

Asha Zurich
for Education
Bringing hope through education

Annual Report 2011



FROM OUR EDITOR

Greetings Everyone,

A brand new year is upon us and it's time to look back at Asha Zurich's achievements in the past year. Our volunteers have compiled a report of all our project partners and various events throughout the year. These project updates show the depth and breadth of the impact of this volunteer driven chapter. We support projects located in inaccessible rural part of Manipur to equally remote area in Maharashtra.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our donors who supported us online and in various fund raising events throughout the year. Your generous donations go a long way to make a socio-economic change in India though the medium of education.

My kudos to all our volunteers who took time from their daily life to work tirelessly for the cause throughout the year. This was the year of events for Asha Zurich. It was marked by a variety of volunteer lead initiatives and popular programs that helped us reach out to more and more well-wishers in Zurich. Divya our General Secretary has penned down a short description of all the events.

One of our longtime volunteer Kirtimalini took center stage in event planning by taking numerous initiatives to cook delicious Indian food to sell at various fund raising events. This was a huge effort for Asha Zurich and more than 50 volunteers participated, many of them first time volunteers. Nandan, another very enthusiastic volunteer started the initiative of E-shop. It's a platform for people to buy handicraft from India. These products are bought by our volunteers from NGOs in India. They make an excellent meaningful gift for loved ones.

In year 2011 we raised 32'135 CHF and dispersed 24'636 CHF.

I hope the donor support and enthusiasm of volunteers doubles in the year 2012.

If you want to make a difference, join our volunteer force by simply walking into one of our meetings or write to us at asha-zurich@yahoo.com or visit us at - www.ashanet.org/zurich.

Thank you,



Tulika Agrawal



ABOUT US

Asha for Education is a volunteer based organization dedicated towards socio-economic change in India. We believe that education is a critical element of change. Asha focuses on providing monetary support to projects dedicated to the education and well-being of children from economically challenged sections of society. We are a 100% volunteer driven organization, meaning we have no paid staff. All the work is done by volunteers. This also enables us to channel 100% of your donations to project in India. All the admin costs are met by volunteers or specific admin donations.

Working with project partners

Asha Zurich, like all other Asha chapters works closely with its project partners. We receive project proposals through our contacts in India or directly from organizations working in the field in India. A volunteer visits the project site and the site visit report is presented in the meeting. The proposal and site visit report are thoroughly discussed and ythen the proposal is voted for approval in the meeting. Upon approval, the funds are dispersed on a half-yearly basis directly to the project partners. Each year a volunteer visits the existing project partners. These visits help in monitoring progress of the projects, maintain communication with them, help them with future planning and sort out any problems. We also receive half-yearly progress reports from all our project partners.

Asha Zurich's 2011 Projects

Project name	Location	Number of students
Akshardeep	Pune, Maharashtra	301
Palas	Shirpur, Maharashtra	360
Lok Biradari Prakalp	Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra	673
SACSAS	New Dampi Village, Manipur	164

Executive committee 2011

- President:** Shyam Chikatamarla
- General Secretary:** Divya Ail
- Treasurer:** Indranil Bhattacharya
- Publicity Co-ordinator:** Nandan Maheshwari
- Project Co-ordinators:** Shreya Paliwal, Kirtimalini Gadre, Sujit Acharya & Ankita Singhal
- Editor:** Tulika Agrawal & Shalmali Patkar



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

New volunteers, new projects and new enthusiasm - this has been the spirit at Asha Zurich over the year 2011. A number of new volunteers have joined us over this year. This was clearly seen in the increased turnout for the monthly meetings and events. The number of committee positions have been increased to spread the work load and streamline the efforts. A new publicity and e-shop coordination position was added. This position was very well and enthusiastically managed by Nandan Maheswari, who is also willing to continue this for next year. Asha Zurich is continuing to maintain its cooperation with various cultural associations related to India and Indian culture. Asha has received representation during the events organized by cultural organizations such as IAZ, IAGZ, Sparshan, Marathi Mandal, Keli, etc. We are thankful to the coordinator of these associations for promoting Asha at their events, and we look forward for a continued relationship with all of them.

