2018 ANNUAL REPORT
Dear Friends,

On behalf of the entire team at the Desai Foundation and the Desai Foundation Trust, we thank you for your support, your voice and contributions to make 2018 one of our biggest years ever!

Our journey over the past five years as a public foundation has been thrilling. We are so grateful to our team, partners, collaborators, donors and the institutional funders that have made our work possible, stronger, and more impactful than ever before. We are deeply thankful for the 755 individual donors, 18 companies, and 5 non-profits that have supported our work through financial or in-kind donations in 2018.

Our approach and mission is multifaceted. We understand that community development cannot be achieved by only focusing on one area of growth for a community. That is why we are so committed to elevating the standards and access to health, hygiene, livelihood and education in the hundreds of villages we serve. And though we collect and report many quantitative metrics of our impact, our growth and our work, we want to remind you that at the Desai Foundation our main focus is to cultivate dignity for everyone we serve so they can dream beyond their circumstances. The work is, after all, about the people we serve – not just about the numbers.

Our model allows us to incubate ideas (many of which come straight from the people we serve in the field), pilot those ideas by iterating to ensure their impact and efficiency, and then scale some of those ideas to bring great programming to as many people as possible.

Our growth this year has been staggering. We have expanded from 78 communities in 2017 to 568 communities by the end of 2018. And we have already doubled that 2018 number only 6 months into 2019.

Our events continue to be the hottest tickets in town for unique and spirited occasions where 100% of the proceeds go directly to the work on the ground. We have continued to break ground with innovative partners – both on the ground and in our marketing.

Thank you for helping us reach over 682,000 people in the US and India to #DreamBeyond their circumstances!

Yours,

Megha Desai
President
OUR MISSION:
We empower women and children through community programs to elevate health and livelihood in India and the U.S.
The Desai Foundation’s primary goal is to elevate the health and livelihood of the greater community, targeting women and children in particular to ensure sustainable growth.

Over the last 22 years, we have significantly improved access to health services, education, and vocational opportunities. Our methods to build and grow are work are born from the spirit of innovation. Our method allows us to incubate and iterate, pilot and evaluate and then scale programs across our regions for the most effective and powerful impact. We hope to continue and grow our work, share our model, and impact the lives of more women and children.

1997 Founding

Though the Desai Foundation was founded as a small private family foundation, our methodology has allows us to grow and expand our work dramatically. This lead to our conversion from a family foundation to a public 501c3 organization in 2014. This means that we are no longer privately funded, and rely on donations and grants to support and fund our work. The founding family of our organization still matches every dollar donated by an individual donor, showing their deep commitment to the work and the process. We’ve also established our NGO status in India, under the Desai Foundation Trust. Our transition to a public organization was with one goal in mind: the ability to help more people and uplift more communities. This transition has not been easy, but your support and faith is why it works. We are committed to keeping our finances transparent, spend money efficiently, and our impact high.

Our Method

We believe innovation is at the root of all progress. It’s with this idea in mind that the Desai Foundation cultivates its programming much like a technology start-up approaches its innovation. When we flesh out a program concept, we test it as a pilot in the real world. Then, after creating structure, evaluation, and a clear process around each program, we begin to scale. Currently we have four programs that are scaling across western India. Because of the rigor with which we develop these models they can scale quickly. Our method also relies heavily on the fine balance we strike between programmatic funding and supporting organizations. Finding the right partners on the ground ensures that our programs are welcome by the community and are sustainable after we are gone. For us, scale isn’t always about the sheer number of people we serve. Scale is about our efficiency, depth of impact, sustainability of our programming, and then, the number of people we serve.

Our Future

The future of the Desai Foundation depends on you. We are committed to continue carefully vetting partners and fostering our deep connection with the communities we serve. Our focus will always remain in health & livelihood for women & children. However, we are always looking to grow geographically! Our modular programs allow us to expand with one program or many. We are committed to creating strong partnerships both in the U.S. and India.
OBJECTIVES

We are driven to promote health and livelihood, particularly for those who are both traditionally underserved and powerful agents of social change: women and children.

