



JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

VOLUME 1



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JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



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2023-2024
VOLUME 1

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



It is with great pride and immense joy that I present the inaugural edition of the *Journal of Community Outreach*. This journal captures the essence of the Community Outreach course introduced at Jesus and Mary College in 2023 under the framework of NEP 2020. The course, offered in semesters III, IV, V and VI, represents our institution's commitment to fostering socially responsible and empathetic young leaders.

Initiating this course was a deeply fulfilling milestone, envisioned as a bridge between classroom learning and the stark realities of our communities. The students' remarkable participation has exceeded and have gone far beyond the four walls of the classroom.

The vibrant participation of 84 students in its first cycle initiated in 2023, their dedicated engagements with NGOs, and their reflective essays presented in this volume are a source of inspiration and deep learning about student engagement in community development. In the second semester, 76 students continued this legacy, contributing to impactful initiatives and documenting their experiences and learnings through essays and detailed weekly reports.

Across two semesters, students worked with diverse NGOs addressing critical issues such as environmental conservation, women's empowerment, education, and senior citizen welfare. The essays in this journal provide a heartfelt narrative of the students' transformative journeys, revealing how deeply their engagements impacted their perspectives on social responsibility. Meanwhile, the reports highlight the structured activities and initiatives carried out under the program—ranging from interactive workshops to impactful campaigns. Together, these contributions showcase a dynamic blend of theoretical understanding and practical engagement, creating a ripple effect of positive change within and beyond the college.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the editorial team, Dr. Mahima Varma, Assistant Professor in Sociology and Ms. Ishita Singh, Assistant Professor in English, for their meticulous effort in bringing this volume to fruition. I also deeply appreciate the guidance provided by our faculty coordinators and the collaboration with our NGO partners, whose contributions have been invaluable. Most importantly, I commend our students for their unwavering enthusiasm, hard work, and commitment to making a difference by becoming agents of social transformation.

May this journal serve as a source of inspiration for future cohorts and a platform to celebrate the power of collective action. Together, let us continue to uphold the spirit of service and strive toward building an equitable and compassionate society.

Prof. Sandra Joseph
Principal

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Community Outreach Report 2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

Community Outreach was introduced under NEP 2020 by University of Delhi. It took shape in the revised draft based on the NEP titled Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in Higher Educational Institutions in India: National Curriculum Framework and Guidelines in January 2022 (University Grants Commission, 2022). The Community Outreach program was issued with clear guidelines and assessments methods in Appendix-92 Resolution No. 27 {27-12} in August 2023 in the form of 'Guidelines for Internship, Apprenticeship and Community Outreach (IAC)'. CO is available as an option in semesters III, IV, V and VI.

Community outreach started in Jesus and Mary College on 13th October 2023 and carried on throughout the two semesters of the Academic Year 2023-2024. It was offered to students of II year, that is, semesters III and IV. A total of 84 students opted for community outreach.

Community Outreach carries 2 credits earned by a student through completion of 60 hours of work per semester. It entails placement of students with an NGO. The work contributed by the student was monitored by the NGO Supervisor, who assigned tasks, monitored student progress recorded the number of hours contributed as well as a designated department-wise JMC Faculty Coordinator who met students in weekly meetings and assessed their progress. Evaluation was based on a work journal maintained by students, detailing the tasks and hours they completed, an end-semester presentation and NGO feedback.

The first batch of students eligible for this course were in their second year, Semester III. The course aims to foster community engagement and sensitivity towards societal development among students.

A total of 84 students enthusiastically opted for the Community Outreach Course, actively engaging in the program and demonstrating their commitment to the principles outlined in NEP 2020. This course provided students with a structured and comprehensive experience in community service within a defined timeframe.

Nodal Officer: Dr. Mahima Varma

Community Coordinator: Ms. Junita Paul

Academic Coordinator: Ms. Ishita Singh

Faculty Coordinators:

1. Dr. Ashwati A Nair, Department of Political Science
2. Dr. Garima Bajaj, Department of Physical Education
3. Dr. Meenakshi Kumar, Department of Hindi
4. Dr. Ruchi Bhalla, Department of Economics
5. Dr. Sabiha Mazid, Department of Sociology
6. Dr. Sanghamitra Burman, Department of History
7. Ms. Ishita Singh, Department of English
8. Ms. Reshma Jose, Department of Psychology
9. Ms. Sarah Awungshi, Department of Psychology

NGO Placements

Students who selected the Community Outreach Course were required to obtain consent letters signed by their parents, as the course involved placements with NGOs outside the college premises. They were placed across nine different Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), with Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) signed with the following organizations:

- HelpAge India
- Indo Global Social Service Society
- International Association of Human Values
- Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation
- Literacy India
- National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People
- Swechha India
- Vishwa Yuva Kendra
- Young Women's Christian Association

This diverse range of placements provided students with exposure to a variety of social issues, including literacy, skill training, disability, environmental conservation, and advocacy for different community groups such as women, children, youth, and the elderly. This allowed students to make meaningful contributions to various causes.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS OCTOBER 2023 - DECEMBER 2023

The semester began with an orientation to the Community Outreach program by Dr. Mahima Varma, Nodal Officer for Community Outreach, JMC. The presentation detailed the purpose and value of engaging with the community, the guidelines set by the University of Delhi, and the JMC faculty coordinators who would be assigned to specific NGOs to closely oversee the coursework.

The objectives of Community Outreach are as follows:

- Promote social responsibility
- Develop empathy and compassion
- Identify social issues
- Raise awareness
- Assist in problem-solving
- Facilitate skill development and empowerment

Prof. Beena A. Reji, Professor, Dept. of Social Work Aditi Mahavidyalaya was invited to deliver a lecture on Community Outreach: Skills of Working with People on 6th October 2023. Prof. Reji is a distinguished academic and expert in social work with extensive experience in community engagement and development. Her lecture provided valuable perspectives on the importance of equipping social work students with the necessary skills to effectively work with diverse communities.

Throughout the course, students actively engaged in community-driven initiatives, gaining hands-on experience and practical insights. The outreach experience not only deepened their understanding of societal challenges but also empowered them to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations. The Community Outreach Course contributed meaningfully to community development and had a transformative effect on the participating students, fostering a sense of responsibility, empathy, and a deeper understanding of the social fabric.

A series called the Community Outreach NGO Engagement Series was organized from November 17 to December 5, 2023. This series enabled students placed with various NGOs during the semester to showcase their work through PowerPoint presentations and to initiate discussions about the transformative impact they contributed to in society.

Students attended an engaging online talk by Dr. Rajesh Tandon, Founder-President of PRIA, titled “Harvesting Sustainability: Ecologies of Knowledge Democracy.” He underscored the importance of democratizing knowledge to address critical global challenges such as inequality, sustainability, and ecological degradation. Dr. Tandon emphasized integrating academic, indigenous, and local knowledge into participatory frameworks to empower marginalized communities and foster inclusive development. His insights inspired attendees to view knowledge as a collective resource essential for building equitable and resilient societies.

In the workshop “Designing Community-Centric Fieldwork for Community Outreach Students,” Shalaka, a Social Designer and Consultant, equipped participants with practical skills for fieldwork tailored to diverse communities. The session covered understanding local contexts, ethical engagement, effective communication, and incorporating feedback into program design.

Kavita Nair, Assistant Director at the Inclusion Trust, Bapu Trust, led the session “Giving the Power Back to the Community.” She highlighted empowering communities by valuing their experiences and fostering self-reliance. Drawing on her expertise in mental health and advocacy, she stressed co-creation and inclusive practices to enable sustainable, community-led interventions.

NGO REPORTS OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

Number of Students Assigned: 07

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Sabiha Mazid

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) is a global women's organization active in 122 countries. The YWCA of Delhi advocates for peace, justice, and environmental care and has been advancing the status of women for more than a century through advocacy, training, and development. It empowers women, including young girls, to drive social change.

On October 20, 2023, the Faculty Coordinator and the students visited the YWCA's main office on Ashoka Road for an orientation. Ms. Amrita and Ms. Linda, the YWCA's Heads of Departments, provided a detailed introduction to the organization. Based on each student's interests and travel convenience, they were assigned to one of the following centers:

- Ashoka Road
- Govindpuri
- Jahangirpuri
- Sarai Rohilla / Mangolpuri

Center 1: YWCA Shelter Home, Ashoka Road

This center primarily provides temporary or long-term housing for women, offering services like housing, food, clothing, TV, and access to arts and crafts. Our students—Sr. Neelam and Jess T. Joseph—contributed through activities such as:

- Mental health sessions
- Mindfulness exercises
- Meditation
- Art and craft
- Johari Window exercises

Center 2: Mahila Panchayat Program (DCW), Govindpuri

This center focuses on empowering women, particularly victims of gender-based violence.

Our student, Aparna Srivastava, actively participated in:

- Success reporting
- File reading
- Community interaction
- Assisting with Mahila Panchayat meetings and programs

Center 3: Matritava Chayya Shelter, Jahangirpuri

This shelter provides support for pregnant and lactating women, addressing their educational and healthcare needs. Our students—Devyani Bathla and Jahnvi Ali—engaged in activities including:

- Mindfulness sessions for residents' mental well-being
- Storytelling on freedom fighters and inspirational figures
- Encouragement games for departing residents to foster positive interactions
- Participation in the "16 Days of Activism Against Violence" campaign with role-play and awareness sessions on social issues like dowry
- Leading self-care sessions on physical and mental wellness
- Observing supervisor-led awareness sessions on social issues, laws, and women's empowerment

Centers 4 & 5: YWCA Shelter Home, Sarai Rohilla and Mahila Panchayat, Mangolpuri

Two students, Yashika Sehwat and Priyanshi Mehta, visited these centers on alternate weekends according to the center schedules. The Shelter Home in Sarai Rohilla supports pregnant and lactating women and their children, addressing basic education and healthcare needs. The Mahila Panchayat in Mangolpuri serves as a forum for women to discuss issues related to their rights, domestic conflicts, violence, and socio-cultural challenges.

The students' contributions included:

- Engaging residents in conversations and vocational activities like beading and art
- Assisting children with number and letter writing, using educational cartoons to make learning enjoyable
- Interactive sessions to foster awareness of healthy relationships
- Gender Role Reversal Play, an exercise to build empathy and raise awareness about violence prevention
- Reading Mahila Panchayat case studies and documenting cases
- Assisting in awareness programs
- Providing a platform for residents to showcase talents, from dance and singing to educational sessions aligned with their syllabus

Learning Outcomes

Through their work at the Mahila Panchayats, students gained a deeper understanding of panchayat functions, the role of the police, and societal challenges. They developed empathy and sensitivity by engaging with residents facing physical and mental health challenges, and they gained a profound appreciation of self-care for marginalized groups. The experience broadened their awareness of the consequences of violence against women and the importance of advocacy.

Students learned the value of empathetic engagement, creativity in education for enhancing engagement and retention, and the importance of inclusivity and awareness-building in fostering healthy relationships and empowerment. The experience highlighted the importance of nurturing individual talents and deepened students' understanding of the complexities within communities and the significance of this understanding for effective intervention.

Despite the limited five-week timeframe for Community Outreach this semester, students gained substantial practical learning and experience. Each student completed the required hours and developed valuable skills for working with diverse communities.

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled Persons (NCPEDP)

Number of Students Assigned: 08

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Reshma Jose

The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) stands as a leading advocate for the rights and empowerment of individuals with disabilities, with a mission to foster inclusivity and promote disability rights across society. At the heart of this transformative work are the dedicated efforts of students who have actively engaged in various initiatives, making significant contributions to the College's community outreach programs.

Overview of Student Contributions

Students assigned to NCPEDP have been instrumental in advancing the organization's objectives through diverse projects in advocacy, education, event coordination, and data management. A key responsibility they undertook was the administration of scholarships and fellowships for individuals with disabilities. They created accessible Hindi Google Forms for different award categories, streamlining participation and recognition within the disability community. Additionally, their work in compiling and analyzing data for the Helen Keller Awards demonstrated their commitment to honoring outstanding achievements and inspiring future generations.

Advocacy and Impact

In the area of advocacy, students played a crucial role in shaping policy discussions and influencing political agendas. They contributed to drafting and editing letters addressed to National and State Party Presidents, urging the inclusion of disability-related demands in election manifestos. This proactive approach not only called for political representation but also amplified the voices of individuals with disabilities on critical societal platforms. Furthermore, they reached out to schools across Uttar Pradesh for the Bajaj Finserv Scholarship, enhancing

educational opportunities and accessibility for disabled students.

Event Coordination and Knowledge Sharing

Students were also actively involved in event coordination, providing essential support for prestigious events such as the Helen Keller Awards and UNESCO NCPEDP panel discussions. They ensured seamless logistical arrangements and effective representation of disability issues. Their participation in panel discussions and registration processes facilitated meaningful dialogues and contributed to broader efforts to promote disability empowerment and foster inclusive policies.

Skills Development and Learning Outcomes

In addition to their contributions, students at NCPEDP gained invaluable skills and experiences that extend beyond their academic pursuits. Proficiency in data management tools like Excel and creative platforms such as Canva has equipped them with practical skills essential for their professional growth. Their involvement in collaborative projects has also honed their communication and teamwork abilities, fostering a holistic approach to addressing complex societal challenges.

Impact on Community and Future Directions

The impact of the students' work at NCPEDP has been profound, leading to tangible changes in societal perceptions and policies concerning disability rights. Their initiatives have empowered individuals with disabilities by enhancing visibility, recognition, and access to essential resources like education and support services. Moving forward, their continued advocacy and commitment will further advance the cause of inclusivity, paving the way for a more equitable society where every individual, regardless of ability, can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

The community outreach work undertaken by students at NCPEDP exemplifies their dedication to promoting disability rights and empowerment. Through proactive

engagement in advocacy, education, and event coordination, they have not only enriched the organization's initiatives but have also set a precedent for future generations of changemakers committed to fostering inclusivity and social justice. Through their collective efforts, they have demonstrated the transformative power of activism and collaboration in creating a more accessible and supportive environment for individuals with disabilities.

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK)

Number of Students Assigned: 10

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Ruchi Bhalla

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK) has a unique history. In 1958, the executive committee of the Indian Assembly of Youth concluded that for youth work to develop scientifically in India, a national youth center needed to be established. This center would provide continuous training in youth work for the workers of youth organizations. The committee also envisioned the center as an international meeting place for young people from all over the world. To ensure the center's permanence, it was decided to set up an independent trust that would command respect and support.

Objectives of the NGO

- **Community Engagement and Social Welfare:** To actively engage in social work initiatives aimed at uplifting marginalized communities, supporting underprivileged groups, and implementing projects that enhance social welfare.
- **Youth Empowerment:** To empower young individuals by offering skill development, education, and mentorship programs.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** To create and implement campaigns on social issues such as education, health, gender equality, and the environment, aiming to

- raise awareness among youth and the broader community.
- Capacity Building: To contribute to building the capacity of youth and the community by organizing workshops, training sessions, events, and providing input for social media initiatives.

Student Engagement

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra conducted an orientation program to help students better understand the NGO's work and objectives. The orientation included a report detailing the history, recent projects, founding members, and the objectives of VYK, as well as the impact on the students who attended.

On the second visit, a trip to a nearby village was organized to raise awareness about girls' education through the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" campaign.

In the third session, Mr. Anand, a member of VYK's digital department, spoke about the importance of digital media today. He encouraged students to suggest ideas for reaching mass audiences and identifying areas where improvements could be made to help people learn more about the NGO.

The fourth session was another field visit to a nearby slum area, where VYK organized a Kho Kho competition at Vivekananda Camp, Chanakyapuri, on 24th November, with 200 young participants. During the competition, the children embraced teamwork, fostering unity and cooperation. The event provided valuable life lessons, such as the importance of teamwork, discipline, inclusivity, and physical well-being. The Kho Kho competition highlighted the significance of sports in promoting social unity and health.

Achievements of the Students

The orientation at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra helped students gain a better understanding of the NGO, its objectives, and the training programs, seminars, and facilities it provides. Each student was given 4 to 5 minutes to introduce themselves and discuss how they could contribute to society.

One key achievement was volunteering in the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" awareness campaign, where students worked closely with 70 children from slum areas. Their commitment to volunteerism helped fulfill the campaign's goal of raising awareness about the importance of girls' education.

In an interactive session with Mr. Anand, students learned about social media management, how individual interests impact social media, and the importance of blogs, posts, seminars, and reports in digital outreach.

The Kho Kho competition, conducted under the guidance of Mr. Rakesh Singh, provided students with instructions on how to organize and manage the event. The students learned valuable lessons on teamwork and how to engage with children effectively.

Lessons Learned:

- Teamwork skills
- Effective communication
- A deeper understanding of social issues
- Fostering personal growth
- A sense of responsibility and grassroots impact
- Public speaking skills
- Community engagement
- Connecting with different communities and working for them

The community outreach work undertaken by students helped them develop stronger communication skills and a deeper understanding of gender inequality, as well as the importance of education and universal access to it. Overall, the community outreach experience was a highly educational and successful event, enriching both the students and the communities they engaged with.

Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation **(Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion)**

Number of Students Assigned: 13

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Meenakshi Kumar

Mr. Kailash Satyarthi is a well-known social rights activist who has been working to end child slavery and exploitation since 1980. He has also worked towards the overall betterment of society. The "Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion" (SMGC) is another initiative taken by the Kailash Satyarthi Children Foundation (KSCF) to uplift youth, women, and other marginalized sections of society.

The session began with an orientation at the Sanjay Camp office of Kailash Satyarthi NGO. Mr. Lakhan, the field coordinator, and Ms. Neha arranged a meeting with the members of the Bal Mitra Mandal (BMM) on 13th October 2023 as part of the orientation program. The students also visited the community to observe firsthand the challenges faced by the residents.

During the orientation session, students learned about the BMM, which is a child-friendly urban community initiative launched by the Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion in 2018. Another group, known as Bal Mitra Gram, works for the underprivileged, mainly in rural areas. BMM empowers children and their communities to work together to secure their rights, raise awareness against child labor, child sexual abuse, and promote sanitation, hygiene, and education through democratic actions. BMM consists of 11 members, with 8 members elected to specific positions and 3 members appointed to the membership. The member who receives the most votes among the 8 elected members becomes the president. The other members are assigned various roles, such as Health Ministry, Education Ministry, Water Ministry, and Electricity Ministry.

Student Engagement

The students began their involvement by visiting the camp and engaging in an interactive session with the community members from both Sanjay Camp and Vivekananda Camp. Under the SMGC, students initiated several programs to support the community. They taught women at Sanjay Camp and organized skill training sessions, such as Mandala and Madhubani art forms, to help the women craft decorative items and achieve financial stability. Additionally, students educated children on various subjects required for effective leadership.

Students demonstrated the ability to organize and manage a team, ensuring the successful execution of these sessions. Initially, they faced challenges in mobilizing the community women, but through gradual learning, their approach improved, and Ms. Neha played a significant role in assisting them.

The students continued to learn and adapt every day, overcoming new challenges. Initially, they felt like outsiders, but after two or three sessions, that sentiment faded. The women in the community proved to be cooperative during the mobilization efforts. When some women could not attend a session, they communicated their reasons calmly. Many women exhibited a genuine eagerness to learn and were highly communicative. The students asked them about their preferences for future sessions, and the women happily shared their suggestions, which helped the students improve their engagement and ability to address diverse needs.

