



## **Annual Update 2008**

**§ 3000 more students were enrolled during the year for the Vocational Training program:** Under project PLAN 100, the vocational training Program has now reached to over 50 schools covering more than 8000 girls and boys in rural India. (Watch documentary on PLAN 100 <http://www.vimeo.com/1257780>).

The first batch of students (approx. 600) will appear for high school graduation with multi-skilled vocational training as one of the subjects. These will be the first graduates of PLAN 100 program.

'**Community service**' which provides hands on work experience is a unique component of the PLAN 100 program. During the year community works worth 5 lakhs (\$ 11,500) were performed by the students by undertaking projects such as construction and repair of sanitary blocks, electric maintenance, repair to school furniture, painting of school premises, raising nursery plants for sale etc.

**§ Career counseling program proves successful:** The recently completed survey of about 400 participants from Aptitude Testing and Career Counseling program reveals that 71 % students have chosen the field which was recommended to them and they are happy with it. Over 3000 students participated in this program during the past three years.

Career counseling center at Kem has decided to go full fledged and start vocational training programs. They will serve two schools and a minority community center.

**§ Launched Global Connection program:** The NYU Business School students helped LAHI to put together a curriculum for this online student exchange program. The pilot program between the Beacon High School, New York City and Alf Byte Institute will be launched in Fall 2009. In all 16 students will participate for a period of full semester.

**§ Micro-enterprise promotion (Bridge Loan Program):** In this program launched in 2007 in all Nine young graduates of the vocational training program have taken the benefit of this program and have started their own enterprises. LAHI is now looking for a partnership with appropriate microfinance institution to expand it further.



**§ Business School partnerships:** This year also Stanford and Stern (NYU) business school students through their GMIX and Stern Consulting Core programs worked with LAHI during summer of 2009. The projects which they undertook were immensely useful for LAHI.

**§ Advocacy:** LAHI's program strategy of 'scaling up of grass roots successful models to reach critical numbers' has borne positive outcome. The State Government has reversed its policy of granting permission to technical/vocational education due to efforts by LAHI and its project partner, Vigyan Ashram. There is an increasing interest by business corporations to support the vocational training centers. However their focus remains the area of their operations.

Advocacy efforts with the State Government have resulted in several ministerial level meetings indicating positive inclination towards introducing vocational training as one of the core subjects in the high school curriculum. This policy change will however pose several administrative and implementation challenges. The efforts now need to be in the direction of how to spread the program but also to ensure its quality. An intermediary monitoring agency is a desirable option.

**§ LAHI's outreach is growing:** LAHI is now collaborating with several NYC based community organizations such as Asian Network, Children for Children, ...Chess, Amex..... LAHI annual day was celebrated with Bob Simon of 60 Minutes and Abhijit Banerjee, Prof. of Economics, MIT as guests, the Run for a Dream program is becoming popular and several enthusiasts participate in the 5K events besides a strong turnover for the regular marathon program.

In India too our strength is growing. The training component which is the key for the success of the PLAN 100 program is further strengthened by offering the training at multi-locations reflecting regional variations. Over 250 instructors participate at least twice in a year in such trainings.

In 2009-10 we will conduct independent review of the PLAN 100 program. This will provide good insight into the program performance and its strength to go multi-state.