

Impact stories for 'Sense India'

Writing

Concept for different platforms/products

Sense India is a not-for-profit organisation helping deafblind children and adults live with dignity through education, care and livelihood.

Due to the lack of awareness about deafblindness as a single unique disability and its resultant impact on the life of the individual affected, these stories had to be written in a way that simplified deafblindness and resonated with anyone who read it, thus, appealing to a wide range of target audiences.

These stories have been featured in a variety of products integral to Sense India's donor communication. They include reports, newsletters, fundraising brochures, direct mailers and a postcard annual report!



When the sense of smell saw her through

Little Sneha came to live at the Sister of Providence Home in Kottayam when she was barely three. Sneha was born with Congenital Rubella Syndrome that impaired her sight and hearing. Sneha had also developed behavioural problems – she would hit her head on the wall or scratch herself.

With a doctor's reference, the nuns got in touch with our partner organisation, Kottayam Social Service Society, where special educator Jessey Joseph took Sneha under her care. Initially, Jessey had difficulty getting Sneha to respond. The three-year-old would get fidgety and even aggressive. Jessey then started noticing that whenever she wore perfume, Sneha would become a bit calmer. "I started wearing loads of perfume. Sneha would follow the smell and come to me. We are great friends now!" says Jessey.

Jessey helped Sneha explore the world around her through auditory and sensory training, using her touch and smell. She started recognising day-to-day objects like pencils, books, and flowers. Sneha turned four this year. She has started walking on her own. She loves to play on the swings.

We work with 65,800 deafblind people like Sneha through 52 partner NGOs across 22 states in India.

95% of what children learn is through their eyes and ears.

Little Bhumika was born deafblind.

Born with Congenital Rubella Syndrome, Bhumika has impaired sight and hearing. By age two, she had developed behavioural problems – unable to express her agony, she would often hurt herself. Her parents felt helpless. When Bhumika was four, her parents met an educator from Sense India.

That's when things started to change.

At Sense India, Bhumika began to discover the world around her for the first time. Bhumika learned to sign for food and water or when she needed to go to the bathroom. She slowly learned to stand and walk. She started using monosyllabic sounds and gestures to communicate. Regular counselling helped her parents understand what their daughter was going through and how they could help.

Bhumika is 11 today. She is in school. She can eat and drink on her own. She is very responsive to visual aids and loves to use picture cards. By age 15, Bhumika will be able to communicate with everybody! By age 20, she will learn a vocational skill to support herself.

Like Bhumika, 71,499 children and adults with deafblindness in India have a chance at a better life with Sense India.

Sense International India, better known as Sense India, enables deafblind children and adults to live with dignity through better care, education and livelihoods.

The Sense India approach



We believe in a change that is whole.

Deafblindness is a unique disability which needs a holistic approach for development. Not being able to see or hear at the same time makes it extremely difficult for a deafblind person to live a normal life – much more than for someone who is only deaf or only blind. It is not enough to have only care or only education.

You can read more about our work at www.senseindia.org

There are still over 400,000 children and adults with deafblindness who do not have the care they need. They are waiting for you.

Please turn over to see how you can help

**NOVEMBER
2015**



LISTEN TO ASMANTA HEAR

Born blind and with limited hearing, little Asmanta used to have difficulty making out sounds when he joined our Regional Learning Centre (North), National Association for the Blind in Delhi, in 2012. Today, listening to music is one of the six-year-old's favourite activities. With daily therapy and education over the last three years, Asmanta now communicates through touch cues, gestures, facial expressions, body movement, sounds and basic signs. Asmanta understands simple instructions. He also eats on his own and walks with support (earlier, he had to be carried). His educator, Mamta is now teaching him new signs, numbers, shapes and directions, and to walk with minimum support.

WHAT'S NEW AT SENSE INDIA

The United Nations has accredited us with a consultative status on deafblindness.

Our partner, Manav Vikas Foundation in Nagpur has a dedicated centre for the deafblind in the city's Mure Memorial Hospital.



Join the

**HEROES
OF
SENSE**

It'll cost you less than
two cups of coffee!



We always love hearing
from you. Write in at
info@senseintindia.org

Shiva makes a comeback!

Shiva (in picture below) has profound hearing loss and very light vision. But he is a quick learner. When his parents moved house, Shiva stopped attending the centre because his parents felt the centre was too far from their new home. With consistent effort from us convincing them to let Shiva join back, his parents finally relented – after nearly nine months. Despite the long gap, we were elated to see that Shiva remembered all the signs he'd learnt! Shiva is making amazing progress. He can count up to 10. He can sign for things such as garden, tree, common fruits and vegetables, salt, sugar, sweets, bread and butter. He is able to identify his educators by signing their names. His favourite activities are gardening, cooking, storytelling and going on outings.

