

# NEWS UPDATE

JANUARY 2022



“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.

- MOTHER TERESA



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# INTRODUCTION

## HISTORY OF M S INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Manu and Rika Shah founded MSI in 1975, in the basement of their home in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. MSI is now the largest importer and distributor in the world of Premium Surfaces including granite, marble, porcelain and ceramic tiles, slate, travertine, limestone and other natural stone products from 37 countries. Most notably, MSI provided the granite for the Vietnam Memorial in DC.

Manu and Rika Shah established Sarva Mangal Family Trust (Sarva Mangal means 'let all be happy' in Sanskrit) over 20 years ago with compassion as their driving force for philanthropy. Manu's vision for SMFT is to act as a catalyst, challenge status quo, nurture passionate change-makers and support leapfrogging ideas that are scalable and sustainable. Today, all members from the Shah family are involved in social impact initiatives that are undertaken by SMFT. Manu supports VOSAP – Voice of Specially Abled People, which has created over 10,000 change makers and rated over 18,000 buildings rated for accessibility. He also supports Lend a hand India, which provides digital vocational training to over 300,000 students in 20,000 schools.

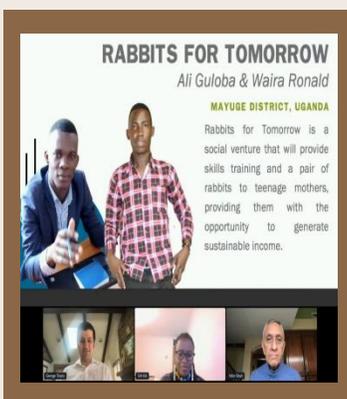
In 2007, Mr. Manu Shah was named Ernst & Young's national "Entrepreneur of the Year" in the distribution, manufacturing, and security category.

## ABOUT SARVA MANGAL FAMILY TRUST

Established in 1994 by the Founders of M S International, Inc. The mission of the Sarva Mangal Family Trust is to improve and strengthen the health, education and wellness of communities and help them prepare for global jobs of the 21st century. Sarva Mangal is a Sanskrit word which means "Goodness to All."

To advance this mission, the Sarva Mangal Family Trust has donated to and is continuing to work with various organizations and programs in health promotion and prevention, assisting victims of domestic violence, empowering seniors, entrepreneurship, technological literacy, community activism, and children's education.

## MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS



### **SARVA MANGAL FAMILY TRUST SPONSORS AFRICAN LEADERS ANNOUNCED AS WINNERS OF SOCIAL VENTURE CHALLENGE 2022**

SMFT sponsored the 2022 Africa Regional Social Venture Challenge conducted by the Resolution Project. Eight teams of emerging African social entrepreneurs have been selected as winners of the 2022 Resolution Social Venture Challenge. A total of 16 teams competed for a fellowship that includes seed funding, mentorship, and access to a network of young global change makers to pursue impactful projects in their communities. (Continued on page 6)