This year Asha Zurich has taken up a new project, once again in the state of Maharashtra. The Lok Biradari Prakalp project was originally envisaged by the famous Baba Amte who is a symbol of reform and development in rural India. Asha Zurich has taken over the responsibility of 100 students out of the 673 students receiving education, food and full residence in this project. The Lok Biradari project is coordinated by our new enthusiastic volunteer Ankita Singhal. This brings the number of ongoing projects to 4. Asha Zurich is proud to have reached over **1300** underprivileged children in the year 2011, providing them with full support for education and in some cases also for food and residence. There were some communication gaps with the NSP project coordinator in Manipur, but this was sorted out at the end of the year by the project coordination Sujit Acharya. We also have two potential projects under consideration for the next year.

Asha Zurich is now showing prospects of a bright and growing organization with an increasing impact. This year there was an increase in the number of volunteers, number of projects and also the outreach of the organization. This spirit needs to be maintained in the coming years with increased stress on publicity and fundraising. Asha Zurich at the moment lacks corporate outreach and funding. This needs to be improved over the coming years. In the upcoming year, we will try to reach out to more professionals based in Switzerland.



Shyam Chikatamarla



FROM OUR SECRETARY

Asha Zurich had an eventful 2011. Thanks to all the volunteers, members, well-wishers and other supporters who contributed their time, money and effort to Asha. Many new volunteers joined this year and helped us especially at the weltmarkt events and some former members became active again. We organized some events for fundraising and at times we put up a publicity stand at events organized by others. Here are the highlights of the events of 2011 –

Weltmarkts

Weltmarkt is an open market that takes place in Oerlikon, Zürich on the second Friday of every month from May-October. The market has a huge variety – from handmade jewellery, African handicrafts to Indian food, everything is sold there. As per tradition Asha Zurich had an Indian food stall there. Kirti was responsible for organizing and managing the stall with the help of volunteers. More than 50 regular and new volunteers helped with the cooking and managing the stall. The stall was a huge success and we were always sold-out before closing time. Many office-going people came by lunchtime to the stall. Our USP was the chat items and some unique regional dishes that we served. In addition to the main food stall, this year we also had an additional publicity stall where we sold Asha merchandise: t-shirts, gift items, cards etc. Nandan managed this stall. We participated in five weltmarkts this year and raised a sum of 7'838 CHF.



Asha Picnic

Nandan organized a one-day hike for Asha members and volunteers. This was meant for members and volunteers to get to know each other outside the context of Asha. This hike took place around lake Uri near Flüelen. It was a fun filled day and more such events will be planned for the next year.





Bollywood Vibes

This bollywood party took place on 1st October at StuZ, ETHZ. Sujit and Shyam mainly organized the event with the help of other volunteers. More than 100 people danced to the tunes of DJs Virat and Priyanka. In addition to the usual disco this year we had a bollywood workshop organized by Poonam. Between 20-25 people attended this workshop.

Other Events

The Kurry club members of Credit Suisse organized a diwali party and they made a generous contribution of 650 CHF to Asha Zurich. Kirti cooked for the local Maharashtra Mandal and collected a sum of 300 CHF for Asha. She, along with other volunteers, also organized the PhD defense apero of a student and generated 200 CHF.



Asha on Facebook

Owing to the popularity of the social networking site facebook we felt a need to have an Asha Zürich page on FB. The page was started and is managed by our publicity coordinator – Nandan. All Asha event updates are done here.

New members

This year we had many one-time donors. We have also seen a steady and constant growth in our volunteer base, our well-wishers and supporters over the years. In 2011, 24 new members joined us as part-time/full-time volunteers. This year 2 students from the International school did some voluntary work with us. We would like to encourage this more in the coming years and would like to involve more students in our activities and events.

