



SANGATH 25TH YEAR SPECIAL REPORT



HEALING MINDS, INSPIRING LIVES

C E L E B R A T I N G

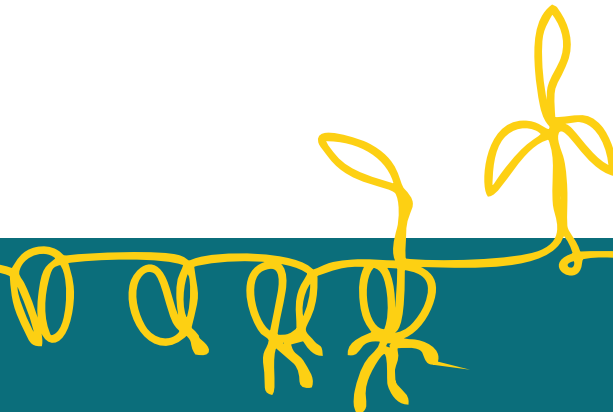
25
YEARS



I wanted to create an artwork that would visually represent community, growth, and the beauty of diversity. I had a vision for a tree to be central to this cover art, but did not know how to depict it. My early sketches had very few people being represented in the sketch, but as I drew the tree and the people around it, the idea of a community circle, creativity, growth, togetherness, and love, all came together!

I also wanted to communicate the context that Sangath works in, with its involvement in the wellbeing of various local communities across India. It was essential in that case to use bright warm colors — the colors that this country represents. Lastly, I felt that it was important to show people from various backgrounds, regardless of their caste, color, sexual orientation, religion, gender, or age.

-Ishita Mehra, Artist and Mental Health Advocate

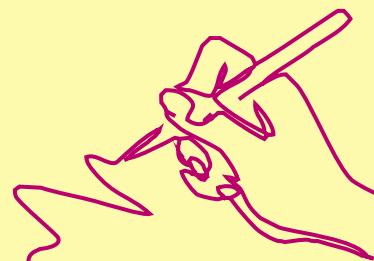


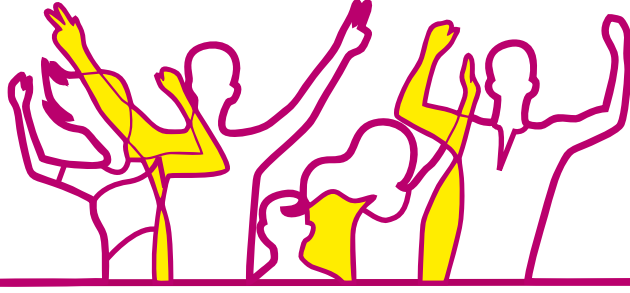
This report has been compiled, designed, and edited by Sweta Pal, Madhavi Roy and Urvita Bhatia with the support of Abhijit Nadkarni and Gauri Divan.

The cover art has been created by Ishita Mehra and the report design is by Sharmila Coutinho.

Sangath is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation committed to improving health for all. We are dedicated to promoting the good health — physical, psychological and social – of children, adolescents and families. You can find out more about our work and ways to get involved via our website www.sangath.in or email us on [contact us](#)

Stay updated with our work by following @SangathIndia on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).





Special thanks

Abhijeet Jambhale
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Tanvi Palekar

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Message from the Chairperson

A small group of professionals – a psychiatrist, a paediatrician, a speech therapist and a social worker – along with some well-wishers and supporters came together in 1996, to try and make a change. They shared a deep dissatisfaction with the mainstream worldview of mental health in the country.

They made a small start in India's smallest state, Goa. Nearly a quarter of a century later, Sangath's innovative psychosocial interventions delivered by community health workers and lay counsellors have found global recognition for changing the narrative on mental health care in poorly resourced countries. These innovations which are ready for implementation have been proven to be effective through world-class clinical trials.

Sangath now goes much beyond – we are crafting therapies for children with autism, and their parents. We have school-based interventions for adolescent health and much more. Sangath has pioneered community and primary care interventions for the most widespread mental illnesses – depression and psychoses. We are crafting new approaches to tackle harmful drinking and other addictions. We are developing interventions to improve coping mechanisms for the elderly, especially those with dementia.

Our team has also tried to adopt and harness the potential of technology in mental health care. We have developed digital platforms for training and quality assurance, apps to assess child development milestones, and even computer games that enable adolescents to improve their problem solving skills. Sangath has managed to influence decision-makers and our hope is that that together with governments and other institutions, the dream of our founders of transforming mindsets about mental health can be realised by introducing scientifically proven new ways new ways of conceptualising mental health care.

After 25 years, we can proudly say that Sangath has met many stated goals. We have a team of the best and brightest professionals, researchers, community health workers and counsellors. Sangath won the MacArthur Foundation's International Prize for Creative and Effective Institutions in 2008, which enabled us to acquire our present headquarters in Goa. We were conferred with the Blessed Mother Teresa award by the Department of Art & Culture, Government of Goa in 2011. Sangath was adjudged the 'Public Health Champion' for 2016 by the World Health Organisation. We have hubs operating in Bhopal and New Delhi, in addition to Goa. Our team provides technical support to organisations all over India as well as in other poorly-resourced countries.

This has been made possible thanks to generous donations from so many institutional and individual donors. All of this from our humble headquarters in Goa, one which we could only afford thanks to an international prize from the MacArthur Foundation and which, thanks to subsequent generous gifts from Charles Reynolds and Kaushik Patel, we will expand into a major new training campus, a centre for the elderly, and office space for our research staff.

Sangath's ability to innovate is its greatest asset. To take these innovations to the community so that they can contribute to the greater good, we are presently engaged in scaling them up. Sangath seeks partnerships with strong institutions that can implement these evidence-based interventions. and deliver its interventions. The dream of the founders – to reduce the worldwide burden of suffering from mental health problems – must move forward.

We look forward to so much more in the next 25 years.

Monica Bariya | Chairperson, Sangath

A moment for celebration and reflection



There is a growing recognition of mental health as a valued asset for all people and that there is enormous human suffering due to mental health problems which can be addressed through collective action by governments and civil society. Sangath can be proud that its pioneering and tireless efforts have played a part in making this happen. Indeed, when we began our journey a quarter century ago, mental health was typically equated with 'madness', shrouded with fear and shame, and associated with mental hospitals and sedative medication. Sangath has built its global reputation on designing innovative ways in which the many myths around mental health can be dispelled. Foremost amongst these was the notion that mental health care was a luxury for a country with such few mental health professionals. Through our singular innovation of carefully designing psychosocial interventions which can be delivered by community health workers and lay counsellors in diverse settings, and then evaluating these innovations in world-class clinical and public health trials, our contribution has been nothing short of changing the narrative on mental health care. Our interventions span the life course, from parenting for children with autism to school based interventions to promote adolescent health and community and primary care interventions for depression, drinking problems and psychoses. Today, this approach is being advocated in national and global policies and, incredibly, interventions designed by Sangath are now being tested and implemented globally, including in the wealthiest countries. In recent years, our innovative team has embraced the use of diverse technologies in our work, from digital platforms for training and quality assurance, to digital tools for assessment of child development and mental health and digital games for enabling adolescents learn skills to promote their mental health.

It is for these reasons that Sangath won the WHO Public Health Champion of India award in 2016 and we were ranked amongst India's leading public health research organizations. It is thanks to my work with Sangath that I have personally been awarded many honours, not least the prestigious John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Prize in 2019. Thanks to contributions from Charles Reynolds and Kaushik Patel, Sangath hopes to start the construction of a new building that will have a centre for senior citizens, a training centre, and office space for our research staff. Our footprint is much larger now, with major hubs operating in Bhopal and New Delhi, and site offices in Pune, Rewari, Kolhapur, Hyderabad and more.

As we celebrate this auspicious landmark on our journey, it is time to reflect on our next steps. It is clear that, while we must continue our path-breaking innovation development which is our greatest asset, we must also expand our attention to scaling up existing innovations. We seek to do this through robust partnerships with implementers who wish to deliver our interventions, building unique digital platforms for training front-line providers and building capacity across the health care and social welfare systems. As a co-founder of the Global Mental Health initiative at Harvard University, my personal endeavour will be to foster a strong, long-term partnership between these two institutions to reduce the burden of suffering due to mental health problems globally.

Prof. Vikram Patel | Co-founder, Sangath

Our areas of work

Sangath was established in 1996 as a child guidance clinic to serve families and young people in Goa. It was the vision of seven professionals, who realised the need to support families especially for those with developmental disabilities for whom there were no services in the state. It initially functioned as a traditional centre based facility serving a large number of families, however it became increasingly clear that there were a section of the community that visited a few times but were unable to engage with regular services. A realization dawned that this specialist-led, clinic-based approach, was modelled on services available in wealthy countries, but seemed a poor fit in the context of India with its massive scale of unmet needs, compounded by the scarcity and cost of specialists. Exploring families and stakeholder experiences allowed us to embark on Sangath's journey to design innovative solutions which was better adapted to our reality.

At the heart of Sangath's vision lies the 'treatment gap' for mental health problems in India, the very large gap between the number of people with a mental disorders or disabilities, and the actual number who receive the care that can greatly improve the quality of their lives. A major barrier to closing this treatment gap is the lack of

affordable and evidence based care in community settings that are accessible to individuals and their families within their own homes, schools or primary health care centres. Since our early days, Sangath has been developing ways of making quality mental healthcare accessible and affordable for the wider community. Our work always uses a participatory approach, with early consultations with user groups and their families, healthcare providers, and community members. Today, we are one of the leading public health not-for-profits in



India, with a strength of more than a hundred people, two centres in Goa, hub offices in Delhi and Bhopal, projects across India, collaborations with leading national and international institutions along with local and international recognition for our path-breaking research and intervention programs in the community.

Our pioneering strategy has been to use relatively low-cost available human resources, by empowering ordinary people and community health workers, to deliver mental healthcare with appropriate training and supervision from experts. This



innovation is called task-sharing and is now being recommended across many settings. This approach has been used in Sangath to design psychosocial interventions which serve a range of purposes. Some of these are promotive and support mental health and well-being, such as our work in early child development, on helping change school environments or supporting older adults with chronic diseases. Others help support the treatment of mental health problems, through teaching individuals skills to recover from depression and harmful drinking; helping parents change their interactions with their children with autism, which decreases the severity of autism; while other interventions promote inclusive education within schools. Besides designing or adapting interventions so they can be delivered by non-specialists, Sangath's core innovation has been to evaluate these complex interventions through rigorous scientific means. This allows these interventions to be respected for their evidence and makes them scalable across contexts. As a result of our success in designing and evaluating effective and low-cost models of care for people with mental health problems, Sangath has been able to contribute to improving the quality of mental health care, not just in Goa, but in other parts of the country, and globally.



Our areas of work can be summarised in the following groups that we work within, though we continue to conceptualise and build bridges across these.



Child Development Group:

Our early work with developmental disabilities has expanded to address the needs of all children who may need support to reach their true capabilities. This has been in the form of designing universal parenting interventions while also developing digital tools which can help us detect children who are faltering in their development and allowing for early interventions. Besides this, we work at designing and evaluating specific interventions for autism, cerebral palsy and learning difficulties.

Ageing and Chronic Disease:

We have developed counselling programmes to meet the mental health needs of the elderly and focus on integrating the care for mental health problems and chronic diseases into existing community-oriented services.

Adolescent Mental Health: We work with adolescents and their circle of influence — peers, teachers, parents and non-specialists to empower adolescents to care for their health. We are focused on increasing youth awareness about mental health, providing safe, accessible, evidence-based and quality services, enabling access to reliable resources for self-help and management and creating spaces for adolescents and youth to open up about their lived mental health experiences , reducing stigma.



