



# PFI FOUNDATION

Reaching the Unreached, Covering the Last Mile

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

A non-governmental organization in  
**Special Consultative Status**  
With the Economic and Social Council of the  
**United Nations** since 2012



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**The World Bank**  
in 2003 and 2007



## Preface



On behalf of PFI Foundation staff and the Executive Council, we are honoured to share the 2020-2021 Annual Report with you.

The past year has challenged us to come together like never before. Thanks to your support and cooperation, we could continue and strengthen our community activities mostly online and some on the ground. Collectively, we also complete our planned programmes, a true testament to the unmatched kindness of our members. As we celebrate these milestones, we also recognize the ongoing challenges we face as a community.

For all the positivity that philanthropy brings to the region, it is difficult not to focus on the hardship and loss that the COVID19 pandemic has brought to our doorstep this past year. As we share this year's Annual Report, COVID-19 continues to harm our communities, the devastating effects of climate change mount, and the generations-long fight for racial equity persists.

These are challenges we must meet head on. And we will, together.

We began the Year 2020-2021 with ambitious goals to adopt a new strategic plan that would guide us into the future. While we had to put those efforts on pause, we made it a priority to update our mission and values to reflect a renewed commitment to community and a path forward with purpose.

To date, we are working on the frontline of the pandemic. Our longstanding programs continue to help youths in their skill training for employment through our NCPUL sponsored centres. We also continue to strengthen research, peace-building and international cooperation activities in the region for current and future generations of our grassroots communities.

Over the coming months, we will continue to meet the evolving needs of disadvantaged people while also finalizing our strategic plan to help us lay the foundation for a brighter future. At every step of the way, we promise that The PFI Foundation will lead with its values and listen with humility and respect.

Our future will be built upon inspiring enduring philanthropy and enabling community solutions.

The past year has reminded us of one important thing. Even though we may face an uncertain future, there's one constant that remains – we are better when we work together.

A K Talukdar  
President

## From the Executive Director

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The reporting period 2020-2021 has been a year of challenges for the PFI Foundation and our local communities. During this pandemic, we've all seen our daily lives and those of many of our colleagues, friends, and family around the world completely changed. Too many in our community also grieved over the loss of family and friends.

It was uplifting to see Foundation members join the fight against COVID-19. Our members locally contributed in terms of awareness campaigns and offered assistance to struggling families and individuals, contributed to national and local efforts to help the society deal with the pandemic.

Our field based programmes were halted this year but ongoing initiatives had to undergo a significant transformation, pivoting over a few weeks from in-person to virtual events. These virtual gatherings helped many in our communities connect during this difficult time. We also learned much about potentially offering a more inclusive experience by providing hybrid in-person events with virtual experiences in the future. We've missed seeing many in our communities in person this year and look forward to seeing you all again when it is safe to do so.

As part of our ongoing diversity efforts and in joining the fight against violence, our members are focused on how they use language of interfaith dialogue and inter-cultural understanding in their projects and finding mentors to guide the next generation of contributors.

This year was a breakout year for our Foundation and member community. We welcomed many new researchers in our ecosystem to help with online activities this year. While we continue to battle challenges, we also reaffirm that the PFI Foundation stands as a part of a global community through its international collaborations.

Our members had to navigate a year of changes in international platforms most of which went to virtual mode and learned how NGOs thrive despite the pandemic. From around the region, our members engage in open collaboration because it is open, neutral, and transparent. Those members clearly desire to continue collaborating with their global peers on challenges large and small.

At the end of a difficult year, all this taken together leaves us assured that virtual collaboration is the model for solving the world's most complex challenges. No single person, organization, or government alone can solve our most pressing problems. On behalf of the entire PFI Foundation team, we look forward to helping you and our communities take on whatever challenges come next.

Dr K M Jahirul Islam  
Executive Director

## Annual Report: 2020-2021

PFI FOUNDATION is an NGO with its HQ in Guwahati (India) which focuses on socio-economic welfare activities and works to promote community empowerment through awareness generation programmes and strengthening of local community organizations. Its programs include advocacy campaigns, preparation of information materials, youth leadership training, self-help groups and microfinance. Its major thrust areas are vocational and Life Skill Training, Information Technology for Development (ICT4D), technology transfer and integrated rural development.

### VISION

Improving the pace of rural development and alleviating poverty in rural areas by using appropriate technologies and building technical skills through a Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) integrated collaborative network.