Publicity Stalls

We had our publicity stall at the Holi event organized by IAGZ (Indian Association of Greater Zurich) and at the Indian festival - India-India 2011, organized by IAZ (Indian Association of Zurich). These associations were kind enough to offer the the space for free. At these publicity stalls we distributed CAYH flyers, Asha pamphlets, Annual reports and other information about Asha Zurich.



Divya Ail



E-SHOP

E-shop is a new fund-raising initiative started by Asha Zurich with the motivation of promoting richness of Indian handicrafts in Switzerland. E-shop is essentially an online shop with a collection of exquisite Indian gift items like jewellery, hand-painted boxes, handloom weaved photo-frames, handmade paintings, etc. Most of the crafts and products have been bought from NGOs in India by our volunteers. We want to provide a marketing platform to these organizations while raising money for charity. By buying just one-two products you can support the education of a child for six months in India. We believe that buying E-shop products as gifts is a great way to increase the awareness among people about the importance of education in rural communities and spread the word about our work.

This year we organized the E-shop stall displaying various products along with Indian food stall at Weltmarkt Oerlikon. We also sold a lot of products at our publicity stall at India-India at Hauptbahnhof. We partnered with two non-profit organizations namely, 'Craftmarks' and 'Uravu' to provide us some of their merchandise in Zurich. We also work with local artists in Zurich by providing them an opportunity to display their products by giving a small donation to Asha Zurich.

Total sales = 887 CHF (March-November 2011)

Profits = 480 CHF (150 CHF reinvested in Craftmarks products, 131 CHF stall cost)

We believe E-shop needs a combined team effort to be a success. Unlike our other fundraising events, E-shop operates throughout the year and can be supported by buying our products or by donating handicrafts from different regions in India to E-shop. All of our products can be viewed online on Asha Zurich website - <http://www.ashanet.org/zurich/index.php?page=eshop>



Nandan Makeshwari



Project Update- AKSHARDEEP

Pune, Maharashtra

Children Benefited: 301

Akshardeep was initiated by an organization called Swadhar in 1998. It is an alternative school program focused on children from 6-12 years of age. It runs 10 classes in Pune Municipal Corporation and 10 classes in Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation. Asha Zurich is currently funding the 10 classes in the PCMC area.

Objectives

Since its inception, the project has been working towards educating the children of migrant workers and sex workers and preparing them for mainstream Government schools. The teachers come from the same community. Timings and the teaching methods are innovative and sufficiently flexible to cater to the educational needs of children coming from varying economically challenged backgrounds. The curriculum is based on State Dept of Education curriculum, but is taught differently making it more enjoyable and easy to learn. The hallmark of this project is the Non-Formal Education (NFE).

The Right to Education act has changed the role of organizations working in the area of primary education, and Akshardeep appears to have made a seamless transition into this new reality. In response to the RTE, they have developed methods to help older, illiterate children to quickly come up to speed with the curriculum in higher classes. Overall, Akshardeep has done a good job in keeping up with the requirements of the times and has reinvented itself to provide valuable services that help retain students in school.

Year 2011

From July - September, 2011 we conducted a detailed survey of out of school children and their age group in two phases. Our survey showed that the number of children going to mainstream school had increased. So we reduced the number of setu classes. On the other hand it showed an emerging need for remedial classes for children going to mainstream schools. We also found a large number of children in the 3-6 years age group who needed access to some form of education. We started Balwadis for these children. Currently, 301 children are enrolled in the NFE and support classes. During the year 116 children were main-streamed. Unfortunately, we saw a drop out of 28 children. More support classes might help reduce this number in coming years.

The setu (NFE) classes are conducted in two areas where there are still out of school children for the age group of 6-14 years. Support classes are conducted in two sessions of two hours each for children of standard I - IV. They help children understand the basic concepts of language and maths and improve their performance in school. Basic concepts are strengthened using practical teaching aids. A test to assess the level of the child is conducted on admission to the class. In case a child is older than the appropriate age of the class he/she is admitted to, they are helped to achieve the critical competencies to reach their correct level.