# EVENT – AFRICA SOCIAL VENTURE CHALLENGE 2022

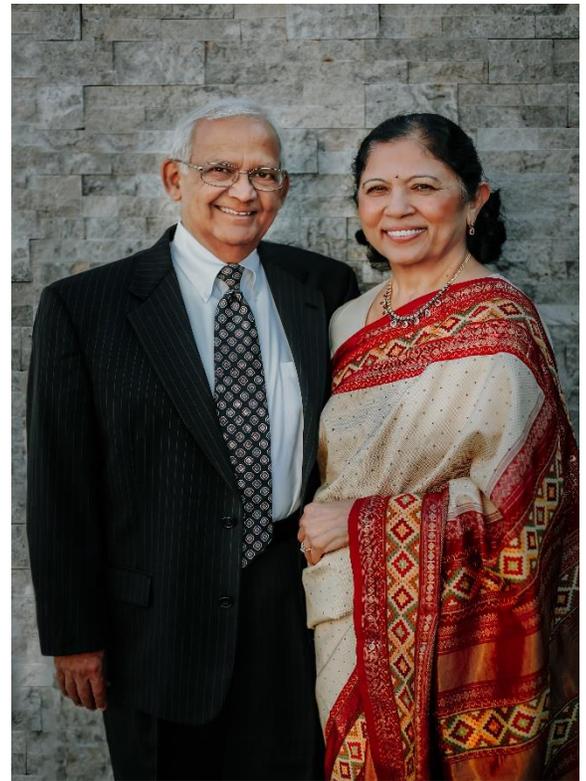
**January 2022** - Sarva Mangal Family Trust sponsored the 2022 Africa Regional Social Venture Challenge conducted by the Resolution Project. The Africa Social Venture Challenge is a multi-step competition designed to inspire undergraduate students to propose impactful, socially-responsible ventures addressing important social issues around the world. Eight teams of emerging African social entrepreneurs have been selected as winners of the 2022 Resolution Social Venture Challenge. A total of 16 teams competed for a fellowship that includes seed funding, mentorship, and access to a network of young global change makers to pursue impactful projects in their communities. The SVC provides a pathway to action for socially responsible young leaders who want to create change that matters.

Winning projects address a wide range of issues Fellows have observed first-hand in their communities and come from across the continent, including Ghana, Malawi, Benin, Rwanda and Uganda.

## **Congratulations to the 2022 Social Venture Challenge Winners:**

1. **Crown Multiverse: By Tennyson Nkhoma and Winfred Nziku from Lilongwe, Malawi.**
2. **Health & Beauty Cocktail Salon: By Angelique Iradukunda and Shallon Kembabazi from Kigali, Rwanda.**
3. **Kwesa – Organic Products: By Kaweesi Edwin and Sandra Mukoya from Kampala, Uganda.**
4. **Proof Made Ltd.: By Clarisse Gusenga from Kigali, Rwanda.**
5. **Rabbits for Tomorrow: By Ali Guloba and Waira Ronald from Mayuge District, Uganda.**
6. **Smile Waste: By Bruno Gbodjivi and Marguerite Zannou from Abomey-Calavi, Benin.**
7. **Touch One Reach All: By Levi Tukundane from Kampala, Uganda.**
8. **Wobil Technologies: By Abena Charity Azogmi and John Wobil from Kumasi, Ghana.**

We encourage the recipients of the fellowship to work hard, bring their ideas to life and become leaders and job creators.



**Manu and Rika Shah – Sponsors of the SVC**

**SVC Judged by SMFT Social Impact Team**

# EVENT – AFRICA SOCIAL VENTURE CHALLENGE 2022 (Cont.)

## RABBITS FOR TOMORROW

*Ali Guloba & Waira Ronald*

**MAYUGE DISTRICT, UGANDA**



Rabbits for Tomorrow is a social venture that will provide skills training and a pair of rabbits to teenage mothers, providing them with the opportunity to generate sustainable income.



### Africa Social Venture Challenge 2022 Result Declaration



### Winners of the Africa Social Venture Challenge 2022

## NGO IN FOCUS FOR JANUARY'22 – EKAL VIDYALAYA



Ekal is the largest non-profit working to bring holistic development to remote rural villages in India. The three branches of Ekal - Vidyalaya, Arogya and Gramothan, work to bring literacy, digital literacy, health and economic development to over 100,000 very remote rural villages in India. Ekal's unique single teacher school model hires local youth from the village and trains them to be a teacher. Children between the ages of 6-14 are enrolled in these schools that use a very innovative pedagogical approach to bring education to first

generation learners. The schools are run at the low cost of \$1/day. Today there are 2.6 Million children enrolled in these schools. More recently digital literacy has been added to the schools in the E-Shiksha program, where children are getting access to quality content through tablets. Skill training and economic development opportunities are provided through the Gramothan wing. The health (Arogya) arm is working to bring health services to the last mile through the use of locally trained women health workers (Arogya Sevikas) who use a telemedicine platform (Intelehealth) to connect doctors to the villagers. The organization, established in 1988, has been working tirelessly to transform rural India. The organization was awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize, the highest award given to a non-profit organization by the government of India.