### MISSION

The Foundation aims to provide the communities with a means to gain successful employment in all possible sectors reversing the urban migration and to train rural youths on the new 'appropriate' technologies and 'skills' suitable for rural areas and that are being used in other parts of the country by the rural industries.

### LEGAL CERTIFICATION

PFI Foundation is registered under the Societies Registration Act of India. It is further endorsed by the Interior (Home) Ministry of the Government of India as a Foreign Contribution receiving charity and allotted FCRA Registration. The organization is also registered under Income Tax Act and granted tax exemption on donation to the organization under Sec 80GG of the Act.



Society Regn No 4292 of 1992-93 under  
Society Regn Act of 1860  
Unique ID under NGO Darpan of Niti Aayog:  
AS/2009/0002462  
FCRA Regn No. 020780111  
Income Tax Regn No: 27/12(a)a/Tech/06-07  
Under Sec 80G for Tax Exemption on donation

### MAJOR OBJECTIVES

- Various kinds of socio-economic welfare activities.
- Promotion of community empowerment through awareness generation programmes and strengthening of local community organization through campaigns, preparation of information materials, youth leadership, self-help groups.
- Education, training and evaluation programmes in education
- Academic institutions with special emphasis on disadvantaged sections of the society and environment orientation to school education.

- Welfare of women and child, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, other backward communities, and marginalised groups like differently abled persons, orphans and destitute.
- Community health and family welfare through water supply and sanitation
- Employment generation programmes and training
- Environment and bio-diversity
- Preservation and development of cultural heritage
- Commemoration of life and activities of late Professor Md Fokhrul Islam (1939-1991), former Dy. Education Minister of Assam, a teacher, educationist and social worker of Barak Valley and to celebrate centenaries of other important national personalities.
- Promotion of national integration and communal harmony
- Disaster management, emergency response, relief and rehabilitation.

## MAJOR ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST YEARS

1. Legal Awareness Campaign for Women Rights under Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India (1995) and National Commission for Women (2007-08).
2. Environment Education Awareness Programme
3. Empowerment and Awareness Training Programme for Rural Women sponsored by the Central Social Welfare Board (1995-96)
4. Capacity building training of the Village Health and Sanitation Committees in Cachar and Hailakandi Districts in Assam, funded by the UNICEF (2010)
5. Community on Community based Water Resources Management in Northeast India (2011). Funded by Ministry of Water Resources, Govt of India and ADPC, Bangkok.
6. Legal Training for Women Lawyers in Northeast India, sponsored by The British High Commission, New Delhi (2010) and ActionAid India.
7. Minorities Initiative for Learning and Partnership (MILAP): Madrassa Teachers, Students and Imams Training Programme in Assam for communal harmony and peace; funded by The British High Commission, New Delhi (2010-11).
8. South Asian Regional Development Gateway for SAARC countries (2006-2012).
9. Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative – Co-deployment of Optical Fibre along Roads and Railways in Indi and Bangladesh to increase the availability and affordability of broadband Internet
10. Inter-faith Dialogue for Peacebuilding in the Northeastern Region, funded by the KAICIID Dialogue Centre, Vienna, Austria; development of a Foundation Programme for undergraduate students in colleges and universities in India (2015-18)
11. Environmental Impact Assessment – participatory training programme for capacity building of NGOs, funded by the World Bank (2014-16).
12. Asia-Pacific Academia Network, in collaboration with the UNESCAP, Bangkok, to set up a regional educational network that will interact with governments, private sector and civil society in conducting research, evaluation, monitoring, education and training programmes focusing on ICT for Development (ICT4D) at the grassroots level (2017-18).



## MAJOR ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR 2019-2020

### 1. SKILL TRAINING OF YOUTH COMPUTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

Providing education, employment opportunities and empowering young people are the three key factors in realizing global progress. Youth unemployment is a growing concern and big challenge and recent figures show that a large number of youth, from different countries and backgrounds, are still facing numerous barriers to employment. Empowering young people to overcome these obstacles is paramount, and governments are currently exploring different avenues that will enable young people to gain access to the labour market and grow professionally and personally.



PFI Foundation has made skill training as one of its priority areas and it contributes to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals. In order for our youths to play an active role in promoting youth entrepreneurship, more focus should be placed on understanding the nature of entrepreneurship, as well as the obstacles that young entrepreneurs face. In order to start the ball rolling and promote knowledge and expertise sharing on the topic, PFI Foundation organised virtual webinars during the period to look at the challenges that youths face, as well as the programmes and policies that can help overcome these obstacles.