Addictions Research Group: The Group include fostering a sustainable group, comprising of researchers, clinical experts, and community health workers to conduct high quality research in the field of addictions; building capacity of the next generation of addiction researchers and clinicians in both applied research, and in intervention development and evaluation; and translating our research outputs into real world impact by influencing public policy and practice in the areas of addictions and related fields.

Clinical Services: Through our clinical services, we provide support and care to people who experience mental health problems. Our experienced team of mental health professionals include psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and counsellors. Sangath's clinical services are strongly guided by principles of quality service, evidence-based care and supervised practice. In 2021, Sangath has expanded the reach of counselling services nationally via its toll-free mental health counselling helpline and the COVID-19 Wellbeing Center. Our child guidance clinic which began over ten years ago, continues to deliver services at our two centres in Porvorim (north Goa) and Raia (south Goa). The most common referrals are for behavioural problems in children and adolescents, and mood disorders in adults.



Adult Mental Health:

Sangath is dedicated to generating cost-effective, scalable psychosocial interventions, high quality scientific knowledge on adult mental health, and works extensively with communities and relevant stakeholders on reducing stigma around mental health, and to encourage people to seek mental health care.



-Contributors: Sweta Pal and Urvita Bhatia

Messages from our staff

Mithun Kumar

Intervention Counsellor, New Delhi

My work with young people and adolescents has shown me the importance of mental health in all our lives as well as the impact of poor mental health on youth. When a Std 9th grade student broke down while sharing his problems, I was able to help him through the training I have received in my work. I have been able to support many students to manage their mental health challenges and my work gives me immense satisfaction. I am also able to recognise signs of stress in myself and work on managing these. Working at Sangath keeps me motivated and dedicated towards improving the lives of those around me. Our commitment to excellence, easy to approach seniors, relaxed and positive atmosphere are some of the factors which make Sangath such a great place to work at. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to contribute to Sangath's work in the society and to work under the mentorship of Professor Vikram Patel.



Pushpa Barla

Housekeeping Staff, Goa

I feel extremely proud to see the progress we have achieved in the last 25 years. Sangath has been more than just a place of work for me, as I have been able to learn many new things here, such as how to carry myself in office, and how to interact effectively with different types of people.



Subhash Pednekar

Health Counsellor, Goa

Personally, I have learnt that problems in life can be managed, and we must talk to people and also reach out to them when they need us. While working in a community I faced many challenges. For instance, people don't acknowledge the role and need for counselling, largely because of stigma. I was able to work with my colleagues at Sangath to organise community awareness events to help spread knowledge of mental health and mental health problems.



Bindiya Chodankar

Field Co-ordinator, Goa

In Sangath, we try to move mountains of stigma and lack of awareness about mental health not only in individuals but the community as a whole. When I started working at Sangath, this was a big challenge, especially when we encouraged people to avail the mental health services provided by our team.

Seeing our clients feel better after continued counselling sessions makes me feel grateful not only for the opportunity to be able to deliver the treatment but also happiness that I am able to do what I love and enable someone to enjoy their life.



Vanessa Lopes

Special Educator, Goa

Sangath will always be, for me, a cornerstone in my career and will continue to develop the avenue in special education and be the voice for children in Goa.

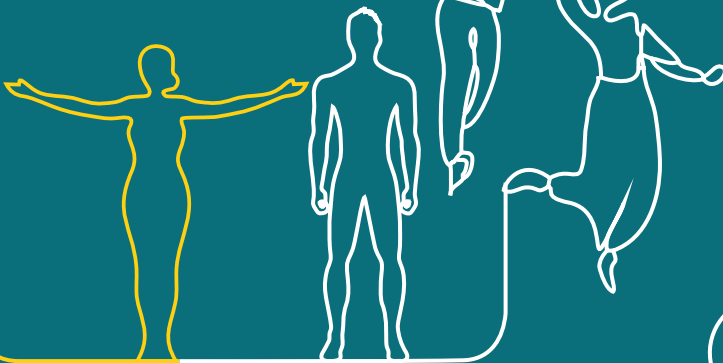


Sangath's DNA



Our Mission

Sangath promotes good health — physical, psychological and social across the life-span for children, adolescents and families. Our primary focus areas are child development, youth mental health, and adult mental health.



Our Vision

Sangath endeavors to innovate solutions to improve mental and physical health across the the life-span for children, adolescents and families.



Our Values

Empathy



Passion



Innovation



Performance



Teamwork



Excellence



Respect



Integrity



Messages from the team

Seema Sambari Health Counsellor, Goa

I faced many challenges in my journey at Sangath, primarily when listening to the vulnerabilities of elderly people. Understandably, I would get emotional when listening to the difficulties faced by the elderly beneficiaries and would have to hide my emotions when I visited their homes to deliver sessions. When I discussed this with my supervisor, they told us to acknowledge these feelings, and provided us with training on how to address such emotions, empower ourselves and emerge stronger. These challenges made me more independent as a person and also boosted my confidence.



ज्योति काउंसलर, नई दिल्ली

संगत की दी गई ट्रेनिंग ने काफी अहम् भूमिका निभाई। मैंने खुद के काम का विश्लेषण किया जिससे सुधार हो पाए और इसके साथ खुद के अंदर छिपी क्वालिटी/गुण को भी पहचाना। इन सब के अलावा सहयोगियों के सुझाव और उनके सहयोग से हर मुश्किल में मदद मिली। इस दौरान लर्निंग के साथ साथ फन भी रहा, जिसमें नई-नई एक्टिविटी की। नए नए टास्क में भागीदारी जिससे आत्मविश्वास बढ़ा।



अभिजा तेली, सयुक्ता केसरकर आनी लालन मडकईकर काउन्सिलरर्स, गोवा

12 वर्सा फाटल्या यादीचेर जर उजवाड घालीत जाल्यार आमकां याद जाता ती आमची संगतानची सुरवातीची वाटचाल, जी सुरु जाल्ली मंथन प्रॉजेक्टापासून. स्कुलानी काम सुरु केले तेन्ना भुरग्यानी आमकां खुप उमेदीन आपणायली. नवे विषय शिकपाक भुरगीं सदांच उत्सुक आसताली. 5 वी ते 6वेतली भुरगीं झिप्पीच्या इश्टांच्यो काणयो आयकुन उमेदी जाताली आनी तातुनसुन वेगवेगळ्यो कला शिकताली. ह्या भुरग्यावांगडा एक्टिविटीज करतना आमीय भुरगीं जाताली. तशींच 7 वी ते 12 वेची भुरगीं खुप प्रश्न घेवन आमचेकडे येताली.

स्कुलानी आमकां सदांच आधार दिलो, स्कुलाच्या प्रत्येक कार्यक्रमान आमकांय हक्कान भाग घेवपाक मेळटालो. हेखातीर आमकां तांच्यावांगडा काम करप खुप सोपे जाताले. आमच्यो कसल्योय अडचणी आसल्यार सुपरवायझरावांगडा उलयताली. सुपरवायझर्स आमकां सदांच सांबाळून घेताली. आमचो तणाव पयस करपाक आनी आमचे मानसिक आरोग्य बरे दवरपाक वेगवेगळ्यो एक्टिविटीज दवरताली.

ह्या प्रॉजेक्टान्सून खुप भुरग्यांच्या आयुष्यान बरे बदल घडले आनी हाची पोच पावती आमकां आजुन मेळटा. ही भुरगीं आमकां खंयूय मेळ्ळी जाल्यार मुजरत येवन हटकता.



Percy Cardozo
Project Lead, Beyond Boundaries, Goa

Since stepping into Sangath's offices the relationship between learning, developmental challenges, and emotional well-being of children and adolescents captivated me. The stimulating and encouraging working environment provided me with safe grounds to explore this relationship and design teacher training programs aimed at improving classroom practices.

A democratic work culture where people relate to each other on an equal footing is a quality that makes Sangath stand out in the crowd; every individual entering its space is respected, supported, and provided with opportunities to grow.



Pranjali Rodrigues
Finance Officer, Goa

Sangath's financial year is full of continuous audits: external audits, review by funders, internal audits, and statutory audits. I feel proud to say that funding agencies are pleased with our financial systems, as we have maintained transparent processes with well worded, descriptive set of guidelines. Sangath has received so many awards for its innovative and path-breaking research in the field of mental health. My experience in Sangath has also made me quite mature in planning, monitoring, vision, understanding of the subject matter, knowledge of laws, and funder's norms. It's a big milestone that we have achieved all these accolades well before Sangath's 25th Anniversary.



Innovations over the last 25 years

What defines us

CORE PRINCIPLES



Sangath believes that there is no health without mental health.

We champion the application of **task-sharing** to **overcome barriers to accessing mental health services** by creating **innovative solutions**.

OUR SOLUTIONS

- increase awareness, reduce stigma and strengthen existing health systems to improve mental health outcomes,



- are **feasible for use in low resource settings** by virtue of being designed to be **scalable and sustainable**.

- are evidence-based and evaluated through **rigorous research**,



- are developed through **community-based participatory research**, are **culturally-appropriate** and acceptable to service users.

We also endeavor to **build capacity** by training a cadre of **next-generation global mental health leaders**.



RETHINKING PLATFORMS OF CARE

Sangath has reimagined the platforms where mental health services can be provided to make sure that they can reach the maximum number of people.



1. Primary Health centers



2. Workplaces



3. Community



4. Educational Institutions



5. Digital and social media



LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND

Sangath believes that mental health and well-being is essential for all members of society. Our work is **inclusive and reaches out to all sections of society**.



1. Service users



2. Caregivers



3. Communities



4. Vulnerable groups



5. Across the lifespan

HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF m-HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

1. Interventions (self-help and assessment apps, tele-psychiatry, text-message based)



3. Capacity building (learning platforms, peer support)



2. Public engagements (using social media and arts)



4. Surveys (electronic data collection and real-time dissemination)



-Inputs from Supriya Bhavnani and Anant Bhan

Messages from our supporters and partners

Nayreen Daruwalla
Director, Prevention of Violence against Women and Children, SNEHA, India

I would like to congratulate each and every member of Sangath for the 25 years of undeterred contribution to the field of mental health. Your vision is truly inspiring and has helped in demystifying mental health interventions, for both urban and rural communities in India.



Neerja Chowdhary
Technical Officer, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use, World Health Organization, Switzerland

Apart from the wealth of experience in public mental health, what I gained in terms of my relationship with the Sangath Family is immeasurable. Sangath also gave me the room to grow and forge my own path — what more can we ask for, from our family? Happy anniversary! May this journey of success continue in the coming years.



Tara Bedi
Public Policy and Community Outreach, Instagram, India

Sangath's [It's Ok To Talk](#) initiative is one of Instagram's first mental health partners in India, and instrumental in bringing Instagram into key conversations around youth and well-being. They lend an informed and inclusive perspective in the development of our products, policies and consumer facing resources that address well-being. Their interventions destigmatize discussions around mental health, enabling a safe space for expression on our platform.



Dr. Tara Thiagarajan
Chief Scientist, Sapien Labs, USA

Sangath's work brings the cutting edge of technology and a cross disciplinary perspective to a low income demographic where the impact can be greatest.



Messages from our supporters and partners



Mary De Silva
Head of Population Health, Wellcome Trust, UK



Your success is reflected in many justly awarded accolades, but the real measure of your success is the acceptance that lay-delivered mental health interventions are effective and sustainable, and provide a much needed way forward to tackling one of the greatest crises of our times. I know that Sangath will continue to flourish and Wellcome looks forward to working more closely with you as we focus our own attention more closely on mental health research in the coming years.