Our resource person Sushma Sathaye (professor SNDT university) – conducted Teacher Training on methods of teaching in Balwadis. These sessions showed them how a topic e.g. flowers can be used to teach pre-reading, writing and math readiness skills. We now have ~13 kits with colourful and attractive teaching aids in each kit developed by teachers. Children enjoy touching seeing and feeling these aids and hence absorb these concepts easily.



Incentives for children

As part of the nutrition program, the children are given a snack of sprouts with rice or bread. A protein supplement in the form of ladoos and some dry snacks is also provided. During the survey conducted in the beginning of the year Akshardeep came across 10 children who were suffering from malnutrition, mostly in the age group of 2-4 years. The field workers kept a record of these children. They contacted the Balwadi worker of the area and informed her about these children. These children were also given protein supplement from our classes. The field workers contacted their mothers and explained how to give low cost nutrition. These children have shown good progress in their health.

Various cultural and social events like Traditional Bhone party, Dassera, Diwali party were organized for the children and teachers to help them bond with each other. Also, this serves to refresh and entertain them and in turn, motivate them to keep coming to the classes.

Future Plans

Akshardeep will continue to work towards facilitating more and more children to be mainstreamed and to be retained in mainstream education. We also plan to reach out to the 0-3 years and 3-6 years age group by starting balwadis and intervening in the anganwadi programs where possible.



Shreya Paliwal



Project Update- PALAS

Shirpur, Maharashtra

Average number of classes conducted in 2011: 27

Children benefited: approx. 360

Palas is one of the projects of Shirpur VMS. They work mainly with Adivasis and scheduled caste communities, most of which are below the poverty line. VMS tries to improve their living conditions through educational and health programs. We at Asha Zurich are very happy and satisfied with the quality and volume achieved by this project. We have been supporting it since 2005. We are also thankful to VMS to take lead and open the doors of education for Adivasi children located in interior village in the state of Maharashtra.

How does Palas work?

The school was opened by VMS-Palas group with the help of villagers at places where there is no government school ("Zilaparishad shala" or ZP school). Slowly villagers have understood the importance of education and came forward to give a place to conduct NFE i.e Non Formal Education classes. Teachers are also picked from local community. Children from 5 -12 years of age are encouraged to enroll. The emphasis is on teaching with learning aids like charts, action songs and poems. Basic Mathematics, Marathi and English are taught.

Classes are divided into groups and are monitored by assigned supervisor. Supervisor checks the attendance of students, conducts exams and does random visits. Main Project coordinator, Brother Joseph for 2011 overlooks the reports and all activities of supervisors and teachers. Teachers are paid monthly salary in the magnitude of ₹1000-1500 plus some travel expense. Children are not charged any fee. With the help of RTE (Right to Education) act; VMS-Palas is integrating children in the nearby government schools.

2011 Site visit

Since the project is located in interior of Maharashtra, it was difficult to organize a personal site visit for last 2 years. In 2011 we were lucky to meet Mr. Sachin Mehta who works for Credit Suisse, Mumbai and accepted my request to visit the place. He visited the project on 22 - 23 Sept 2011 and gave us a detailed report with photos, observations and his suggestions. He was highly motivated and satisfied by the project. I would like to thank Mr. Sachin Mehta for his valuable contribution.

Activities

Children participated in a parent's day where they performed songs, play, dance etc. Children also went to Diwali Education camp which was conducted in 2 slots by B.Ed college students from St Xavier's college, Mumbai. 108 children and 8 teachers participated in first camp lasting 7 days. The camp included some fun activities along with learning general Mathematics, English, Marathi. 2nd part of camp was only for older students who can directly be enrolled in 5th class. 32 students attended this 7-day camp. This camp acted as confidence and knowledge boost for children. Teachers' training cum meeting is organized monthly where teachers from all classes share ideas with each other and new inputs for VMS are taken forward. A 5-day training camp named "Uttejan" meaning Encouragement was organized by Xavier's college, Mumbai. The aim of this training was to learn new methods to teach Math, English and Marathi and make teachers more dynamic and active.