The students also conducted sessions on waste material utilization and educated children about the CUET, NEP, Canva, YouTube, and board exams. These sessions showcased the students' teaching abilities and enhanced their communication skills, as they addressed questions from Sanjay Camp students.

Campaigns and Community Engagement

The students' involvement in campaigns such as Karunamaya Diwali and awareness sessions on menstruation highlighted their capabilities in community engagement. During Karunamaya Diwali, they emphasized compassion, and during the menstruation awareness sessions, they addressed myths with sensitivity. Speaking to large groups in Sanjay and Vivekananda Camps helped the students gain confidence in public speaking. They also educated the community about important issues, such as child trafficking.

Reflections

Working in Sanjay Camp allowed students to engage directly with the community and understand their issues. Common problems included poor hygiene and family misunderstandings. Many girls complained about foul odors and unclean washrooms. They also highlighted the disruptive effects of alcohol and substance abuse among men. Education was a major issue, as many were first-generation learners and lacked knowledge of basic rights. Most residents are daily wage laborers and face difficulties due to their work in the unorganized sector.

In Vivekananda Camp, residents face economic challenges, with limited employment opportunities often resulting in low-income, unstable jobs. The lack of education and resources further hinders their ability to break the cycle of poverty. Hygiene is another major concern, as inadequate sanitation facilities and overcrowded living conditions make it difficult to maintain basic hygiene. Access to clean water is limited, exacerbating health risks and diseases in this densely populated area. These struggles significantly impact the health and well-being of the community's residents.

Literacy India

Number of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Garima Bajaj

Literacy India is a prominent non-governmental organization dedicated to empowering underprivileged communities through education and skill development in India. Founded with a mission to eradicate illiteracy and poverty, Literacy India focuses on enhancing literacy rates, especially among children and women from marginalized backgrounds. By providing access to quality education, vocational training, and digital literacy initiatives, the organization aims to foster sustainable socio-economic growth and empower individuals to break the cycle of poverty. Through innovative programs and partnerships, Literacy India continues to make a significant impact by transforming lives and building a brighter future for disadvantaged communities across the country.

On 13th October 2023, the Faculty Coordinator, along with the students, visited the office of Literacy India at the Mohammadpur Branch for an orientation. The branch supervisors, Ms. Teena and Mr. Deepak, provided a detailed overview of the organization's work. Based on the students' interests and travel convenience, each student was assigned to one of the following centers:

- Bajghera (Branch with Main Office)
- Mohammadpur
- Government College for Girls in Sector 52

Activities at the Centers

Bajghera Branch:

The Bajghera branch of Literacy India is a community-focused initiative aimed at transforming the lives of rural populations through education and skill development. Situated in the heart of Bajgedha, this branch addresses the unique needs of local communities by offering a range of programs. Under the guidance of Kadambari

Ma'am, students Kanak, Hema, and Sandhya were involved in the following activities:

- Literacy programs
- Vocational training
- Digital skills workshops

Mohammadpur Branch:

The Mohammadpur branch primarily focuses on the empowerment of women. The center offers services such as teaching women basic computer skills, including typing and calculations. Students Sneha and Pratyusha actively participated in activities with:

- Children (ages 12-16)
- College students
- Elderly women

Government College for Girls, Sector 52:

This center is specifically designed for school and college-going females. It addresses both basic education and introduces women to technology. Student Pranati was engaged in the following activities:

- Introduction to computers
- Familiarizing students with basic computer functions
- Addressing basic health and sanitation issues

Learning Outcomes

Working with Literacy India yielded several impactful learning outcomes for the students:

- **Improved Literacy Rates:** The programs led to significant improvements in literacy rates among children and adults from marginalized communities.
- **Empowerment of Women:** Initiatives provided women with education and skill training, enabling them to contribute actively to their families' income and decision-making processes.
- **Enhanced Vocational Skills:** Participants gained practical vocational skills that enhanced their employability and income-earning potential.
- **Digital Literacy:** By imparting digital literacy skills, students helped bridge the digital divide, enabling community members to access information, education, and online opportunities.

- **Community Development:** The programs fostered community cohesion and participation, leading to collective efforts to address local challenges and promote sustainable development.
- **Socio-economic Impact:** Families and individuals experienced improved socio-economic conditions, leading to better living standards and increased resilience against poverty.
- **Long-term Sustainability:** The promotion of education and skill development contributed to long-term sustainability and growth within the communities served.

These outcomes reflect the commitment of the students and Literacy India to make a lasting difference in the lives of individuals and communities through education and empowerment. Despite the limited time-frame of 5 weeks for Community Outreach in the semester, the students gained practical learning and experience from working with the community and the NGO. Each student completed the required hours (and more) and acquired valuable skills in engaging with diverse communities.

Additionally, the students raised more than Rs. 6,000 in donations for the NGO.

Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS)

Number of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Ishita Singh

The Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS) is a prominent non-governmental organization based in New Delhi, India. It is dedicated to the development and empowerment of vulnerable communities through social service initiatives, capacity building, and community-based interventions. The organization's work focuses on a variety of social issues such as education, health, sanitation, women's rights, and youth empowerment. During their

engagement with IGSSS, the students had the opportunity to work directly with community youth and leaders, taking part in the Youth Leaders' Program, which allowed them to better understand the challenges faced by these youth and how they are addressing them within their communities.

Key Activities and Experiences

Orientation Session

The first step in the students' engagement with IGSSS was an orientation session, which provided them with an introduction to the organization's history, mission, and the scope of its work. During this session, students were trained on the core skills needed to interact with community members, build rapport, and contribute meaningfully to the ongoing projects. They also discussed the logistics of the upcoming community visits and brainstormed ideas on how to best approach these visits. This orientation was crucial in equipping the students with the necessary knowledge and mindset for their fieldwork.

Community Visits

The students participated in several community visits, where they interacted directly with youth leaders and community members. These visits offered a hands-on experience of the social issues faced by marginalized groups. Below are the key community visits and the learnings gained:

- Community Visit 1 (North Delhi - Rang Mahal Basti): The North Delhi group had the opportunity to engage with the youth leaders of Rang Mahal Basti. During this visit, students and youth leaders discussed a wide range of topics including their personal hobbies, career ambitions, and the challenges they face in their localities. This session allowed students to gain insights into the daily struggles of young people living in urban slums and understand the importance of community leadership in creating positive change.
- Community Visit 2 (Shakur Basti): In Shakur Basti, the focus was on issues related to hygiene and sanitation.

- Students interacted with local residents, listening to their concerns about the lack of proper sanitation facilities, waste disposal systems, and clean water access. This visit allowed students to understand the role of community leaders in addressing public health issues and the significant barriers that residents face due to inadequate infrastructure.
- Community Visit 3 (West Delhi - Baljeet Nagar): The group visiting Baljeet Nagar had a deep discussion with a youth leader about social issues affecting the area. Topics ranged from education, employment opportunities, and local safety concerns. The youth leader shared how he and his peers are working to overcome these challenges by engaging young people in meaningful activities and advocacy efforts. The students learned how community leadership can influence local policy and empower youth to become active change agents.
- Community Visit 4 (South East Delhi - Khichripur): In Khichripur, the students engaged with a group of young people at a youth adda – a local gathering space where youth come together to discuss issues affecting them. The topic of discussion was peer pressure, a prevalent issue in many youth communities. Through this visit, students learned about the pressures young people face in their social environments and how peer support can help mitigate these challenges. This conversation highlighted the importance of safe spaces where youth can express themselves and seek guidance from their peers and community leaders.

Yuv Utsav Mela

The students participated in the Yuv Utsav Mela, a vibrant event that celebrated Sustainable Youth Development. This event was a platform for youth leaders and community members to come together and showcase their efforts towards sustainable development in their communities.

The students not only observed but also actively contributed to the event, helping to organize activities and interact with participants. Through this event, they learned the importance of community gatherings in raising awareness about social issues and building solidarity among youth groups.

Sports Day

A Sports Day event was organized for the IGSSS youth leaders, where the students assisted in organizing various games and activities. The event focused on promoting teamwork, fitness, and community spirit. By participating in the games and helping to manage the activities, the students gained practical experience in event coordination and learned about the role of sports in fostering positive behavior, health, and social cohesion among youth.

Project Outcome

As part of their fieldwork, the students conducted interviews with 70 youth leaders from the different communities they visited. These interviews were part of a project to create a booklet cataloging and archiving the experiences and contributions of the youth leaders in their communities. This booklet will serve as a record of the work done by IGSSS in fostering youth leadership and community development. The interviews provided valuable insights into the challenges youth leaders face and their strategies for overcoming obstacles in their respective communities.

Learning Outcomes

The experience with IGSSS provided the students with several important learning outcomes:

- **Understanding the History of Social Work:** The students gained an understanding of the history and evolution of social work and its impact on communities. They learned how organizations like IGSSS play a pivotal role in addressing social disparities.

- **Fieldwork Skills:** Through their community visits, the students learned the importance of effective communication and how to build trust and rapport with community members. They were trained on how to conduct field research, including interviews and surveys, and how to approach sensitive topics with empathy.
- **Youth Leadership and Community Change:** The students observed firsthand how youth leaders are bringing change to their communities. They learned how young people are becoming the driving force behind initiatives focused on sanitation, safety, education, and social justice. The visits underscored the significant role that youth leaders play in mobilizing their communities and advocating for their needs.
- **Unity and Potential in Communities:** The students gained a deep appreciation for the unity and kindness within these communities. They learned how these youth leaders, despite facing challenges, continue to drive change and work towards creating better conditions for themselves and others. The experience reinforced the importance of collective action and how communities can empower one another to bring about positive change.
- **Understanding Social Issues:** The program also helped the students understand the social issues that youth in these communities face, such as lack of access to education, poor sanitation, and limited employment opportunities. By interacting with the youth and community leaders, the students developed a deeper understanding of the barriers these communities face in achieving sustainable development.

Swechha India

Number of Students Assigned: 05

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Sarah H. Awungshi

Swechha India is one of the leading environmental and social organizations in India, established in 2000 in New Delhi. Swechha's core areas of focus include Sustainable Lifestyle & Education, Awareness and Advocacy for local and global environmental issues, Research on Climate Change and Sustainability, and Empowerment of Communities to enhance their resilience. Through its community outreach programs, Swechha works to engage local communities, foster creative skills in children, and promote environmental awareness.

The students volunteered across two main domains: the After-School Workshops and the Green the Map initiative.

After-School Workshops

The after-school workshops at Swechha's Malviya Nagar center provided children with a vibrant platform to explore their creativity and develop new skills. The workshops focused on three main areas: dance, art and craft, and drawing.

- In the dance workshop, energetic children found joy and liberation through rhythmic movement, developing unique dance styles that emphasized self-expression and confidence. The workshop became a medium for the children to channel their energy into creative and expressive forms.
- The art and craft sessions engaged the children in the intricate art of origami. By transforming colorful sheets of paper into imaginative 3D shapes, the children not only improved their fine motor skills but also honed their creativity, learning the value of patience and focus.
- The drawing workshop provided an outlet for the children to unleash their artistic potential. With guidance on basic techniques, the children created vibrant

artwork that reflected their ideas and stories, fostering personal expression and boosting their emotional well-being.

These workshops collectively contributed to the development of creativity, skill-building, and emotional growth, offering the children opportunities for self-expression while enhancing their cognitive and motor abilities.

Green the Map Initiative

As part of the Green the Map initiative, the students took on the responsibility of managing the social media platform. They were tasked with curating engaging reels and writing captions that would resonate with the platform's audience. This hands-on experience allowed the students to sharpen their social media management and communication skills. Through crafting content, the students gained valuable insights into the advocacy efforts of various climate activists, learning that even small, seemingly insignificant tasks, such as creating social media posts, can contribute to larger environmental movements.

The students also explored Green the Map's eco-friendly shop, which featured innovative products made from recycled and waste materials. For example, they saw how discarded car bonnets had been transformed into functional sofas and how household utensils had been repurposed into unique lighting fixtures. This part of the initiative, Remakery India, highlighted the creative potential of sustainability and the importance of reimagining waste materials, reinforcing the principles of recycling and circular economy.

Learnings

- Individualized Learning Approach: The students learned to create personalized learning plans to meet the varied needs of after-school students from different age groups. This approach enhanced the students' confidence and comprehension, as they adapted their teaching methods to suit each child's developmental stage and learning style.

- **Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity:** The students gained a deeper understanding of cultural sensitivity and the importance of inclusivity. By embracing and respecting the diverse backgrounds of the children, they were able to build trust and create an inclusive learning environment where all participants felt valued and accepted.
- **Social Media and Communication Skills:** Managing social media platforms effectively was one of the key learning experiences. The students learned how to craft engaging content—creating reels and writing captions—to improve audience engagement. This experience improved their communication skills and taught them the power of storytelling in the digital space, demonstrating how impactful narratives can influence social change and promote environmental awareness.

Through their work with Swechha India, the students gained invaluable experiences in community engagement, environmental awareness, and creative education. Their involvement in the after-school workshops and the Green the Map initiative not only allowed them to contribute to the empowerment of children and communities but also helped them develop critical skills in communication, teaching, and social media management. These experiences enhanced their understanding of the intersection between social advocacy and creativity, preparing them to apply these skills in future endeavors.

International Association for Human Values (IAHV)

Number of Students Assigned: 10

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Sanghamitra R. Verman

This report highlights the work and initiatives undertaken by the students during their 2.5 months (60 hours) of community work as part of the Community Outreach Program.

The program focused on a collaborative, grassroots effort to improve the well-being of local communities. It aimed at identifying and addressing collective needs, fostering inclusivity, and empowering individuals to actively contribute to their social, economic, and cultural development. The students worked towards fostering positive change and bridging the gap between themselves and the neighboring communities, with a focus on creating sustainable, community-driven initiatives. This report reflects the skills acquired, the tasks assigned, and the outcomes of their involvement in various community activities.

Community Familiarization

The first step of the initiative involved visiting Sanjay Camp and Vivekananda Camp to familiarize the students with the community and its residents. These visits were crucial for establishing trust and rapport with the community members. Through direct interactions with the residents, the students gained a deeper understanding of the challenges they faced and the resources they needed. This foundational step was key to ensuring that the community felt valued and understood, thus laying the groundwork for future collaborative efforts.

Mobilizing for ABHA Card

One of the core tasks of the students was to help mobilize people for the Ayushman Bharat Scheme (ABHA Card). This required effective communication and persuasive skills, as the students had to encourage residents to take part in a government initiative aimed at providing health coverage to underserved communities. The students were divided into small groups to visit households, where they explained the benefits of the scheme and helped individuals register for the ABHA Card. Through this process, the students demonstrated their organizational skills and their ability to manage grassroots-level community engagement. The initiative was successful, with nearly 65 ABHA Cards successfully issued, showcasing the students' ability to effectively mobilize and

educate the community about essential services

Educational Sessions on Government Policies:

The students organized educational sessions on key government policies, such as Sukanya Samriddhi, Ayushman Bharat, National Incentive for Education, and Swanidhi Yojana. These sessions aimed to raise awareness among the community members, particularly women across various age groups, about the government schemes available to them. The students' commitment to educating the community on policies that could improve their lives was evident throughout the process. The sessions were designed to be interactive, fostering a two-way exchange of information, which allowed residents to ask questions and engage in discussions. This approach ensured that the community not only learned about these schemes but also understood how to access them and their benefits. The students' efforts in conducting these workshops empowered the residents, making them more informed and confident about their rights and entitlements.

Healthcare Workshops and ABHA Card Mobilization

In addition to the educational sessions on government policies, the students also focused on healthcare education, with a particular emphasis on the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. Through targeted workshops and household visits, the students helped raise awareness about the healthcare benefits available under the scheme. These workshops not only provided crucial information but also offered a platform for the students to connect with the community on a personal level. Their proactive approach in organizing and conducting these workshops contributed significantly to the success of the ABHA Card registration, reinforcing the importance of healthcare accessibility in marginalized communities.

Fun and Educational Activities

In the concluding phase of the community outreach program, the students organized fun

and educational activities to strengthen community bonds and make the learning process more engaging. Activities such as Antakshari and Pass the Parcel were incorporated into the sessions, offering entertainment while also creating opportunities to educate the residents about government policies and the available facilities. By blending education with fun, the students were able to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, which made the community more receptive to learning about important issues. This dual approach—entertainment mixed with education—highlighted the students' creative and innovative approach to community engagement, ensuring that the learning was both impactful and memorable.

HelpAge India

Number of Students Assigned: 05

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Ashwathi Nair

HelpAge India envisions a society where the elderly have the right to live an active, healthy, and dignified life. With a projected 138 million elderly people in India, HelpAge India advocates for their rights and well-being, focusing on issues such as universal pension, quality healthcare, and action against elder abuse. The organization operates across 26 state offices in India and runs numerous programs addressing the needs of the elderly while promoting elder-friendly policies at the national, state, and societal levels.

HelpAge's programs include direct interventions in healthcare (mobile healthcare units, cataract surgeries), age care (helplines, senior citizen homes, daycare centers, physiotherapy), livelihoods (elder self-help groups, linkages with government schemes), disaster response (e.g., COVID-19 relief), and advocacy and awareness on rights and policies relating to the elderly.

Orientation with HelpAge India

The students were introduced to HelpAge India and its activities by Mrs. Rojibala, the NGO supervisor. They learned about the various centers operated by HelpAge, such as those in Palam and Govindpuri, which focus on addressing issues related to elderly individuals, including elderly women. HelpAge also provides van services weekly, offering medicines and basic necessities to people living in underserved areas. This initial interactive session offered a valuable introduction to the organization's work and left the students fascinated by the extent of its outreach and impact.

Visit to Dada Dev Palam

During the visit to the Palam center, the students met Ms. Pooja, the center head, and learned about the services offered, particularly physiotherapy for elderly individuals. The students also interacted with the elderly residents by engaging them in games such as Tambola, painting, and other recreational activities. These interactions not only helped the elderly have fun but also provided an opportunity for the students to engage deeply with the elderly and understand their needs.

Visit to Govindpuri

The visit to the Govindpuri old age home was a deeply emotional experience. The students did not anticipate how moving it would be to connect with the elderly residents. Despite being strangers, the elderly individuals shared their personal stories, many of which were marked by abandonment by their children. This shared experience of loneliness and isolation brought a sense of empathy and understanding for the challenges the elderly face.

The students conducted interviews with the residents, learning about their migration stories and the reasons they ended up in the HelpAge home. The common thread was the painful reality of being abandoned by their own families, which added to the emotional gravity of the visit.

How HelpAge Supports Community Engagement

Old age homes play a significant role in improving the quality of life for elderly individuals by offering various services and fostering community involvement:

1. **Healthcare Support:** Old age homes typically have medical staff to provide regular check-ups and timely healthcare.
2. **Social Connections:** These homes offer opportunities for residents to connect with peers, reducing feelings of isolation.
3. **Community Involvement:** Events and programs are organized to involve the broader community, creating intergenerational connections.
4. **Resource Utilization:** Old age homes pool resources such as trained medical personnel, allowing for more efficient use of these resources.
5. **Professional Care:** Trained caregivers provide specialized assistance, improving the overall well-being of the elderly.
6. **Relieving Family Burden:** For families unable to provide full-time care, old age homes offer a solution, ensuring that the elderly are well taken care of.

In summary, old age homes contribute significantly to the community by offering healthcare, fostering social interactions, and supporting families who may not be able to care for their elderly loved ones.