The first step

We assess each child's needs based on the level of sensory impairment. This involves an exhaustive initial screening and detailed assessment by a multi-disciplinary team consisting of experts as well as family members.



Bhumika, the storyteller

This little wonder loves stories – but she likes telling them, more! Her eagerness to learn and a good memory have helped Bhumika (in picture below) make steady progress in her education. She uses picture cards, gestures, signs and monosyllabic words to communicate. Bhumika loves pictures and is very responsive to visual aids. Recently, she was able to relate up to ten lines of a story at a go, drawing loud cheers from the staff and her parents. With the active involvement of her parents and her speech therapist, Bhumika has also started speaking a few words.

Learning through touch

Based on the assessment report, we design an individualised education plan. With the help of aids, appliances and counselling, special educators and therapists help the children learn and use tactile language. The children begin by learning simple things like signing for food when hungry or water when thirsty.



Annual Report 2013-14

Sense India supports and advocates for better services for 65,800 children and adults with deafblindness across India. Deafblindness is a unique disability that combines both hearing and visual impairment.

We send them to school. 12,000 children are attending special schools, while over 53,000 children are getting ready for mainstream school.

We help them learn skills for a living. 147 people are training in a vocation.

We support livelihoods. 19 people have started their own businesses.



One of the lives you changed this year

Thanks to donors like you, Swapnil is living his dream – of being financially independent. With support from us, the 25-year-old bought an automatic flouring machine and was trained to use it. He now earns Rs 1,000 a month and helps support his family.

Change more lives. Log onto www.senseindia.org.in

Financial summary*

We raised **Rs 5.11 crore.**

We spent **Rs 5.13 crore.**

Rs 2 lakh was drawn from reserves.

(*as on March 31, 2014)

Best Indian NGO!

We won the 'India NGO Award 2013-14' for professional management, innovation in local resource mobilisation and effectiveness in improving lives.

Thank You!

Contact us:

Sense International India, Andhajan Mandal Campus, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad - 380 015, India Phone: +91 79 26301282

Email: info@senseintindia.org, Deafblind Helpline: 1800 233 7913

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/discoversense

Sense International India is registered as a Public Charitable Trust, under the Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950, (Registration No. E/11279 dated 29 March 1997). In general, we use the name Sense India. We are fully accredited members of the Credibility Alliance (www.credibilityalliance.org).

All donations to Sense India enjoy 100% exemption from Income Tax u/s 35AC or under 80GGA of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

THE STORY OF ANAKHA

How a little girl with deafblindness
discovered the world around her



Made possible by
Mr. Sattar Abdoula

Once upon a time...

there was a little girl named Anakha born to loving parents, Sitara and Ashok. When they discovered their beautiful daughter could not see or hear, Sitara and Ashok felt helpless – Anakha couldn't even cry when she was hungry! She also had frequent epileptic fits. Sadly, Anakha's parents didn't have enough money to help their daughter.

One day, a very kind and generous man, Mr. Sattar Abdoula made a donation of Rs 182,880 to Sense International India. He wanted to support the care and education of a deafblind girl.

Around the same time, Sense India met Anakha and her family. She needed our help and Mr. Abdoula had just made it possible for us to help her!



Dear Mr. Abdoula,

This report comes as a heartfelt 'thank you' for making the story of Anakha possible. This 7-year-old girl who loves to laugh and play with her sisters can do all of that and more today because of your contribution. Anakha is now in school and she is an inspiration to her family. Please read on to see the huge difference you have made to her and her family's lives.

From all of us at Sense India and at our partner, Kottayam Social Service Society in Kottayam where Anakha is training, a big 'thank you' for being there for Anakha and giving hope to more children with deafblindness in India.

Aspaul

Akhil Paul
Director



How your donation transformed Anakha's life - and her family's too

When we first met Anakha

Seven-year-old Anakha lives in Amanakara village in Kottayam, with her parents, two siblings and her grandparents. Her father is a daily wage worker and her mother a homemaker. Her family lovingly calls her 'Kuttoos'. "Anakha is our firstborn and her birth was a dream come true!" says her mother, Sitara.

But three days after her birth, her parents watched helplessly as Anakha experienced her first fit of epilepsy. "When we consulted a paediatrician, he said Anakha had been born with congenital rubella syndrome. He explained she had impaired hearing and vision (she had cataract in her eyes), heart problem and cerebral palsy," says Sitara. With income barely enough to feed the family, Sitara and her husband were unable to afford regular treatment for Anakha. The epileptic fits got more frequent.

When she was five, our field worker from Kottayam Social Service Society (KSSS) met Anakha's family. By then, Anakha had delayed development with poor motor coordination and mobility, zero communication, poor vision and hearing.