Working with the existing strengths of a community, we focus on providing a healthy life, the dignity of a job, and the fulfillment of an education.

HEALTH

Good health and well-being are the most fundamental human rights and basic necessities of social progress. In partnership with other nonprofits as well as local universities, hospitals, and community centers, we offer health camps that provide free screening, treatment, and education to those who otherwise would not have access to the care they need.

LIVELIHOOD

We partner with organizations to provide youth mentorship, workshops, and vocational training. These programs provide an opportunity not only to develop a skill set, but a sense of dignity. We recognize livelihood not only as the capacity to pursue educational and vocational opportunity, but to live a fulfilling, purposeful life on one’s own terms.

WOMEN

Women are the backbone of any community and the discrimination that they face limits social progress as a whole. By targeting their needs, we address the well-being of the greater community. Supporting women is essential to overall growth, as 90% of what women earn is invested back into their community. **

CHILDREN

Children too have the potential to advance their communities. The Desai Foundation provides quality education and enrichment programs to equip children with the knowledge to meet the many challenges shaping our world today.

** statistic taken from the United Nations
FUNDAMENTALS

Our work in both India and the U.S. stress inclusivity, sustainability, and accountability. We work under a community-based approach to ensure a strong and positive impact.

STRONG FUNDAMENTALS

We work in communities we know well—therefore we know we are tackling real issues that they face—not simply creating band-aids to fix problems.

ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

We identify the right local leaders to spearhead each project. This ensures community buy-in and a deep understanding of issues. It also promotes self-sustaining empowerment among the whole community.

TRUSTED & QUALIFIED NONPROFIT PARTNERS

These organizations help push our work and dollars donated even further. It also spreads credit for the work—which in turn builds morale in the community.

PROVEN PROGRAMS & MODELS

For every major initiative, a test program is set up to ensure its effectiveness and to understand its impact. We make adjustments to these programs when necessary so we can be confident in expanding them.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We are looking to solve long-term problems, not simply create short-term solutions. Our goal is to truly inspire those we serve to dream bigger and lead healthier and more economically stable lives. We are in it for the long run.
"I have made so many new friends now. I love to come to this center because I feel so free and get away from my domestic life. This is the only place where I have time for myself. I meet my friends here, we go out together, eat together... I have never felt so special."
SINCE OUR INCEPTION...

- **682,000** people have been impacted by our programs.
- **568** communities reached.
- **$1,871,371** received in contributions from 2,810 individuals, 91 corporations, and 36 NGOs.
- **2,500+** people have attended our fundraisers in the US.
HEALTH AWARENESS & SERVICES

HEALTH CAMPS

We host a variety of health camps across the regions we serve, connecting rural people with access to the health care they need. We host camps that focus on general health, diabetes, vision, dental, pediatrics, etc. These camps provide screenings, medicine, triage, and where necessary, follow up care.

WOMEN’S HEALTH

Our gynecology camps are some of our most robust. These camps not only provide screening and care, but also lots of education to prevent future issues for women living in rural India. Our Asani Menstrual Health Management program is also heavily focused on educating women on proper use of sanitary products during their periods.

HYGIENE TRAINING

Hygiene education is a vital preventative measure for a child’s overall health. We provide hygiene education at our health camps, in schools and through our Sanitary Napkin Program. We also believe these students bring their learning home and spread their knowledge to their families. Through repetitive, easy-to-learn, and kid-friendly tools, our hygiene training can shape healthy futures for these children.