Parents play significant role in educating the child. So to get them involved, Palas organizes parents meetings. They are given information on progress of the children. Parents were also invited for parents' day where children of each class performed. Prizes were distributed to children for different academic achievements.

Future plans of Asha Zurich with VMS

We at Asha Zurich would like to continue the support for upcoming year. However we would also like to discuss with them about achieving self-sustainability. We are asking them to keep track of students who are enrolled in ZP school and try to give scholarships to bright students. Palas faces same issues as most non-conventional schools in remote areas. Some older age children have to help parents at home and cannot attend the class. Some schools are very remote and teacher needs to walk 12 - 16 km to reach the village, making it difficult to find teachers for these villages. Due to failure of electricity, sometimes children have to study in dark rooms.



Kirtimalini Gadre

With Best Compliments from

Walhalla Hotel

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Project Update- SACSAS

New Dampi, Manipur

Children Benefited: 164

Save Children Save Society (SACSAS) Academy is a secular organization dedicated to socio economic change in Manipur. It primarily aims at providing quality education to children in the remote villages in Manipur where there is no form of education system. It has been successful in taking education to the first generation learners and to an area where education is not being adequately addressed by the government. SACSAS Academy, New Dampi Branch in Manipur started its operations in 2009 with Asha Houston acting as the steward for this project. The entire school building construction at New Dampi was sponsored by Mr. Martin H. from London. In 2010, Asha Zurich became a part of the project to fund 50% of the recurring costs comprising salary of the teachers, study tools, uniform for students, text books, school maintenance and scholarships.

This school in New Dampi village caters to 9 surrounding villages and has strength of 164 (97 boys and 67 girls) students from pre-nursery to class VI and is the biggest school operated by SACSAS. They follow the Manipur State Education Board syllabus so that graduating students can directly enter the mainstream schools. School also organizes sports meets at least four times a year for all round development of the students. SACSAS also conducts regular meetings with parents and the guardian committee to address the problems faced by children.

Administration of the school

Mr. Surjitkumar, on ground coordinator of the SACSAS Academy coordinates all the five schools including the new one at New Dampi. However, the administration of all these schools is taken up by local people who also take care of protecting the school premises from terrorist groups. This is really essential to build up the spirit of self-governance and sense of responsibility in the minds of parents and villagers for their children's education. New Dampi School has appointed a School Committee, which comprise of the village king or any family member of the king and parents of some of the students. The Committee charges a nominal monthly fee of ₹5-10 from the parents for a watchman's salary. The committee looks after the attendance of children and teachers.

We disbursed CHF 4750 to the project in 2010.



Sujit Acharya



LOK BIRADARI PRAKALP

Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra

Children Benefited: 100

Lok Biradari Prakalp (LBP) is a manifestation of utopian dreams of Muridhar Devidas Amte popularly known as Baba Amte. Hemalkasa is located in Bhamragad, in the Gadchiroli district in the state of Maharashtra and it is part of the Dandakarayna forest reserve. It was started in 1973 with the motivation for rehabilitation and empowerment of poor people suffering from Leprosy. Soon Dr. Prakash Amte and Dr. Mandakini Amte realized the need of education for these people. In 1975, foundation of Lok Biradari Residential Ashram School was laid with merely 15 students. In 1986, it was given the status of a granted ashram school. The grant covers teachers' salaries and student expenses of 40 students per class.

The school was started with the aim to empower the local tribals with a metaphorical tool called education. It equips them with ability to stop their exploitation and serves as a drive towards emancipation. It not only teaches them how to read and write but also provides a solid base to make them aware of better methods of agriculture, better health care, hygiene and be a part of main stream. Presently, the school provides residential facility for 650 children from Balwadi to 12th standard. In addition to formal education, it provides non-formal training in bare foot doctors, bamboo craft, farming, fabrication, etc.

Every year 40 to 45 students passing through LBP do their graduations in different cities and in different fields like arts, commerce, engineering, veterinary and bachelor of education. LBP has groomed 6 doctors, 2 lawyers, and 250 teachers from Madia tribal community. Some former students of the school are working in police and forest department. Few of them have opted for self-employment in farming and local crafts.