• **Anakha begins her journey of discovery**

The KSSS team assessed Anakha for clinical and functional abilities. Based upon the recommendations of experts and in consultation with her parents, we developed an individualised education programme (IEP) for Anakha, which determined the focus areas for her learning and therapy. She started training in motor, mobility and orientation, communication, education and sensory skills and in activities of daily living (ADL). She also underwent surgery to remove her cataracts.

We initially trained Anakha at her home as her parents were not entirely convinced we could help her. Within a few months, after seeing positive results in their daughter, they agreed to bring Anakha to train at our resource centre.

Slowly, Anakha started discovering the world around her. She learned to recognise objects through picture cards and textured toys. She then used these objects to express herself! She learned body awareness and was able to nod and move her head. Her sensory training for vision helped her track and focus on objects.



• **Anakha can now sit, stand, drink, eat and even scribble!**

With regular training and therapy over the last two years, Anakha has made tremendous progress. Today, she can stand with support and has improved her hand coordination. She is able to hold biscuits in her hand and drink a glass of milk independently! She has greatly improved her expressive and receptive communication. She is also oriented with her home and her surroundings.

Anakha now recognises her parents and her siblings and she responds to her name. She has learned to scribble and is learning to write the number '1' at the moment. She has made friends with other children at the centre and her interactions with them are helping her develop social skills and her hearing. Regular medical care and nutrition has improved Anakha's health and the epileptic fits have reduced. •



• **‘My daughter has inspired a new confidence in me.’**

Sitara is overjoyed at the progress of her daughter. “My daughter couldn’t even recognise my voice earlier. But now, Anakha has inspired a new confidence in me and she has given me the strength to be there for her and her sisters. I am so proud of her!” she says.

Sitara is an active member of our parents’ network and has also joined a local community-based rehabilitation self-help group. She takes part in and helps organise various activities as part of these groups. The knowledge from Anakha’s trainer, Simi, and her experience of caring for her daughter at home has made Sitara a good trainer – she often helps other children at the centre now! •

• **Anakha goes to school!**

Anakha has started going to a regular school on a scholarship of Rs 7,000 under the government programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Sense India has sponsored her hearing aid to help her at school and at home. Our parents’ network has helped Anakha’s mother secure a monthly benefit of Rs 525 under the Aashwas Kiran scheme and she has applied for disability pension as well. During a medical camp organized by the Block Resource Centre in Kottayam, Anakha was granted Rs 10,000 under the Chief Minister’s Fund for an orthopaedic surgery.



They live a better life.

Lakshmi is ready to join her family's new venture!

She carefully transfers cattle feed from the gunny bag into small boxes and packs them neatly. The methodical way in which she works makes you forget that this 13-year-old has total vision loss and severe hearing loss. Satisfied with the work, she smiles and signs to her trainer.

Veere Gana Lakshmi has been under our care at Uma Educational and Technical Society in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, for the last one year. Within a short time, she has learned to communicate through signs and tactile sign language. She can follow instructions and performs several daily tasks on her own. Her

family is now confident that their daughter can live an independent life. Lakshmi's parents, who live in Virava village with their three children, have been saving up for a small-scale cattle feed business which involves buying cattle feed on wholesale from the city and selling it in the village. And they want Lakshmi to be a part of the venture.

With your support, Lakshmi has learned how to transfer and pack the cattle feed into smaller boxes for sale, and is currently learning to identify different weights and learn about the concept of money.

From Bachelor of Arts to a master farmer!

Sudhir Babu has not let the fact that he has low vision and total hearing loss come in the way of his dreams. The 35-year-old who lives in East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh has a Bachelor of Arts degree. He applied for a government job after college but unfortunately, he did not get selected. When he joined the deafblind programme at Uma Educational and Technical Society in Kakinada in 2014, he felt dejected but had not lost hope. We helped him apply for and secure his disability pension. We also helped him register with the Employment Exchange. Sudhir is an active member of 'Udaan', our adult deafblind network.

Sudhir's family owns a farm where they live. This year, he and his family told us of his decision to rear cattle for milk on the farm. With your contribution, we were able to give Sudhir a grant of Rs 15,000. Sudhir bought a cow and built a cowshed. With help from his family, Sudhir supplies milk to several houses in his neighbourhood and earns a net income of Rs 1,200 a month. He manages his own accounts. This independence has instilled a new confidence in Sudhir. He is popular and respected in the community. Sudhir recently told us that he wants to marry and start a family of his own now.



A better life for a deafblind child can cost you less than two cups of coffee!

500,000 children and adults in India cannot see or hear. This letter holds a chance at **a better life for one of them.**

Giving her that chance **will cost you less than two cups of coffee** at your favourite café every month! Look inside to find out how.



Thank you for reaching out to us. We look forward to having you with us on this journey.

Can you imagine not being able to see the person you most love?

A deafblind child cannot imagine what it is like to see.