The Foundation continued to run the Computer Applications, Business Accounting and Multilingual DTP Centres (CABA-MDTP) in Karimganj district under the sponsorship of the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) which is an autonomous body

under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Department of Higher Education, Government of India.

The one-year course "Diploma in Computer Applications, Business Accounting and Multilingual DTP" has been designed for transformation of Urdu speakers into productive human resource and making them part of the employable technical work force in the emerging Information Technology scenario and penetration of computer education to grass root level. Taking base as the DOEACC 'O' level course contents, the contents have been enriched with programming techniques, developing database applications, accounting package, web designing tools, Urdu, and English DTP.

## 2. TWO YEARS DIPLOMA COURSE IN FUNCTIONAL ARABIC

In line with the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), Government of India, the foundation recognises the importance of classical languages in preserving cultural heritage of the country and at the same time the need to bring students of faith-based schools to the mainstream job market. Since 2011, with the support from the NCPUL, the foundation is running *Two Years Diploma Course in Functional Arabic* 2002 with modern Arabic teaching in content and methodology being made accessible to Madrasa students who lack ability to speak and write and communication skill on colloquial level.



The basic aim of the course is to enrich the instruction in Arabic and give an experience to the students to modern and colloquial spoken level as well as on writing level. The 7 & 8 modules have been prepared on the basis of business and day to day user letters so as the students get expertise in drafting letters and communicating with business world. In exercises of these two modules, the rich translated version of English articles has been provided. This course will help students to achieve a level of excellence and bring them at par with the students of other foreign languages. Also, this will open the door of employment to the students of Arabic language.



### 3. LEGAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

PFI Foundation delivered an online legal awareness programme on *Sources of Law, its implications and importance* on 12 September 2020 which was hosted on YouTube Channel [[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3pzsU\\_23O7c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3pzsU_23O7c)].

The reality of our existing legal and justice system is, that a large section of the population is handicapped by poverty, illiteracy and ignorance of law coupled with the complexity and obscurity of laws made and declared by the legislation. Due to this reason large section of people suffer from injustice both from the state organs as well as from individuals or group of individuals. They become victims of violation of their rights without any legal remedy. Despite declaration in the Preamble of the Constitution, of securing justice- Economic Social and Political, justice is beyond the reach of the large segment of the society. There is an urgent need to spread legal awareness amongst the people particularly the women of our country need to be imparted with knowledge of legislations made by the Parliament for their welfare and security.

Recognizing the need to impart legal awareness to women and girls, regarding their rights, the Foundation in collaboration with the *Barak Legal Analysis* portal has initiated an online Legal Awareness Programme. The programme is delivered on the belief that education is a process through which society creates the kind of individuals we wish to see in the world. It is therefore proposed to go by 'Each one Teach One'. It's imperative that Legal Awareness Programme is introduced, for the community at large,

as it would lay strong emphasis on inculcating values of equality, inclusivity and diversity, all of which are essential for building a healthy society. Moreover, knowledge of Major laws of a country is not only crucial for balanced development of young minds; it will also help students' in formation of correct values, self-discipline and national spirit.

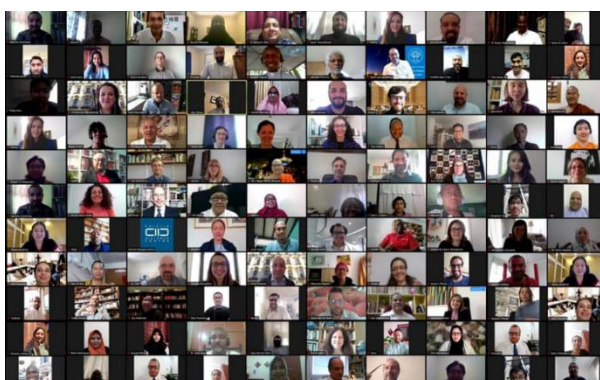
PFI Foundation's Legal Awareness Programme aims to empower the youth of our country with the knowledge of their legal rights and duties, ultimately to be able to share power equally, gain full access to the means of development and to inspire a whole generation of women to work together towards achieving gender equality and justice. In order to achieve the aforesaid objective, it has decided to launch a regular online open access channel on Legal Awareness Programme.