MORE HEALTH PROGRAMS

• pediatric camp with blood group & hemoglobin check-up
• general medical check-up with dermatologist
• pre-natal clinics and seminars
• blood-type testing
• distribution of medicine, vitamins, and glasses
• minor operations (ex. cataracts at eye check-up camp)
In the village of Untdi in Gujarat, India, Shantaben Vidhyabhavan is a vital community center, providing quality education, vocational opportunity, and health and developmental services. Since reconstruction, Shantaben Vidyabhavan’s school, “Lok Vidyalaya” has tripled in size and we have added four more classrooms to meet rising demand. We now provide quality education to over 800 students from 15 surrounding villages and have doubled our teaching capacity to children from kindergarten to 12th standard. Unlike many schools in rural India, our curriculum covers all major subjects: language, math, the arts, history, and science through the use of our state of the art science labs. Our science school is the only one of its kind in the region, offering a rich curriculum to students hungry for a level of academic rigor and exploration that they would not otherwise have access to. This school has a waiting list to meet the demand.

Community Impact (CI), a student-run organization at Columbia University, serves underprivileged communities in the Morningside Heights, Harlem, and Washington Heights neighborhoods of New York City.

CI’s programs empower both youth and adults to pursue educational and vocational opportunities, promote health and wellness, and foster a spirit of community service. Community Impact (CI) is making great strides in continuing their work of engaging students at Columbia University to serve local, disadvantaged youth and address the needs of the overall community.

CI’s volunteers and coordinators have donated over 61,000 hours of their time. To put that in monetary terms using the NYS industry standard rate of a volunteer hour of $28.06, CI’s volunteers and coordinators have donated almost $100,000 worth of their time.

We are proud to have partnered with IIT Gandhinagar’s NYASA and NEEV programs to help transform the rural communities near the school. These programs, like the program at Columbia University, use the resources present at the school to help uplift its surrounding areas. We have partnered with them on large scale health camps and vocational programming. Each year, 25-30 students from NYASA organize the Sanjeevani health camp at IIT Gandhinagar for children and women living in neighboring villages. Activities conducted in this camp include screening children for health-related issues, required vaccinations for children, and hygiene training. These programs are designed to build global citizen leaders who take on the social responsibility of changing conventional norms and practices that limit the development of many.
VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

SEWING CLASSES

- Library + research services
- Entrepreneurship programs
- Electrician training
- Plumbing training
- Welding training

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- Asani sanitary napkin program
- Jewelry making
- Personal finance
- English language classes
- Library + research services
- Entrepreneurship programs
- Electrician training
- Plumbing training
- Welding training

Our Beauty Parlor Skills vocational program prepares women for a relatively high-paying job in an environment where they feel safe. Our course teaches hair, makeup, and wedding & special occasion services.

These classes teach valuable digital literacy skills to help advance personal, educational, and professional development.

We host a variety of vocational sewing programs across many of the regions we serve. We intentionally grow these courses slowly. We’ve learned that vocational training is partially about economic empowerment and partly about cultivating dignity. For those taking our course, we don’t require that they take a job directly after, as that doesn’t make sense for all rural women.
We are incredibly proud of our Asani Sanitary Napkin program, and are so happy to report its expansion. The program trains women to manufacture & distribute high quality, low cost sanitary napkins through their communities. This empowers girls & women to take control over their health + livelihood, and enables girls to pursue higher education beyond the onset of puberty.

The vocational training provided through the Asani Sanitary Napkin program has a profound personal and public impact. The program also has the added effect of combatting stigma and giving women and girls a fundamental sense of dignity that will empower them to pursue long term opportunities.

We are currently expanding our Asani Sanitary Napkin program with other partners. As one of our most all-encompassing programs, we are thrilled to announce that the Asani Sanitary Napkin was given our first grant by the International Foundation in 2018!

7,750 Sanitary Napkins Produced
10,000 Women Reached
5,000+ Pads per day are made using our Saral Swacch Machine
65+ Women Working
40 Local schools with regular MHM Programming
Half of the world’s population has their period. Women in India and South East Asia are done staying quiet about their periods! P&G sells their sanitary products as “Whisper” in India and South East Asia and it’s promoting the social stigma around periods.

If P&G wants to keep making ads talking about women’s empowerment, it’s time for them to change the name.

Visit www.wearedonewhispering.org and join the movement.