Can you imagine not being able to hear your favourite song?

A deafblind child cannot imagine what it is like to hear.

Now, can you imagine not being able to do both?

A deafblind child cannot imagine what it is like to do both.

Children born with deafblindness face the **double disability** of not being able to see and hear – making it far more challenging for them to communicate and move as compared to those with only one of the two disabilities.

Most of them also develop additional physical, medical and behavioural conditions – especially infants who were not screened at birth and hence did not receive early intervention care.

The good news is that **71,500 children** with deafblindness in India do **have a chance** at a better life, **thanks to donors who support Sense International India, also known as Sense India.**

Sense India is the only organisation in India working exclusively with deafblindness. We help deafblind children live better and independent lives. We help them go to school, have better care and even learn a vocational skill when they grow up, and start their own enterprises.

Sneha explores the world around her using touch and smell.



Meet Sneha

Sneha was born with congenital rubella syndrome that impaired her sight and hearing. The trauma of not being able to see or hear also led to behavioural problems and she would often hit her head on the wall or scratch at herself. Under the care of our special educators, Sneha slowly learned to use touch and smell to communicate. She started recognising ordinary objects around her such as pencils, books, flowers, water, food, etc. She also became calmer and gradually stopped hurting herself. Sneha will turn five soon. She has started walking on her own. She loves the swings.

But there are **many more** children who need our help.

You can help one of them have a better life, through a monthly contribution.

As little as Rs 399 every month will enable a child with deafblindness learn to use touch and her remaining hearing and vision to communicate and move around on her own.

What your contribution will mean for you

Two less cups of coffee at your favourite café every month

What your contribution will mean for a child with deafblindness

She can say 'Hello' or 'I'm hungry'.

She can learn about the world around her.

She can go to school.

She can live.

**Become a hero to one of our deafblind children.
Become a Hero of Sense.**

Thank you in advance for your contribution.

Sincerely,



Akhil Paul
Director, Sense India

P.S.: All donations to Sense India are eligible for a 100% tax exemption under the Income Tax Act (1961).

Please do read more about our work and spread the word by visiting our website www.senseindia.org.in. You can email us at info@senseindia.org or call us on 1800-233-7913 for any enquiries. Thank you!



Act once. Change a life forever.

All you have to do is fill in the enclosed ECS form just this one time. We will take care of the rest.

No monthly trips to your bank!

No writing & mailing of cheques every month!

No logging online to make a bank transfer every month!

Yes, I want to become a Hero of Sense.

You're just three steps away!

1. Please choose how you would like to help.

- Rs 399 (monthly)** will fund nutrition for a deafblind child.
- Rs 899 (monthly)** will fund clinical assessment of a deafblind child.
- Rs 1,499 (monthly)** will fund home-based education and therapy of a deafblind child.
- Rs 2,999 (monthly)** will fund assistive devices – hearing aids, adaptive chairs, spectacles, etc. – for a deafblind child.
- Amount of your choosing** (you can specify how you'd like your contribution to help)
Rs _____ to fund _____

2. This will help us send you exclusive feedback about the work you are funding and a special message on your birthday.

Your email id _____

Your date of birth _____

3. Please fill in the enclosed ECS Mandate form with Auto Debit instructions to your bank and send it to us along with this form and a cancelled/photocopy of cheque of the bank account which you wish to use for the Auto Debit.

Turn over to see what you will get as a 'thank you' from the children you are helping.

Congratulations!

You are now a Hero of Sense.

We are so thrilled to have you on board. As a token of our gratitude, we will send you a welcome pack with small reminders of the young lives you are changing.

Rs 399

- A tactile puzzle (used by the children to enhance their tactile sensory skills)

Rs 899

- A tactile puzzle (used by the children to enhance their tactile sensory skills)
- Kinetic sand (used by the children to enhance their sense of touch)

Rs 1,499

- A tactile puzzle (used by the children to enhance their tactile sensory skills)
- Kinetic sand (used by the children to enhance their sense of touch)
- An art print on canvas of a painting by a deafblind child (so you can see what they see)

Rs 2,999

- A tactile puzzle (used by the children to enhance their tactile sensory skills)
- Kinetic sand (used by the children to enhance their sense of touch)
- An art print on canvas of a painting by a deafblind child (so you can see what they see)
- A personalised wall plaque showing your support for Sense India

For a contribution of your choosing, we will send you the welcome pack closest to it.

Please tick this if you choose not to receive the welcome pack.

We will of course send you exclusive feedback about the work you are supporting through our newsletters. We will also email you web banners and stickers you can post on social media to spread the word about deafblindness among your family and friends and connect with other Heroes of Sense.

THANK YOU!

[Please send us this form along with the ECS Mandate Form and the cheque, in the BRE enclosed.]