Atif Rahman
Professor of Child Psychiatry & Global Mental Health, University of Liverpool, UK



The organisation is an asset not just for India but for the world. The high-quality research and innovative service-delivery models that have emerged from Sangath have been trailblazers for global mental health.



Medical Research Council, UK

In several of its MRC investments, Sangath notably leads the way in embracing innovative technology to address the treatment gap for mental health problems in India and bring mental health interventions and support to low resource, and sometimes inaccessible, settings.



Ernest Hunter
Professor (Retd.), James Cook University, Australia



The Leadership in Mental Health Course through Sangath has shifted my thinking and priorities; I believe that it has also now done the same for those across the Island Nations of the Pacific with whom we have been working. I can only express my gratitude for what Sangath provided to me personally, but I think I can speak for all of my colleagues across these distant Island Nations in saying that Sangath has not only pointed the way but been there to make it happen.

Generating evidence, influencing change: a 25 year journey

Abhijit Nadkarni,
Co-Director, Addictions Research Group

One of Sangath's key values is innovation. We learn the new, unlearn the outdated, and share knowledge to resolve social and systemic challenges. This drives our vision to innovate solutions for improving mental and physical health across the life course. We are aware that it is beyond our ability to achieve it all by ourselves, so in partnership with stakeholders across the world, we try to do it 'one brick at a time'. Over the years, Sangath's work has influenced change in a variety of domains, and through various ways locally, nationally and globally. I attempt to consolidate some of that as a snapshot of our 25-year journey.

Goa is the state where it all started for Sangath. Our work in the [education](#) sector has taken Goa closer to achieving a crucial Sustainable Development Goal which assures access to equitable quality education for all children in an inclusive setting. This has been done through the initiation of an

awareness campaign about inclusive education at the state level; special educators being organised into a formal group for the first time; and a school counselling programme modelled on Sangath's work scaled-up across the state by the Government of Goa.

The work continues in our hubs; in 2015, the Government of Madhya Pradesh allocated a budget of INR 43.5 million to scale up Sangath's PRIME model, called SOHAM ([Scaling up Opportunities for Healthy and Active Minds](#)), across the State in 51 district hospitals covering a population of 75 million. Besides influencing policy at the local level, our work has also informed key developments in the mental health space at the national level. The National Mental Health Policy of India (2014) identified several areas for action, three key and inter-related ones being universal access to mental healthcare, community participation, and availability of



The foundation of these guidelines is the delivery of low intensity psycho-social interventions by frontline non-specialist health workers, both the content and processes of which have been informed by evidence generated at Sangath.



human resources for delivery of mental healthcare; all of which have been influenced by Sangath's research on task-sharing interventions over the years. Some of these will now be implemented in Health and Wellness Centres across India through the Ayushman Bharat Operational Guidelines for Mental, Neurological and Substance Use (MNS) Disorders Care. The foundation of these guidelines is the delivery of low intensity psycho-social interventions by frontline non-specialist health workers, both the content and processes of which have been informed by evidence generated at Sangath.



A lay health counsellor conducting community survey.



Sangath's lay counsellors working on community and conducting a health research survey.

Sangath's work has informed research and implementation programmes both locally and internationally. In the United Kingdom, we have inspired the use of teaching aids in schools as a part of the PACT- G trial and in Nepal, Uganda and Kenya, where our interventions for depression and alcohol use disorders have been implemented. Lessons learnt from our [Healthy Activity Programmes](#) have influenced a large-scale trial on scaling up Maternal Mental healthcare by Increasing access to Treatment (SUMMIT) in Toronto, Chicago and North Carolina. Finally, some of Sangath's major achievements in the space of developmental disorders globally, has been to nudge 'Autism Speaks' and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to include all disabilities in their work on early interventions for developmental disorders; such as in the WHO Caregiver Skills Training programme.

Sustainable change requires investment in the future; not just in infrastructure but also in people. Sangath is strongly committed to developing leadership potential to further the agenda of the global mental health movement. Since 2008, our annual ['Leadership in Mental Health'](#) course has been supporting the next generation of global mental health leaders to effect change in their countries. It has also influenced similar leadership

programs in the Eastern Mediterranean region and Pacific Island Nations, and the MSc in Global Mental Health run jointly by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and King's College London.

All of this impact has been achieved step by step over a period of 25 years as we march towards our goal of increasing optimal access to evidence based mental healthcare. The day this is achieved, we will sit back and rest, as we will consider our work done! Until then, our work continues with the same zeal as it had started with 25 years ago.



Our annual 'Leadership in Mental Health' course has been supporting the next generation of global mental health leaders to effect change in their countries.



Messages from our supporters and partners

Sian Arulanantham
Head of Programmes and Policy,
The Leprosy Mission England &
Wales, UK

Sangath's two-week training on Leadership in Mental Health in Goa was a turning point in our understanding of how best to integrate support for mental health across The Leprosy Mission's programmes.



Poonam Natarajan
Former Chairperson National
Trust, Government of India

Training people in the community as health counsellors, school counsellors and community mental health workers in a participatory way, leads to empowerment, allows communities to organize themselves and find their own solutions, which is of course, the most sustainable.



Annuradha Joshi
Former State Disability
Commissioner, Goa, India

I joined a course on counselling for a month conducted by Sangath. This needs a mention here, as when I was nominated in 2015, as a State Disability Commissioner, the course helped me to get better insights on mental issues faced by people with disabilities.



Pallab Maulik
Deputy Director and Director of Research,
George Institute, India

Sangath has done excellent work in the area of mental health over the past 25 years! The quality of the research has been of the highest standards and has contributed immensely to the field of global mental health.



Monica Juneja
Director, Professor (Pediatrics), Head Child
Development Centre, Maulana Azad Medical College, India

Sangath totally changed my idea of non-governmental organisations from those which were working to fill the service delivery gaps, to a novel one which was also participating in and spearheading path breaking research in collaboration with nationally and internationally acclaimed organisations and academic institutions.



Our footprint



INDIA

Messages from our supporters and partners



Emily Maguire
Senior Program Coordinator,
Harvard University, USA

Christy Colburn
Associate Director,
Harvard University, USA

In the words of one intern about her experience working with Sangath, "This ended up being probably the most impactful academic experience I've ever had... I think it's safe to say that this summer experience has changed my life."



Ngawang
Public Health Division,
The Tibetan Government in Exile

In the few years that we got to know and work with Sangath and its staff, they never failed to amaze us with the wonderful initiatives and contributions towards mental health and wellness. We feel privileged to be associated with Sangath and look forward to growing and learning along the journey.

Jaclyn Schess
Founder, Generation Mental Health, USA

I am forever thankful to Sangath for the opportunity it has given me to grow as a researcher and a person. I hope that Sangath continues to recognize the power it has to empower young people to enter the global mental health field and continue to help this field grow.



Melissa Gladstone
Professor in Neurodevelopmental Paediatrics
and International Child Health,
University of Liverpool, UK

The team at Sangath have been instrumental in supporting work that will soon occur in Malawi where we will be using innovative tools created by the organisation to measure neurodevelopment and cognition in children in a simple user-friendly way.

Milestones

1996-2000



Sangath founded in Goa, starts providing services for children with developmental disabilities; working on depression in adults, alcoholism in adult males, school going adolescents' health needs, dementia and depression.



An art-therapy workshop organized in Goa for children with developmental disabilities.

2001-2005

Work started on early intervention, domestic violence, patterns of drinking in men.

Sangath started a resource centre on adolescent and child health; started working with school children with learning difficulties, and launched Zippy's Friend-an emotional wellbeing programme for preschoolers in English and Konkani; developed interventions and



Sangath launched Zippy's Friend—an emotional wellbeing programme for pre-schoolers in English and Konkani.

conducted research into postnatal depression, and the link between gynaecological and mental health problems.



An outdoor activity to highlight the importance of relationships in Goa.

Sangath extended its reach to Chennai where it developed a community response program for bereavement due to the tsunami; worked on the mental health needs of women and child victims of human rights violations; and launched intervention programs for youth wellbeing, and the detection-and-treatment of common mental disorders in adults.

2006-2010

Sangath worked with *anganwadis* to improve child developmental outcomes; worked with people living with HIV, and was awarded the MacArthur Foundation's International Prize for Creative and Effective Institutions.

Sangath developed training manuals for different stakeholders such as teachers and caregivers of children with special needs; continued work on school based multi-component interventions; expanded work into working with people with schizophrenia; adapted a gold standard diagnostic tool for autism; worked on building resilience in girls; expanded to Chandigarh, Pune, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odhisha, Bihar and Maharashtra through the project Prayatana I and II that provided youth friendly counsellor services.

Sangath was awarded for its outstanding contributions to the success of *Badhte Kadam*- A National Trust Awareness competition for disabilities.



A Leadership in Mental Health course session in progress.

We expanded work into dementia, explored how non-specialist health workers could provide mental health care, and continued work on evaluating psychosocial interventions for depression and harmful drinking. The 1st Leadership in Mental Health Course was launched.



Work expanded into chronic disease risk factors and severe mental disorders. Sangath collaborated with Ethiopia, South Africa, Uganda and Nepal through PRIME which aimed at improving access to care for priority mental disorders, as well as with Pakistan through the PASS project which is an evidence based social communication intervention for young children with Autism. Sangath was awarded the Blessed Mother Teresa award from the Department of Art & Culture, Government of Goa, 2011.



Sangath was invited as a member of the Expert Group, Government of India to develop operational guidelines on 'Developmental Screening and Early Intervention for Children with Disability and Developmental Disorders', 2012.

Gauri Divan, Director of Sangath's Child Development Group, was selected as a member of the Technical Resource Group on Developmental Disabilities, Ministry of Health, 2013; member of the Expert Group on Autism Spectrum Disorders, National Trust, Government of India; member of the Consultative Group World Health Organisation (WHO) on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities; member of the Technical Working Group Meeting on Caregiver Skills Training for Developmental Disorders, WHO, 2014.



Sangath at Rewari, Haryana with SPRING, a project with kilhari workers that used home based interventions to support early child nutrition and play.

Sangath reached Rewari, Haryana with SPRING, a project with kilhari workers that used home based interventions to support early child nutrition and play, and expanded work into late life depression prevention and healthy ageing.

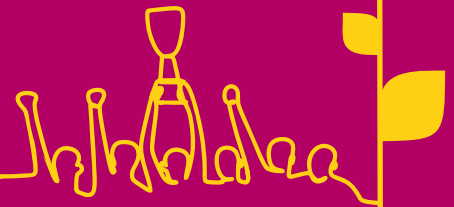
Sangath started its shift into digital-and-home based interventions for children with special needs.

Vikram Patel was listed in the *TIME* magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2015.

Sangath is listed as one of the top five public health research institutions in India (2015) as per the 'Public Health and Well Being' report of the Research Councils UK, India, and the UK Science and Innovation Network.

The Addictions Research Group came into existence.





Amit Dias receiving the honour of Public Health Champion of India by WHO, on behalf of Sangath

WHO adjudged Sangath as the Public Health Champion of India.

Vikram Patel conferred with the prestigious Order of the British Empire award by the UK government in 2016.

Sangath opened a major site office in New Delhi as part of the PRIDE project, which targeted common mental disorders in school-going adolescents.