Challenges Faced

The students faced several challenges during their visits to HelpAge India:

1. **Age Barrier:** A significant challenge was overcoming the age gap, as elderly individuals may not readily open up to younger people, especially strangers. This made initial interactions difficult.
2. **Time Constraints:** The students faced scheduling issues, as their academic commitments conflicted with the timings of the center's activities. This required some adjustment and planning to ensure participation.

3. **Reluctance to Participate:** Initially, some elderly residents were reluctant to engage in the activities organized by the students. However, with persistence, they became more involved, which made the experience more rewarding for both the elderly and the students.
4. **Financial Constraints:** Some elderly residents hesitated to interact due to financial or social concerns, which added a layer of complexity to the engagement.
5. **Language Barrier:** While the students communicated in Hindi, regional dialects sometimes made it difficult to fully understand each other. Over time, however, the students became more familiar with the local dialects and adjusted their communication.

Approaching Elderly People

The students learned how to effectively approach and communicate with elderly individuals. Key guidelines included:

1. **Use Polite Language:** Address them respectfully, using titles like "Mr." or "Ms." unless they prefer a more informal approach.
2. **Respect Personal Space:** Be mindful of the elderly's comfort levels and avoid invading their personal space.
3. **Make Eye Contact:** Establish eye contact to show attentiveness, but be aware that some cultures may find prolonged eye contact uncomfortable.
4. **Speak Clearly and Audibly:** Ensure speech is clear and at an appropriate volume, considering any hearing impairments.
5. **Be Patient:** Allow elderly individuals time to process information and respond, avoiding rushing the conversation.

Reflections and Skills Developed

The community outreach program contributed significantly to the students' personal and professional development:

1. **Increased Awareness and Empathy:** The experience enhanced the students' empathy and understanding of social issues, particularly the challenges faced by marginalized communities like the elderly.

2. **Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Engaging with diverse groups helped improve the students' communication and interpersonal skills.
3. **Teamwork and Collaboration:** The students learned the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving shared goals.
4. **Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking:** Working with an NGO exposed the students to complex social issues, fostering problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
5. **Adaptability and Flexibility:** The dynamic nature of NGO work taught the students to adapt quickly and remain flexible in their approach.
6. **Leadership and Initiative:** Actively engaging with the elderly and taking the initiative during activities helped the students develop leadership skills.
7. **Cultural Competence:** Interacting with people from diverse backgrounds helped the students gain cultural competence, an essential skill in today's globalized world.
8. **Time Management:** Balancing academic responsibilities with volunteer work taught the students how to effectively manage their time.

Personal Insights

The students' experiences at HelpAge India led to personal growth and insights:

1. **Heightened Social Awareness:** The visit to the NGO increased social awareness about the challenges marginalized communities face.
2. **Human Stories Beyond Statistics:** The personal stories shared by elderly residents provided a deeper understanding of the social issues beyond academic statistics.
3. **Self-Discovery through Service:** Volunteering allowed the students to discover their strengths and weaknesses, contributing to personal growth.
4. **Recognition of Privilege and Responsibility:** The experience encouraged the students to recognize

their privilege and the responsibility they have to advocate for those less fortunate.

Conclusion


The students' involvement in the community outreach program at HelpAge India provided valuable life lessons. By engaging with elderly individuals, the students learned the importance of social inclusion, respect for elders, and the value of providing care and attention to the elderly in their communities. They overcame challenges such as communication barriers and time constraints, and in doing so, developed essential skills in leadership, communication, and empathy. This experience reinforced the importance of taking responsibility for the well-being of the elderly and the need for better financial planning and care for the future. The students left with a profound understanding of the importance of social inclusion, care for the elderly, and the value of personal connections in enhancing the lives of marginalized individuals.

ORIENTATION



TALK BY DR. BEENA ANTONY REJI


“COMMUNITY OUTREACH: SKILLS OF WORKING WITH PEOPLE”



**Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi**

Invites students to a Lecture on
Community Outreach: Skills of Working with People

on 6th October 2023, 1 PM to 2 PM
Venue: Hall, Third Floor



Speaker :
Dr. Beena Antony Reji
Professor
Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi

Dr Beena Antony Reji is a professor of Social Work, actively involved in government and non-governmental initiatives working towards a equal society for all. Presently, she is serving as the faculty-In-Charge at Aditi Mahavidyalaya and overseeing two projects, Pramaan and Pravaah, at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences from 2021-2024.



JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI
invites you to a workshop on

Designing Community Centric Fieldwork



Shalaka, a social designer by training, has several years of work experience with organisations like ROSS and VUNA in the fields of informal livelihoods, spatial justice, and community development. Currently positioned at WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing), she actively researches and advocates for the livelihoods of workers, particularly women, within the informal economy. As a social designer and consultant, she is involved in urban planning, policy formulation, governance, and development practices. As the coordinator of the Main Bhi Dilli campaign, she advocates for inclusive urban planning in Delhi's Master Plan. Additionally, she is a core member of the Delhi Roundtable on Solid Waste Management, a city-level platform collaborating with organizations to improve working conditions for waste pickers in Delhi NCR. Concurrently, Shalaka is pursuing a PhD in Urban Studies at Ambedkar University Delhi, focusing on women waste pickers in and around the Bhalsawa landfill of Delhi.

SHALAKA
SOCIAL DESIGNER & CONSULTANT

DATE: 22ND NOVEMBER 2023
TIME: 12:30 PM ONWARDS
VENUE: MPH2, JMC

Dr. Mahima Varma
Nodal Officer
Community Outreach, JMC

Prof. Sandra Joseph
Principal
JMC



WORKSHOP ON "DESIGNING COMMUNITY CENTRIC FIELDWORK"




SESSION ON "GIVING THE POWER BACK TO THE COMMUNITY"


JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE

Community Outreach Session on
GIVING THE POWER BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

In conversation with
KAVITA NAIR
Assistant Director
Inclusion Trainer
Bapu Trust



29th November, 2023
(Wednesday)
1:00 PM-2:00 PM
Room no 210,
Jesus and Mary College



PRINCIPAL
Prof. Sandra Joseph

NODAL OFFICER
Dr. Mahima Varma

GLIMPSES FROM THE FIELD











NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES



Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

HelpAge India Fighting isolation, poverty, neglect

Date: 27th November 2023
Time: 6-7 pm
Venue: Google Meet


Dr. Mahima Varma
Prof. Sandra Joseph

Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Date: 5th December 2023,
Thursday
Venue: Google Meet
Time: 4pm



DR. Mahima Varma, Nodal Officer, Community Outreach, JMC
Prof. Sandra Joseph, Principal, JMC

Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

INDO-GLOBAL SOCIAL SERVICE SOCIETY (IGSSS)

Date: 27th November 2023, Monday
Time: 3:00-4:30 pm
Venue: Google Meet

Dr. Mahima Varma, Nodal Officer, Community Outreach, JMC
Prof. Sandra Joseph, Principal, JMC



Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

presents

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

Kailash satyarthi children foundation

Date - 23rd November, 2023
Time - 5:00 pm- 6:00 pm
Venue - Google Meet



Dr. Mahima Varma, Nodal officer, Community outreach, JMC
Dr. Sandra Joseph, Principal, JMC

Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

IAHV
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN VALUES

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

International Association for Human Values

Understanding the Organization's Goals and Initiatives.

Date: 17th November 2023, Friday
Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Platform: Google Meet

Dr. Mahima Varma, Nodal Officer, Community Outreach, JMC
Prof. Sandra Joseph, Principal, JMC

JESUS AND MARY

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

Swechha

27 NOVEMBER/ 4.30PM

VENUE - GOOGLE MEET

DR. MAHIMA VERMA, NODAL OFFICER, JMC
PROF. SANDRA JOSEPH, PRINCIPLE, JMC



Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

Literacy India

Date: 23rd November 2023, Thursday
Time: 4 P.M.
Venue: Google Meet



Prof. Sandra Joseph, Principal, Jesus and Mary College
Dr. Mahima Varma, Nodal Officer, Community Outreach

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2024 - MAY 2024

The second semester of the Community Outreach program took place from February to May 2024. A total of 76 students registered for the program.

Nodal Officer: Dr. Mahima Varma

Community Coordinator: Ms. Junita Paul

Academic Coordinator: Ms. Ishita Singh

Faculty Coordinators:

1. Dr. Garima Bajaj, Department of Physical Education
2. Dr. Ruchi Bhalla, Department of Economics
3. Ms. Ishita Singh, Department of English
4. Dr. Phuirengam Honghui, Department of Political Science
5. Dr. Sabiha Mazid, Department of Sociology
6. Ms. Priyanka Marwah, Department of Commerce
7. Dr. Sonu Vincent, Department of History
8. Ms. Reshma Jose, Department of Psychology
9. Dr. S.T. Khaiminthang Vaiphei, Department of Mathematics

NGO Placements:

1. HelpAge India
2. Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS)
3. International Association for Human Values (IAHV)
4. Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation
5. Literacy India
6. Navjyoti Foundation
7. National Center for Promotion of Employment of Disabled Persons (NCPEDP)
8. Pratyek
9. Swechha India
10. Vishwa Yuva Kendra
11. Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

An orientation session for the students was conducted on 28th February 2024. This session was designed to provide students with a comprehensive overview of the Community Outreach program, its objectives, and the roles they would be undertaking during the course of the program. The orientation aimed to familiarize the students with the expectations, key activities, and the various NGOs they would be collaborating with. It also offered a platform for the students to ask questions, clarify doubts, and gain a deeper understanding of the impact their contributions would have on the community. The session emphasized the importance of active participation, cultural sensitivity, and effective communication while working with diverse communities. Additionally, the students were introduced to the structure and timeline of the program, setting the tone for a productive and rewarding experience.

A talk was organized on 6th March 2024 for the students of the Community Outreach program. The guest speaker was Mr. Munish Kaushik, Advisor to the Ministry of Education and former Country Director (India and Bangladesh) for CORDAID Netherlands. The title of the talk was Community Outreach: A Path to Promote Social Responsibility.

The NGO Engagement Series for the second semester of the Community Outreach program was organized as follows. This initiative aimed to explore a wide range of community outreach efforts led by different student groups, offering valuable insights and fostering collaborative learning.

NGO REPORTS FEBRUARY- MAY 2024

Navjyoti India Foundation

No. of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Sabiha Mazid

Navjyoti India Foundation (NIF) was founded in 1988 by Dr. Kiran Bedi, a renowned figure in Indian law enforcement and social activism. Driven by a deep commitment to addressing the root causes of social inequality and crime, the foundation began its journey in the slums of Delhi. Over the years, NIF has developed innovative community development initiatives in education, healthcare, vocational training, and women's empowerment. Dr. Bedi's vision, shaped by her extensive experience in law enforcement and community policing, emphasized grassroots engagement and sustainable solutions.

On 8th March 2024, the students assigned to NIF, along with the faculty coordinator, visited the Karala Centre for an orientation meeting. The coordinator of the Karala Centre, Mr. Gurnam, provided the students with a comprehensive overview of the foundation's history and mission. To facilitate travel convenience and proximity to their residences, the students were divided into two teams, each assigned to one of the following centres:

- Navjyoti Centre Karala
- Navjyoti Centre Sohna

The NIF Centre at Karala, also known as Navjyoti Skills Academy, is a community-centered institution offering vocational and career-oriented programs. Out of the six students assigned to NIF, four—Priyanshi Mehta, Yashika Sehrawat, Khushi Rathi, and Ayushi—were allocated to the Karala Centre. The academy's curriculum focuses not only on intellectual development but also on Social Quotient (SQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ), emphasizing holistic development. The centre provides subsidized vocational training for youth and women and engages

In various community development initiatives, including women's empowerment, family-community counseling, environmental awareness, and interventions.

The students at the Karala Centre were actively engaged in the following activities:

- **Community Outreach:** The students visited nearby villages and distributed informational pamphlets to raise awareness about the free courses offered by NIF, thereby contributing to the well-being of the local population.
- **Counseling Sessions:** They participated in sessions conducted for students at the centre by professional counselors.
- **Skill Development Presentations:** The students delivered presentations to the enrolled students, focusing on essential skills for securing employment, such as practical applications of tools like Excel.
- **Visual Branding:** They contributed to the NGO's visual branding efforts by designing promotional course posters.
- **Digital Tools for Assessment and Outreach:** The students assisted in creating digital tools for assessment and outreach, helping to streamline communication and evaluation processes.

The Navjyoti Sohna Centre collaborates with GuruJal, a society established by the Sohna District Administration to promote water conservation. The NIF Centre at Sohna focuses on self-reliance and community development in the district, working in partnership with HSBC to improve infrastructure in Ullahwas, Gurugram. The centre also promotes clean drinking water, sanitation, hygiene training, and biosand water filters. In addition to these efforts, NIF provides entrepreneurship opportunities for women, family counseling, and legal support.

The students assigned to the Sohna Centre — Chehak Khurana and Ishita Kalra—were

involved in two research projects related to WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene):

- Research Module 1: The students conducted a field visit to Ghamroj, a village near Sohna, where they carried out an intensive study of WASH and menstrual hygiene. The goal was to create an informative and engaging module for middle-school children to educate them on these topics.
- Research Module 2: The students designed a training workshop on the use of biosand filters versus reverse osmosis filters, aiming to equip high-school students with the knowledge needed to compare the two water filtration methods.

Learning Outcomes

For the students at both centres, their engagement with the community provided valuable insights into the practical challenges at the grassroots level.

- Research Skills: Developing the research modules enhanced the students' ability to analyze research documents and understand the intricacies of fact-checking.
- Community Awareness: Through their work at the Sohna Centre, the students broadened their understanding of WASH and menstrual hygiene, gaining practical knowledge about water conservation techniques and the economics of water filters. This experience highlighted the importance of basic facilities like clean, drinkable water.
- Digital Skills: Students at the Karala Centre enhanced their data management skills and became proficient in using digital tools for evaluation and assessment. They also gained valuable experience in teaching and evaluating students.
- Leadership and Teamwork: Overall, the students' active involvement in these initiatives helped them develop essential leadership skills, improve their communication abilities, and learn the importance of teamwork in achieving common goals. They also enhanced their

project management, problem-solving, and organizational skills.

This hands-on experience at both centres helped the students develop a deep sense of social responsibility and a greater understanding of the challenges faced by marginalized communities, preparing them for future work in community development and social impact initiatives.

National Center for Promotion of Employment of Disabled Persons (NCPEDP)

No. of Students Assigned: 08

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Reshma Jose

Overview of the Organization

NCPEDP is a cross-disability, non-profit organization dedicated to empowering persons with disabilities. It serves as an interface between the government, industry, international agencies, and the voluntary sector. This report outlines the community outreach efforts carried out by the students, detailing their activities, achievements, and the impact of their contributions.

Vision

A society where individuals with disabilities are equal members, leading dignified lives through economic independence.

Mission

To promote equality for people with disabilities in all spheres of life through research and advocacy in the areas of:

- Employment
- Education
- Accessibility & Communication

NCPEDP aims to empower individuals with disabilities through legislative efforts, promoting employment, raising awareness on disability issues, and advocating for

accessibility in public spaces, products, services, and technologies. With a pan-India presence through the National Disability Network (NDN) and the National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD), NCPEDP has been a strong advocate for a rights-based approach to disability issues for the past 25 years.

Projects and Activities

The students participated in several key projects and activities during their assignment at NCPEDP:

NCPEDP-Bajaj Finserv Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities

The students assisted in the implementation of this scholarship program across Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, aimed at providing financial support to 100 students with disabilities to help them continue their education and improve their employability. Their roles included identifying eligible candidates, coordinating scholarship disbursements, and monitoring the progress of recipients. The program's distribution was balanced across Secondary Education, Senior Secondary Education, and Higher Education, with a 30:30:40 ratio, offering three years of support based on the needs and performance of the scholars.

NCPEDP Mphasis Foundation Project on Awareness, Accessibility, and Implementation of the RPwD Act, 2016

This project aimed at raising awareness about the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and ensuring its effective implementation. The students were involved in organizing issue-based campaigns, providing legal aid, conducting sensitization seminars and workshops, and lobbying policymakers. They also contributed to public awareness campaigns on disability issues through the DNIS portal and recognized best practices in accessibility through the NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Awards.

NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability

Supported by the Azim Premji Foundation, this three-year immersive leadership development program is designed for youth with disabilities to build careers in the disability rights and inclusion sector. The students assisted in documenting the fellows' research journeys, interacting with them, and preparing curated folders with case studies, baseline reports, and other research materials. This experience provided them with a deeper understanding of the discourse surrounding disability.

Specific Roles and Contributions

The students undertook various roles and tasks to support NCPEDP's mission:

- **Advocacy and Political Inclusion:** The students participated in advocacy efforts by preparing candidate lists for upcoming elections and transcribing interviews and media conferences. Their work supported NCPEDP's commitment to political inclusion for persons with disabilities.
- **Event Planning and Promotion:** They created posters and invites for national meetings held by the organization, playing a crucial role in raising awareness and fostering community engagement.
- **Monitoring Accessibility:** The students monitored disabled-friendly facilities at polling stations, ensuring that voting processes were accessible to all.
- **Research and Content Creation:** They contributed to global research on persons with disabilities, gaining insights into key issues. Additionally, they designed content for NCPEDP's social media platforms to raise awareness and engage a broader audience.

Achievements

- **Enhanced Awareness:** Through their outreach activities, the students successfully raised awareness about disability rights and inclusive policies. Participants reported a better understanding of these issues.

- Support for Education: The scholarship program provided essential financial support to students with disabilities, helping them continue their education and enhancing their future employment prospects.
- Advocacy Impact: The students' advocacy efforts contributed to increased political inclusion for persons with disabilities, supporting NCPEDP's mission of "Nothing About Us Without Us."
- Improved Accessibility: By monitoring and advocating for disabled-friendly facilities at polling stations, the students helped ensure that the electoral process was more inclusive.

Challenges and Solutions

- Resistance from Stakeholders: Some stakeholders were initially resistant to adopting inclusive practices. The students addressed this by providing educational resources and highlighting the benefits of inclusivity.
- Logistical Constraints: Organizing large-scale events posed logistical challenges. The students collaborated with NCPEDP staff and community volunteers to manage these events effectively.
- Resource Limitations: Limited resources hindered some activities. The students creatively utilized available resources and sought additional support from local businesses and community organizations to overcome this limitation.
- The students' contributions to NCPEDP not only enhanced their own understanding of disability rights but also played a critical role in furthering the organization's mission of promoting inclusion, accessibility, and empowerment for people with disabilities across India.

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra

No. of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Ruchi Bhalla

Overview of the Organization

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK) was established in 1958 when the executive committee of the Indian Assembly of Youth recognized the need for a national youth center. The goal was to create a platform that would provide continuous training in youth work to individuals from youth organizations across India. Additionally, the committee envisioned the center as a meeting place for young people from around the world. To ensure its permanence and credibility, an independent trust was set up to oversee its operations and garner the necessary support.

Objectives of the NGO

1. Community Engagement and Social Welfare: Actively engage in social work initiatives aimed at uplifting marginalized communities, providing support to underprivileged groups, and implementing projects that enhance social welfare.
2. Youth Empowerment: Empower young individuals by offering skill development, education, and mentorship programs.
3. Awareness Campaigns: Create and implement campaigns on social issues such as education, health, gender equality, and the environment to raise awareness among youth and the broader community.
4. Capacity Building: Contribute to building the capacity of youth and communities through workshops, training sessions, and events, as well as by suggesting improvements for social media engagement.

Activities and Sessions

- Orientation Session: This session provided an overview of the organization's history, objectives, and recent projects. It also included interactive discussions to inspire future student participation.

