OF INTERVENTIONS

1. Partnering with **Government Agencies** for public health initiatives, COVID-19 vaccination, food security both through the Public Distribution System as well as curated emergency nutritious food supplies.
2. **Community based mapping of vulnerable children** by the field staff and linkage to the Ashram's development interventions for health, nutrition and education.
3. Creating awareness and critical linkages between individual vulnerable families, **Medical Doctors & Public Health services** through the International Center for Child and Public Health (ICPH).
4. Creating awareness on **mental wellbeing** through the 'Child centered community outreach for social and mental wellbeing'.
5. Enabling **educational outreach** through the 9 Bala Shanti Kendras for children in the **early childhood** age group studying in primary school as well as for adolescents in high school.
6. Ensuring **nutritional security** for children and families through the Ashram's Food Bank.
7. **Learning Hub** sessions for high achievers from Government Schools.
8. **Direct cash transfers** to children living with HIV, children without living parents and mother headed families living in poverty.
9. Bridging the **digital divide** for vulnerable children via the digital platform @Shanti Ashram-ICPH.
10. Providing a **safe space** for children to meet and interact in the headquarters and the field sites of Shanti Ashram & ICPH.
11. Encouraging **child participation** including Online talent sharing by children and onsite workshops for children.
12. **Disseminating Government advisories** to vulnerable communities and stranded migrant families.
13. **Student Internships & Volunteering opportunities** for children and young people.
14. **'Art in your Life'**: creating art and organizing art appreciation sessions for children.
15. **Community cohesion** initiatives to advance peace, solidarity and cooperative action with children.
16. **Knowledge Sharing, Field Research** and shaping of **Public Opinion**.



# ONGOING PROJECTS



**Creating a Social Safety Net for Vulnerable Children**



**Holistic Care Initiative for Vulnerable Children in partnership with public health professionals and local rural women entrepreneurs**

# ONGOING PROJECTS



**Providing Holistic Care to Vulnerable Communities including COVID-19 Patients Under Home Quarantine During the 2<sup>nd</sup> spike of the COVID Pandemic in India**



**Ensuring Critical Services for Vulnerable Families in partnership with public health professionals and development practitioners**

# ONGOING PROJECTS



**Micronutrient supplementation for vulnerable children  
in the midst of school closure**

# ONGOING PROJECTS



**'Vaccines for All' initiative**

# ONGOING PROJECTS



## COVID-19 Research & Response Desk