It's Ok To Talk launched-India's first youth focused mental health campaign to increase awareness about mental health and reduce stigma, so that young people are able to engage in a dialogue on mental health, and seek and get help. It's Ok To Talk was recognised as one of the 10 most prominent international mental health campaigns by Facebook in 2019.



A scene from a puppet show on body positivity at the launch of It's Ok To Talk on World Health Day, 2017.



A non-specialist worker recording EEG while a preschooler plays DEEP, a cognitive assessment game, in Rewari.

Sangath evaluated a novel method of using a portable computer tablet to detect autism using interactive tasks and eye-tracking with the START project; and used portable electroencephalography & tablet-based games to measure cognitive development in preschool children with the REACH project.

Sangath continued work on mobile text messaging interventions for hazardous drinkers in Goa, and examined the feasibility and acceptability of the integration of tele-psychiatry into primary care services in Goa.

Sangath commenced a project on self-harm in young people with the 'Young Lives Matter' project, and evaluated the feasibility of frontline health system workers delivering a home based intervention for young children with autism.

Face-to-face training with Sehore government officials as part of the ESSENCE project in Madhya Pradesh.



2019



Developing a prevention intervention for gender-based violence against women in rural Rajasthan.

The STREAM project started its work on developing scalable tools to assess the development of preschool children.

Mann Mela—a web-based museum of mental health experiences of young people in India was launched.

Sangath was invited to be a member of the *Lancet Commission on Autism*.

Participants at a multi-stakeholder consultation organised to strategise the development of Mann Mela, a mental health museum.



In 2019, Vikram Patel received the John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award, and Sangath reached Rajasthan through 'Men Against Violence'-an programme to prevent gender-based violence.

Sangath continued its work on digital health interventions on tobacco cessation, developing video based curriculums for *anganwadi* teachers in Hyderabad.

Sangath formalized its Child Development Group and continued its work with children and adolescents, and studying illicit drug use amongst adolescents.

2020

In 2020, EMPOWER started and aimed to expand India's mental health workforce by working with frontline workers via digital platforms.

Gauri Divan was invited as a member of the International Society for Autism Research, Global Senior Leaders Group.



The EMPOWER Project aims to expand India's mental health workforce by working with frontline workers via digital platforms.

COINCIDE works on the effect of risk factors on neurodevelopment and mental health across the 0-9 years lifecourse.

SHARP started to develop a smartphone application that will help to predict and prevent relapse among individuals diagnosed with Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders.

-Contributors: Rhea Sharma and Madhavi Roy

Messages from our supporters and partners



Helen Weiss
Professor of Epidemiology,
London School of Hygiene &
Tropical Medicine, UK

With each study, I have been so impressed with the energy, intellectual insight, and passion of the Sangath team. As a statistician, it has been a special pleasure to work with the excellent data management team, and I would like to thank Bhargav Bhat and his team for their outstanding work which makes life as a trial statistician very straightforward! And as a woman, I am always thrilled to be part of investigator meetings with so many female scientists.



Pratima Murthy
Director, NIMHANS, India

People make organisations and organisations make people. I am really pleased to congratulate each and every person involved in the genesis of Sangath and in helping Sangath to grow through adolescence into young adulthood.



Pim Cuijpers
Professor of Clinical Psychology,
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands

I visited Sangath a couple of years ago for the preparations of the DIL project, which was led by Chip Reynolds and Vikram Patel. I was highly impressed by the quality of the work that is done at Sangath, the dedicated attitude of the people working there, the innovative force of the projects that were being run, and the friendly and supportive atmosphere.

I understand that the theme of Sangath's 25th Anniversary is "Innovating Solutions to Improve Mental and Physical Health". I think that theme very well characterises Sangath's dedicated and determined journey towards improving mental and physical health.



Ryan McBain
Health Economist,
Partners In Health, USA

I have observed the thoughtful listening and responsiveness of those in the Sangath community, and I have appreciated its emphasis on disseminating results to promote the scale up.

Genesis D'Silva
Manager, Adarsh High School, India

We would like to thank Sangath for including us on this journey and remind them that we are willing and able to be part of such ventures.





Elizabeth Neuville
Executive Director,
Keystone Institute USA

Congratulations to the Sangath team on 25 years of service, leadership, and change work. The past has set the foundation; the future awaits us all to shape it. It has been a privilege to walk alongside Sangath in the important work they do towards better lives and better communities.



Mallika Taneja
Theatre artist, India

I have worked with It's Ok To Talk over many years and have always found it to be an extremely open and accommodating space, one that trusts the people it works with. The Mann Mela artist residency in January 2020 was also an incredibly open space, a playground for young minds to come together and collaborate on issues of Mental health. A crucial space to create in these times.

Roxana Dalal Singh
Associate Professor,
Carmel College for Women, India

Students of Carmel College who have interned, volunteered or worked with Sangath have learnt valuable practical lessons, honed listening and observation skills, watched and imbibed team spirit and zeal from your teams, returning to class with renewed realization of the world outside the security of their homes and college and we have found them just a tad more mature and serious about their education, careers and choices.



Tulshidas P. Dessai
Headmaster, Murgaoon High School, India

Sangath instilled confidence, team spirit and way of working together not only in the slow learners but also among our teachers and hence were successful in changing the mindset.





Adapting to the new normal

Beginning in March, 2020, we (along with the rest of the world) adapted our offices, workforce and programmes as per COVID-19 safety norms. Beyond safety measures, Sangath has continued to contribute to the wellbeing and mental health needs of the communities we work with by raising awareness, generating evidence and providing mental health support to those who need it.



Generating evidence on COVID-19 and mental health

We organised and participated in over **40** virtual lectures, webinars and discussions on managing and taking care of our mental health during the first and second waves of the pandemic.



Accessible and reliable resources

We created and disseminated **12** resources as handouts, videos, TV and radio advertisements, street plays to share information about managing mental health challenges during the first wave of pandemic.



Expert views and recommendations

Experts from Sangath contributed to **19** news articles, TV news panels, and opinion pieces on emerging public health and safety concerns.



Generating evidence

We launched the longitudinal pan-India My Wellness & COVID-19 Survey in June, 2020, to assess the psychosocial impact of the pandemic on the mental health & social wellbeing of adult Indians. Till October, 2021, 608 respondents have completed the baseline survey.



Calling on world leaders

We joined [Speak Your Mind](#) and mental health campaigners and organisations across the world to call on world leaders and policymakers to ensure mental health is included within COVID-19 response plans.



Understanding the impact of the pandemic

As per the results of the My Wellness & COVID-19 Survey, a major source of worry for survey respondents was the fear of a family member getting COVID-19, which was at least 3 times more than respondents worrying about getting COVID-19 themselves. Overall, 16% of respondents felt that they did not have any control over their mental health, and 17% felt they did not have control over their future plans since the pandemic began. 1 in 4 respondents indicated having thoughts of suicide and self-harm.









Mental health services

We launched www.covidav.com with the Directorate of Health Services – Goa, Psychiatric Society of Goa, Antarman, COOJ and Goan entrepreneur Nishadh Amonkar on April 7, 2020 (World Health Day) to provide free Mental Health services for anyone facing distress during the pandemic.

In June, 2021, Sangath launched the COVID-19 [Wellbeing Center](#) which provides free mental health counselling and support via a toll-free national helpline and group listening Circles.



Publications by Sangath on the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

1.  COVID-19 and forced alcohol abstinence in India: The dilemmas around ethics and rights. International Journal of Law and Psychiatry. Abhijit Nadkarni, Arjun Kapoor and Soumitra Pathare.
2.  COVID-19 Global & National Response: Lessons for the Future. Voluntary Health Association of India. Madhumita Balaji and Vikram Patel.
3.  COVID-19 mental health impact and responses in low-income and middle-income countries: reimagining global mental health. The Lancet Psychiatry. Kola et al (Madhumita Balaji, Pattie Gonsalves and Vikram Patel).
4.  Hunger, fear and isolation: An analysis of media reports of COVID-19 related suicides in India. Preprint. Madhumita Balaji and Vikram Patel.
5.  Mental health and COVID-19 in India. India Development Review. Madhumita Balaji and Vikram Patel.
6.  Early warning signs of a mental health tsunami: A coordinated response to gather initial data insights from multiple digital services providers. Frontiers in Digital Health. Inkster et al (Pattie Gonsalves and Sweta Pal).



Messages from our supporters and partners

Ashish Srivastava
Hon. President, Psychiatric Society
of Goa, India



It takes all hands that are available to ensure the good mental health in a community. It is in this context that Psychiatric Society of Goa and Sangath have successfully partnered in several initiatives over recent years. Mindscope, an annual mental health film festival that showcases curated films focusing on various aspects of mental health is one such event organized by Sangath, supported by us. Our recent joint endeavour to provide pro bono mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic through an online platform, COVIDAV, has been widely recognised.

Kavita Anand
Founder Director, Adhyayan Quality
Education Foundation, India



Sangath is an organization with a heart that reminds us that the first question to ask educators is about how they are dealing with their emotions, before asking how they can help anyone else.

Nishadh Raj Amonkar
Co-Founder, COVIDAV and Octo, India

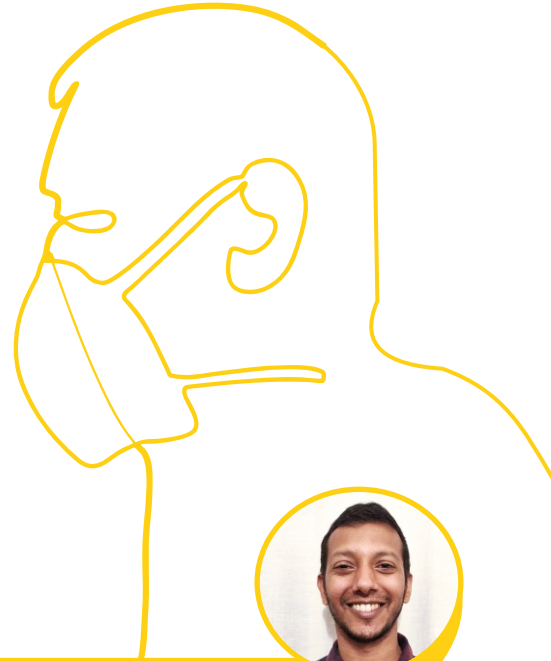


Our partnership with Sangath allowed us access to more than 20 counsellors and therapists who volunteered and delivered free online mental health therapies to the users of COVIDAV.

Vrinda Borker
Principal, Dhempe College of Arts and
Science, India



Mahatma Gandhi once said that 'the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others'. With its unwavering commitment to social work, Sangath has indeed exemplified this fine statement.



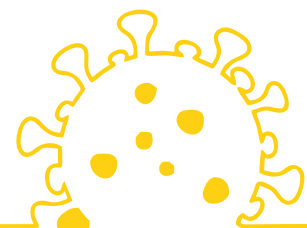
Avinash Kumar
Founder, Quicksand Design Studio, India

Our partnership revolves around bringing best practices from human centred design into mental health research and interventions; a unique intersection that we hope will create innovations that might be an inspiration for others.



Nathaniel Da Costa
Senior Manager, Grassroots Football, Forca Goa Foundation, India

Sangath's experience, knowledge and most importantly, passion towards driving conversations around mental health is what makes our collaboration and work together impactful.



Sangath's journey in working with children

Gauri Divan,
Director, Child Development Group



An ASHA worker teaching new mothers about development milestones in Rewari, Haryana.