Being a Hero of Sense: Everything you need to know

How do I become a Hero of Sense?

With this mailer, we have attached an Electronic Clearing System (ECS) form to give Auto Debit instructions to your bank. We will ask you for a cancelled cheque to attach to the form. By filling in the form, signing it and attaching a cancelled cheque, you authorise us to contact your bank for the monthly Auto Debit of your chosen donation amount. All you have to do is fill the form once and we'll take care of the rest.

What will my money achieve?

At Sense India, we help deafblind children and adults live better and independent lives. We help them go to school, have better care, learn vocational skills and even start their own enterprises. We design individualized education program for each child based on the level of sensory impairment. Our program for children combines education, communication and mobility. We've also specified what your contribution will achieve in the appeal form.

How can I help create awareness about deafblindness?

By choosing to become a Hero of Sense, you've already taken the first and most important step towards this. Now, you can log on to our website www.senseintindia.org and read up about deafblindness so you have more information. You can follow our blog (www.senseintindia.org/blog). We will also email you web banners and icons that you can upload to your social networking profiles to pledge support for deafblind people. If you know a deafblind child or an adult who needs better care, call our toll-free helpline on **1800-233-7913**.

How can I connect with other Heroes of Sense?

You can share and spread the word through social media. Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/discover sense). You can help build a community which has a close understanding of the condition and what deafblind people need. You can also join other Heroes of Sense on Twitter ([@senseindia](https://twitter.com/senseindia)).

I want to be more involved in Sense India's work.

Intern or volunteer with us; Get your company to support our events; Join our events:
www.senseintindia.org/get-involved

Follow us on Facebook for regular updates from our work: www.facebook.com/discover sense

Start conversations about deafblindness on Twitter: [@senseindia](https://twitter.com/senseindia)

Our newsletter will keep you updated on the work you are supporting. You can read it online too:
www.senseintindia.org/resources/newsletter

A note on filling the ECS form

Field: Batch No, Agency Name **NOT TO BE FILLED BY YOU**

Field: Donor code **NOT TO BE FILLED BY YOU**

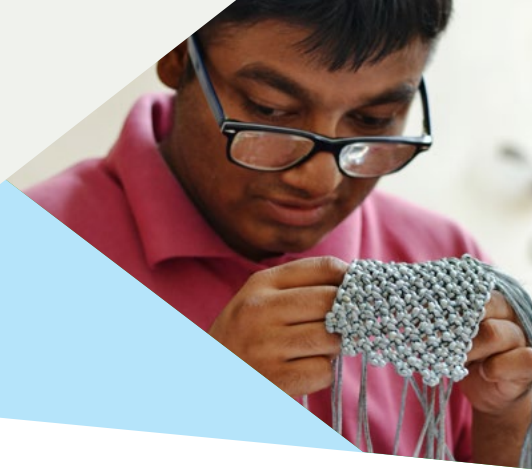
Field: UMRN & Date, Reference 1 & Reference 2 **NOT TO BE FILLED BY YOU**

Field: User code **NOT TO BE FILLED BY YOU**

- **Frequency:** Please tick 'Mthly' (monthly) as your welcome pack is conditional on your contribution being monthly.
- **Debit Type:** Please tick 'Fixed Amount'
- Your **signature** is **mandatory** in **ALL** places marked on the form
- Please read the Terms & Conditions before you sign.

If you need any assistance **filling out the ECS form, please get in touch with us on 1800-233-7913 or email us at info@senseintindia.org**





Your script, your voice, your donor

Mimicking typical call flows, the following presents various scenarios/ donor responses and effective ways you can address them as well as giving you suitable options to open your call.

Opening 1: Leading with Sense India

Hello! Am I speaking to Ms/Mrs/Mr. name?

(Donor replies in affirmative)

Good morning!/Good afternoon, Ma'am/Sir.

This is <your name> and I am calling you from Sense India. Is this a good time to talk?

(Donor replies in affirmative)

That's great, thank you!

Ms/Mrs/Mr. name, Sense India works with children and adults with deafblindness.

Sense India is the only NGO in India working exclusively for deafblindness.

We work with over 71,000 children and adults with deafblindness in India, helping them live better and independent lives. Based in Ahmedabad, we work across India in 23 states through 57 partner NGOs.

(Pause for a few seconds. Continue if there is no resistance from donor).

You may have met and interacted with people with deafblindness. Deafblindness is a unique disability, where a person has both vision and hearing loss (of varying degree). Not being able to see and hear at the same time makes it extremely difficult for a person to live a normal life – much more than for someone who is only blind or only deaf. A deafblind person cannot communicate or walk on her/his own!

At Sense India, we teach them how to communicate with people, move around and perform everyday tasks such as eating, brushing their teeth, pouring a glass of water, reading and writing and go to school. We even train young adults in vocation so they can earn their own living!