- **Orthopedic Health Camps:** A camp was held at Bhayaram Camp to raise awareness about orthopedic health, conduct comprehensive examinations, and provide personalized consultations for better skeletal, muscle, and joint health.

Another camp at Vivekananda Camp focused on promoting early detection through exams and BMD tests, as well as offering preventive education for healthier lifestyle choices.

- **Youth Engagement Sessions:** Two groups of students were tasked with gathering information on:
 1. The Role of Youth in Cyber Security and Digitalization
 2. The Role of Youth in Climate Action
- **Leadership and Communication Skills Development:** A session on "Project LEAD: Education Through Leadership, Action, and Determination" helped students understand 14 key topics related to leadership and communication. The session also included discussions on the major concerns of youth in India, such as Unemployment and Drug Abuse.
- **Interactive Group Discussions:** A dynamic group discussion was held on the relevance of leadership and communication for youth. Topics covered included the qualities required to be an effective leader and the necessary skills for developing leadership and communication abilities.
- **Online Learning Experience:** VYK provided an enriching online learning experience with weekly assignments. Students were required to craft detailed reports based on videos featured on the organization's YouTube channel. Topics included stress management, effective communication, e-learning, and time management. These assignments served as essential tools for both personal and professional development.

Achievements of the Sessions

Health Camp Experience: The field visits to the orthopedic health awareness camps

allowed students to gain practical experience in organizing and executing health camps. They worked alongside professionals and learned how to assist people across various age groups. At the Vivekananda Camp, students successfully applied the knowledge and skills gained during the initial visit, ensuring smooth and efficient operations.

- **Collaborative Efforts:** A key takeaway for the students was the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders to address social challenges. This experience improved their skills in report writing and data analysis, helping them accurately summarize and present information.
- **Cyber Security and Digitalization:** The discussions on youth involvement in cyber security and digitalization gave students a broader perspective on the role of youth in addressing national issues. The sessions also provided insights into youth unemployment and drug abuse, encouraging students to brainstorm practical solutions to these critical problems.

Learning Outcomes

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra's approach focused on both professional development and nurturing individual potential, offering numerous opportunities for personal growth:

- **Community Health Awareness:** Students gained a deeper understanding of community outreach, particularly in promoting orthopedic health awareness. They learned how to organize and execute health camps and provide assistance to individuals of all age groups.
- **Experiential Learning:** The experience in implementing health initiatives emphasized the importance of hands-on learning and helped students understand the practical aspects of promoting health awareness.
- **Collaboration and Data Analysis:** The students developed a stronger understanding of the value of collaborative efforts in solving social

problems. Their work also honed their ability to conduct thorough research and accurately analyze data.

- **Youth Empowerment through Digitalization:** The workshops on cyber security and digitalization showcased the importance of empowering youth with relevant skills for national progress. They also gained insights into how youth can contribute to solving major societal issues.
- **Video Editing and Leadership Skills:** The sessions on leadership and communication helped students improve their video editing skills and software proficiency, enabling them to condense seminar content into engaging reels. The discussions on leadership emphasized the importance of qualities like vision, integrity, empathy, and resilience.
- **Addressing Social Issues:** The discussions on unemployment and drug abuse allowed students to critically examine these pressing issues facing the youth of India, fostering a collaborative environment where practical solutions were brainstormed.
- **Developing Leadership Skills:** The sessions emphasized the vital role of leadership in addressing social challenges, encouraging active listening, formal communication, and resilience among participants.

The community outreach work undertaken by the students with Vishwa Yuvak Kendra provided valuable experience in community engagement, digital marketing, and organizing health camps. It enhanced their leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills while raising awareness of critical social issues affecting youth in India. Through their involvement, the students gained a deeper understanding of how collaboration, empowerment, and education can drive positive social change.

Swechha India

No. of Students Assigned: 05

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Sonu Vincent

Overview of the Organization

Founded in 2000 in New Delhi, Swechha India is one of India's leading environmental and social organizations. Its core focus areas include promoting sustainable lifestyles, raising awareness about key local and global environmental issues, researching climate change and sustainability, and empowering communities to build resilience. Swechha is dedicated to driving impactful change through education, enterprises, and environmental stewardship.

Focus Areas

Swechha operates through a range of initiatives and programs aimed at addressing critical societal challenges. These initiatives include Yamuna Walks, Bridge the Gap, Farm School Sustainability Programs, and Eco Action Infrastructure Projects, all of which focus on educating communities on environmental awareness, sustainability practices, and conservation efforts.

Key Events

1. **Hawa Light Kar Initiative (November 2022):** Launched by Chintan and Swechha, this initiative aims to combat air pollution in marginalized urban communities such as Kusumpur Pahari and Bhalswa. The initiative targets both outdoor and indoor pollution, particularly its impact on women. Five selected individuals and organizations are working on projects in Bhalswa to reduce pollution exposure and enhance community well-being.
2. **She Leads Change:** This program extends beyond individual schools to involve the larger community. Swechha organizes monthly events such as awareness sessions, film screenings, street plays, and magic shows to engage families and empower women and girls. These events aim to

foster community-wide participation and awareness.

3. Green The Map: Green The Map is India's premier eco-friendly retail and B2B online marketplace, initiated by Swechha. It offers a wide range of sustainable, fair-trade products crafted in India, such as eco-friendly daily accessories, stationery, and upcycled items, supporting a circular economy. The platform promotes conscious consumerism and sustainability.

Activities the Students Were Involved In

1. Blogging: The students engaged in creative expression through environmental blogging. The blogs served as platforms for raising awareness, advocating for environmental causes, influencing policy, and building a community around sustainability. Topics covered in the blogs included:

- Ladakh's Battle for Ecological Protection and Autonomy
- Bangalore Water Crisis
- Cultural Significance of Godavari
- Tracing Life Along the Brahmaputra
- Manikarnika Ghat

2. Upcycling Activities: Students worked hands-on with upcycling materials such as discarded objects and painted them brightly. These upcycled items, including tyres painted as plant containers, were later used in Swechha's school sessions to promote recycling and sustainable practices.

3. Plantation Activities: A highly anticipated activity was working with plants. The students had the opportunity to plant seedlings, such as Madagascar periwinkle, hibiscus, spider plants, night-blooming jasmine, and money plants. These activities were part of Swechha's ongoing initiatives with educational institutions to spread awareness about environmental protection and sustainability.

4. Meetings: In addition to weekly offline meetings at the college, the students participated in frequent online meetings to plan and execute their tasks effectively.

5. Shooting Documentary: The students visited several green zones in Delhi-NCR to capture footage for a documentary highlighting the area's biodiversity and serenity. They visited locations like the Aravali Biodiversity Park, Sanjay Van, and Nehru Park, spending four hours at each location to gather footage for the project.

6. Reel Brainstorming: To enhance engagement on Swechha's social media platforms, the students brainstormed creative ideas for product transformation reels. They developed five reel concepts, which were shot and completed during office hours to raise awareness about sustainability and environmental practices.

Learning Outcomes

1. Teamwork: The students learned to collaborate effectively by working in groups to achieve collective outcomes. Group tasks helped strengthen their teamwork and project management skills.

2. Real-World Experience: Working with Swechha provided the students with invaluable hands-on experience in implementing sustainability initiatives such as upcycling, plantation, and content creation for social media platforms.

3. Problem-Solving: The students developed creative solutions to pollution and waste management issues. They also learned how to use data storytelling to advocate for environmental protection and sustainability.

4. Communication: Through public speaking, writing, and social media engagement, the students enhanced their communication skills, essential for raising awareness about environmental sustainability.

5. Innovation: Swechha encouraged the students to think creatively and innovate as they brainstormed solutions for various environmental challenges. The experience helped them develop a problem-solving mindset and innovative approaches to sustainability.

6. Environmental Awareness: Working with Swechha enriched the students' understanding of environmental issues and how sustainable practices can be integrated into everyday life. They gained insights into the importance of community engagement and how environmental advocacy can drive long-term change.

Working with Swechha India has been a transformative experience for the students. They gained valuable knowledge and practical experience in environmental sustainability, community engagement, and social media advocacy. The hands-on activities such as upcycling, plantation, and documentary shooting, combined with blog writing and social media engagement, helped the students develop essential skills in teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. The experience deepened their understanding of how to coexist with nature by adopting sustainable practices and promoting environmental stewardship in their communities.

Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF)

No. of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Priyanka Marwah

Overview of the Organization

The Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF), founded by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi in 2004, is a leading organization dedicated to protecting children's rights. KSCF works to eradicate child trafficking, child labor, child marriage, and other forms of exploitation, while also focusing on issues such as education, child sexual abuse, water, sanitation, hygiene, and livelihood. Through its grassroots and global partnerships, the organization works with governments, businesses, civil society, and communities to create a sustainable child protection ecosystem.

Key Programs

1. **Bal Mitra Gram (BMG):** BMG is a community-led solution designed to prevent child exploitation in rural areas. The program empowers children to take democratic actions to protect their rights, withdraw them from child labor, and enroll them in schools. BMG also focuses on creating child-friendly villages by improving infrastructure and raising awareness about child rights. It has successfully stopped child marriages, mainstreamed children in education, and provided evidence for advocacy with the government and parliamentarians.
2. **Bal Mitra Mandal (BMM):** Adapted from BMG, BMM is aimed at children in urban slums. Launched in 2018, BMM is a holistic intervention for child protection and development in slum communities. It focuses on educating and empowering children and communities to protect their rights and raise awareness on critical issues such as education, hygiene, water, sanitation, and livelihood. Through BMM, children gain skills and confidence, and the

program has empowered thousands in urban slums.

3. Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion (SMGC): This initiative is part of KSCF's broader mission to uplift youth, women, and marginalized communities, advocating for global compassion and social change.

Activities the Students Were Involved In

1. Practical Survey Skills: The students were trained and gained hands-on experience in conducting surveys using specialized tools and apps. This helped them collect data on the socio-economic conditions of camp residents, which would be vital for future interventions and assistance programs.
2. Empathy and Compassion: Through activities such as a drawing competition, the students had the opportunity to interact with children from slums. These interactions fostered empathy and compassion, allowing the students to better understand the challenges these children face.
3. Reflection on Privilege: The students were prompted to reflect on their own privilege after witnessing the resilience of the children and families in the camp. They recognized the stark contrast between their own lifestyles and the hardships faced by the community, leading to a deeper appreciation for their own circumstances and a desire to contribute positively to the community.
4. Community Engagement: The students took part in organizing and delivering talks on important topics such as health, hygiene, and education for the camp residents. This experience allowed them to contribute to the community's holistic development while fostering unity and support.
5. Insight into NGO Work: The students participated in NGO engagement talks, where they gained insights into the work of their peers and other organizations in the field of child protection. This broadened their understanding of the

challenges and approaches in the sector and sparked ideas for future collaborations or career paths.

Feedback and Learning Outcomes

- Empathy & Compassion: The students developed a deeper sense of empathy through their interactions with the children in the camps. These experiences highlighted the importance of understanding others' struggles and working towards positive change.
- Understanding Privilege: The activities prompted students to reflect on their own privileged positions, fostering a sense of gratitude and a desire to make meaningful contributions to the community.
- Practical Experience: The students gained real-world experience in survey skills, community engagement, and NGO work. They learned the value of gathering data and addressing crucial social issues effectively.
- Broader NGO Insight: Engaging with the NGO's work gave the students a clearer perspective on the impact and challenges of child protection and development. They also saw the potential for collaboration in the future.

The experience with Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation has left an indelible impact on the students, who not only developed professional skills in data collection, communication, and community engagement but also cultivated a deeper sense of empathy and social responsibility. Witnessing the strength of the community in overcoming adversity inspired the students to reflect on their own lives and consider how they can contribute to a more compassionate and just world.

HelpAge India

No. of Students Assigned: 03

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Garima Bajaj

Overview of the Organization

HelpAge India is a prominent Indian nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the concerns of elderly individuals, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged or socially marginalized. Established in 1978 by Jackson Cole and Samson Daniel, the organization's mission is to enable senior citizens to live active, dignified, and healthier lives by providing a range of services and initiatives aimed at improving their well-being.

Objectives of HelpAge India

- **Healthcare Support:** HelpAge India offers various healthcare services, including free medical care, mobile healthcare units (MHUs) that visit underserved areas, and physiotherapy centers to help elderly individuals manage physical ailments.
- **Pension and Livelihood Programs:** The organization supports financially disadvantaged elderly people through pension schemes and livelihood programs aimed at providing them with a steady income.
- **Advocacy & Awareness:** HelpAge India raises awareness about elder abuse and the rights of senior citizens, advocating for better policies and support at the governmental level.
- **Promoting Healthy Aging:** The organization promotes healthy aging through preventive healthcare measures, fitness programs, and social integration activities such as intergenerational platforms and community events.
- **Combating Elder Abuse:** HelpAge India runs campaigns to combat elder abuse and offers legal aid and support services to those affected.
- **Relief and Rehabilitation:** In addition to

regular support services, HelpAge India provides relief and rehabilitation to elderly populations affected by natural disasters and emergencies.

HelpAge Centers

1. **Mobile Healthcare Units (MHUs):** These units travel to remote areas to provide free healthcare services to elderly people who may not have access to medical facilities.
2. **Day Care Centers:** These centers offer elderly individuals a place to socialize, receive medical care, and engage in activities that promote their overall well-being.
3. **Old Age Homes:** These provide shelter, companionship, and care to senior citizens who may not have family support.
4. **Physiotherapy Centers:** Located in areas such as Dada Dev Mandir, Palma, the centers help elderly individuals manage and recover from physical ailments.

Learning Outcomes for Students

Volunteering at HelpAge India provides several valuable learning experiences, particularly in areas related to social welfare, healthcare, and community service. Key learning outcomes include:

1. **Increased Awareness:** Volunteers gain a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and health challenges faced by the elderly, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. This fosters empathy and compassion.
2. **Improved Communication Skills:** Working with elderly individuals requires patience, clarity, and sensitivity. Volunteers develop essential communication skills that are crucial when interacting with senior citizens.
3. **Project Management and Organizational Skills:** Volunteering involves participating in the planning and execution of various programs, providing experience in managing time and resources effectively.
4. **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Volunteers work in diverse teams,

collaboration and teamwork, which is essential for organizing and delivering community-based initiatives.

5. **Advocacy and Public Speaking:** Volunteers engage in advocacy campaigns and public speaking, promoting the rights and welfare of the elderly, and raising awareness about elder abuse and ageism.

6. **Respect for Older Generations:** Volunteers learn the importance of respecting the wisdom and contributions of older generations. They also learn active listening and how to interact with the elderly with dignity.

7. **Resourcefulness and Adaptability:** Volunteers often work with limited resources and face unexpected challenges, which helps them develop problem-solving skills and adaptability.

8. **Broader Societal Perspective:** Volunteering with HelpAge India broadens students' perspectives on issues such as ageism, poverty, healthcare disparities, and the impact of these issues on elderly populations.

Key Lessons Learned

- **Value of Elderly Contributions:** Volunteers develop a deep respect for the knowledge and experience of older generations.
- **Importance of Patience and Active Listening:** Patience is critical when working with the elderly, as well as listening to their concerns and needs.
- **Social Responsibility:** Volunteering fosters a greater sense of social responsibility and awareness of the issues affecting elderly individuals in India.
- **Small Acts of Kindness:** Volunteers understand that small gestures of support can have a significant impact on improving the lives of elderly individuals.
- **Community Support:** The importance of community-based initiatives in improving the well-being of senior citizens is a key lesson learned.

Volunteering at HelpAge India offers a transformative experience that enables students to not only develop professional and interpersonal skills but also gain a deeper understanding of societal issues related to aging and elder care. By working closely with elderly individuals and participating in various initiatives, students learn valuable lessons in empathy, communication, and social responsibility. Through this engagement, they contribute to creating a more inclusive society where the elderly are respected, supported, and empowered.

Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS) and Vishwa Yuva Kendra (VYK)

Number of Students Assigned: 06

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Ishita Singh

Overview of the Students' Work with IGSSS and VYK

The students in this group worked with both IGSSS (Indira Gandhi Institute of Social Studies and Services) and Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK) as part of their Community Outreach Initiative. Their work spanned across a range of activities, from research and documentation to community engagement, providing them with valuable insights into social issues and grassroots interventions. Below are the highlights of their contributions:

Work at IGSSS:

1. Hum Se Hai Dill Outreach Event:

- The event began with extensive outreach efforts aimed at ensuring the participation of a diverse range of stakeholders, including marginalized communities whose voices are often sidelined in mainstream discourse. Collaborating with various NGOs and community activists, invitations were sent to approximately 100 individuals, representing a wide spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds.

- The students meticulously captured detailed notes and observations throughout the event, documenting key discussions, presentations, and participant interactions. They compiled a comprehensive report summarizing the event's highlights, focusing on critical issues such as housing, women's rights, youth empowerment, and environmental sustainability.
2. Portfolio for Marginalized Communities:
- The students were tasked with creating a portfolio for marginalized communities living in bastis (informal settlements) to provide certified support for those facing sudden eviction notices. This initiative by IGSSS aims to safeguard these communities and empower them by representing their needs to relevant authorities.
 - The portfolio was designed to address key inquiries such as population size, livelihood activities, and access to essential services, including sanitation, water supply, healthcare, and law enforcement.
3. Community Visits:
- Shiv Vihar JJ Colony: This visit involved gathering data to help understand the community's demographics, livelihoods, and infrastructure, particularly focusing on sanitation and water supply.
 - Police Line: Located on government land in Uttam Nagar, this area houses approximately 100-150 residents, predominantly from Scheduled Castes. The community primarily relies on construction labor and masonry work, with limited educational opportunities for children.
 - Kaali Basti: A large settlement on government land near a hospital construction site, Kaali Basti is home to over 10,000 residents, mostly Muslim with a significant Hindu population. The area faces infrastructural deficiencies, including limited access to water and basic amenities, despite having reliable electricity.
- Madanpur Khadar Project: Transect Walk: The students conducted a transect walk through the community to observe and document the physical layout, infrastructure, and living conditions. This firsthand exploration provided critical insights into the community's environment.
 - Social Mapping: Using the information gathered during the walk, the students created a social map of the area. This map highlighted key issues such as open gambling, the condition of parks, and other community challenges. It serves as a valuable tool for identifying pressing concerns and planning future interventions.
 - Community Meeting with Youth Volunteers: Engaging with local youth volunteers allowed the students to gain a deeper understanding of the community's challenges from the perspective of those living there. The discussions with these volunteers provided valuable input on potential solutions for improving conditions.
 - Report Preparation: Based on their observations and discussions, the students prepared reports detailing the issues plaguing the community, such as waste disposal, open sewage, and the dilapidated state of parks. These reports also explored potential causes and solutions for these problems.
 - Brainstorming Youth Participation: The students brainstormed strategies to engage youth in community initiatives. Proposals included introducing incentive systems (such as a token economy) to encourage responsible waste management practices and providing youth leadership roles to foster ownership and accountability within the community.
4. Problem-Posing Approach: The students were introduced to the problem-posing approach, which emphasizes collaborative identification of problems and co-creation of

solutions. This framework encourages active participation from residents and empowers them to address their own challenges in culturally relevant and sustainable ways.

