

Project Selection Guidelines

- Partner organization should not have any 'objectionable affiliations' - in the sense of supporting sectarian strife, whether based on religion, caste, or other categories. Any such prejudicial links will be judged carefully based on concrete evidence and not based on surmises or inferences.
- The target population should largely be children (aged 5-14). Other programs will not be considered unless they are adequately linked to plans to educate children in the 5-14 years age group, as part of a comprehensive package.
- Primary focus of the project should be education that will eventually be an impetus for socio-economic change. Further, projects implementing innovative approaches will be preferred.
- Projects that benefit children in rural areas where there is very little help readily accessible will be preferred over projects that are well established in urban areas where other means of funding/help may be more accessible.
- It is very important that follow-ups are part of the project design in order to ensure that it is not merely a temporary effort, but a sustained one. (For example, children who are educated up to the 5th grade by the project should be helped to get placed in some other school for continuing their education). The project should espouse a long-term commitment to their programs and convince Asha-Stanford that it can sustain itself beyond the funding cycle.
- We prefer a significant amount of local participation (other than as beneficiaries) to ensure a long-term involvement, both from the organizers and the local people benefiting from the project.
- Arranging a site visit to the project is an important requirement - this should be done before the final meeting at which its funding will be considered. The site visit ensures that the money is being spent as stated (in the funding request) and for evaluating future funding. A second site visit is required if there is a proposal to renew funding to an active Asha-Stanford project - details are available in the Project Stewardship Guidelines.
- Given our low budget, we are unable to fund large infrastructure costs. But if infrastructure needs to be established in order for the project to become functional (eg., school building), then it will be considered based on the amount of funds currently available.
- Projects will be assessed for high cost effectiveness (low \$/child/year) - low overhead costs can increase funding chances.
- There is no fixed maximum sum for funding a project. But projects should be selected so that the money available for funding is spread out amongst a few different projects and not all pooled into one project. If one particular project requires a large sum of money and if the project seems to demand it, then the project reviewer or the projects coordinator can contact other Asha chapters to explore the possibility of sharing the funding amount requested.
- Asha Stanford will not commit to any funds it does not already have. At the same time, efforts will be taken to ensure reasonably quick disbursement of funds collected to fund different projects.

The following are project characteristics that we specially value:

Sector: bonded and landless laborers, tribal populations, street children, children of sex-workers, migratory labor (eg. construction workers), unorganized labor (eg. domestic servants)

Geographical Areas: tribal districts, far flung districts, areas of particular economic hardship (eg. drought), urban slums

Education Type: primary education using innovative methods, non-formal education, special education for mentally and physically challenged children

Regarding NGO Type: small NGOs (in terms of annual funding and infrastructure) and NGOs conceived / run by local people