Two of Asha Zurich volunteers, Dr. Indranil Battacharya and Kirtimalini Gadre visited Hemalkasa at beginning of 2011. Asha Zurich funds residential activities of 100 children at LBP. The project is running since June 2011. This year Asha Zurich conducted five weltmarkets with LBP as theme.



Academic year 2011 - 12

Number of students supported by government grant	480
Number of students supported by Asha Zurich	100
Remaining supported by other sources	93
Total number of students	673

LBP believes in overall development of a student. Three proper meals with one glass of milk are given with special emphasis on essential dietary nutrition. In addition to above, every student is provided with 2 sets of uniform, bedding including warm blankets for winter, stationary, complete study material and lots of paper and craft material especially for lower grades. New ways of teaching not only brings enthusiasm but also sets stage for enhancing creativity and innovativeness both among students and teachers. We have appointed extra teachers for the purpose of improvement in teaching techniques and methodology. The extra share of salary is supported by LBP only.



Ankita Singhal



FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2011, three projects were funded- *Akshardeep, Palas (Vishwa Mandal Sevasharam)* and *Lok Biradari Prakaalp*. The closing balance as on 31st December 2011 stood at **CHF 65'285.50**.

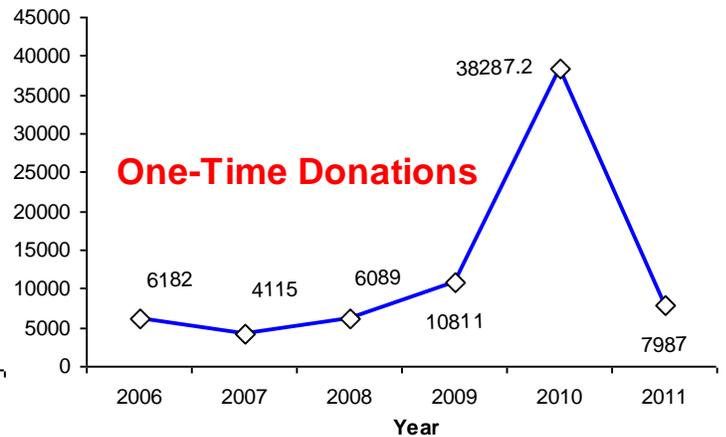
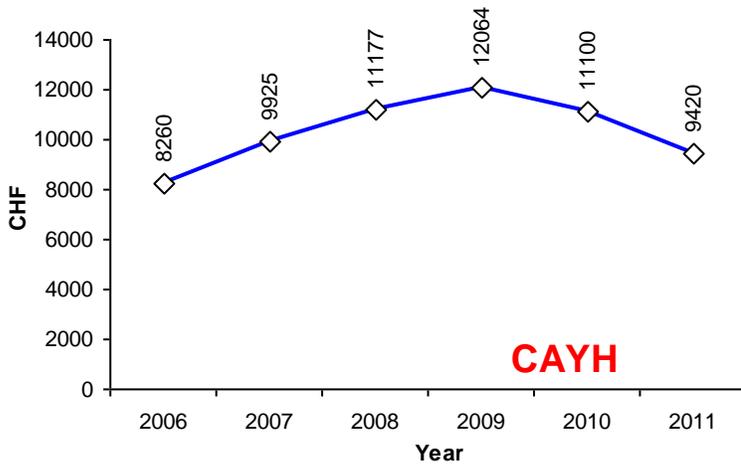
Balance sheet as on 31st December 2011 (in CHF)¹

Opening Balance UBS A/c 1	17'871.35
Opening Balance UBS A/c 2	45'197.12
Receipts	32'135.30
Expenditure	29'918.27
Closing Balance UBS A/c 1	43'237.55
Closing Balance UBS A/c 2	22'047.95
Fund Balance	65'285.50

Income

Charity As Your Hobby (CAYH) is a scheme started by Asha Zurich in 2002. In this program, donors contribute a fixed amount of funds periodically (usually monthly). This ensures a constant inflow of money and allows Asha Zurich to plan for projects in advance. In 2011, CAYH contributions were equal to **CHF 9'420.00**.