Work at VYK

At Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK), the students focused on several important thematic areas, organizing events and discussions that aimed to raise awareness and promote social change:

1. **Cybersecurity and Its Role for Youth:** A discussion on the importance of cybersecurity in the digital age, particularly focusing on how youth can protect themselves and their communities from online threats.
2. **International Women's Day 2024 – "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress":** A session aimed at highlighting the critical need for investing in women to drive social and economic progress, with a focus on empowerment and equality.
3. **National Education Policy (NEP):** The students organized discussions around the NEP, exploring its history, pros and cons, and the potential benefits it offers to students in India.
4. **Drug Awareness Campaign:** A campaign aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of substance abuse and its impact on youth, while also discussing prevention strategies and available support systems.

Learning Outcomes

Through their work with IGSSS and VYK, the students gained valuable skills and experiences that enhanced their personal and professional growth:

1. **Interpersonal Skills:** Developing effective communication, teamwork, and collaboration abilities through interactions with colleagues, partners, and beneficiaries.
2. **Project Management:** Gaining experience in planning, executing, and evaluating projects, which honed their organizational, time management, and problem-solving skills.

3. **Advocacy and Lobbying:** Learning how to advocate for specific causes, mobilize support, and influence policies to promote social change.

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Developing skills in tracking project progress, measuring impact, and using data to improve outcomes and inform future interventions.

5. **Cross-Cultural Competence:** Gaining experience working with diverse groups from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, fostering cultural sensitivity and empathy.

5. **Resilience:** Building the ability to adapt to challenges, setbacks, and unexpected obstacles while staying committed to the organization's mission and objectives.

Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

Number of Students Assigned: 04

Faculty Coordinator: Ms. Ishita Singh

Overview of the YMCA

The New Delhi YMCA is a socially committed, development-oriented voluntary movement that serves the people of Delhi across diverse sectors. The organization's work focuses on reconciliation, empowerment, and social transformation, particularly among underprivileged communities. It has been actively working with the urban poor and marginalized groups in selected slum clusters and resettlement colonies across Delhi for several years.

The YMCA's community work is coordinated through Five Community Development Centres and 25 Alternative Learning Centres located in areas such as Sunlight Colony (East Delhi), Kalyanpuri (East Delhi), Karpoori Thakur (South Delhi), Savda-Ghevra (North-West Delhi), and Daya Basti (North Delhi).

Work at YMCA

During their time at the YMCA, the students worked primarily at the Day Care Centre,

which caters to children under the age of 3, particularly those whose parents work in the unorganized sector and live in slums. The program is designed to provide personal attention to every child, with a focus on their physical growth, health, hygiene, and cleanliness.

Additionally, the Balwadi program (for children aged 3-5 years) and Remedial Education programs were also a part of their activities. The Remedial Education program supports young school children who do not receive any academic assistance at home. It helps them improve their performance in school by offering guidance and support for homework and revision.

For students in grades 9-12, YMCA offers Coaching services to assist with subject-specific challenges in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Economics. These services are designed to bridge the gap in academic support for senior students who lack help at home.

Activities Conducted by Students at the Day Care Centre

1. Origami Workshop: The children at the YMCA Karpuri Thakur Centre were introduced to the world of origami, where they created items like tiny houses, dolls, and birds. Using simple folds of paper, the children experienced creativity, community, and a sense of accomplishment. The students provided origami sheets and guided the children through simple folds to create items such as huts, dolls, and dogs. The children not only enjoyed the activity but also learned to write their names on these creations before pasting them in their notebooks.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Enhanced fine motor skills through intricate folds.
- Fostered creativity and imagination.
- Developed patience and perseverance.
- Encouraged learning through differences.
- Boosted self-esteem and a sense of achievement.

2. Storytelling Session: The children engaged in a storytelling session using puppets, where they explored stories from the Panchatantra. This session taught valuable morals such as honesty, kindness, and empathy. It was interactive and engaging, sparking laughter, discussion, and empathy among the children.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Learned morals such as honesty, kindness, and empathy through puppetry.
- Improved critical thinking and perspective-taking.
- Enhanced communication and articulation skills.
- Fostered creativity, teamwork, and cultural awareness.

3. Math and Time Reading Worksheets: As part of the community outreach program, the students introduced an engaging activity aimed at enhancing mathematical skills and time-telling abilities. The children, from grades 1-5, eagerly worked through worksheets featuring interactive math problems and clock images, which helped develop both their math fluency and understanding of time.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Strengthened basic math skills.
- Learned to read clocks and tell time.
- Fostered collaborative learning and cognitive development.
- Improved attention span, memory, and math fluency.
- Enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

4. Drawing with Numbers: The students guided the children through an art activity where they used numbers and simple shapes to create figures. The children created objects like ducks and kites, and even received hand-drawn worksheets that they could color and personalize.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Unleashed creativity and imagination.
- Learned to draw figures using simple shapes and numbers.
- Understood the interconnectedness of math and art.

- Developed visual skills and pattern recognition.
- Enjoyed artistic expression and exploration.

5. Academic Help: The students also provided academic assistance in English, Hindi, and Mathematics to children in grades 1-5. The goal was to bridge learning gaps, help with homework, and teach new vocabulary through fun, interactive lessons. The students engaged with the children through dictations, vocabulary exercises, and meaningful conversations to make learning enjoyable and effective.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Improved proficiency in English, Hindi, and Mathematics.
- Developed cognitive and socio-emotional skills.
- Gained confidence in academic abilities.
- Learned new words and vocabulary.
- Cultivated a love for learning.

5. Interactive Game Session: Saturdays at the YMCA were dedicated to fun and activity days. The students organized games and dance sessions, forming teams and engaging in playful activities. It was not just the children who had fun; the volunteers too enjoyed a nostalgic trip, rediscovering old games and learning new ones played by the children with minimal resources.

Learning Outcomes for Children:

- Improved team-building and communication skills.
- Gained confidence and motor abilities.
- Learned expression, adaptability, and social interaction.
- Received mental relief and emotional indulgence through play.

International Association for Human Values (IAHV), India

Number of Students Assigned: 07

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. S.T. Khaiminhang Vaiphei

The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) is an organization dedicated to promoting sustainable development by fostering human values. Since its inception in 2000, IAHV has worked towards creating social, economic, and ecological harmony through grassroots initiatives. The organization's founder, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, is a globally recognized spiritual and humanitarian leader. IAHV's mission is to empower individuals and communities to become socially and economically self-reliant by addressing core issues such as health, homes, hygiene, harmony in diversity, and human values, particularly through its 5H Program. The organization is registered under the IT Act, with 80G and FCRA registration, contributing to the 17 SDGs of the United Nations.

The Journey with IAHV

Our community outreach journey began with an insightful orientation led by Dr. Mahima Varma, which introduced us to the concept of community outreach. The term "community outreach" combines the idea of connecting with communities to foster shared interests and the efforts of groups to support the well-being of these communities. After this, we attended a talk by Mr. Munish Kaushik on the importance of community outreach in fostering social responsibility. His focus on empathy, cultural sensitivity, and giving full rights to vulnerable populations resonated deeply with us, setting the tone for our project with IAHV.

The NGO supervisor, Ms. Junita Paul, guided us in understanding IAHV's mission, which is rooted in human values. IAHV aims to promote harmony and sustainable development through community empowerment, particularly in rural areas.

With a focus on the 5H Program, IAHV strives to strengthen rural India through initiatives addressing health, homes, hygiene, harmony, and human values. Our team included students Anahita Kapoor, Toshita Panwar, Ritika Mishra, Priyanshi Agarwal, Tanu Lawaniya, Anjelina Rao, and Christine M Wells.

Initial Project: Soap and Phenyl Production for Women's Empowerment

Our first project aimed to establish a production unit within the college to make phenyl and soap products, empowering local women. With guidance from Enactus, we embarked on the soap-making journey, learning about raw materials, production processes, and marketing strategies. The project involved detailed planning, including budgeting, cost analysis, packaging, pricing strategies, and marketing efforts.

We conducted market surveys in local areas, including Satya Niketan, Mayapuri, and other nearby markets. These surveys helped us understand customer preferences and the demand for phenyl products. Despite challenges, such as facing rejection from retail shop owners, we remained resilient and continued our surveys. Our findings provided insights into market prices, popular products, and consumer expectations.

We also visited residential areas to understand people's demand for the products and identified potential clients, such as retail shops, hotels, and military canteens. Despite the challenges, including emotional fatigue and physical burnout from working in the scorching heat, the experience taught us the value of persistence and effective communication in business.

Unexpected Setback: Project Funding Issues

As we neared the approval for production, we encountered an unexpected setback. Due to the organization's inability to provide the necessary funding, our initial project was discontinued. Though this was a disappointing turn of events, it provided an

opportunity to learn valuable lessons in resilience, critical thinking, and problem-solving. We understood the importance of being adaptable and finding alternative ways to achieve our goals in the face of setbacks.

Shift in Focus: Organizing a Summer Camp for Children

Determined to continue contributing to the community, we shifted our focus to organizing a two-day summer camp for children in Bapudham. This camp aimed to provide both fun and educational activities. We initiated our outreach by visiting Bapudham to inform and engage parents about the camp, ensuring their participation by addressing concerns about safety and creating a communication platform via WhatsApp.

On the first day of the camp, we celebrated Mother's Day with various activities, including making greeting cards and engaging in dance sessions. The children enthusiastically participated, showcasing their creativity and joy. The second day focused on Road Safety awareness, where we screened a road safety movie and conducted an interactive session with games to reinforce key safety principles. The children also participated in a "passing the parcel" game that encouraged teamwork and cooperation. At the end of both days, we provided the children with refreshments, leaving them with memorable experiences.

Impact of the Summer Camp

The summer camp left a lasting impression on both the children and our team. The activities provided a much-needed break for the children, allowing them to express themselves creatively while learning valuable life lessons. The camp also gave us the opportunity to witness firsthand the challenges children face and the importance of community-based initiatives. The enthusiasm of the children inspired us and reinforced our commitment to community outreach.

Challenges Encountered

Throughout our journey, we encountered several challenges that tested our resilience and determination:

- **Limited Resources:** The lack of funding caused our initial soap and phenyl production project to be discontinued, forcing us to find an alternative community outreach activity.
- **Emotional and Physical Strain:** Market surveys in extreme heat led to emotional burnout and physical fatigue, but these experiences taught us perseverance.
- **Shifting Plans:** The abrupt halt of our main project required us to quickly adapt and reorient our efforts towards organizing the summer camp, which presented its own set of constraints.

Despite these challenges, we remained committed to our goals and continued to work towards community betterment.

Key Learnings

- **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Working together as a diverse team allowed us to complete tasks efficiently and share responsibilities.
- **Patience and Resilience:** The challenges we faced taught us how to stay patient and resilient in the face of setbacks.
- **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** Tasks like budgeting, market planning, and adapting to changes honed our critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Adaptability:** We learned to embrace change and adapt quickly to new situations, demonstrating flexibility in our approach.
- **Time Management and Balance:** Juggling academic responsibilities with our community outreach efforts helped us develop effective time management and balance.

This journey with IAHV has been a transformative experience, teaching us the value of community service, resilience, and collaboration. Through setbacks and successes, we learned essential life skills that will continue to shape our future endeavors.

Literacy India

Number of Students Assigned: 05

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Garima Bajaj

Overview of Literacy India

Founded in 1996, Literacy India is a renowned non-profit organization committed to transforming lives and strengthening communities through education, employment, empowerment, and environmental initiatives. Its core focus is on empowering underprivileged children, youth, and women by providing them with formal education, vocational training, and holistic development programs. Literacy India aims to unleash untapped talent and create a nurturing environment where individuals can fully develop their skills and personalities. By integrating education with the dignity of labor, Literacy India fosters self-sufficiency and supports sustainable growth. Through innovative initiatives and collaboration, Literacy India has had a profound impact on underprivileged communities across the nation.

Community Outreach Activities (February 28 – May 9, 2024)

The community outreach activities for this semester began with an orientation session at the college on February 28, 2024, attended by the Faculty Coordinator and the students. The 5 students were assigned to either the Bajghera or Mohammadpur branches, based on their interests, proximity to home, and travel convenience. The activities concluded on May 9, 2024, with a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the students' work experience and the outcomes of their learning.

Bajghera Branch:

Bajghera is the main branch of Literacy India and a crucial community initiative that focuses on improving the lives of rural populations through education and skill development. Students Aleena and Kimaya were involved in the following programs

under the guidance of NGO supervisors Mr. Satya and Ms. Kadambari:

- Literacy Programs
- Vocational Training
- Project INDHA
- Digital Skills Workshops

Mohammadpur Branch:

Mohammadpur is one of the many centers of Literacy India, led by Ms. Teena and her team of teachers. The center primarily offers computer classes to students and women, teaching essential skills such as typing and calculations. Students Jemi, Smita, and Thian participated in the following activities with children aged 12-16 years, college students, and elderly women:

- Computer literacy and typing
- Basic calculations and digital literacy skills

Learning Outcomes

1. Improved Literacy Rates and Vocational Skills: Participants gained practical skills that enhanced their employability and income potential.
2. Digital Literacy Advancement: The digital skills workshops helped bridge the digital divide by teaching community members how to access information and educational resources online.
3. Community Cohesion: The activities strengthened community bonds, promoting collective action to tackle local challenges and support sustainable development.
4. Socio-economic Progress: Families and individuals experienced improved living standards and greater resilience against poverty.
5. Sustainability Focus: The focus on education and skills development contributed to the long-term sustainability and growth of the communities.

Learning Outcomes for Students

1. Cross-cultural Understanding: Exposure to diverse communities enhanced empathy and understanding of different cultures and backgrounds.

2. Project Management Skills: The students learned to plan, execute, and evaluate projects, gaining valuable experience in organizational management.

3. Advocacy and Communication: Opportunities to advocate for social causes and effectively communicate with stakeholders developed the students' advocacy and communication skills.

4. Leadership Development: Taking on responsibilities at the organization helped students cultivate leadership qualities and teamwork skills.

5. Impact Assessment: Learning to measure and evaluate the impact of programs enhanced the students' analytical and critical thinking abilities.

6. Networking: Building relationships with professionals and community members expanded the students' professional networks and career opportunities.

These learning outcomes reflect the students' dedication to making a positive impact on individuals and communities through education. Despite the semester's brief duration, the students gained significant practical experience and knowledge by collaborating with both the community and the NGO. Each student not only met but exceeded the required volunteer hours, acquiring valuable skills in working with diverse groups within the community.

Pratyek Foundation

Number of Students Assigned: 18

Faculty Coordinator: Dr. Phuireingam Hongchui

Overview of Pratyek

Pratyek is a non-governmental organization (NGO) committed to empowering individuals and communities through education, skill development, and social initiatives. The organization was founded with the principle of inclusive development and strives to create a world where every individual, regardless of background or circumstances,

has the opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully to society

Mission and Vision

At the heart of Pratyek's mission is the belief that education is a fundamental human right and a powerful tool for social transformation. The organization's flagship program, the NINEISMINE campaign, advocates for the allocation of 9% of India's GDP towards education and healthcare. This campaign underscores the importance of investing in children's education and healthcare to secure their future and build a stronger, more equitable society. Guided by the core values of inclusivity, empowerment, integrity, collaboration, and innovation, Pratyek aims to create resilient communities equipped to tackle the challenges of the 21st century.

Activities and Contributions

Pratyek's programs and initiatives focus on addressing a wide range of social, economic, and educational needs, especially within marginalized and underserved communities. Key areas of intervention include:

- Education
- Skill development
- Vocational training
- Entrepreneurship development
- Digital literacy
- Gender empowerment
- Community development

The Community Outreach journey began with an introductory session, where volunteers were warmly welcomed and briefed by the NGO staff. This session provided valuable insights into the organization's goals and the significant impact it aims to create within the community. Volunteers engaged in a variety of activities, such as teaching different subjects, conducting workshops on legal literacy, cleanliness, cyber security, menstrual hygiene, screen time management, and imparting organizational skills. Additionally, volunteers assisted with data collection, data entry, and administrative tasks.

Key Activities

1. **Teaching:** Volunteers helped children with subjects like drawing, basic Mathematics, Science, Economics, and Political Science, with a focus on sensitivity, patience, and care.
2. **Surveys and Data Collection:** Volunteers participated in a survey of the Gol Jhuggi community, conducting door-to-door visits to understand the daily challenges faced by residents. Key areas of focus included access to water, electricity, and essential services such as Ration Cards and Voter IDs, which were seen as lifelines for many families.
3. **Workshops:** Volunteers conducted workshops on essential life skills, such as teamwork, collaboration, communication, social and interpersonal skills, and organizational skills.

Learning Outcomes and Takeaways

1. **Resilient Leadership:** The community outreach experience highlighted the innate leadership qualities displayed by children. At Pratyek, these children are not only recipients of support but have also emerged as catalysts for change within their communities. This reflects the transformative power of empowerment, demonstrating that leadership and positive change are possible even in difficult circumstances.
2. **Community Engagement:** Engaging in community outreach activities emphasized the importance of collective action in addressing common challenges. Volunteers helped foster meaningful connections within the community, promoting understanding, unity, and support among diverse groups.
3. **Impact of Education:** Volunteers saw firsthand the transformative power of education. By assisting in educational programs, they witnessed how access to education can empower children and provide them with opportunities for a better future.

4. Adopting Flexible Approaches to Learning:

The outreach experience reinforced the importance of adapting teaching methods to individual learning styles. Volunteers learned to be flexible and creative in their approach, ensuring that each child's unique needs were met. This flexibility is key to personalized education and holistic development.

5. Skills Development and Collaborative Learning: Through various workshops and recreational activities, volunteers contributed to creating a learning environment that encouraged patience, critical thinking, teamwork, coordination, sportsmanship, and cooperation—essential skills for meaningful existence and learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The Community Outreach Team's experience at Pratyek was both enlightening and humbling. It highlighted the importance of community-driven initiatives and the profound impact they can have on empowering individuals, particularly children from marginalized and underprivileged backgrounds. The outreach work reinforced the idea that every person, regardless of their circumstances, can become an agent of change for a more inclusive and equitable society. Through their efforts, the volunteers contributed to breaking barriers to education and helping children gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Community Outreach
Jesus and Mary College
University of Delhi



COMMUNITY OUTREACH A PATH TO PROMOTE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Mr. Munish Kaushik
Advisor to Minister Education, Delhi Govt.;
Ex-Chairman Vivekananda College, DU;
Ex Country Director (India and Bangladesh)
for CORDAID Netherlands

Date: 6th March, Wednesday
Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm (Activity Period)
Venue: Room 407

Dr. Mahima Varma
Nodal Officer
Community Outreach, JMC

Prof. Sandra Joseph
Principal
JMC



LECTURE ON “COMMUNITY OUTREACH: A PATH TO PROMOTE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY”

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

Community Outreach, JMC

NGO ENGAGEMENT SERIES

<p>2ND MAY @ 5PM NAVJYOTI FOUNDATION</p>	<p>4TH MAY @ 5PM VISHWA YUVA KENDRA GROUP 1</p>
<p>6TH MAY @ 5PM SWECHHA INDIA & NCPEDP</p>	<p>7TH MAY @ 5PM KAILASH SATYARTHI CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION</p>
<p>8TH MAY @ 6PM PRATYEK</p>	<p>9TH MAY @ 5PM LITERACY INDIA & HELPPAGE INDIA</p>
<p>9TH MAY @ 6PM YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION & VISHWA YUVA KENDRA GROUP 2</p>	<p>10TH MAY @ 5PM INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HUMAN VALUES</p>

Dr. Mahima Varma
Nodal Officer
Community Outreach, JMC

Prof. Sandra Joseph
Principal
JMC

GLIPSES FROM THE FIELD











STUDENT ESSAYS

EMPOWERING CHANGE: MY EXPERIENCE WITH KAILASH SATYARTHI CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

BY PRANA VI VAISHNAVI, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - PHILOSOPHY

During my placement, I had the privilege of working with the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF), a leading organization in child protection and development. Founded by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi in 2004, KSCF envisions a world free of violence against children and focuses on eradicating child trafficking, labor, and marriage, among other critical issues like education and sanitation. Through grassroots efforts and global collaborations, KSCF creates sustainable child protection ecosystems, exemplified by its innovative programs, Bal Mitra Gram (BMG) and Bal Mitra Mandal (BMM).