212,403+ views across social channels
3,443+ shares and likes
In partnership with Diwaliben Trust, Bardoli is one of our fastest growing regions. In 2018, we conducted one summer camp that was attended by 185 children from nearby villages.

We’re excited to have worked in 2018 to forge a strong relationship with this region of 50 villages populated by 100,000 people.

2019 is a big year for the Bardoli region as we are expanding three of our programs—sewing vocational program, women’s health camps and the Asani Sanitary Napkin program—for our target community members.

In 2019, we have organized 4 summer camps so far, attended by 760 children. We have started 4 sewing classes and are launching our Asani Sanitary production unit, reaching approximately 10,000 women and girls. In just one year our target population reach has increased from 185 children to over 15,000 women and children in Bardoli.
“I came with my family and friends and I liked the initiative a lot. We even got spectacles and medicines for knee pain. He also advised me to do some basic exercises which I am doing daily and I am feeling much better now. This is a nice initiative on your part which is very helpful for the villagers. You people should do it more often like once in 3-4 months.”
Community Impact, in partnership with Hostos Community College, began Café Prep. Café Prep is for students who have expressed an interest in the culinary arts. The program prepares its participants for employment in food service and hospitality through cooking, as well as lessons on digital and financial literacy and occupational training and credentials.

Two English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) participants have written pieces for publication in this year's NYU Literacy Review. 77 works were chosen from 350 submissions from adult literacy programs throughout the five boroughs.

The program will broaden its reach to focus on the following: building relationships with individuals in the community affected by housing inequity; creating a lecture series about housing policies and how it effects the campus community; partnering with sustainability groups on campus to locate local businesses for food recovery; and advocacy work in Manhattanville and the community surrounding campus.
In 2018, we served a population of over **682,000** in India, both directly by providing services in health, vocational training, and schooling, and indirectly through our outreach. Our outreach through universities and community centers promotes awareness for health and other vital resources and creates spaces to support both individual and communal advancement. We are working to expand our reach, ensuring that our services are accessible to thousands of others in neighboring regions.

**INDIA**

**682,000 TOTAL POPULATION REACH**

**IIT GANDHINAGAR**
- 7 villages
- 10,000 reach

**SHANTABEN VIDHYABHAVAN GRAM SEVA TRUST**
- 20 villages
- 40,000 reach

**GRAM VIKAS TRUST**
- 200 villages
- 300,000 reach

**HANSA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER**
- 6 villages
- 10,000 reach

**DIWALIBEN TRUST**
- 123 villages
- 222,000 reach
2,492 women have attended gynecology health camps.

15,000 children have attended our kids health camps (BAL Health Mela).

25,124 villagers who received treatments - many of whom had never had medical attention before.
21650 students have been taught how to use a computer.

368 women have received vocational training.

867 K-12 students are enrolled full-time at Shantaben Vidhyabhavan.

650 students have been taught how to use a computer.

368 women have received vocational training.
OUR OVERALL IMPACT

- 992 children have attended our summer camps
- 695 women have received vocational training
- 575,000 sanitary napkins have been produced at our centers
- 800 students have been taught computer skills
- 20 sanitary napkins have been produced at our centers
- 9,000 members of the Harlem/Morningside Heights community have been impacted by Community Impact at Columbia University annually
- 15,500 children have attended our kids health camps
Hansaben is a mother of two young women. All Hansaben knew was to use rags during menstruation. While attending a Desai Foundation menstrual awareness program, Hansaben learned about the benefits of using pads that she could afford the Asani ones. On that day, she decided to change her household's practices and educated her daughters as well as some of the other young women in her community on using sanitary napkins.
After many years, the Desai Foundation has understood that not every program will yield the same results. Not every vocational program leads to job placement. Not every girl that enters a classroom goes to college. Not every child going through hygiene education lives a disease-free life.