Calling your donor

Your script, your voice, your donor

(Stress on this next sentence)

All this is possible only because of the support and encouragement of our donors – people just like you who came to know about our work and wanted to help.

There are still about 500,000 deafblind people in India who do not have the care and education that they need. And this is where we need your help.

Ms/Mrs/Mr. name, you can change the life of one deafblind child with a small monthly contribution which will cost you less than two cups of coffee at your favourite café!

As little as Rs 399 every month will help a deafblind child learn how to sign for food when hungry or for water when thirsty!

Imagine that! Simple things that we often take for granted will completely change a deafblind child's life. And you can make that happen.

Not only will you change a life, but your donation will be completely exempt from Income Tax!

Calling your donor

Your script, your voice, your donor

Opening 2: Leading with deafblindness

Hello! Am I speaking to Ms/Mrs/Mr. name?

(Donor replies in affirmative)

Good morning!/Good afternoon, Ma'am/Sir. This is <your name> and I am calling you from Sense India. Is this a good time to talk?

(Donor replies in affirmative)

That's great, thank you! Ms/Mrs/Mr. name, did you know that over 90% of what we learn is through our eyes and ears?

(Pause for a fleeting second - we are really not looking for a response here. Quickly continue.)

Right now, as we are talking, you can't see me, but you can hear me - the sound of my voice and how I speak gives you an impression of how I might be and because you can hear me clearly and I can hear you, we are able to have this conversation.

(Slowly) Now, imagine if you could neither see nor hear me! That's how it's like for 500,000 people in India who are deafblind.

Not being able to see or hear at the same time makes it extremely difficult for them to live a normal life - much more difficult than for someone who is only blind or only deaf.

Deafblind children and adults are unable to do simple daily tasks like eating, drinking, walking, on their own. They cannot speak or communicate - they may be thirsty but they are unable to ask for water!

(Pause for a few seconds. Continue if there is no resistance from donor).

But, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name, you can change the life of one deafblind child with a small monthly contribution which will cost you less than two cups of coffee at your favourite café!

As little as Rs 399 every month will help a deafblind child learn how to sign for food when hungry or for water when thirsty!

Imagine that! Simple things that we often take for granted will completely change a deafblind child's life. And you can make that happen.

Not only will you change a life, but your donation will be completely exempt from Income Tax!

Calling your donor

Your script, your voice, your donor

Sense India is the only NGO in India working exclusively for deafblindness.

We help deafblind children and adults live better, independent lives, through education, therapy, medical care and even livelihoods.

And all this has been possible only because of the support of our donors – people just like you who came to know about our work and wanted to help.

We work with over 71,000 deafblind people but there are still about 500,000 deafblind people in India who do not have the care and education that they need. This is where we need your help!

[If donor asks – Sense India is based in Ahmedabad, but we work across India in 23 states through over 57 partner NGOs. We are currently working with over 71,000 deafblind children and adults in India.]

Calling your donor

Your script, your voice, your donor

Call to action 1

Setting up a F2F meeting with donor

(Donor asks how he/she can help)

We can come over and meet you so we can talk more about how you can help.

(The idea is get the donor to say yes to meeting where the process of signing him/her as a donor will happen in all probability – don't give too much about details of what donating entails here so that you don't lose donor's attention)

When would be a good time to come and meet you, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name? *(Take down details)*
And where can we come to meet you? *(Take down address)*. Can we call you on the same number if we need to reach you? *(If alternate number, then take it down)*

Thank you so much! We really look forward to meeting you and having you on board as a Sense India donor, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name.

Do you have any questions for me before we say goodbye?
(Address any query the donor may have)

Thank you so much for your time today - it was great talking to you. We will see you soon, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name. Have a great day!

(If donor is not sure when he/she wants to meet/ is evasive about committing)

No problem, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name. What I'll do is send you a brief email about our work and our contact details – you can get in touch with us at your convenience. Can I have your email address please?

(Take down email id) That's great. Thank you so much! We really look forward to having you on board as a Sense India donor, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name.

Do you have any questions for me before we say goodbye?
(Address any query the donor may have)

Thank you so much for your time today. It was great talking to you.
Have a good day!

Calling your donor

Your script, your voice, your donor

Call to action 2

Getting donor to donate online

(Donor asks how he/she can help)

We have made online donations real easy for you. You just have to log on to our website senseindia.org.in and click on the DONATE button on the homepage.

You can choose how you would like your contribution to help, from any of the options given or you can choose an amount of your choice. The mode of online payment is quick, easy and simple.

Ms/Mrs/Mr. name, if you are at your computer, you can do it right now and I would be happy to guide you through it and answer any questions you may have along the way.