Sangath started in 1996 as Goa's first child development centre for families of children with developmental disorders, disabilities and behavioural problems. This was an innovative comprehensive service not only for Goa, but unique for India, which had very few developmental services in those years. Over the early years, a few realisations emerged. Firstly, families of children with disabilities found the repeated attendance for therapies difficult to sustain; that it was not enough to treat just the younger

children since children grew into adolescents; and finally that children were not islands but lived within the context of families; families which are unique in their structure, their internal relationships and their resilience to manage challenges.

As a response, Sangath began to expand its services to support

adolescents and adults, but also decided to explore the experiences of families of children with disabilities by conducting research to identify the roadblocks to children getting the treatments they deserved. Our early findings in research made us realise that families of children with intellectual disability and autism struggled to get a diagnosis and found it difficult to get treatments which were supported by evidence. Simultaneously we realised that children were confronted with various obstacles to their development; which included poor nutrition, difficulties in learning and difficult childhood experiences.

Our research work with young children has expanded to include work in communities, in schools and in clinical settings, and was formalized in 2019 as the [Child Development Group](#). Our aim is to coordinate our work in addressing these varied challenges through wide-ranging innovations. Our current work includes the evaluation of a holistic autism intervention delivered by frontline



health workers in New Delhi [[COMPASS](#)], the designing of smart games that young children can play on a digital screen allowing us to assess their level of development; and flagging up those children who may need more support [[REACH](#), [STREAM](#)] in Haryana and New Delhi; a universal intervention to support early learning through play designed for delivery by government pre-school teachers [[ASPIRE](#)] in Telangana; supporting the building of emotional resilience of young children [Zippy's Friends] and working with schools in Goa to support teachers to adopt universal teaching approaches that can allow all children to learn [[Beyond Boundaries](#)].

The Child Development Group comprises innovators who are pushing the boundaries of what we can do to support the large numbers of vulnerable and disadvantaged children in reaching their true potential. The famous Greek dramatist Aeschylus said many centuries ago, "From a small seed a mighty trunk may grow". At Sangath we know that this seed needs to be nurtured in an environment that respects every child, and this requires us to empower families and caregivers with the knowledge and skills to support their children to develop into the best person they can be.



The Sangath Child Development Team ready to embark on a new collaboration with the Goa Medical College, India.

Message from a parent-advocate

My experience with the PASS Plus intervention has been excellent. The thing I really enjoyed was that the team became part of the family, and my son Vaibhav also began to look forward to your visits. What I found interesting was that the things I learnt with you were not unique, other doctors had also suggested some of these strategies, but it was the way that you shared this information that allowed me to understand why and how I could use them. The video feedback was very useful for me to see my behaviours, and their effect on Vaibhav, and allowed me to change my interactions with him, so that he was encouraged to communicate to the best of his abilities.

The biggest regret I have is that I wish I had received this intervention when Vaibhav had been younger, so it would have been a truly early intervention, I think he would have made tremendous progress.

Neetu Singh
Vaibhav's mother,
New Delhi



Messages from our community workers

कामा जयंत
कम्पास काउंसलर, नई दिल्ली



जिन लोगों को आउटिज्म होता है उनसे जुड़ी मेरी सोच में बहुत बड़ा बदलाव आया है। पहले मैं सोचती थी कि वह चीजों को समझ नहीं सकते हैं, लेकिन अब मुझे पता है कि वह सब कुछ समझते हैं, फर्क सिर्फ इतना है कि उनका तरीका थोड़ा अलग है।

मैंने एक काउन्सलर के तौर पर जो क्षमताएँ सीखी हैं उनका इस्तेमाल करती हूँ, जब भी मैं अपनी बेटी से बात करती हूँ और वह कुछ नहीं समझ पाती तो मैं उसको चिंतनशील तरीके से समझाने की कोशिश करती हूँ। मैं दूसरे व्यक्ति की भावनाओं को समझने भी लगी हूँ और उनका सम्मान भी करने लगी हूँ, यह पहले भी करती थी पर इतना नहीं, अब कई ज़्यादा करती हूँ।

सावित्री
कम्पास काउंसलर, नई दिल्ली

एक NGO के साथ काम करने का यह मेरा पहला अनुभव है और इससे मुझे कई तरह से मदद मिली है।

मैंने ट्रेनिंग्स के माध्यम से कई चीजें सीखी हैं, पहले मुझे अपने बच्चों को समझने में कठिनाई होती थी कि वह क्या कहना चाहते हैं लेकिन अब मैं उन्हें ध्यान से देखती हूँ और मेरे बेहतर ध्यान देने की वजह से मेरे आसपास के लोगों के साथ बेहतर संबंध बनाने में मदद मिली है।



प्रोमिला
रीच असेसर, नई दिल्ली

सबसे पहले मैंने संगत संस्था के किलकारी परियोजना में यहाँ पर काम किया था जहाँ मैंने जूनियर असेसर के पद पर काम किया। अब मैं संगत संस्था के रीच परियोजना में काम कर रही हूँ। यहाँ पर काम करते हुए मैंने बहुत कुछ सीखा है। अब मैं अपने बच्चों को भी अच्छी शिक्षा दे पा रही हूँ उसका पूरा खर्चा मैं खुद से उठा पा रही हूँ और घर की जरूरतों को भी पूरा कर पा रही हूँ। ये देख कर मेरे घरवाले बहुत खुश हैं और अब वो हर काम मुझसे पूछ कर करते हैं।

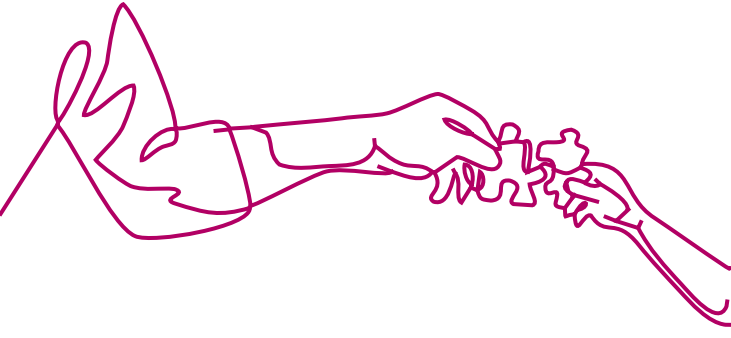


प्रियंका
कम्पास काउंसलर, नई दिल्ली



बच्चे जिन्हें आउटिज्म है, उनके साथ काम करने का यह मेरा पहला अनुभव रहा है जिसमें मुझे उनके भावनाओं और विचारों को बेहतर समझने का मौका मिला।

अब आउटिज्म के बारे में जानने के बाद मैं सामान्य रूप से विकसित बच्चों और बच्चों जिनमें कठिनाई पाई जाती है, इनमें अंतर बेहतर समझ पाती हूँ। इन ट्रेनिंग्स से मेरी सहनशक्ति और मेरे नजरिया में काफी बदलाव आया है। पहले मैं बहुत जिद्दी और दूसरों की बातें कम समझती थी। अब मैं उनकी बातें ध्यान से सुनती हूँ और उनके बोली हुई बात के पीछे की वजह समझने की कोशिश करती हूँ।



बब्ली
आशा, साउथ-ईस्ट डिस्ट्रिक्ट, नई दिल्ली

COMPASS में, हम लोगों से उनकी ही समस्याओं का समाधान सोचने के लिए, चिंतनशील होने के लिए, प्रेरित करते हैं। अब तो हम पेशेंट्स से भी पूछते हैं कि “आप के लिए क्या संभव है?” यह आपको कैसे प्रभावित करेगा?” फिर वह खुद से समाधान सोच कर हमें बताते हैं। यह बदलाव आया है अब, पहले हम उन पर अपने समाधानों थोप देते थे, यह कहकर कि “आपको ऐसा करना चाहिए या वैसा”, अब ऐसा नहीं है। मैंने अपने आप में येही सबसे बड़ा परिवर्तन अनुभव किया है।



आयेशा
आशा, साउथ-ईस्ट डिस्ट्रिक्ट, नई दिल्ली

विकलांगता या औटिस्म को पूरी तरह से समझने के लिए 4 से 5 साल का डिग्री कोर्स करना पड़ता है, लेकिन संगत की ट्रेनिंग के माध्यम से हमने इसके बारे में बहुत जल्दी जान लिया।

PASS उपचार की ट्रेनिंग ने हमारी सहनशीलता और धैर्य को बढ़ा दिया है। पहले दूसरों से बात करते समय हम ही ज्यादा बोलते थे, अब हम दूसरों को कई ज्यादा ध्यान से सुनते हैं।

सोनीया
आशा, साउथ डिस्ट्रिक्ट, नई दिल्ली

मुझे लगता है कि संगत को दूसरी ऑफिसों से जो बात अलग बनाती है, वह यह है की यहाँ किसी के सीनियर या जूनियर होने के फरक को ज्यादा महत्व नहीं दिया जाता। हम अपने COMPASS सूपर्वाइजर को खुल कर अपने मन की बात, बिना डर के, बोल सकते हैं।



मुझे अब यह काम करने पर गर्व है क्योंकि यह औटिस्म की समस्या इतनी अनोखी और हर एक बच्चे की अपनी एक समझ होती है, और हम बच्चे को बेहतर तरीके से अपने पालक के साथ संबंध बनाने में मदद करते हैं, यह एक बहुत अद्भुत एहसास है।



अन्नू
रीच असेसर, नई दिल्ली

रीच परियोजना में जब हम बच्चों का असेसमेंट करते हैं तो हमको बच्चों के वृद्धि और विकास के बारे में बहुत कुछ सिखने को मिलता है। जिसके बारे में मैं अपने बच्चों को भी जानकारी देती हूँ। इस संस्था में काम करके मैं अपने परिवार को बहुत अच्छे से संभाल रही हूँ। अब गाँव के लोग मुझे आदर से देखते हैं और मुझे इज्जत भी देते हैं। मेरा परिवार बहुत खुश है और इस काम की वजह से हम अच्छे से जीवन व्यतीत कर रहे हैं।



Youth mental health advocates at a training by It's Ok To Talk in Delhi, 2018.

Addressing young people's mental health needs

Prachi Khandeparkar

Psychologist and Project Lead, Adolescent Health Promotion Programs



Imagine a school in a low-resource setting in India.

A school where the school community is committed to promoting the physical, social, and mental health of all students and staff; where bullying and violence are nearly non-existent; and where dropout rates and discipline referrals are low. A school where students are involved in the day-to-day functioning and have access to resolve their life concerns.

Sound like an unrealistic utopia?

Not anymore!

What started as a small-scale seed

grant from the MacArthur Foundation in 1998 to initiate an alternative model of a school health program in Goa, has now travelled through various destinations in India; Bihar, Delhi, and Maharashtra. This has been made possible with the support of leading CSR agencies, The United Nations Population Fund, and The Wellcome Trust. Today, Sangath's school health program, led by lay school health workers, is an exemplary model in the field of school health.

As school administrators face the daunting challenge of improving

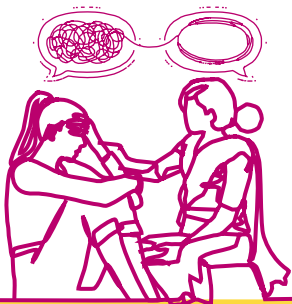
the academic performance of students, they often overlook the social and mental well-being of the individual child. At a time when much attention was focused on

Our experimental projects in different parts of the country have taught us that only providing access to education will not solve anybody's problems if the nation's schools continue to be overwhelmed.