#### 4. TEACHERS' TRAINING

PFI Foundation in collaboration with Anvarul Islam Women's Arabic College Mongam, Calicut is hosting a National Webinar on '**Remote Learning: Challenges and Opportunities for Teachers**'. It was held on 14 Sept, 2020. IWA College is offering Higher education, focusing on the upliftment of poor and destitute girl students. The college is a pioneering institute situated in the serene ambience of Calicut.

UNESCO has rightly observed that "Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. These nationwide closures are impacting over 60% of the world's student population. Several other countries have implemented localized closures impacting millions of additional learners." Overall, close to 200 countries closed their schools in the spring, thereby interrupting the education of more than 1.5 billion young people. We therefore need to reflect deeply on our education systems in light of this unprecedented crisis.



The COVID-19 pandemic has already had devastating impacts that are likely to have long-term social and economic consequences. The crisis has exacerbated already-widespread educational inequalities due to factors relating to gender, disability, immigration, mother tongue, learning difficulties or other sources of socioeconomic disadvantage. Indeed, 40% of the world's poorest countries have been unable to support their disadvantaged learners in recent

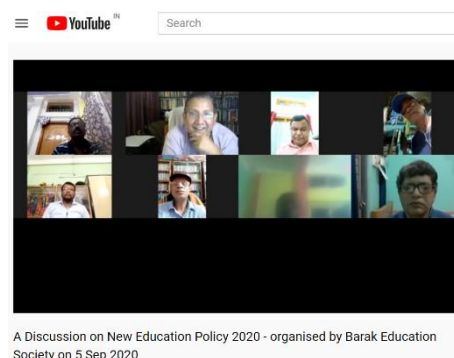
months, and the many adverse consequences of school closures have been particularly severe for disadvantaged children and their families, as well as for all learners with learning difficulties and special needs.

The pandemic has starkly highlighted the fragility of our education systems, even those considered relatively stable. It is therefore crucial that the innovation and creativity stimulated by this crisis be leveraged to make education systems more just, inclusive and resilient. This article is therefore intended to give educational system stakeholders a crisis-inspired glimpse into potential opportunities for improvement in the areas of curricula, students, teachers and educational settings..

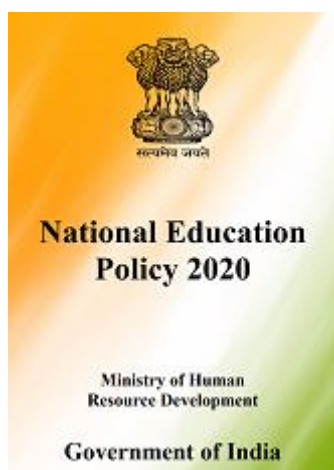
## 5. NEW EDUCATION POLICY – 2020

PFI Foundation partnered with the Barak Education Society to organise a virtual seminar on India's New Education Policy 2020 in virtual platform on 5 Sep 2020 to discuss the policy implications on education system[[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bPYzxXUT\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bPYzxXUT_U)].

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system. The new policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986.[a] The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2021.



Shortly after the release of the policy, the government clarified that no one will be forced to study any particular language and that the medium of instruction will not be shifted from English to any regional language. The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. Education in India is a Concurrent List subject and the central government (cabinet) approved the policy that aims to overhaul the country's education system. The NEP 2020 aims at making "India a global knowledge superpower". The new academic session will begin in September-October – the delay is due to the unprecedented coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak – and the government aims to introduce the policy before the new session kicks in.



The policy raises the importance of mother tongue and regional languages; medium of instruction until Class V and preferably beyond should be in these languages. Sanskrit and foreign languages will also be given emphasis. The policy also states that no language will be imposed on the students.

Shortly after the release of the policy, the government clarified that the language policy in NEP is a broad guideline; and that it was up to the states, institutions and schools to decide the implementation. A more detailed language strategy would be released in the National Curriculum Framework in 2021. Note was also made that there were already institutions which had implemented this language policy 60

years ago such as Sardar Patel Vidyalaya. Both the Education Policy of 1986 and the Right to Education Act, 2009 promoted usage of the mother tongue too as an advisory guideline.