### Updates and Achievements:

- **Literacy:** Ekal Vidyalayas are innovative non-formal schools that run in the village. They cater to children ages 6- 14. Over 2.6 million children attend these schools. After completing three years of education, the children move on to middle school. A fivefold educational curriculum that includes academics (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic), health and hygiene, financial literacy, civics and value education helps bring holistic development to the child. A unique pedagogical approach using song and dance is used to make education fun. Several alumni have joined frontline workforce in the villages like police, postal workers etc. Yet others have joined the army. One of our alumni, Pinky Karmakar carried the torch in the London Olympics for India.
- **Digital Literacy:** Realizing the importance of digital literacy, Ekal has worked to implement the E-Shiksha program where children are able to use tablets to access curricular content to improve their learning. They also gain familiarity with the use of tablets thus becoming digital literate.

**With pioneering support from the Sarva Mangal Family Trust, we were able to initiate the E-Shiksha program and implement it in 2000 schools. We are now working to make E-Shiksha as a core offering in all of the Ekal schools and integrate it with the core curriculum.**

## NGO IN FOCUS FOR JANUARY'22– EKAL VIDYALAYA (Cont.)

- **Arogya** - The Arogya Foundation of India works to bring health services to the last mile. A local woman, trained to serve as an Arogya Sevika works to educate the villagers on good health and hygiene. Anemia for women is a prime focus of the health efforts. Testing and guidance is provided to women who are anemic. In several villages we have now launched a Telemedicine Enhanced Arogya (TEA) program. Partnering with a telemedicine provider, <http://intelehealth.org> Ekal sevikas are trained to triage health issues, provide advice and if needed connect the patient to a doctor.

**The Sarva Mangal Family Trust has provided significant support to Ekal's TEA program in Gujarat.**

- **Gramothan** - Skill training and bringing economic opportunities to the villages is core to Ekal's holistic development efforts. The offerings include:
  - **Tailoring Training** - Women are taught tailoring that enables them to start tailoring shops in their villages. Graduates earn Rs 2000-5000/month without leaving their home. The tailoring shops are a boon to the women in the village who now have easy access to a tailor in the village.
  - **Ekal on Wheels** - A mobile computer lab travels to the villages to bring digital literacy skills to the youth in the villages. The basic literacy skills are a great addition to the youth seeking government and other jobs, where digital literacy is now a requirement.
  - **Computer Training Labs** - Youth are provided in-depth training in different areas and are awarded a certificate at the end of the training that helps upskill them. Some go on to start little internet cafes. Graduates earn anywhere from Rs 10,000-12,000/month.
  - **Agriculture** - Farmers are trained in different techniques in agriculture with a focus on multiple cropping and organic farming.
- **COVID-19 Efforts** - The impact of the Ekal presence in the villages came to the forefront during the COVID-19 Pandemic and helped keep the villagers safe. The COVID-19 efforts included
  - Keeping the children engaged in educational activities in an outdoor environment. Thus children had some activities while most things were closed.
  - Our tailoring trainees were able to make masks and provide them to the frontline workers and villagers. Over 3 million masks were made and distributed in rural areas.
  - A COVID-19 lifeline was established with our telehealth partner. Sevikas were given Oximeters and Thermometers. Patients calling into the lifeline were able to support when no other resource was available.
  - Informational pamphlets were distributed in the villages to provide information on quarantining, mask wearing and social distancing. When vaccinations were available, training to prevent vaccine hesitancy was a key part of our initiatives.
  - Skill training centers were transformed into COVID-19 isolation centers with Oxygen Concentrators.

