# Program for Teacher Training

Our project aims to support our international partners in expanding their reach to bring training and services to their local communities.

The Global Autism Project was established in 2003 after its founder spent two years in Ghana working with children with autism. Here, the first of the organization’s six partnerships to date commenced at one of the few local centers for kids with autism. At the time, the center lacked adequate resources or therapeutic skills—a “safe place” for children with autism to go more than anything else. Thus, the organization’s vision was born—to provide *sustainable* training and support to autism treatment centers worldwide. Today, the Global Autism Project is a small but thriving organization that is making a huge difference.

# The Problem:

The Global Autism Project seeks to serve the estimated 70 million people worldwide that are affected by autism, the majority of whom live in under-developed countries where services are limited or not available at all. In these countries, children with autism are mistreated, and in many cases injured, abducted, or even killed.

The needs and challenges that the project addresses are widely recognized as a pressing health issue by both the United Nations and the World Health Organization. The issue is exacerbated by the fact that families in these countries report confusion and cultural ostracism with regard to their child’s diagnosis of autism; this is in addition to widely- held beliefs in some countries that autism is caused by witchcraft, possession by evil spirits, or in some cases, lack of maternal care and love. These problems require immediate attention.

# Our solution:

Each of our partners is provided with training in both clinical best practices and, importantly, sustainable business practices, to encourage the ultimate goal of complete independence as centers of excellence in autism treatment in their communities. Further, all local partners work closely with the Global Autism Project to complete a dissemination plan for their communities that includes a systematic review of available resources, government support, and local perceptions of autism in the community.

Dissemination plans include collaboration and sharing of resources with local centers which serve children with autism, awareness campaigns, government outreach, and establishing local programming in the community where it is lacking.

# How We’ll Assess Progress:

At each partner site, staff are trained to constantly track each individual student’s progress. This data collection helps identify areas of improvement and concern to best treat each student individually as well as trend-level indicators for areas of concern to target on a center-wide basis. In turn, student progress also represents a measure of local teacher success. To assess each partner site’s progress, the organization has developed the Site Assessment Survey for Sustainable Intervention (SASSI), designed to be an objective measure of a partner site across seven domains: clinical services, center facilities, administrative, funding, human resources, outreach, and awareness.

To date, over 300 students and their families have been impacted by the organization’s work, while countless others have benefitted from outreach efforts in the six partnership sites. Over 50 staff have received training, and the Global Autism Project’s focus on sustainable development means that many others stand to benefit from the organization’s efforts even after a partnership has formally ended.

# How We’ll Leverage Your Support:

We plan to leverage contributions by working with the Global Autism Project’s existing donors to match the amount raised, and thus doubling our capacity to develop and implement the Programs for Teacher Training. This money would cover our staff and volunteers’ travel expenses to reach our partner sites, and would increase the amount of hours of training we are able to provide. It would also be spent to create local awareness campaign materials to aid the dissemination component of the project. In accordance with our organization’s mission, money raised would not be put towards supplying materials that neither foster sustainability nor expand outreach efforts, such as toys or instructional pamphlets.