(If donor says he/she'll do it later)

No problem, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name. What I'll do is send you a brief email about our work and the link to our website so it's easier for you. Can I have your email address please?

(Take down email id) That's great. Thank you so much! We really look forward to having you on board as a Sense India donor, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name.

Do you have any questions for me before we say goodbye?

(Address any query the donor may have)

Thank you so much for your time today. It was great talking to you. Have a good day!

TURNING 'NO' TO A 'YES' - OR A 'MAYBE'

Call me later / not a good time

No problem. Maybe I can call you another time. What would be a good time to call you?

(Note down the details) Thank you for your time Ms/Mrs/Mr. name! I will call you then. Have a good day! *(hang up)*

I am not interested at all

Ma'am/Sir, may I know why?
(Try to find out why - probe lightly but don't irritate the donor.)

(If donor says he/she is busy)

No problem. Maybe I can call another time. What would be a good time to call you?

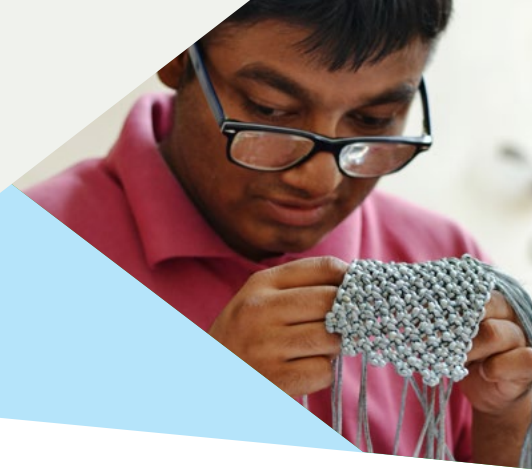
(If donor says he/she is not comfortable making donations over the phone)

Well, how about if I send you a brief email on our work at Sense India with my contact details? You can read it at your leisure and get in touch with me for more information. Could I have your email address please?

(Take email down)

I appreciate that, Ma'am/Sir. Thank you for your time, Ms/Mrs/Mr. name. Have a good day! *(hang up)*

[If donor strongly insists that he/she doesn't want to talk at all, then do not press on as this will only irate him/her and you may lose the contact completely! Politely thank him/her and hang up.]



They ask, you answer

These are commonly asked questions that you may encounter from the donor during the call. The responses have been developed keeping mind the need for a coherent and consistent messaging about Sense India and its work and to avoid any disconnect across calls as well as callers. It is very important for the donor to know that you are calling from the right organisation and that you give the right information and you say it right.

Q. What is deafblindness?

A. People with deafblindness suffer from both vision and hearing loss in varying degree. Not being able to see or hear at the same time makes it extremely difficult for them to live a normal life – much more difficult than for someone who is only blind or only deaf. Deafblind children and adults are unable to do simple daily tasks like eating, drinking, walking, on their own. As a result, they also often develop physical and medical conditions.

Q. What causes it?

A. There are many causes. Common causes that are present or occur around the time of birth include prematurity, childbirth complications, and numerous congenital syndromes. Deafblindness may also occur later in childhood or during adulthood due to causes such as meningitis, brain injury, or inherited conditions. You can read more on this on our website senseindia.org.in

Q. How can it be cured?/ What is the treatment for deafblindness?

A. People with deafblindness can live a normal life with the right care and support which will help them learn, communicate and move around. At Sense India, we develop customised programs based on each deafblind person's level of sensory impairment. Deafblind people learn and communicate in different ways based on their condition, age and resources. For example, someone who grew up deaf and had vision loss later in life is likely to use sign language to communicate. Others who grew up blind and had hearing loss later are more likely to use a tactile mode of their language. Also, early intervention is extremely crucial for the child's development and helps reduce the risk of medical complications later.

Q. How many people in India have deafblindness?

A. There are an estimated 500,000 deafblind people in India, including children.

Q. How did you get my number?

A. -----

Q. What does Sense India do? / Why is Sense India working with deafblindness?

A. We help deafblind children and adults live better and independent lives. We help them go to school, have better care, communicate and move on their own, learn vocational skills and even start their own enterprises. Our education and therapy program is customised/ individualised for each person based on the level of sensory impairment. In India, most people and organisations are still unfamiliar with deafblindness. Our public health system is ill-equipped for early intervention services for children born with deafblindness and access to available services is limited to select locations. Early intervention is extremely crucial for a deafblind child's development and helps reduce the risk of medical complications later. All this makes it important for our work to reach more deafblind children and adults. Sense India is the only national NGO working exclusively for deafblindness, in India.