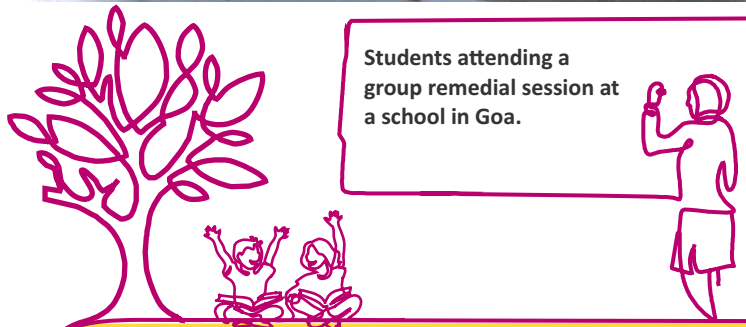
classroom-based sex education in the country, we demonstrated through our efforts that the overall school climate is linked with the health and achievements of the students. Health and education go hand in hand, and part of our job is to provide every child an opportunity to achieve and excel. The critical component has been empowering the schools and letting them take the lead in bringing the health of the school community to the forefront. Sangath runs several school-based research projects through which we have developed a philosophy and comprehensive packages of health-promotion at schools and also an individual counselling model, which is context-driven and ready for adaptation in other low-resource settings. Through our journey of 25 glorious years, we have learned a lot. Some lessons were in the form of increased knowledge through journal articles, books, write-ups, and presentations, but the majority were learned while taking risks, asking tough questions, trying new things, and navigating difficult terrain.

Our experimental projects in different parts of the country have taught us that only providing access to education will not solve anybody's problems if the nation's schools continue to be over whelmed. If we are serious about the next generation and want them to thrive, then our goal must be to provide a school environment that supports every child's health, nutrition, fitness, safety and imparts them with skills to deal with difficult situations.

At Sangath, through the initiatives of the [Adolescent Mental Health Group](#), we are committed to creating physical and virtual spaces to strengthen our adolescent and youth health programs and reach multiple horizons, such as working with youth in colleges, community settings, adolescents from vulnerable populations in high-income countries, and reaching teachers and parents through evidence-based interventions.



Students attending a group remedial session at a school in Goa.



At a time when much attention was focused on classroom-based sex education in the country, we demonstrated through our efforts that the overall school climate is linked with the health and achievements of the students.




Messages from our supporters and partners




Moutushi Sengupta
Country Head, John D and Catherine T
Macarthur Foundation, India

Your commitment to systematically developing interventions which are acceptable to the local community and feasible to deliver in resource poor settings has paved the path for similar efforts across India.



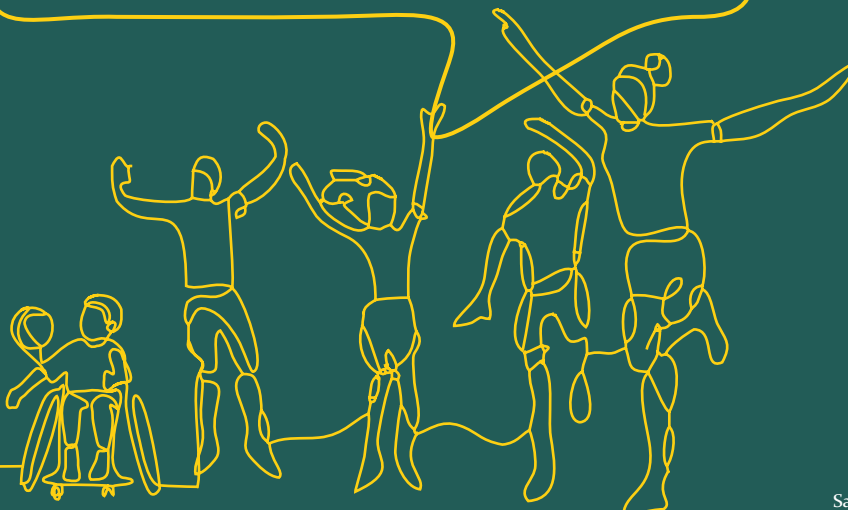
Yojana Palse
Senior Officer-Projects,
Bajaj CSR Group, India

We chose to work with Sangath's model that it is delivered by a low-cost human resource that facilitates activities with the whole school community to advance the cause of adolescent mental health.



Iqbal Hasan
Principal /Director CWCC,
Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Welfare Society, India

Young girls and boys are burdened with stress and tension in numerous ways in their day to day life. This is when organisations such as Sangath step in. The young counsellors appointed by the organization are supportive and committed towards their objectives.



Improving community mental health



**Azaz Khan, Intervention Coordinator and
Anant Bhan, Site Principal Investigator, Bhopal Hub**



Two days refresher training and review meeting with front line workers of Doraha (2015)

Addressing mental health needs is important for an individual to be happy, productive and maintain overall well-being. In India, there is a treatment gap for mental disorders, owing to the inequity in the availability of trained mental health professionals, access to mental health services, infrastructure, utilization and prioritization among the states.

Over the past 25 years, Sangath has worked towards bridging this gap through its various research and implementation projects that focus on improving community mental health. These projects have developed effective, scalable and evidence-based psychological interventions using rigorous research methods with the collaboration of national and international organizations which are aimed at integration into primary health care settings through a task-sharing and stepped care model. In doing so,

Sangath has generated high quality research and contributed to the evidence base of mental health interventions.

We developed and implemented a comprehensive package that comprises social and clinical interventions for providing care to chronically institutionalized patients and the homeless mentally ill, in two cities in India, Pune (Maharashtra) and Tezpur (Assam).

With regards to maternal mental health interventions for reducing perinatal depression in low resource settings, Sangath joined a network of research and non-governmental organisations from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka (South Asian Hub for Advocacy, Research and Education for mental health) (SHARE) to adapt and implement a peer-led psychological treatment called "The Thinking Healthy Programme" in urban communities in Goa.

Through its initiative [PREMIUM](#) (Implementation of evidence-based facility and community interventions to reduce the treatment gap for depression) for addressing adult mental health problems such as depression and alcohol problems, Sangath developed affordable, feasible and culturally appropriate brief psychological treatments such as Healthy Activity Programme (HAP) for depression and Counselling for Alcohol Problems (CAP) that are delivered by lay health counsellors at community and primary health care levels. Later these interventions were scaled up in two states of India i.e. Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh through the Programme for Improving Mental Health Care ([PRIME](#)) and Vidarbha Stress And Health Programme ([VISHRAM](#)) initiatives respectively.

In Maharashtra, Sangath has implemented the VISHRAM project in Vidarbha which aimed to understand the mental health needs of rural communities and to train community volunteers for improving mental health awareness and delivering community-based mental health interventions.

In Madhya Pradesh, as part of the PRIME project, Sangath developed and demonstrated a model of care to integrate mental health service into primary health care called 'Mann-Kaksh' in order to make mental health services accessible and increase treatment coverage. In 2015, The Department of Health and

Family Services, Government of Madhya Pradesh initiated a process of moving beyond District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) to planning a scale-up of mental health services across the state based on the 'Mann-Kaksh' model which covers the entire population of the state of around 72 million.

While the PRIME project focused on strengthening facility-based mental health services, in order to establish community based mental health care through front line health workers, Sangath initiated the (Enabling Translation Of Science To Service To Enhance Depression Care) **ESSENCE** project. In this ongoing project, Sangath is carrying out implementation research to assess the comparative effectiveness of technology-enabled interventions for treating depression, delivered by trained non-specialist health workers in the community and evaluate implementation support strategies necessary to scale-up evidence-based delivery strategies for treatments for depression in community and primary health care levels.

Sangath's project **EMPOWER** India which builds on the ESSENCE project, aims to build India's mental health workforce by using digital platforms to enable front-line providers (such as community health workers and nurses) to learn brief psychological interventions, assess their competency, and assure quality as they deliver these interventions at scale. This project is drawing from our work done in Madhya Pradesh and will be implemented in in Gujarat in partnership with local stakeholders.

Similar to ESSENCE and EMPOWER, Sangath is increasingly foraying into technology-based mental health solutions. The NARSAD project is designing and developing digital training programme to train non-specialist health workers to detect severe mental disorders such as schizophrenia in the community, provide basic psychological care and make referral to tertiary center. While the Smartphone Health Assessment For Relapse Prevention In Early Psychosis (**SHARP**) project aims to predict and prevent relapse among people living with schizophrenia through the use of a smartphone-based health assessment tool based on the **LAMP** platform. Thus, over the last 25 years, Sangath's work in adult mental health has extended from developing evidence based psychological interventions and creating

innovating models of care through task sharing to tailoring and implementing cutting edge digital solutions in mental health. Through these efforts, Sangath is working to improve community mental health provision in low resource settings such as India.



World Mental Health Day 2019 poster making competition.



नुसरतजहाँ

आशा सहयोगनी

संगत के साथ काम करने में बहुत नया अनुभव मिला है। मानसिक रोग और रोगियों के बारे में बहुत कुछ सीखने को मिला है। मानसिक रोगियों की मनोदशा को समझना, मानसिक स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं की पहचानना करना, मानसिक रोगी के अनुकूल कार्य करना, उनके साथ किस तरह का व्यवहार करना है, उनके पारिवारिक स्थिति को समझना एवं उनके परिवार के सदस्यों के साथ तालमेल बैठाना और उनसे जानकारी लेना, उनको भरोसे में रखना और अपने मानसिक रोगी का विश्वास जीतना, ये सभी बातें संगत के साथ काम करके और उनके द्वारा दी गए प्रशिक्षण से सीखने को मिली। जिससे जीवन में बहुत बदलाव आया है इससे पहले यह नहीं पाता था कि मानसिक रोग भी होता है, आत्महत्या करना भी मानसिक रोग का हिस्सा है। इसका इलाज संभव है। समाज और परिवार में, हम प्रत्येक स्थिति में अपनी मनोदशा के अनुकूल कार्य करते हैं, अपने आसपास के वातावरण में लोगों को देख पाना, उनके व्यवहार को समझना पाना और इसके पीछे के कारणों को समझना यह सब पहले बहुत मुश्किल था। बैचेनी, उदासी, निराशा, दुखी रहना, आत्महत्या के विचार आदि व्यक्ति की मनोदशा जो मानसिक तनाव भी हो सकता है और यह किसी ना किसी कारण से होता है। अगर कोई व्यक्ति अगर शराब पीता है और उसे शराब की लत है तो यह भी मानसिक रोग है। यह सब मानसिक स्वास्थ्य कार्यक्रम (एसेंस और प्राईम) टीम के सदस्यों के साथ काम करके और प्रशिक्षण से समझने को मिला है। मानसिक रोगियों के साथ किया जाने वाला व्यवहार उनकी स्थिति को बदल सकता है उन्हें अन्य बीमारी से दूर कर सकता है। इसके लिए दवा भी दी जाती है, सहानुभूति और दवा के द्वारा मानसिक रोगी को बहुत सारे आघात से बचाया जा सकता है।



Margaret Pereira
Special Educator, Gujarati Samaj
Educational Trust, India

I have seen Sangath catering to not only the needs of students, but the entire unit that affects the wellbeing of a student, right from the parents, to the siblings, to peer groups, to the institution the child is in.



Charles F. Reynolds III
Director of the Aging Institute of UPMC
and University of Pittsburgh, USA

Ellen Gay Detlefsen
Professor, University of Pittsburgh, USA

It was a great pleasure for us to donate the proceeds of the 2016 Pardes Humanitarian Prize, from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, to Sangath, in order to better enable research and education in the behavioral health care of older adults. We cannot think of a more worthy partner in this important work.