We are focused on two main areas to measure our success:

1. Are we providing access & awareness?
2. Does this program cultivate dignity?

Sometimes the rupees in a woman’s pocket is less important than the self-worth she feels after learning a skill. Our growth is intentionally slow, as we care more about the people we serve, rather than the numbers we report.
Our efforts tap resources in the communities we serve, not only ensuring long-term progress but promoting a spirit of local engagement. Inspiring those inside the community to know that they have the power to shift their own circumstance is an important part of successful community development.

Our work also acknowledges the broader spectrum: how community development in turn translates to global advancement. By operating under the mission of forming more inclusive societies, our goals not only support participatory action on the local level, but also intersect with the goals established by major national and international bodies for a prosperous future. Our mission runs parallel with both that of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Indian government’s social initiatives. We share the goals of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao; Swachh Bharat; and Digital India to educate and empower girls, improve hygiene and sanitation, and promote digital literacy.

By elevating health and livelihood, all of our projects collectively address several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Good Health and Well-Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, and Decent Work and Economic Growth. As our projects continue to thrive, we are working toward one day impacting 1 million lives, a goal that while ambitious, aligns with vital objectives like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Our work was validated in the concluding outcome from the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women: “rural women and girls are essential to sustainable development, and their rights and empowerment needs to be prioritized.”

We are thrilled to continue moving forward alongside the objectives of global and national powers for a healthier, more equal world. Together, we can empower those with the greatest need and potential, helping strengthen communities.
FINANCIALS

BUDGET ALLOCATION

- Outreach: 4%
- Management/Administration: 12%
- Education: 15%
- Health: 33%
- Fundraising/Marketing: 13%
- Livelihood: 23%

OUR COMMITMENT

EVERY DOLLAR raised for the Desai Foundation from individuals will go directly to the work on the ground. Our overhead is covered by the initial endowment, Board of Directors, and corporate donors. We work hard to ensure maximum value for every dollar you generously trust with us.

OPERATIONAL SPEND

- FY 2018: $476,464
- FY 2019: $600,000
- FY 2020: $650,000 (estimated)

A FULL PICTURE

In accordance with Indian law, the Desai Foundation Trust was established in 2014. All money raised in India is directed to the Desai Foundation Trust. To be as transparent as possible, we will disclose financials of both the Desai Foundation (US 501(c)3) and the Desai Foundation Trust together to present a full picture.
We are thrilled to be expanding our reach to Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Our goals remain to bring quality services to those we serve and to expand our scalable programming.

Programs We Are Expanding

- Asani Sanitary Napkin Program
- Summer Camps
- Hygiene Training Program
- Health Camps
  - Vision + Gynecology
Our Model Amplifies Your Contribution

Turning a $1 donation into $8 of working capital

- The founding family matches your donation
- We leverage existing hospitals, buildings, schools, that don’t charge us to host our programming
- Our model promotes co-financing from local partners to ensure local buy-in & fundraising ensuring the sustainability of the program
- In-kind donations of books, supplies, etc. allows us to focus on our funding services and empowerment
- We inspire students, local leaders and volunteers to donate their time and expertise to our programming allowing us to do more with every dollar raised.

At the Desai Foundation, we are very proud of having created an infrastructure that allows each dollar donated to not only go directly to the work on the ground, but also to multiply in its impact. Many other organizations have to pay for infrastructure, supplies, and volunteers – we’ve created local buy-in to reduce those costs so your dollar goes further.

DISCLAIMER: This is an estimate based on a sample of 2017 donations. These amplifications don’t apply to every program donation.
2018 EVENTS

Lotus Festival
$196,206 300
RAISED
ATTENDEES

Diwali on The Hudson
$43,021
RAISED
400
ATTENDEES

Cocktails + Chaat

LA
$3,516
RAISED
59
ATTENDEES

NYC

SF
Thanks to these incredible sponsors for helping bring our work and our events to life!

For upcoming event sponsorship opportunities, please contact Pooja Banerjee at pooja@thedesdaifoundation.org
The Desai Foundation is proud and grateful to have the support of so many generous donors. In 2018, we received donations from 755 individual donors, 18 corporate partners, and 5 nonprofit organizations. We are deeply honored to serve, and thank you for your continued support. We’d like to take the opportunity to thank some of our generous and long-standing donors.