Q. Where is your office located? / Where do you have your centres? / How many deafblind people are there at your centre?

A. We currently work with more than 71,000 deafblind people in 23 states of India through our network of 57 partner NGOs. Our head office is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
[Have list of states and centers ready, in case donor asks for closest center/location]

Q. How do I know you are a legitimate organisation?

A. Sense India or Sense International India is a registered public charitable trust since 1997 (under Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950 Registration No. E/11279 dated 29 March 1997). We are a fully accredited member of Credibility Alliance, an independent organisation established by the NGO sector to promote good governance and public accountability of NGOs. We are an independent affiliate of Sense UK. You can visit our website senseindia.org.in for more information.

Q. Are you supported by the government?

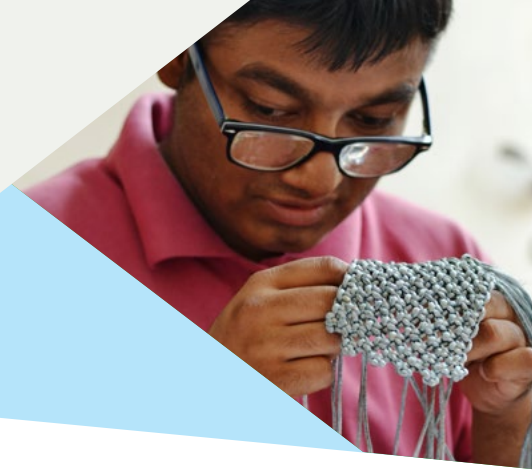
A. -----

Q. How will you use my donation?

A. You can choose how you want your contribution to be used. We have different programs and you can support any/all of them – such as care and rehabilitation, education, vocational skill training for young adults and our advocacy efforts for deafblindness in India.

Q. Do you take cash? / How do I donate?

A. We do not collect cash. You can donate by writing a cheque made out to 'Sense International (India)'. You can also donate online which is easy and quick: senseindia.org.in. Your donation to Sense India is 100% exempt from income Tax (under section 35 AC of the IT Act).



A good call to a *great* call

Things to keep in mind

Introduce/ identify yourself clearly.

You already know this. Once you confirm you are talking to the right person, introduce yourself clearly with your name and the name of the organisation you are calling on behalf of. If the donor mishears the name of your organisation, repeat it for them, but make sure they know exactly where you are calling from. When the donor agrees to make a donation or meet you, it is imperative that she/he is under **no false notion of who you are or what your organisation is.**

Engage the donor when you are talking.

Keep your language active and your pitch conversational – no one wants to listen to someone rattling off a script on a call! And donors can tell! Address the donor frequently while talking ('I understand, Ms/Mr...'/ 'Exactly, Ma'am/Sir...'/ 'Right, sure we can do that, Ms/Mr...'), but don't overdo it, of course. If donor has a query midway, address it immediately (instead of continuing with your pitch) – this tells the donor that you are reliable, helpful, attentive and that you know your work. While talking about Sense India, intersperse 'Sense India' with 'we/ us/ our/' – this not only gives the donor further assurance that you represent Sense India, but also personifies the organisation which is further reassuring – **remember, people give to people, not to organisations.**

Listen to what your donor has to say too.

When the donor is talking, **don't interrupt**, don't talk at the same time, **listen** to what she/he has to say – it makes her/him feel like they have a say too. It's ok if she/he is not interested this time, but it's important that you do not make the donor irate on this call for you to be able to make the second call.

Minimise dead air.

Acknowledge what the donor is saying with fillers such as 'Yes, I understand', 'Right', 'Uh-Huh', 'Hmm yes' and so on. What usually happens is when the donor is speaking and you keep quiet (or press the mute button) since you obviously do not want to interrupt him/her, the silence or dead air gives the donor the feeling that either the line has been disconnected or there is no one at the other end. To avoid this, fill the dead air, without of course interrupting the donor. **This reassures the donor that you are there and you are listening.**

Avoid putting donor on hold

If you have to put the donor on hold (to check some information, etc.), ask for permission first and inform donor of how long the hold will be for. If it goes beyond the estimated time, go back on the call, apologise, inform how much longer it will take and check with the donor. Ideally, avoid putting the donor on hold for more than 5-10 seconds at a time.

Get clear consent from donor.

Do not assume anything. If the donor indicates that she/he would like to know more or meet you or make a donation, get clear affirmation. For instance, you can say, "So, you would like to make a donation of...?/you would like to meet me at..?" And then wait for the donor to reply in the affirmative. Then proceed.

Get as much as you can from each call.

Use the opportunity of getting the donor to talk to you to the fullest. **Find out as much as you can about the donor.** Update donor's contact details. If you don't have email address, get it. If donor has an alternate contact number, get it! Many times, donors reveal their interests and their likes during the call – make a note of these as you can use these in your pitch. Also, ask what is the best time to call. This will help you not only reach the donor at the right time, but also get her/him to listen and talk to you.

Smile when you speak - it shows in your voice.

Do not forget to say THANK YOU!

LET'S BEGIN!