David Osrin
Professor of Global Health, University College
London, UK

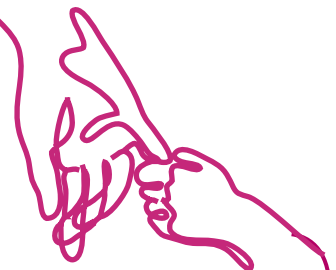
Sangath has set the bar for engaged research on mental health that emphasizes a thoughtful and systematic way of developing and testing interventions that can help communities. Sangath have nurtured the careers of many young people who have internalised a commitment to evidence-based mental health and have gone on to develop projects of their own.



Messages from our supporters and partners

Tessa Roberts
Post-doctoral Research Fellow,
Centre for Society and Mental Health,
King's College London, UK

Sangath has been a pioneer in democratising mental health care, thinking outside the box in terms of who a mental health service provider is, and demonstrating how research can be used to design effective models of support across diverse settings.



Adding life to years

Miriam Sequeira,

Project Coordinator, Addictions Research Group



Sangath was established in response to the unattended needs for children with developmental difficulties and behavioural problems, but very soon realized that adults had similar problems and these were often neglected. Professors Vikram Patel and Martin Prince began to address this gap with a qualitative study in 2001. Interviews with key stakeholders showed that aging-related mental health conditions were perceived as a normal part of aging and did not require medical care. The study suggested directions for the future development of locally appropriate support services for the elderly such as involving the comprehensive network of non-specialist health care workers. Sangath set out to execute the plan laid out by this foundational work under the able leadership of a young and energetic Dr. Amit Dias

from the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine (PSM) at Goa Medical College. The first step was to develop culturally appropriate measures to detect mental health problems in the elderly. This was done in collaboration with Prof. D. D Motghare from the PSM department at GMC and the 10/66 Dementia Research Group led by Prof. Prince.

In 2010, Sangath implemented the award winning intervention for people with dementia for the state of Goa with support from the Rotary Club of Crosby and the Dennis Jarvis Trust led by Ms. Anita Jarvis. People from the local community were trained to deliver this programme free of cost. Around the same time, the concept of using non-specialist health workers was also recommended by the Mental health Gap Action Plan (MhGAP) programme of the World Health Organisation. Informed by



“After taking part in the program I am feeling better; especially after doing the exercises and now I roam about a little. Earlier I used to have tremors in my legs, now they do not shake that much. After doing the exercises I am feeling better. I am not fully fit but 50% well. Even after taking tablets, I was not feeling better. I had to visit the doctor frequently. But now I do not have to go often to visit the doctor and I take the tablets regularly. These days, I am interested in whatever I do. One year ago I did not have any interest. Earlier I did not like to go to the market, now I like to go. I feel nice when I go out. I am better than before... not much since now we have grown old. So, not perfect but better.”

-A 72-year-old man from Santa Cruz, Goa who received the DIL intervention at his home.

A DIL counsellor uses a flipchart to explain the problem-solving steps to a woman at her home in Goa while her husband looks on.



the latest advances in the field, Sangath developed a multi-component intervention package for the Care for Older People (COPE) to be delivered by non-specialist health workers under the stewardship of Dr. Jotheeswaran A T, Dr. Amit Dias and Prof. Vikram Patel. Today, this idea has evolved into a major programme for the WHO called the 'Integrated care of the Older People' (ICOPE). Programmes were developed and evaluated with the joint aims of



A DIL counsellor discusses managing alcohol consumption with a couple, using a flipchart.

Promoting well-being and improving quality of life in the elderly and, addressing the needs of caregivers who often suffer from burnout.

By then, both our work in Goa and global evidence pointed towards the importance of early interventions as a prevention strategy. Sangath began working in this direction in association with the South Asia Network for Chronic Diseases (SANCD) by conducting a study to identify risk factors that contribute to chronic diseases (CRDF). This was followed by a study which successfully developed a culturally acceptable psychosocial intervention for prevention of Depression in late Life (DIL). This study, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, USA, was also delivered by non-specialist health workers in the homes of the elderly in Goa and led by Dr. Amit Dias and Professor Charles F. Reynolds, III from the University of Pittsburgh. As a member of the *Lancet Commission for the Prevention of Dementia*, Dr. Amit Dias continues to advocate for the mental health needs of the elderly on global platforms. Sangath is committed to continue working for the mental health needs of the elderly in India and is building a

Centre for Ageing Research and Education (CARE) in Goa, made possible by the generous donation of Professor Charles F. Reynolds III and his wife Ellen Detlefsen. And so, we continue to add life to years...



A DIL counsellor understanding the challenges of an elderly woman at her home in Goa.



Messages from our supporters and partners




Felix Naughton, Senior Lecturer in Health Psychology, University of East Anglia, UK

The ambition of Sangath came through loud and clear during my visit. Not only was this ambition orientated around maintaining high-speed momentum to address important health topics and maximising value from the resources available but on an ethos of implementing internationally recognised best practices in research design and delivery.



**Sven Andréasson, Adjunct Professor, Karolinska Institute, Sweden
President, International Network on Brief Interventions for Alcohol and Other Drugs (INEBRIA)**

INEBRIA is very fortunate in developing a collaboration with Sangath in Goa. Sangath has an impressive track record in the mental health field, adapting and developing interventions to reach poor communities.



Where the 'spirit' takes us

Abhijit Nadkarni

Co-Director, Addictions Research Group



A decade ago, Sangath's foray into addictions research had a stop-start feel to it. It was in 2011 that we started to make a concerted effort to strategically consolidate the addictions research portfolio. But this relatively short nine-year story is incomplete without going back to the roots which are defined by the three seminal surveys that were conducted in community, primary care and industrial workplace settings. This was critical work because, despite being known for its 'wet' culture, these studies were the first systematic attempt to explore the burden of alcohol-related problems in Goa. They were the foundation for more sustained efforts at Sangath to examine alcohol use disorders and other related conditions. This started with what was one of the biggest community cohorts of males with alcohol use disorders in India, followed up at six years to understand the long-term trajectory and impact of alcohol use in low-resource settings.

Having defined the scope of the problem, the next obvious step was to design contextually relevant and

(L-R) Sheina Costa, Urvita Bhatia (presenting 'The impact of a lay health counsellor delivered psychological treatment for harmful drinking in primary care: a qualitative study nested in the PREMIUM trial') and Abhijit Nadkarni at the 15th Conference of the International Network of Brief Interventions on Alcohol and Other Drugs, Chile.



Building awareness about the harms of alcohol use in the community in Goa.

scalable solutions. This included the first trial from India which demonstrated the cost-effectiveness of a culturally appropriate intervention for harmful drinking delivered by lay-counsellors in primary care settings. Supplementing it, was a proof of concept demonstration of how even the more severe types of alcohol use disorders requiring medication and psychological treatment could be managed safely through

collaboration between lay-counsellors and primary care physicians, precluding the need for expensive hospital admissions.

Interestingly, out of this original work designed to estimate burden and develop interventions for addictions, have organically emerged several crucial strands of work which we continue to develop. While working with men with alcohol use disorders we became acutely aware of the immense but largely ignored burden on the health and well-being of their family members. That led to our work in developing an accessible intervention that addressed their needs in their own right, independent of the needs of the drinkers. Our work with such affected families exposed us to horrifying stories of intimate partner violence which became an ethical imperative for us to address. We then started to develop a contextually appropriate and scalable intervention to address the mental health impacts of this much prevalent but greatly hidden social phenomenon.



A parallel area of work that we have also engaged in is on understanding how technology-based interventions can be used to reduce the burden of substance use (e.g. simple SMS-based brief interventions for hazardous drinking and tobacco use); to build the evidence base for alternate delivery platforms to increase access to care.

A lot of this more recent work is in its infancy but we remain highly committed to developing it further as it has emerged bottom-up from the ground, and expressed as a felt need by the communities that we work in. All of this work is now being conducted by the [Addictions Research Group](#) which was started five years ago by Prof. Richard Velleman and me, and is anchored by the enthusiastic leadership provided by several bright and home-grown early career researchers. Over the coming years we will also be focusing on policy relevant research to scale up some of our evidence-based models, testing technology enabled interventions, and developing interventions to prevent the initiation of substance use as well as violence in young people.



A health counsellor conducts screening for alcohol problems at a workplace in Goa.



Despite being known for its 'wet' culture, these Sangath's studies were the first systematic attempt to explore the burden of alcohol-related problems in Goa.



The ARG at the International Symposium on Addictions and Gender-Based Violence in Goa as part of the ARG's 5 year celebrations.



R. Thara
Vice Chairman, Schizophrenia Research Foundation, India

If India has made a mark on the international mental health scene, in innovative mental health care, robust research and community involvement; it is largely because of the work of some premier NGOs, and Sangath is one of the foremost among these.



Sir Graham Thornicroft
Professor of Community Psychiatry, King's College London, UK

The Leadership in Mental Health course is an immersive, and for some, a transformational experience. My impression is that the small groups working all hours to write country mental health plans forges a powerful sense of collegiality and friendship, and leads to strong networks lasting well beyond these two weeks of learning. While Sangath is a collective effort, it is also vital to acknowledge the inspiring leadership of Vikram Patel in all of these successful accomplishments. His vision, drive, ethos and brilliance illuminate the whole range of superb achievements at Sangath. These 25 years have demonstrated that Sangath is working at the very highest levels of research excellence, application of knowledge to policy and practice, and teaching and learning and the centre has an increasingly prominent global impact. Long may you continue.

Jonathan Green
Professor, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, The University of Manchester, UK

My initial sense of Sangath's values is continually reinforced: the total commitment to locality and the needs of children and young people in India, with an ambitious focus to link this into the best possible global health science and the global health context.



Messages from our supporters and partners

Andy Shih
Senior Vice-President, Public Health and Inclusion, Autism Speaks, USA

I am grateful that Sangath's pioneering work in autism and developmental disabilities are immensely influential in the autism research community. They challenged decades of assumptions about intervention content and delivery mechanisms and encouraged a reconsideration of what is possible.

While the work of many researchers never directly impacts the lives of individuals and families, Sangath's science aims to touch and uplift the most neglected and marginalized on a daily basis.



Bhismadev Chakrabarti
Professor of Neuroscience &
Mental Health, University of
Reading, UK



Challenges and excitement are the two hallmarks of the Sangath team, and ones that make working with Sangath a fulfilling experience.

Sheffali Gulati
Chief, Child Neurology Division,
Department of Pediatrics, All India
Institute of Medical Sciences, India

My collaboration with Sangath has been a wonderful journey with many fruitful collaborations across a number of projects in neurodevelopmental disabilities, and looking forwards to many more.



Reverend Father Pio Furtado
Headmaster, Our Lady of Fatima
High School, India



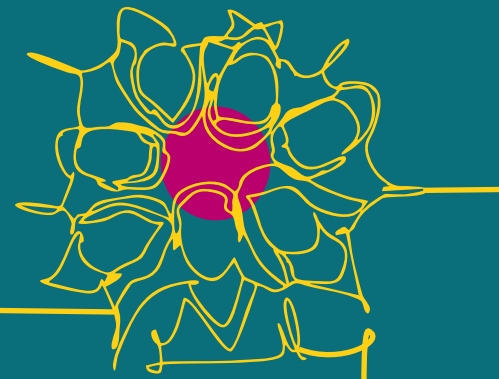
The 25 years in the history of Sangath is a mark of success when we look back with gratitude. It evokes sentiments of joy at the road travelled so long and Sangath has all the reasons to rejoice on the achievements of this significant landmark in their fruitful service to the people.