Your donations are important to us, even if we didn’t list your name.
DONATE YOUR BIRTHDAY

Want to leverage your birthday to support a good cause? Would you rather your friends donate money rather than buy you unnecessary gifts? The Desai Foundation loves birthday fundraising campaigns! Here are a few of our top 2018 birthday donors:

RESHMA PENDLETON
PROGRAM MANAGER, NETFLIX
RAISED
$4,788

“I love that the Asani Sanitary Napkin Program breaks down taboos around menstruation in rural India while also giving girls crucial education and supplies to have healthy periods.”

PALAK PATEL
CELEBRITY CHEF
RAISED
$1,282

“By giving to the Desai Foundation, you can truly make a difference in the lives of women in rural India by ensuring that they have the opportunity to dream beyond their circumstances.”

SANDRA JAIN
CHIEF PHARMACIST, CAPSULE
RAISED
$1,286

POOJA THAKER
WELLNESS COACH
RAISED
$1,220

RAINAKUMARA GARDINER
CEO, JUGGERNAUT
RAISED
$3,268

ELIZABETH SARQUIS
CEO, JUKKO
RAISED
$1,620

“Creating a birthday campaign is a piece of cake. Get the toolkit at www.thedesaifoundation.org/donate-now”
MEDIA 2018

NGO'S IN THE DIGITAL AGE
HOW THE DESAI FOUNDATION MARKETS ITSELF IN THE U.S. AND INDIA

INDIA Abroad
A Window Into the Indian-American World
A Light That Shines in The Heart

INDIA New England NEWS

The Desai Foundation’s New Asani SWACHH machine and the ‘ATAL Tinkering Lab’ at Shantaben Vidhyabhavan get Inaugurated by Gujarat CM Rupani
Gram Seva Trust has been a long standing partner that has created such trust in its community to deliver healthcare and hospital services to some of the most underserved of communities.

Our founding partner, Columbia Community Impact is an umbrella organization that empowers Columbia students to volunteer in their communities and uplift the Morningside Heights and Harlem communities.

Diwaliben Trust is a new partner that allows us to experiment and collaborate. We rarely meet an organization with such aligned values and impressive execution.

UVKM has been our most trusted collaborator & partner. They have allowed us to experiment, develop & incubate our change making programming with the collaboration of not only the staff but the community, as well.

Creating vision and opportunity is what community college is all about, so we work with the college to inject creativity and entrepreneurship into their students.

We have closely partnered with the Yogananda Trust to build our first community center and bring our programming to the Untdi district. We worked very closely with the entire leadership and community to ensure a fully sustainable and thriving community center.

IIT Gandhinagar is unique in its commitment to social service. We are proud to partner with programs that engage both students and staff in uplifting the surrounding rural communities.

Gram Vikas Trust is a robust organization that has been a reliable partner and ally in bringing effective programming to the region.
2018 TEAM

USA

- Samir Desai, Founder/CEO
- Yash Shah
- Moha Desai
- Santhana Krishnan

INDIA

- Vikram Parekh
- Shivani Desai
- Kiran Desai

ADVISORS

- Nishit Acharya
- Vikas Desai
- Rakesh Kamdar

MARKETING

- Megha Desai, President
- Thulasi Sivalingam, Operations Manager
- Olivia Pendaragast, Development
- Pooja Banerjee, Business Systems Analyst
- Isabella Oliveira, Marketing Intern
- Sumedh Gangurde, Programming Intern
- Nauka Patel, Field Officer
- Jinal Patel, Field Officer
- Jacksia Kabir, Administrative Manager
- Prakita Patel, Asani Technician

PROGRAMMING

- Kshipra Patel, Program Coordinator
- Kiran Ravarani, Program Executive
We’re expanding!

Do you want any of our programs in your village?

Email info@thedesaifoundation.org