Key Programs of KSCF

- **Bal Mitra Gram (BMG):** This initiative is a community-led solution to prevent child exploitation in villages. By empowering children through democratic actions, BMG has withdrawn numerous children from labor, enrolled them in schools, and halted child marriages. The program also advocates for systemic changes by producing research and evidence for policymakers.
- **Bal Mitra Mandal (BMM):** Launched in 2018, BMM adapts the BMG model to urban slums, addressing issues like education, sanitation, and livelihood. It has empowered thousands of children, fostering safe, inclusive urban communities.

Experiences and Reflections

Our engagement began on March 13 with an orientation, followed by field visits to various camps. At the SP Camp on March 22, we received training to conduct surveys on the socio-economic conditions of residents, using a dedicated app. This training laid the foundation for meaningful interactions and data collection.

Organizing a drawing competition for children on the theme of Holi became a memorable experience. Gathering the lively participants was challenging yet rewarding. The children's enthusiasm and creativity, as they shared art supplies and expressed themselves through vibrant drawings, were heartwarming. One conversation with a young girl, aspiring to become a doctor who provides free treatment to the underprivileged, left a profound impact on me. It highlighted her selflessness despite her challenging circumstances, prompting deep reflections on my own privileges.

Subsequent visits to other camps, such as Vivekananda and Sanjay Camp, strengthened our practical skills in surveying and community engagement. Alongside surveys, we organized educational talks for children on topics like health, hygiene, and personal development. These sessions fostered awareness and unity within the community, showcasing the importance of collective efforts.

Key Learnings

1. **Survey Skills:** Hands-on training equipped us to gather data critical for understanding and addressing community needs.
2. **Empathy and Compassion:** Engaging with children fostered a deep emotional connection, enriching our perspective.
3. **Privilege and Gratitude:** Witnessing the resilience of camp residents encouraged us to value our circumstances and work towards positive change.
4. **Community Engagement:** Educational sessions empowered children and built a sense of togetherness within the camps.
5. **Understanding NGO Work:** Learning about the efforts of peers and other

NGOs expanded our knowledge and inspired potential future collaborations.

Conclusion

This journey with KSCF has been transformative, leaving us with invaluable skills, insights, and a renewed sense of

purpose. The resilience and spirit of the communities we worked with inspire us to contribute meaningfully to society. As we move forward, we carry the lessons of empathy, compassion, and empowerment, striving to build a more inclusive and compassionate world.

BRIDGING BARRIERS: INSIGHTS FROM WORKING AT NCPEDP

BY DHWANI BADIA, B.A. (H) PSYCHOLOGY

Community outreach stands as a cornerstone of social progress, weaving together the fabric of our communities through proactive engagement and collaboration. It serves as a beacon of connection, bridging gaps, and fostering relationships that lay the foundation for positive change. By reaching out to diverse segments of the community, including marginalized groups or individuals facing barriers to participation, community outreach initiatives strive to ensure that all voices are heard and valued. This inclusivity not only fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment but also promotes equity and social justice within society

By choosing to explore the discourse of disability through this course, I aimed to develop a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the various challenges and obstacles persons with disabilities (PwDs) face—an area I was largely unfamiliar with and unaware of.

Interning with the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) I was a transformative experience that broadened my perspective on disability rights advocacy and community empowerment. From the outset, I was immersed in a dynamic and inclusive

environment focused on promoting equal opportunities and creating a more inclusive society for PwDs. During my internship, I had the opportunity to contribute to various projects and initiatives aimed at advancing the rights and inclusion of PwDs in employment and society at large. Whether it was conducting research on disability-related policies, assisting in awareness campaigns, or supporting advocacy efforts, each task allowed me to witness firsthand the impact of NCPEDP's work in driving social change.

In particular, I worked with NCPEDP's Fellowship on Disability department. The fellowship is a three-year immersive leadership development program for youth with disabilities aspiring to build careers in the development sector, particularly in disability rights and inclusion, with a focus on policy and practice. The fellowship program seeks to provide youth with disabilities the opportunity to voice issues faced by PwDs at the grassroots level, supported by local civil society organizations across India.

My primary role as an intern was to assist the fellows in documenting their research journeys. This entailed interacting with them via Gmeet calls and preparing a curated folder of various case studies, baseline

reports, and other research documents they produced over the three-year period.

Collaborating with the fellows was a humbling and enlightening experience, as I had the privilege of learning from individuals who possess remarkable resilience and determination. Through their reports, I was exposed to a diverse range of experiences, each marked by unique challenges and triumphs. Their courage and perseverance in the face of adversity served as a powerful reminder of the strength of the human spirit.

The reports provided valuable insights into the systemic barriers and inequalities faced daily by individuals with disabilities. Immersing myself in their narratives revealed the stark realities of exclusion and discrimination prevalent in our society. This awareness prompted deep reflection on my own privilege and compelled me to consider how I can leverage my position to advocate for greater accessibility and inclusivity in all aspects of life.

My work with NCPEDP also highlighted the pervasive issue of public inaccessibility,

which remains one of the most significant barriers to the inclusion of PwDs. Physical barriers, such as steps without ramps, narrow doorways, lack of elevators or accessible parking spaces, and inaccessible public transportation systems, often render essential services, employment opportunities, and recreational activities unreachable for PwDs. Addressing these accessibility barriers is critical to promoting inclusion and ensuring that PwDs have equal opportunities to participate fully in society.

In summary, my internship at NCPEDP was both a professional and personal journey of growth and learning. It deepened my appreciation for diversity and strengthened my commitment to social justice. Working with and for PwDs through this transformative experience has reinforced my dedication to advocating for disability rights and fueled my aspiration to foster a more inclusive and equitable society for all. My time at NCPEDP has left an indelible mark on me, and I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful cause.

FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE : MY JOURNEY WITH SWECHHA INDIA

BY PRERNA MAHESHWARI, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - PHILOSOPHY

Embarking on my second stint with community outreach, I anticipated continued growth, passion, and fulfillment. Little did I know this experience would not only meet my expectations but ignite a deeper passion for environmental activism. Swechha India's remarkable work in environmental conservation became the cornerstone of my journey, guiding me through a transformative process of learning and action.

The dedication and enthusiasm of individuals like Ashim Sir, Sanya Ma'am, and Akshita Ma'am at Swechha India were contagious, inspiring me to delve deeper into environmental issues and contribute meaningfully. Additionally, the unwavering support and mentorship provided by our college faculty, Dr. Sonu, played an essential role in shaping our understanding and commitment to community outreach. My peers also motivated me every step of the way, making this journey a collaborative and enriching experience.

Exploring Environmental Marvels

My allocation to Swechha India opened doors to a world of environmental wonders. From the breathtaking landscapes of the Aravali Biodiversity Park to the serene sanctuaries of Delhi's ecologically rich regions, each excursion left an indelible mark on my consciousness. Visiting these green sites provided not only opportunities for exploration but also invaluable educational experiences.

Through guided tours and interactive sessions, I gained insights into intricate ecosystems, biodiversity, and conservation efforts. These visits cultivated a profound sense of appreciation and reverence for nature, reinforcing my commitment to protect and preserve our planet.

Engagement Through Expression

One of the most rewarding aspects of this journey was the opportunity to express my newfound knowledge and passion. Through blogs, visual storytelling in reels, and hands-on engagement in upcycling initiatives, I found creative outlets to spread awareness about pressing environmental issues. Each project became a platform to inspire action and foster environmental stewardship in the community.

Whether crafting informative blogs about the ghats of Varanasi or creating engaging reels showcasing sustainable living practices, every endeavor was driven by a shared goal of promoting positive change. Collaborative brainstorming and execution deepened my understanding of environmental challenges while honing my communication and teamwork skills. Additionally, upcycling old materials into functional and artistic creations emphasized the importance of sustainability, bringing our conservation efforts to life.

Enlightenment Through Education

The workshops organized as part of the course were invaluable sources of knowledge and inspiration. Mr. Munish's enlightening session on outreach strategies deepened my understanding of the complexities inherent in serving the community. Engaging with him and fellow classmates during these sessions sparked thought-provoking discussions and provided valuable insights into effective advocacy techniques.

The NGO engagement series further enriched my perspective. Interacting with volunteers from various organizations, each working toward a common goal of environmental conservation, broadened my understanding of innovative projects and best practices. These interactions

strengthened my resolve to make a positive impact.

Gratitude and Reflection

Reflecting on this journey fills me with immense gratitude for the wealth of experiences and knowledge I have gained. This course has equipped me with practical skills and empowered me to advocate for environmental stewardship in my community and beyond. I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with passionate individuals and organizations, which amplified our collective impact.

This journey has also brought significant personal growth and fulfillment, reaffirming my belief in the power of grassroots action and the importance of preserving our planet for future generations.

My second community outreach experience has been nothing short of transformative. Through Swechha India's inspiring work and the collaborative efforts of passionate

individuals, I have found purpose and fulfillment in advocating for environmental conservation. As I conclude this chapter, I am filled with optimism and a renewed commitment to protecting our planet.

Inspired by Swechha's dedication, I have embraced sustainable practices in my daily routine. For instance, I have reduced single-use plastic consumption by switching to reusable water bottles and grocery bags, contributing to a cleaner environment. Supporting local and sustainable businesses, such as GreenTheMap by Swechha, has also become a priority. This initiative taught me the value of supporting ethical practices and creating a greater impact.

Beyond individual actions, I am committed to actively supporting Swechha's mission through volunteering, advocacy, and fundraising. By embodying the values of sustainability and environmental protection, I am confident that together, we can pave the way for a greener and more sustainable future for all.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: MY ENGAGEMENT WITH NAVJYOTI INDIA FOUNDATION

BY KHUSHI RATHI, B.A. (H.) PSYCHOLOGY

Social work embodies compassion, where individuals altruistically assist those in need, fostering empathy and positive change. Advocating for justice, equality, and well-being, social workers dismantle barriers and promote inclusivity through solidarity. Community outreach, a vital aspect of societal progress, bridges disparities, empowers marginalized groups, and ensures social justice by amplifying all voices and fostering a more compassionate society.

With a desire to effect positive change and directly impact lives, I opted for community outreach. This choice not only allowed me to

make tangible differences within communities but also aligned with my academic pursuits, offering invaluable hands-on experience. By engaging with diverse communities, I expanded my understanding of societal issues at the grassroots level. This outreach program honed essential skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving, significantly contributing to my personal growth.

Among various areas of focus, I prioritized education within the NGO assignment,

driven by the disparities faced by disadvantaged segments in accessing quality education. Recognizing these individuals as future catalysts of societal change, I deemed it imperative to enhance their educational opportunities. Through my skills and expertise, I aimed to make a meaningful contribution to this cause.

A Beacon of Hope: Navjyoti India Foundation

Established in 1988 by Dr. Kiran Bedi, Navjyoti India Foundation (NIF) stands as a symbol of hope and empowerment. Driven by a commitment to addressing the root causes of social inequality and crime, the foundation initially worked in Delhi's slums and has since expanded its programs nationwide. Its initiatives span diverse areas, including combating drug abuse, empowering youth, conserving the environment, and providing disaster relief.

Assigned to NIF's Karala center, I witnessed its transformation over time—from Navjyoti India Foundation to Navjyoti Community College in 2010, and its rebranding as Navjyoti Skills Academy in 2023. The institution is dedicated to individual empowerment through education and skill development, offering programs focused on child education, vocational training, and community outreach.

Engaging in Project Kaushal

My journey began with orientation sessions, offering insights into NIF's mission and our roles within it. A tour of the NGO deepened my understanding of its work, as faculty members, including Mrs. Prem Soni, shared valuable historical insights.

The centerpiece of my engagement was Project Kaushal, a vocational initiative aimed at equipping marginalized communities with skill-based education. Courses such as Tally Prime, data entry, digital marketing, and retail management were offered to enhance job prospects and self-reliance.

As part of our outreach efforts, we visited nearby villages to distribute pamphlets and raise awareness about these vocational programs. This initiative highlighted the importance of skill development in today's employment landscape, resulting in increased enrollment, particularly in computer-related courses.

Our responsibilities also included crafting and delivering seminars for children participating in NIF's initiatives. These seminars emphasized essential skills like leadership, communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and IT competencies.

Contributions to Learning and Development

Throughout this experience, I actively contributed to the creation of practice materials, assignments, and assessments for students. These resources, covering topics such as Tally, MS Excel, and data entry, were tailored to foster critical thinking and practical application. This involvement not only strengthened my comprehension of these subjects but also enhanced the students' learning outcomes.

Additionally, we worked on designing posters, crafting presentations, and assisting with organizational tasks, such as data segregation and feedback form management. These efforts supported the NGO's operations and bolstered its visual identity. I also analyzed cases handled by the family counselor, which provided insights into real-world issues like domestic violence and theft.

Reflections and Takeaways

This community outreach journey has been profoundly rewarding, offering numerous personal and professional benefits. It heightened my awareness of local issues and their impact on community welfare while fostering a deep sense of social responsibility.

Key skills in leadership, communication, project management, and data organization were refined through this experience. Additionally, hands-on tasks, such as poster creation and classroom assessments, nurtured my creativity and problem-solving abilities. Observing the unity and dedication among NIF's faculty and staff instilled in me a greater appreciation for teamwork and collaboration.

Above all, this journey expanded my perspectives on societal challenges and emphasized the importance of grassroots efforts in driving meaningful change.

Commitment to Change

As I reflect on my experience with Navjyoti India Foundation, I am deeply grateful for the insights gained, connections formed, and the positive impact achieved. This journey reinforced my belief in the power of education and skill development as tools for empowerment.

Inspired by NIF's 4C Model—creating Competent, Compassionate, Conscientious Changemakers—I am committed to continuing my involvement in community outreach and leveraging these experiences for local and global betterment.

CULTIVATING CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM A COMMUNITY OUTREACH JOURNEY WITH VISHWA YUVAK KENDRA

BY JINOL ABRAHAM, B.A. (H) PSYCHOLOGY

Engaging in a 60-hour community outreach initiative facilitated by Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK) has been an enriching journey marked by diverse experiences and reflections conducive to personal and professional development. This initiative encompassed various activities aimed at promoting healthcare awareness, addressing orthopedic ailments, and fostering societal transformation. Through active engagement and introspection, I gained profound insights, nurturing holistic growth and a heightened sense of civic responsibility.

First and foremost, I express my deepest gratitude for the incredible opportunity to intern with Vishwa Yuvak Kendra. I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Principal, Prof. Dr. Sandra Joseph, our Nodal Officer, Dr. Mahima, and Dr. Ruchi Bhalla for their unwavering support and encouragement. I am also deeply grateful to Mr. Uday Shankar Singh (CEO of VYK), Mr. Rakesh Singh, Mrs. Mukta Bhardwaj (Programme Officer), and the VYK team for entrusting me with this

opportunity and providing invaluable guidance. It is truly an honor to contribute to the meaningful work that VYK is doing.

Orientation

The orientation session with esteemed office bearers of VYK provided valuable insights into the organization's transformative impact. Activities such as envisioning India by 2047 and reflecting on personal contributions to society prompted introspection and a vision of tangible societal engagement rooted in curiosity, empathy, and service.

Orthopedic Health Camps: A Lesson in Community Health

Participation in orthopedic health camps organized by VYK offered firsthand experience in community health promotion. Tasks included mobilizing communities, facilitating event logistics, and engaging with patients, which emphasized the importance of effective communication and early intervention. Witnessing a comprehensive approach to addressing orthopedic ailments

underscored the significance of holistic healthcare initiatives in empowering individuals and fostering well-being.

Through involvement in examinations, consultations, and Bone Mineral Density (BMD) tests, I developed a deeper understanding of orthopedic care intricacies and the value of tailored treatment plans. Interactions with healthcare professionals and patients illuminated the emotional and practical aspects of managing orthopedic conditions, reaffirming the importance of empathy and professionalism in healthcare delivery.

Entrepreneurship and Leadership

The seminar on fostering entrepreneurial mindsets emphasized the role of creativity, innovation, and resilience in entrepreneurship. Key takeaways included viewing failure as a learning opportunity and nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit to drive societal progress. Similarly, discussions on leadership and communication highlighted vision, integrity, and empathy as crucial leadership attributes, alongside strategies such as active listening and feedback-seeking to enhance effectiveness.

Climate Advocacy and Youth Empowerment

Engaging in discussions on climate change underscored the critical role of youth in combating environmental challenges. By exploring the multifaceted impacts of climate change and strategies for youth involvement, I gained a deeper appreciation for collective action in safeguarding the planet.

Holistic Well-being and Stress Management

The online assignment on stress management and happiness enhancement provided practical insights into holistic well-being. Techniques such as positive thinking, relaxation exercises, and fostering community support emphasized the importance of self-care and self-awareness in achieving a fulfilling life.

Educational Reforms and Youth Unemployment

Participation in discussions on the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 provided a comprehensive understanding of its potential benefits, including holistic development and inclusivity. However, implementation challenges such as language policies and assessment methods were also examined, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts.

Delving into youth unemployment illuminated the pressing challenges faced by young individuals in India. Strategies discussed included skill development, internships, and entrepreneurship, emphasizing the need for partnerships among governments, educational institutions, and industries to address these issues.

Digital Creativity and Outreach

Creating a reel on stress management and happiness enhancement using VYK's YouTube playlist Project Lead allowed me to explore digital communication mediums. This experience enhanced my understanding of stress management techniques while improving digital literacy.

Reflections and Future Commitments

This internship has been a transformative experience, equipping me with valuable knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary for active citizenship and societal engagement. The activities and discussions inspired a profound sense of purpose and agency in driving positive change.

I am grateful for the chance to contribute to VYK's mission and for the lessons learned throughout this journey. Moving forward, these experiences will undoubtedly shape my future endeavors, fostering a commitment to lifelong learning, community empowerment, and social justice.

FROM CHALLENGES TO CHANGE: MY JOURNEY WITH IAHV

BY ANAHITA KAPOOR, B.A. (H) ENGLISH

In an era where skills drive both personal and professional success, skill enhancement courses offer an invaluable opportunity to develop practical, impactful abilities. When the option for such a course presented itself, I chose community outreach—a choice driven by a desire to create meaningful change beyond personal gain. I wanted to hone my skills in community engagement and project management to empower those less privileged, using this journey not only to learn but to leave a lasting impact on myself and on others.

Our community outreach project began with a noble ambition—to empower the women from neighbouring communities such as Sanjay Camp, Vivekananda Camp, and Bapu Dham through various socio-economic activities such as the production and sale of phenyl and soap. We began with a simple visit to the camps, where we encountered women and children from various backgrounds and understood their lifestyles. Their conditions sparked a zest within us, and we were all eager to work toward solving their challenges. This seemingly simple goal, however, unravelled into challenges, market research, and ultimately, a necessary pivot. The journey itself became an enriching exploration of community needs, resource constraints, and the unwavering spirit of collective action.