Daniele Fuhr
Associate Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical
Medicine, UK



Happy 25th Anniversary Sangath! 25 years of togetherness, 25 years of making dreams come true, 25 years of sharing, 25 years of trust! It is a day to celebrate all achievements, success, and an important milestone. I feel very proud to have worked with Sangath and have fond memories of working together. The achievement of Sangath are the results of the combined efforts of every individual, their creativity and dedication to work. I feel that it is not just an anniversary of an organisation but a family anniversary that has grown strong and achieved great things together. Congratulations on all your efforts and achievements!

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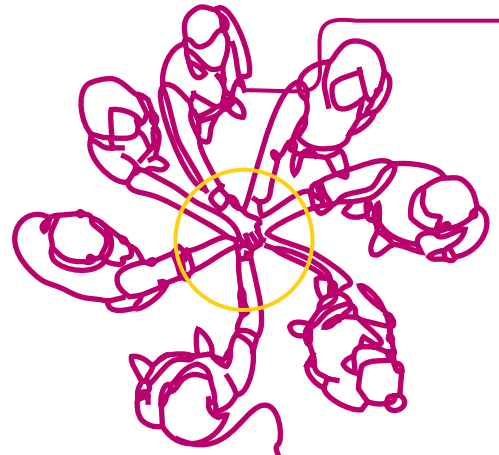
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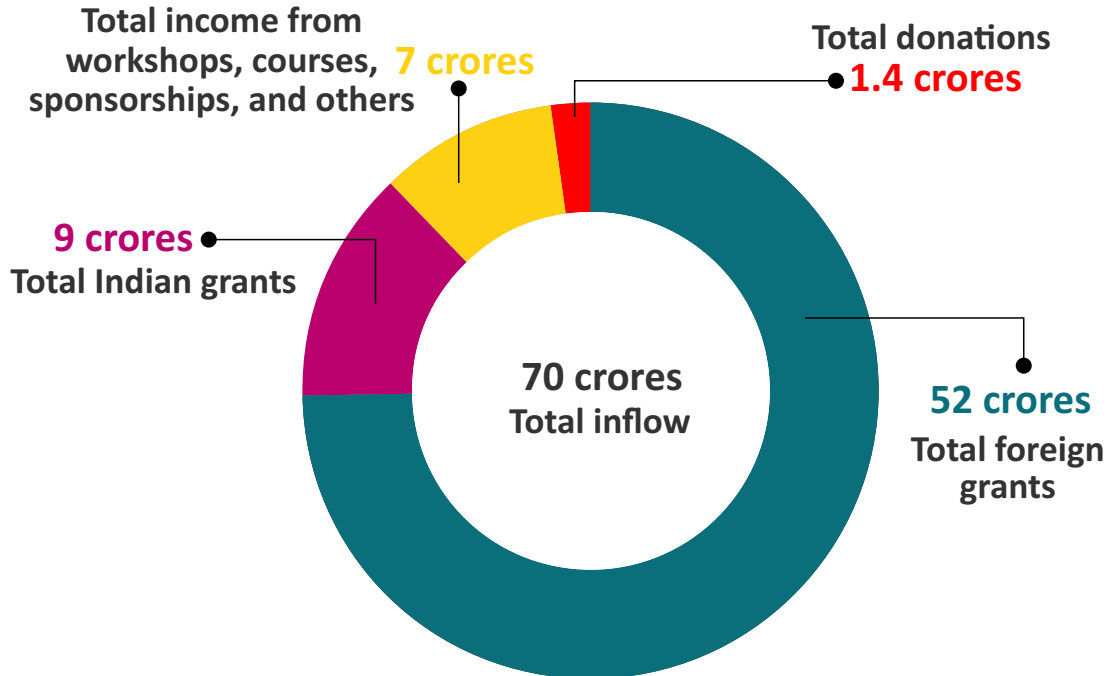
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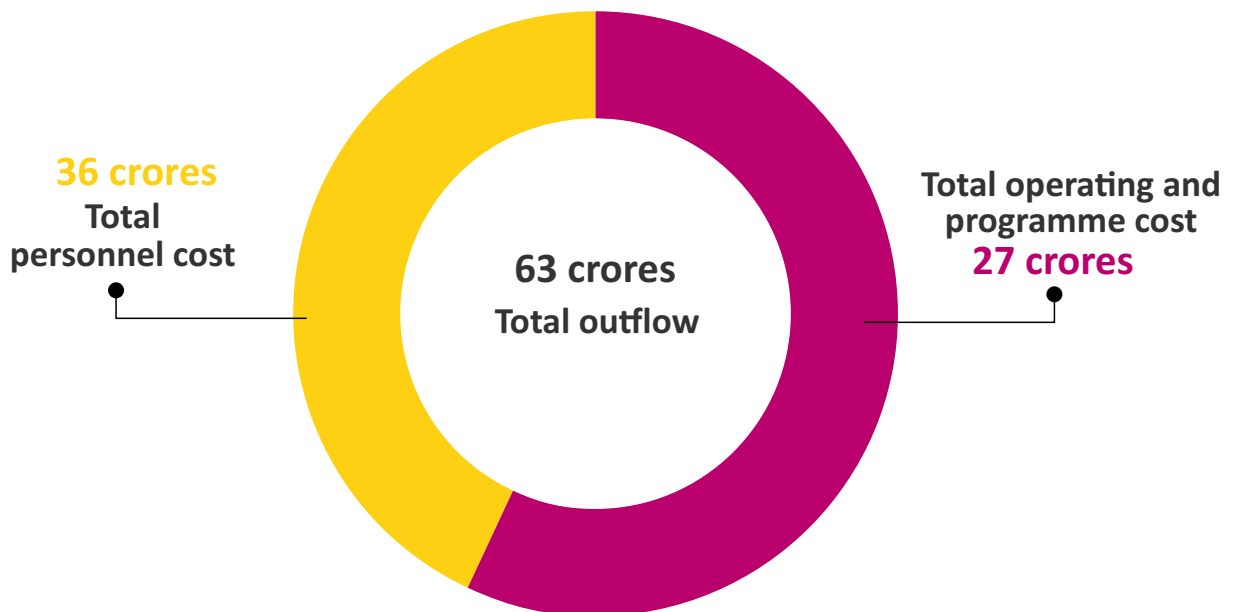


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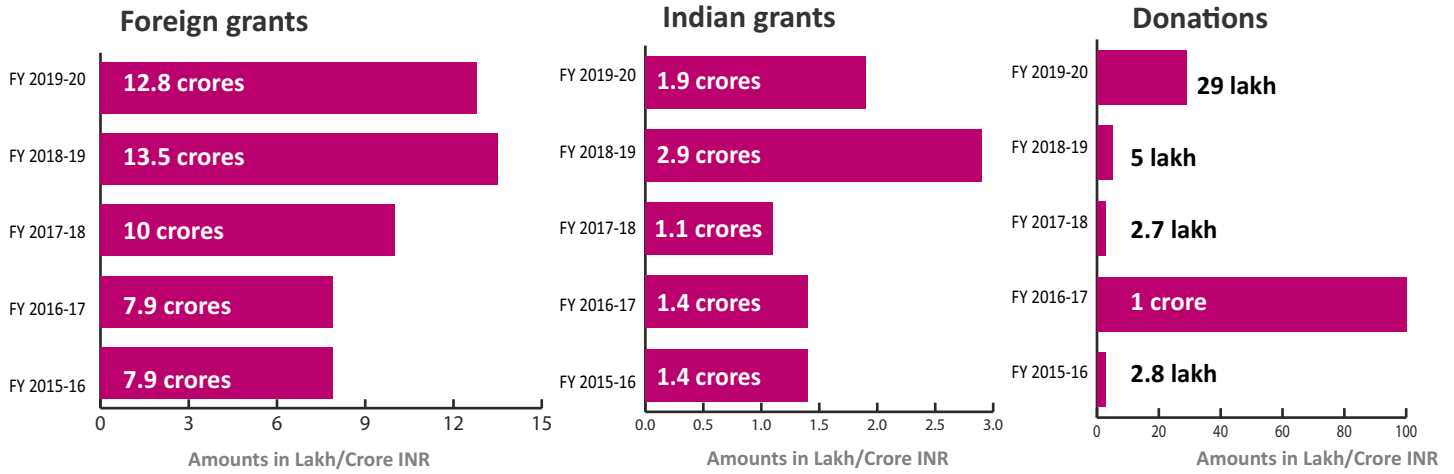


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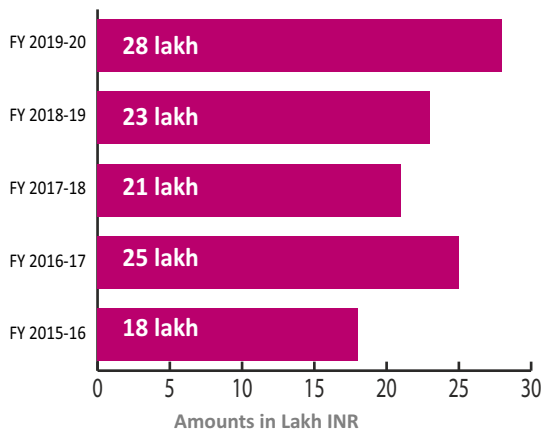


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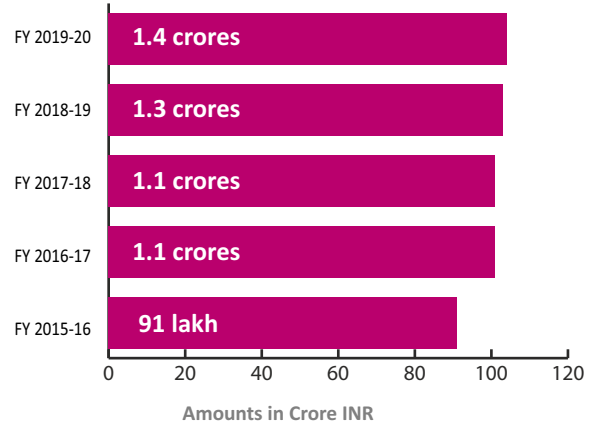
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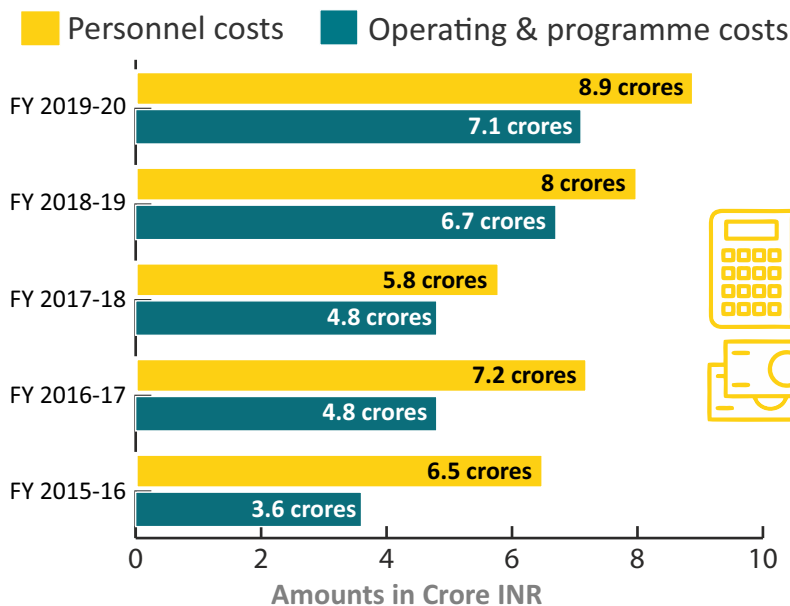
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