## 6. EMPLOYMENT IN HIGH EDUCATION SECTOR

PFI Foundation partnered with a community platform *Alokito Samaj* to deliver a virtual seminar on 18 Aug, 2020 to discuss employment opportunities in high education sector in India [<https://www.facebook.com/fakhrul.hasan.3386/videos/1408829912648751>] India holds an important place in the global education industry. India has one of the largest networks of higher education institutions in the world. However, there is still a lot of potential for further development in the education system. With ~26.31% of India's population in the age group of 0-14 years, India's education sector provides numerous opportunities for growth.



India has the world's largest population of about 500 million in the age bracket of 5-24 years, which provides a great opportunity for the education sector. The education sector in India was estimated at US\$ 91.7 billion in FY18 and is expected to reach US\$ 101.1 billion in FY19. Number of colleges in India reached 39,931 in FY19. Number of universities in India reached 967 in FY21 (as of December 2020). India had 37.4 million students enrolled in higher education in FY19. Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education reached 26.3% in FY19.

In 2020-21, there were 9,700 total AICTE approved institutes. Of the total, there were 4,100 undergraduates, 4,951 postgraduates and 4,514 diploma courses in AICTE approved institutes. According to the National Institutional Ranking Framework, 7 positions were bagged by prominent Indian Institutes of Technology out of the top 10 institution rankings in 2020.

The country has become the second largest market for E-learning after the US. The sector is expected to reach US\$ 1.96 billion by 2021 with around 9.5 million users. In India, the online education market is forecast to reach ~US\$ 8.6 billion by 2026.

The demand for labour in India is likely to remain high and robust in the coming years, both nationally and internationally. But this would demand skilled and qualified labour. It is with this background that the webinar focused on analyzing the growth and changing structure of the Indian higher education system in the light of the education profile of the Indian jobseekers, labour market demands and the employability index for India's high-growth sectors on the basis of existing skill gaps and suggests a broad pathway to plug in the gaps and missing links. Starting from an overview of the main interactions between higher education and employment, two alternative approaches to promoting them – that of fostering general 'employability' skills and that of linking higher education courses to professional formation – are examined and contrasted, particularly from the point of view of concepts of the integrity of professional practice on the one hand, and notions of a critically evaluative stance within higher education on the other.



## 7. RESEARCH DURING COVID19 PANDEMIC

PFI Foundation partnered with a *Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University* to deliver a virtual seminar on 10 July, 2020 to discuss research opportunities through innovative methods like Digital ethnography during the ongoing pandemic in the country.

The spread of pandemic Covid-19 has drastically disrupted every aspects of human life including education. It has created an unprecedented test on education. In many educational institutions around the world, campuses are closed and teaching-learning has moved online. Internationalization has slowed down considerably. In India, about 32 crore learners stopped to move schools/colleges and all educational activities brought to an end. Despite of all these challenges, the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have reacted positively and managed to ensure the continuity of teaching-learning, research and service to the society with some tools and techniques during the pandemic. This article highlights on major impacts of Covid-19 on HEIs in India. Some measures taken by HEIs and educational authorities of India to provide seamless educational services during the crisis are discussed. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, many new modes of learning, new perspectives, new trends are emerged and the same may continue as we go ahead to a new tomorrow. So, some of the post Covid-19 trends which may allow imagining new ways of teaching learning of higher education in India are outlined. Some fruitful suggestions are also pointed to carry out educational activities during the pandemic situation.

The webinar presents stressed that Digital ethnography is essential to our understanding of the social world; it defines methodologies and provides the framework for utilizing the technological tools needed to research the society. Ethnographic research practices shaped by digitalisation, has become increasingly popular in the recent years with the growing influence and presence of the internet in people's everyday lives and has gained relevance in the present situation when the mobility of the researchers has been adversely affected due to covid-19 crisis. The main difference between ethnographic research and digital ethnography is that the researcher does not have to travel to a particular location in order to make their observations. Digitalisation and online communications provide researchers with unprecedented opportunities for accessing and examining people's communicative repertoires across the globe. A recent study reveals that amid the worldwide lockdown and transition to online learning students were most satisfied with the support provided by teaching staff and their universities' public relations. Still, deficient computer skills and the perception of a higher workload prevented them from perceiving their own improved performance in the new teaching environment.

HOME NEWS BUSINESS EDITORIAL OPINION SPORTS GALLERY

### BGSBU holds webinar on Digital Ethnography

By KR Desk on 12:59 am July 11, 2020 - No Comment

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## **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

The annual accounts of the Foundation as audited by our auditors M/S Hussain & Co., Chartered Accountants, Guwahati 781 006 (Assam) and approved by the General Body is appended herewith.

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