# NGO IN FOCUS FOR JANUARY'22– EKAL VIDYALAYA (Cont.)



**E-Shiksha**



**Tailoring Training**



**Ekal on Wheels**



**Telemedicine**



**Ekal Teachers from Arunachal Pradesh**



**Sharing Masks**



**Ekal Receiving the Gandhi Peace Prize**



**Organic Farming**

## SUCCESS STORY – EKAL VIDYALAYA



**Name:** Kalpana Mahato

**Program:** Ekal Vidyalaya

**Location:** Karyadi, Jharkhand

“We are from a very poor family. We are four sisters. My father has special needs and hence cannot go to work. I was helping out at home from a very young age. I could not go to school because no one was there to take care of my sister”, says Kalpana Mahato. When an Ekal school was started in her village, she could attend it for her sister to school with her. The teacher was very motivational and created a love for education in Kalpana. When she was older, the teacher encouraged her to go to the formal school that was slightly far away. She joined the school. “When I joined high school, unfortunately the grain store in my house caught fire. This caused a deep financial hardship. I started to work in road construction jobs to make ends meet” says Kalpana.

When the Ekal teacher found out about the situation, he talked to the school teacher and arranged for some financial aid from the government. This allowed Kalpana to continue her studies without having to work. She graduated top of her class. “I love technology and I would love to become an engineer. I am studying to become an electrical engineer. It is my dream to use my skills to make a difference for my village”

“If there was no Ekal, I would have been limited to just grazing cattle or working as a laborer. Thanks to Ekal for lighting the lamp of education, I have hopes and dreams that I look forward to fulfilling soon”

## SUCCESS STORY – THE RESOLUTION PROJECT

The RoHo ethical fashion line in Kenya sells beaded leather sandals, beaded jewelry, reusable bags, and a collection of cowhide totes, clutches & journals in local and international markets. RoHo is currently working with 400 local artisans (95% of whom are women) and pays wages far higher than the industry standard. They also ensure local artisans are working in a safe environment, and provide education grants to send their children to quality schools in Kenya.

**Name:** Caleigh Hernandez

**Program:** RoHo

**Location:** Kenya

Since the onset of COVID-19, Caleigh and her team have used income from mask sales to feed 250 artisans and their families—an estimated 1,500 people overall.

The Resolution Project provided the startup capital to help launch RoHo and continues to provide mentorship to Caleigh. “There are so many things that I didn’t know about going into business,” says Caleigh. “Resolution helped to bridge that gap. They are my safety net and cheerleading squad.”



## SUCCESS STORY – VOICE OF SPECIALLY ABLED PEOPLE

Under many initiatives of VOSAP, enabling Specially Abled People with Assistive Devices is one. In 2019, VOSAP helped and enabled 34 girls studying in Lion's Blind Girls' School in Vadodara by providing them smart phones. This enablement activity made a huge difference in their lives and our team was witness to that change during their visit to the school.

### Smartphones Enabling Blind Girls School Children to see Bright Future

**Program:** Individual Enablement with Assistive Devices

**Location:** Gujarat

It helped them learn and study especially in the time of COVID-19 lockdown period. They not only study with help of their smart phones and the applications but also learn to keep up with latest technology like email, zoom, watching YouTube videos, using money app etc. which makes their lives a lot easier. These young students are now learning to type multiple languages and use Computer.

In a conversation with Faculties at School, One of the teacher expressed her gratitude to VOSAP and said "This Device has helped our students a lot with their education and I believe they will be able to learn new techniques, use technology like this and be ready to compete tech generation and make a better lives for themselves. Initiatives that are focusing on enabling Visually Impaired students with technology should be promoted and accepted widely".

VOSAP is determined to help children like these and make sure they have a bright future ahead. Their stories inspire thousands of people to break the barriers and dream big. It gives us strength to do more, help more and ensure that this act of kindness and compassion goes a long way.

This is just one example of the transformative power of assistive technology.



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