One-Time Donations is another source of income received from well-wishers of Asha Zurich. These donations also include contributions raised by individuals and organizations. The organizations which gladly contributed in 2011 were Kurry Klub and Marathi Mandal. In 2011, one-time donation contributions were equal to **CHF 7'987.00**. This was less than the money raised in 2010, primarily because in 2010 there was a major donation of CHF 30'000.00. Another newly added one time donor this year was Best Curry and in return of their donation we have posted their company's advertisement on Asha Zurich website.



¹ Numbers reported here correspond to the period 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2011.



Events

This year the earnings from the events were **CHF 14'602.60**¹. This includes the following:

Receipts from Events

Asha Disco	
Disco 2010	3'763.00 ²
Disco 2011	2'520.60
Weltmarkts	
May 2011	1'854.15
June 2011	2'064.10
July 2011	1'636.75
August 2011	1'213.00
October 2011	1'071.00
E shop sales	480.00
Total	14'602.60

In 2011, we raised **CHF 7'839.00** from the Weltmarkt stalls as opposed to **CHF 3'286.55** raised in 2010. This year handicraft products and cards were also sold at the Weltmarkt stall, **CHF 480.00** was raised.

A summary of receipts are shown below-

Receipts for the year 2011 (in CHF)¹

CAYH	9'420.00
One-time donations	7'987.00
Events	14'602.60
Interests earned	125.70
Total	32'135.30

Expenditure

In 2011, Asha Zurich disbursed a total of **CHF 24'636.32** towards its projects. We supported the two regular projects, *Akshardeep* and *Vishwa Mandal Sevashram*, and started funding a new project- Lok Biradari Prakalp (a residential school for tribal kids).

Projects Disbursements (in CHF)¹

Akshardeep	10'940.00
Palas	7'650.00
Lok Biradari Prakalp	6'046.32
Total	24'636.32

² Asha Disco 2010 happened late in 2010. Therefore, the funds raised from this event were credited in 2011 and bill settlements also took place in early 2011.

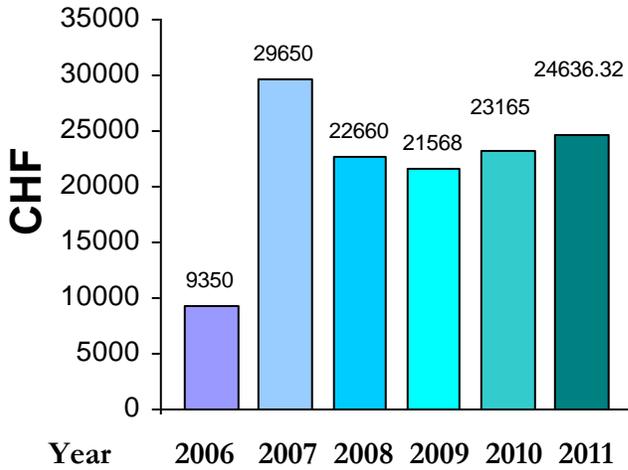


Administrative expenditures such as meeting room rents, printing, posting and bank charges were **CHF 581.35**. While the donations are completely utilized for project funding, the administrative expenditures were, as always, covered by contributions given by Asha Zurich volunteers.

The event expenses for the Disco 2010 and Disco 2011 were **CHF 2'576.70** and **CHF 2'123.90**.

Expenditure (in CHF)¹

Project Disbursement	24'636.32
Administrative charges	581.35
Disco 2010 -2011	4'700.60
Total	29'918.27



Money funded to different projects in the last 6 years



Indranil Bhattacharya



Vol nteer

Asha Zurich needs yo **U**

Donate your time and skills to support the education
of underprivileged children

Volunteer with Asha Zurich

www.asha-zurich.ch

Donate To Asha

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Organization: Asha Zurich
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Account no.: 206-259021.40Q
Clearance no.: 206
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BIC/SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A