Exposure to these communities and interaction with marginalised groups such as community women and children opened my eyes to their challenges and the transformative role of organisations in addressing those needs. Visits to Sanjay Camp, Vivekananda Camp, and Bapu Dham revealed the stark realities of limited resources, gender inequalities, and the vulnerabilities of children in such

environments. These encounters highlighted the importance of listening to their stories and addressing these struggles with empathy and strategic action.

Our initial foray into the world of phenyl and soapmaking was fuelled by research and collaboration. We devoured online resources, diving into the science behind effective cleaning agents and exploring various natural and synthetic formulations. We envisioned creating a product line that catered to a range of needs and budgets. This research phase was crucial, laying the groundwork for a product that was both efficacious and commercially viable.

However, the real test came with the market surveys that were essential to assess and place our new product as a feasible, well-priced one. The scorching Delhi heat became a constant companion as we traversed bustling marketplaces and residential areas, clipboards and questionnaires in hand. We braved the cacophony of street vendors and the curious stares of passersby, determined to gather data on consumer preferences, existing brands, and pricing structures. Each completed survey represented a vital piece of the puzzle, a glimpse into the realities of the local market.

The data collection process was not without its challenges. The language barrier occasionally posed a hurdle, necessitating patience and clear communication. Some shopkeepers were hesitant to divulge information, while others were simply too busy to spare us their time. The physical demands of navigating crowded marketplaces under the relentless sun were undeniable. Yet, with each completed survey, a sense of accomplishment grew. We

were not just gathering data; we were actively engaging with the community, understanding their needs, and laying the groundwork for a product that would resonate with them.

The next phase involved meticulous budgeting and costing. We meticulously researched the raw materials required for phenyl and soap production, comparing prices across different vendors and online platforms. We factored in operational costs, packaging materials, and potential profit margins. This exercise in financial planning was an eyeopener, revealing the intricate dance between quality, affordability, and profitability.

However, the news that followed was a crushing blow. Our proposal did not come to fruition.

This setback was a turning point in our journey. We wouldn't let this setback derail our mission to create a positive impact on the community. Our initial plan may not unfold, but the spirit of collaboration and the desire to empower remained. It was time to regroup, reassess and perhaps reimagine.

This initial phase was far from a failure. It highlighted the unwavering spirit of collaboration and the resilience required to navigate unforeseen setbacks. These learnings, along with the data we meticulously collected, would become valuable building blocks for the next phase of our journey—a summer camp focused on fostering creativity and road safety awareness by organising a summer camp for the children of Bapu Dham.

Reaching out to the families of Bhapu Dham was crucial. My teammate and I embarked on a door-to-door campaign, navigating the narrow lanes of the community. The hesitant smiles that gradually transformed into warm welcomes highlighted the importance of building trust and establishing a rapport with the families. This initial outreach not only

garnered participation but also allowed us to witness firsthand the living conditions and needs of the community.

Celebrating mothers and fostering a sense of family connection became the cornerstone of the first day of the camp since our theme for the same was Mothers Day. Construction paper transformed into vibrant hearts adorning the walls, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. We procured an assortment of colourful craft materials—markers, glitter, glue—all carefully chosen to spark creativity and allow the children to express their love for their mothers.

Steering away from traditional classroom settings, we opted for interactive activities that encouraged participation and self-expression. The highlight of the day was a dance performance. Witnessing the uninhibited joy on the children's faces as they twirled and stomped to music was a truly heartwarming experience. The confident way they introduced themselves and shared their favourite snacks offered a glimpse into their personalities and family dynamics. These unscripted moments were a testament to the power of creating a safe and encouraging space for children to learn and express themselves.

The first day of the summer camp was a whirlwind of colour, laughter, and heartfelt emotions. Witnessing the children's excitement as they crafted cards for their mothers was truly rewarding. Their shy smiles as they presented their handmade tokens of love were a reminder of the simple joys that can create lasting memories. The day concluded with a sense of accomplishment that transcended glitter-dusted construction paper hearts. We had created a space for celebrating family bonds and fostering creativity in the heart of Bhapu Dham.

The second day of the camp shifted focus to road safety, a crucial concern in the bustling streets of Delhi. We envisioned a

learning environment that was both informative and engaging. Walls were transformed with colourful road signs, creating a visual learning aid. Educational movies served as a starting point, introducing the children to basic road safety concepts through animation and songs.

Taking a step beyond traditional lectures, we incorporated games to make learning fun and interactive. "Passing the parcel," adorned with road signs, became a lively activity that reinforced the importance of traffic signals. Witnessing the children's enthusiasm and energy as they participated in these games underscored the effectiveness of gamification in knowledge retention.

Our objective extended beyond disseminating information about road safety. We strived to cultivate responsible behaviour in the children. Throughout the camp, we emphasised the importance of following traffic rules and staying safe on the roads. The children's bright smiles, coupled with their enthusiastic chanting of "stop, wait, go!" instilled a sense of hope. This camp was not just about teaching them road safety; it was about empowering them to become responsible citizens who could navigate their surroundings safely.

The concluding moments of the summer camp were filled with a sense of profound gratitude. We had witnessed the incredible potential that resides within each child. Their unbridled enthusiasm, coupled with their willingness to learn and participate, left a lasting impression. The hugs exchanged, not just between children and mothers but also amongst ourselves, solidified the sense of community we had nurtured over the two days.

Our community outreach journey was filled with challenges that tested our patience, resilience, and adaptability. From the initial phases of market research and data collection in Delhi's bustling streets to navigating the complexities of product

costing and budgeting, each step brought its own lessons. The scorching heat and crowded markets were physically exhausting, while communication barriers and limited cooperation from vendors often tested our determination. However, every obstacle strengthened our commitment, teaching us the importance of clear communication, cultural sensitivity, and collaborative problem-solving. The disappointment of the project was a particularly hard lesson, yet it forced us to innovate, pivoting from product-based outreach to impactful, experience-based initiatives like the summer camp.

Organising the summer camps was a transformative experience. It dispelled the initial disappointment and replaced it with a sense of accomplishment that transcended financial gain. We discovered the joy of giving back, of utilising our resources and skills to create a positive impact on the lives of others. This new direction brought fulfilment beyond expectations. We witnessed firsthand the power of creating spaces for growth, learning, and joy, making this journey a truly transformative one. Community outreach as a skill enhancement course wasn't just about project management—it was about the power of empathy and adaptability to make a difference.

These experiences will significantly shape my future journey. Engaging with these communities taught me resourcefulness, patience, and the power of collaboration. I now recognise that my career must intertwine with social impact, focusing on creating inclusive opportunities and nurturing potential in underprivileged groups.

Organisations, particularly NGOs, play a transformative role in uplifting marginalised communities by addressing their immediate needs and fostering long-term empowerment. These entities bridge the gap between societal challenges and sustainable

solutions by providing resources, education, and advocacy. NGOs work at the grassroots level, tailoring initiatives to the unique needs of each community—be it skill development, healthcare, education, or financial inclusion. They amplify the voices of the under-represented, ensuring their concerns are heard and acted upon in policy discussions. By building trust, offering consistent support, and creating platforms for collaboration, NGOs not only alleviate immediate hardships but also empower individuals to become self-reliant, paving the way for systemic change and societal equity.

Teachers also play an invaluable role in this equation. They not only impart knowledge but also foster awareness and empathy among students. Their guidance throughout our outreach project—encouraging problem-solving, critical thinking, and the application of academic learnings—transformed theoretical knowledge into

actionable social interventions. They were the cornerstone of our journey, inspiring us to persevere despite setbacks.

This understanding has cultivated a deep sense of responsibility in me. Empowered with these insights, I am committed to driving initiatives that champion inclusivity and innovation, creating ripples of change that extend far beyond the confines of a classroom or workplace.

The community outreach project in its entirety was a testament to resilience. We encountered setbacks, adapted our plans, and ultimately found success in a different form. The initial disappointment of funding rejection forced us to reimagine our approach, leading us to the impactful summer camps. This experience instilled in us the importance of flexibility and the ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

EMPATHY IN ACTION: MY TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY WITH THE NEW DELHI YMCA

BY ANANYA SACHDEV, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - SOCIOLOGY

In the vibrant cityscape of New Delhi, amidst stark contrasts of affluence and deprivation, stands the New Delhi YMCA—a beacon of hope and compassion. Rooted in principles of social justice and human dignity, the Young Men's Christian Association of New Delhi strives to unite individuals from diverse backgrounds in fostering caring, inclusive communities. Committed to reconciliation, empowerment, and social transformation, the YMCA has consistently served as a cornerstone of support for the urban poor and marginalized populations in Delhi's slum clusters and resettlement colonies.

Operating through Five Community Development Centers and 25 Alternative Learning Centers, the YMCA adopts a

holistic approach to community development, addressing needs ranging from education to healthcare. It was within the nurturing embrace of this institution that I embarked on a transformative journey through the community outreach program. Guided by mentors like Mr. Munish Kaushiki and Ms. Monika Singh, I explored the profound significance of empathy, connection, and service in driving meaningful change in both individual lives and broader communities.

First Impressions

My first day at the YMCA center in Karpoori Thakur Camp was marked by a mix of apprehension and curiosity. Navigating through the labyrinthine alleys, the stark

realities of poverty and deprivation loomed large, casting a shadow of uncertainty over my mind. However, stepping into the center, I was greeted by the infectious energy and warmth of the children. Their bright eyes, filled with curiosity and anticipation, quickly dispelled any unease.

As we engaged in activities and shared stories, barriers of unfamiliarity melted away, giving rise to a sense of camaraderie and belonging. What began as a tentative journey transformed into an experience filled with laughter, learning, and genuine connections. By the end of the day, I realized I had embarked on a path of countless memorable and impactful moments.

Experiences at YMCA Centers

My initial encounter with the children at the Karpoori Thakur Camp was a moment of profound awakening. Despite daily challenges, their laughter and resilience served as a testament to the indomitable human spirit. Witnessing the transformative impact of YMCA's educational and support initiatives moved me deeply. It reaffirmed my belief in the potential of every individual to thrive against all odds.

At the YMCA Centre in Ashram, I gained further insights into the transformative power of education. Through sessions in Hindi, English, and Mathematics, I witnessed the children's insatiable thirst for knowledge and their determination to succeed. By employing innovative teaching methods and providing personalized attention, we created a nurturing environment where each child felt valued and supported. This experience highlighted education's ability to break the chains of ignorance and open doors of opportunity for marginalized youth.

The Taimur Nagar Camp provided yet another perspective on the human condition. Despite varied backgrounds and circumstances, the children radiated resilience and hope. Their laughter transcended barriers of circumstance, and

our shared experiences forged bonds of empathy and understanding, bridging the chasms of social divides.

Beyond Education: Holistic Development

The YMCA's outreach program extends beyond education, offering critical daycare services that serve as a lifeline for working parents in the unorganized sector. The Balwadi program caters to children aged 3-5 years, focusing on holistic development, encompassing physical growth, health, and social and emotional well-being.

For older children, coaching sessions provide subject-specific assistance in core subjects like Mathematics, Science, and Economics, while remedial classes ensure that no child is left behind in their educational journey. Witnessing the tangible impact of these initiatives reinforced my belief in the importance of addressing diverse needs to foster a nurturing environment for growth and development.

The Power of Connection

One of the most profound aspects of my journey was the meaningful bonds formed with the children. Despite differences in backgrounds and experiences, our interactions transcended barriers, rooted in shared humanity and mutual desire for connection. Through laughter, storytelling, and shared activities, we forged bonds of trust and understanding that went beyond language or circumstance.

Each moment spent with the children was a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the transformative power of empathy. Whether engaged in educational activities or creative endeavors, our connections deepened, leaving an indelible mark on my heart and reaffirming my belief in the inherent goodness of humanity.

Reflections and Takeaways

As I reflect on my journey with the YMCA, I am humbled by the profound impact of empathy and connection in transforming

lives and communities. Each interaction with the children left an indelible mark, reinforcing my commitment to service and compassion. I learned that true joy lies in giving and that even the smallest acts of kindness have the power to create ripples of positive change far beyond our immediate surroundings.

The genuine smiles and heartfelt gratitude of the children, despite their challenges, served as a poignant reminder of the resilience of the human spirit. Witnessing the tangible difference our efforts made in their lives—whether through educational support, emotional encouragement, or companionship—has fueled my passion for making a meaningful impact in the world.

Moving forward, I am committed to continuing this journey of service and compassion, knowing that even small acts of kindness can ignite hope, inspire change, and build brighter futures for those in need.

Conclusion

My journey with the New Delhi YMCA's community outreach program has been nothing short of transformative. Through immersive experiences and meaningful interactions with children from the slums, I gained invaluable insights into the resilience of the human spirit and the power of empathy and compassion.

The YMCA's commitment to fostering inclusive and loving communities has inspired me to stand in solidarity with marginalized populations and work toward a more just and equitable society. As I reflect on the laughter, shared stories, and lessons learned from these incredible children, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to make a positive impact and for the profound lessons they taught me about resilience, hope, and humanity's true essence.

WITNESSING THE UNSEEN: AN IMMERSIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH JOURNEY

BY PRACHETA PARASHAR, B.A. (H) SOCIOLOGY

I have been incredibly fortunate to work with two esteemed NGOs, which provided me with the opportunity to experience diverse fields and circumstances. Transitioning from practical work at IGSSS to brainstorming and preparing official documents at VYK, I gained a comprehensive understanding of the varied dynamics in NGO operations. The invaluable lecture by Mr. Munish Kaushik prepared me to approach my assignments with clarity about what to give and take in the NGO ecosystem.

IGSSS

The Indo Global Social Service Society (IGSSS), with a presence across India, focuses on developing opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, constructing climate-

resilient communities, inspiring youth to be change agents, safeguarding lives and livelihoods from disasters, and promoting the rights of urban poor populations.

At the core of IGSSS's work on urban development is the creation of "city vision documents," currently implemented in four cities, including Delhi. The goal is to empower impoverished urban communities, fostering inclusive and sustainable cities through collaboration with urban settlements.

During our tenure, the Delhi city vision document was nearing completion, culminating in the launch event titled "Humse Hai Dilli" (It is from us that Delhi is).

This initiative sought to include marginalized communities in envisioning a city that fulfills their needs and aspirations, contrasting sharply with their current realities.

Outreach

Our first task involved making phone calls and sending emails to approximately 100 stakeholders, including marginalized community members, street vendors, rickshaw pullers, representatives from about 40 NGOs, and seasoned industry experts. Adapting to this diverse audience, we quickly learned to communicate essential event details concisely and effectively. The varied responses taught us that community outreach extends beyond material assistance; it often involves simply being present and willing to connect.

The event itself offered a glimpse into the struggles faced by marginalized communities. Themes such as homelessness and the aftermath of slum demolitions under the guise of social progress were central discussions. Panelists highlighted the cascading effects of losing a home—jeopardizing livelihoods and uprooting lives.

Notable issues discussed included the challenges faced by rag pickers, whose contributions to waste management often go unrecognized, and the need for policy reforms to uphold their rights. Panelists also addressed gender-sensitive urban planning, advocating for better lighting, clean streets, and increased safety measures to protect women and vulnerable populations.

An intriguing observation was the gender divide among participants—NGO representatives advocating reform were predominantly men, while women from marginalized communities represented the affected groups. The event not only deepened my understanding of societal issues but also provided valuable networking opportunities with other NGO representatives.

Field Visits

Our next task was to create portfolios for marginalized communities across 15 bastis (settlements), though we could visit only three: Shiv Vihar, Police Line, and Kali Basti. This project aimed to provide documented support for communities facing sudden eviction notices.

Shiv Vihar

Major challenges included:

- A damaged community toilet without electricity, heavily relied upon by women.
- Increasing substance abuse among young men.
- Daylight theft of basic necessities.
- Persistent waterlogging in perpetually incomplete sewage works.

Women were more forthcoming in sharing their problems, with some even showing medical and utility bills. Aspirations like a women-only community gym emerged, highlighting their determination for better amenities.

Police Line

Located near a sewage drainage in Uttam Nagar, this community lacked a single toilet. Most residents worked as construction laborers, and educational opportunities were minimal, with only one girl attending school. Conversations revealed the deep-rooted power dynamics that hinder development and perpetuate marginalization.

Kali Basti

Predominantly a Muslim community, Kali Basti faced imminent eviction due to a nearby hospital's construction. While electricity was available, water supply remained limited to one side of the road. Residents expressed a desire for government-initiated skill development programs for women.

These visits underscored the importance of empathy and proactive engagement. The guidance of the program head helped us

hone skills in conducting assessments, fostering community relationships, and advocating for systemic changes.

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK)

VYK focuses on developing youth work scientifically, providing training, and promoting constructive participation in community, political, and social life.

Assignments:

We tackled questions addressing pressing societal issues, including:

- How can I contribute to society?
- How do I envision India's development by 2047?
- Challenges like unemployment, drug abuse, and social media addiction.

These assignments fostered introspection, aligning personal skills with community needs and emphasizing the role of proactive measures in societal development.

Project LEAD: Watching project videos, we created reports and reels, deepening our

understanding of stress management and effective communication. This exercise enhanced creativity and technological skills while providing tools to empower others.

Group Discussions: Discussions on topics like cybersecurity and national youth policy emphasized youth's role in creating a safer digital environment and underscored the importance of engaging with policies shaping educational and economic opportunities.

Conclusion

Community outreach, as introduced under the new National Education Policy, has provided invaluable opportunities to apply knowledge, develop skills, and contribute to society. This journey has not only fostered personal and professional growth but also clarified my interest in pursuing a career in the social service sector. It has been an enriching experience that compelled me to look beyond textbooks, embracing the real-world challenges and triumphs of community work.

A JOURNEY OF ADVOCACY AND INCLUSION THROUGH THE NCPEDP OUTREACH PROGRAM

BY DRISHTI KAUR NANDA, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - SOCIOLOGY

Over the course of our Community Outreach program, we undertook a diverse range of activities that showcased a multifaceted approach to community engagement. The focus extended beyond direct service to building sustainable relationships, sharing knowledge, and fostering a sense of empowerment within the community. These activities enhanced our understanding of the socio-economic contexts, prevalent challenges, and effective strategies for community development.

was assigned to the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled

People (NCPEDP), a non-profit organization that bridges government entities, the corporate sector, international organizations, and voluntary groups to empower individuals with disabilities. Rather than adopting a purely charitable or welfare-oriented approach, NCPEDP operates as an advocacy group. It emphasizes shifting traditional perspectives toward productivity, enabling people with disabilities to become active and self-reliant contributors to society.

During my tenure, I was assigned to the Scholarship Department, where I engaged in scholarship administration, database

creation for educational outreach, communication with schools and colleges, brainstorming vocational training ideas, and writing alt text for accessibility.

Initial Engagement and Orientation

Our journey began on October 13, 2023, with an introduction to the NGO's integral departments, such as the Scholarship Department, Fellowship, Advocacy, Helen Keller Awards, and Communications. Each department plays a crucial role in furthering the organization's vision of empowering individuals with disabilities.

The guiding philosophy of NCPEDP transcends mere sympathy and charity. It seeks to empower individuals with disabilities, envisioning them as integral contributors to the economy. This proactive approach emphasizes economic independence and a life of dignity and quality. The organization strives for a society where individuals with disabilities lead autonomous lives, free from societal constraints.

Responsibilities and Key Learnings

In the Scholarship Department, my primary responsibilities included evaluating scholarship applications, creating a database of schools and colleges, and fostering educational outreach. I engaged with school administrators to inform them about the Bajaj Finserv Scholarship, inquiring about the presence of disabled students and identifying potential candidates. This required effective communication, empathy, and a commitment to inclusivity, enabling the creation of a more targeted and impactful scholarship program.

Collaborating with peers from other departments, I also participated in brainstorming sessions on vocational training and skill development, exploring practical solutions for empowering disabled individuals beyond formal education. Additionally, I worked on writing alt text for visual materials, which sharpened my

descriptive writing skills and deepened my understanding of the importance of accessibility.

These experiences enhanced my project management, data management, and communication skills. They also fostered adaptability, empathy, and collaboration, preparing me to address the diverse needs of the community effectively.

Broader Impact

The scholarship initiatives directly improved the lives of disabled individuals by enabling access to higher education and vocational training. This not only enhanced their employment prospects but also fostered financial independence. The outreach efforts increased awareness about scholarship programs, expanded partnerships with schools and colleges, and strengthened the organization's network for future initiatives.

Classroom Insights

In addition to hands-on engagement, classroom sessions enriched our understanding of NGOs and community outreach. Professor Beena Anthony Reji from Delhi University's Social Work Department delivered an inspiring talk, highlighting the skills essential for effective NGO work. She emphasized the importance of communication proficiency, adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and advocacy in fostering meaningful community engagement.

Dr. Srinivas Suriseti, Chairperson of the School of Livelihoods and Development at TISS Hyderabad, provided a practical perspective on partnering with NGOs. Drawing from his extensive experience in capacity building, research, and livelihood promotion, he illustrated the symbiotic relationship between NGOs and academic institutions. His insights bridged theoretical concepts and real-world applications, offering a holistic understanding of sustainable development and social impact.

Enriching Perspectives

An online talk by Dr. Rajesh Tandon, hosted

by Aspen Global Change Institute, explored the concept of “Knowledge Democracy” and its role in sustainable development. Additionally, Kavita Nair’s session emphasized empowering communities by redistributing power and fostering inclusivity.

Presentations by organizations like YWCA, Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, and HelpAge India provided diverse perspectives on advocacy, youth engagement, and elderly care. These interactions underscored the significance of aligning with organizational goals while addressing specific community challenges.

Reflection and Conclusion

The 60-hour Community Outreach program at NCPEDP was a profoundly transformative experience. It offered a dynamic blend of hands-on activities, theoretical learning, and interactions with professionals. From scholarship administration to brainstorming

for vocational training, every task deepened my skills and broadened my perspective.

The challenges we addressed, whether evaluating scholarship applications or adapting outreach strategies, fostered personal and professional growth. This experience underscored the importance of trust, empathy, and sustained engagement in building meaningful relationships with the community.

As I move forward, the insights gained during this program will guide my commitment to advocacy and inclusivity. This journey has been a testament to the power of community-based learning, where both the student and the community benefit. It has instilled in me a deeper resolve to work toward a compassionate, equitable, and empowered society.

LESSONS IN EMPATHY AND RESILIENCE: MY JOURNEY AT YWCA SHELTERS

BY JANVI ALI, B.A.(P) SPANISH - SOCIOLOGY

My time at the YWCA shelters has been a profound journey, fostering personal growth, empathy, and resilience as I navigated the complexities of engaging with the residents. The diverse experiences, stories, and challenges encountered within the shelter have left an indelible mark on my understanding of the human spirit and the transformative power of compassion.

Understanding Privilege and Gratitude

Interacting with the residents, each with their unique stories, was a continuous reminder of the privileges I often take for granted. Their narratives illuminated the struggles they face, instilling gratitude for the supportive network and opportunities in my life. These experiences offered a lens through which I

began to reevaluate the significance of family, education, and stability.

Cultural Exposure and Celebration

The YWCA shelters were vibrant cultural tapestries—a mosaic of diverse backgrounds and traditions. Engaging in activities such as the Christmas performance not only allowed us to share cultural expressions but also exposed the residents to new forms of creative expression. The performance, featuring Hindi poems and joyful dancing, became a celebration of unity in diversity, fostering cultural appreciation within the shelter.

Building Rapport and Trust

Establishing meaningful connections with the residents required a delicate balance

of empathy and respect. Our initial interactions involved fun and engaging activities like a gender role reversal play, which fostered an environment where residents felt comfortable expressing themselves. Through open conversations and the sharing of personal stories, a foundation of trust was established, allowing for more profound connections to evolve over time.

Navigating Emotional Goodbyes

The departure of Resident 2 was a poignant moment, highlighting the deep emotional bonds formed within the YWCA shelters. The residents' expressions of sorrow underscored their interconnectedness and the genuine care they held for one another. Witnessing this farewell reminded me of the transient nature of relationships in the shelter and the resilience required to navigate such moments.

Educational Transitions and Sacrifices

Understanding the educational transitions within the shelters revealed the sacrifices residents make for their children's futures. Resident 2's decision to leave for her daughter's education exemplified the strength and determination of mothers ensuring their children receive opportunities for growth. This deepened my appreciation for their resilience and unwavering commitment to providing better lives for their families.

Fostering a Positive Atmosphere

Contributing to a positive atmosphere within the YWCA shelters became a central goal. Activities like the Christmas performance, interactive sessions, and games were not merely for entertainment but were also designed to cultivate joy, inclusivity, and confidence. Through these activities, the shelter transformed into a space where laughter, support, and shared experiences became essential components of daily life.

Empathy as a Guiding Light

The heart of my experience at the YWCA shelters lies in the cultivation of empathy.

Interacting with residents such as Resident 1 and Resident 4, who expressed deep sorrow at Resident 2's departure, unveiled the emotional tapestry woven within the shelter's walls. Understanding their pain and sharing in their vulnerability taught me to see beyond circumstances, connect on a human level, and foster bonds that transcend roles.

Celebrating Individual Triumphs

The YWCA shelters became canvases where residents painted stories of resilience and determination. Residents like those in Bed No. 4 and Bed No. 6, who swiftly mastered the Hindi poems for the Christmas performance, exemplified personal growth. Witnessing their journey from learning the verses to confidently presenting them highlighted the transformative power of creative expression and the nurturing environment within the shelter.

Impact on Residents

The learning outcomes of various activities were evident in the residents' lives. The cultural appreciation gained through the Christmas performance, the development of communication skills, and the confidence built through interactive sessions demonstrated the multifaceted impact of these efforts. Individual stories, such as those of residents mastering poems and dance, showcased the positive influence of shared initiatives.

The Shelter as a Transformative Space

In essence, the YWCA shelters became transformative spaces where narratives of struggle, sacrifice, and resilience intersected. They were sanctuaries where laughter mingled with tears, and the collective pursuit of better futures resonated in every interaction. Our efforts to create a positive atmosphere were reciprocated by the residents' openness and willingness to engage, transforming the shelters into hubs of growth and unity.

A Classroom of Life Lessons

As I reflect on this journey, the YWCA shelters stand not just as sites of outreach but as

classrooms of life lessons. They symbolize the transformative power of empathy, the celebration of individual triumphs, and the recognition of shared narratives. Through laughter, tears, and the collective pursuit of better futures, these shelters became testaments to the strength found in community and the unwavering spirit of those facing life's challenges.

This experience has reinforced my commitment to empathy, compassion, and the belief that positive change begins with understanding and acknowledging the stories of others.

A JOURNEY OF LEARNING AND GROWTH WITH IAHV

BY KIRTI SHEKHAWAT, B.A. (P) ENGLISH - HISTORY

This essay delves into the initiatives and experiences of the past 2.5 months of community engagement undertaken by my peers and me. Community work, at its core, is a collaborative, grassroots effort aimed at improving the well-being of a local community. It involves identifying and addressing collective needs, fostering inclusivity, and empowering individuals to actively contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of their surroundings.

The Community Outreach Program, organized as part of this endeavor, stands as a significant initiative aimed at fostering positive change and bridging the gap between academia and neighboring communities. This report meticulously reflects upon the skills acquired, tasks assigned, and initiatives undertaken during this impactful engagement.

Tasks Assigned and Initiatives Taken

Program Initiation

The program commenced with an orientation led by the Principal, where we gained an understanding of the course structure, assessment methods, and faculty introductions. This session set a clear roadmap for the outreach program, aligning our understanding with its objectives.

Engaging with Experts

Sessions by Dr. Beena Antony Reji and Dr. Srinivas Suriseti provided diverse perspectives on community work. Their insights enriched our learning experience and offered a nuanced understanding of the complexities of community engagement.

Allocation to NGOs

Based on our residences, we were allocated NGOs. I was assigned to International Association for Human Values (IAHV), and understanding its vision, mission, and initiatives deepened my appreciation for the multifaceted nature of social work.

Community Familiarization

Visiting Sanjay Camp and Vivekananda Camp allowed us to familiarize ourselves with the community and its residents. These visits, which facilitated interactions with individuals, helped establish trust and rapport, laying the foundation for meaningful engagement.

Mobilizing for ABHA Cards

Mobilizing residents for the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) card initiative required effective communication and persuasion. Dividing into groups to visit households provided hands-on experience in grassroots-level community mobilization. Nearly 65 ABHA cards were successfully .

issued, showcasing our ability to organize and execute targeted awareness campaigns

Educational Sessions on Government Policies

We conducted sessions on various government policies, such as:

- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana
- Ayushman Bharat
- National Incentive for Education
- PM SVANidhi Yojana

These sessions empowered community members, particularly women, by disseminating crucial information. The interactive nature of the sessions fostered a two-way exchange, strengthening mutual understanding and collaboration.

Fun and Educational Activities

To conclude the program, we organized activities such as Antakshari and Pass the Parcel. These fun engagements helped foster community bonds while integrating educational discussions on government schemes and policies, making the learning process enjoyable and impactful.

NGO Engagement Series

Participation in the NGO Engagement Series, featuring representatives from organizations like Vishwa Yuva Kendra (VYK), IGSS, YWCA, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation, Literacy India, and IAHV, facilitated the exchange of ideas and highlighted impactful social projects.

Learnings

- Communication Skills

Communication was central to every task, from initial orientations to community interactions. The session by Dr. Beena Antony Reji helped refine our ability to convey ideas clearly, enabling us to connect personally with residents and effectively deliver our messages.

- Empathy and Compassion

Engaging with residents at Sanjay Camp and Vivekananda Camp instilled a deep sense of empathy and compassion. Understanding

their challenges fueled our desire to contribute meaningfully, fostering a greater receptiveness to diverse perspectives.

- Organizational Skills

Planning and executing initiatives, such as ABHA card drives and educational workshops, required meticulous organization and teamwork. These experiences strengthened our ability to manage tasks efficiently, a skill invaluable in real-world settings.

- Presentation Skills

Opportunities like introducing IAHV during the NGO Engagement Series enhanced our presentation skills. Articulating ideas effectively not only enriched our academic experience but also prepared us for future endeavors requiring public speaking and advocacy.

- Teamwork and Collaboration

Working as a team necessitated collaboration, negotiation, and finding common ground. This experience underscored the importance of valuing diverse opinions and working cohesively toward shared goals.

- Problem-Solving Skills

Challenges during the ABHA card-making drives, such as dealing with low participation, required adaptive strategies and patience. This process honed our problem-solving abilities, equipping us to tackle unforeseen obstacles.

Feedback and Suggestions

The Community Outreach Program has been a transformative experience, significantly impacting our skills, personality development, and problem-solving abilities. Witnessing the positive changes in the community and the smiles of the residents was immensely rewarding, reaffirming the importance of our efforts.

Key suggestions for improvement include:

1. **Diversifying Areas of Work:** Expanding the program's focus areas would provide students with a broader spectrum of challenges and learning opportunities.
2. **Extending the Duration:** Allocating more time for the program would enable deeper community engagement and a better understanding of residents' challenges.
3. **Detailed Planning:** Incorporating a more structured approach would enhance the efficiency of future initiatives.
4. **Increased Focus on Skill Diversification:** Encouraging students to engage in varied tasks would foster a more holistic skill set aligned with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP).

Conclusion

The Community Outreach Program, conducted in collaboration with NGOs like IAHV, has been an invaluable journey of learning and growth. It served as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and practical application, highlighting the importance of empathy, resilience, and collaboration in fostering social change.

This experience has not only deepened my commitment to community work but has also equipped me with skills and insights that will guide my future endeavors. By reflecting on the successes and challenges of this program, we can ensure its continued improvement and greater impact in the years to come.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH HELPAGE INDIA'S SENIOR COMMUNITIES

BY ANUSHKA PANT, B.A. (H) HISTORY

Over the past month, as part of our Internship Project Apprenticeship Community (IPAC) initiative, I chose to participate in the Community Outreach Program. I, along with four other students, worked with HelpAge India, an organization dedicated to the cause and care of disadvantaged older persons, striving to improve their quality of life.

Established in 1978, HelpAge India began as a humble initiative from a rented two-room office in New Delhi's Kasturba Gandhi Marg. Founded by Cecil Jackson Cole, the organization soon gained momentum with John F. Pearson and Samson Daniel playing instrumental roles in its establishment. Officially registered in Delhi in April 1978, the organization received exemptions under the Income Tax Act of 1961. Over the years, HelpAge India has expanded its operations to cover 26 states, with its headquarters in the Qutab Institutional Area of Delhi.

This report aims to encapsulate the tasks undertaken, skills developed, initiatives launched, and key learnings from this program. It also reflects on the feedback received and provides suggestions for improving similar initiatives in the future.

Experiences at the Palam and Govindpuri Shelter Homes

During the program, I visited the Palam and Govindpuri shelter homes five times, engaging with senior citizens and participating in various activities. At the Palam shelter home, our activities included storytelling, playing games, and watching television to engage with the residents. One memorable experience was interacting with seniors at the physiotherapy center. Many spoke openly about their health issues and the challenges of dealing with constant pain. Contrary to my expectations, they shared that their family bonds were strong and

supportive, dispelling some common stereotypes about neglect of the elderly.

In contrast, the Govindpuri shelter home presented a different reality. The seniors here came from varied parts of India but shared a common story of strained family relationships. Most residents recounted being abandoned by their families, which led them to seek solace in the shelter. My team and I interviewed three seniors who had faced neglect and indifference from their families. Despite their difficult circumstances, these individuals exhibited remarkable resilience and found companionship within the shelter community.

Skills Acquired and Initiatives Launched

- **Leadership and Responsibility:** This program pushed me out of my comfort zone, enabling me to take up leadership roles. I conducted online seminars, prepared presentations for awareness campaigns, and led interviews, demonstrating decision-making and coordination skills.
- **Effective Communication:** I developed my communication skills through public speaking, creating informative materials, and engaging with diverse community members. Interacting with the seniors required patience, empathy, and adaptability.
- **Team Collaboration:** Working collaboratively with my peers, volunteers, and organization heads taught me the importance of teamwork. Whether at Palam or Govindpuri, our ability to coordinate efforts was essential to achieving our goals.
- **Problem-Solving:** Tackling logistical challenges, resource limitations, and unforeseen hurdles during events honed my problem-solving skills. These experiences taught me to remain calm and adaptable under pressure.

Key Initiatives

- **Awareness Campaigns:** We organized both online and offline awareness sessions on topics like sustainability,

employment for disabled individuals, and community-centric fieldwork. Using social media, we extended the reach of these campaigns to a broader audience.

- **Workshops on Digital Awareness:** We conducted educational workshops for senior citizens, focusing on digital literacy to help them navigate technology more confidently.
- **Long-Term Planning:** We initiated discussions about implementing sustainable, ongoing community programs to address persistent issues and foster lasting impact.

Key Learnings

- **Community Dynamics:** I gained insights into the diverse needs and dynamics of the local community. Each interaction provided valuable lessons about the complexities of community engagement.
- **Adaptability:** Plans often needed adjustment based on unforeseen circumstances and community feedback. Flexibility became a vital skill throughout this program.
- **Empathy:** Engaging with the senior citizens at both shelter homes deepened my understanding of their challenges and fostered a sense of empathy and compassion.

Feedback and Suggestions

The community members expressed gratitude for our initiatives and provided constructive feedback, highlighting areas for improvement. They emphasized the importance of maintaining regular engagement to sustain the positive impact and build trust.

Suggestions for Future Programs:

- **Continuous Engagement:** Sustained interaction with the community can strengthen bonds and foster long-term impact.
- **Diversification of Initiatives:** Exploring additional areas of community concern, such as mental health or intergenerational activities, could enrich

future programs.

- Documentation: Maintaining detailed records of outcomes and feedback will help track progress and guide future initiatives.
- Extended Duration: Increasing the program's duration would allow for deeper engagement and more meaningful impact.

Reflections and Conclusion

This community outreach program not only met its objectives but also became a deeply meaningful part of my personal journey. At Palam, the transient nature of residents made it challenging to form lasting bonds, but our consistent efforts helped us connect with them meaningfully during each visit. Playing carrom, sharing stories, and receiving their guidance on life were unforgettable experiences.

In Govindpuri, the atmosphere was optimistic yet harsh. The residents' lack of expectations from life or even their own families was humbling and a stark reminder of the realities many face. One resident's advice—"Expectations will never die, but they only bring trouble"—left a lasting impression on me.

This program taught me the value of resilience, empathy, and the importance of human connection. The love and kindness I received from the elders will stay with me forever, shaping my outlook on life and community service. The skills I acquired, the lessons I learned, and the bonds I formed will serve as a strong foundation for future endeavors aimed at making a lasting positive impact.

REFLECTIONS ON A COMMUNITY OUTREACH JOURNEY WITH VISHWA YUVAK KENDRA

BY SHARON MARIYA ROJI, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - PHILOSOPHY

The Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (VYK) holds a unique place in the history of Indian youth development. Established in 1961 under the Indian Youth Centers Trust, VYK was inaugurated by Dr. Zakir Hussain, the then President of India, on December 22, 1968. Located in the Diplomatic Enclave of New Delhi, its mission is to provide continuous training to youth workers, fostering leadership and capacity building among India's youth.

VYK envisions a society where self-reliant, empowered youth lead the way toward an inclusive, prosperous, and just future. Through a range of training programs, seminars, and community-based development initiatives, VYK empowers young individuals to contribute meaningfully to society.

This report documents our experience during a community outreach program at VYK, highlighting its objectives, achievements, and the impact it had on us as participants.

Orientation Program: Setting the Stage

The Orientation Program introduced us to VYK's history, vision, and objectives. A short documentary provided an overview of the institution's initiatives, such as thematic workshops, skill training, and integrated community development programs. Faculty members elaborated on VYK's mission, showcasing the impact of its work through engaging presentations and discussions.

Key takeaways from the orientation included:

- Understanding the role of youth in societal transformation.

- Learning about the initiatives undertaken by VYK to empower marginalized communities.
- Exploring how we, as young individuals, can be catalysts for positive change.

The session was interactive, featuring talks by eminent speakers like Dr. Jayanti Dutta, a psychologist, and Prof. Arun Kumar, who shared their insights on social work and its significance.

Campaigns and Fieldwork

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign: As part of our engagement with VYK, we participated in an awareness campaign in Shankar Camp, Moti Bagh. This initiative aligned with the Government of India's efforts to address the declining child sex ratio and promote girl child education.

Highlights of the campaign:

1. Engaging with 77 adolescent girls and women through interactive sessions.
2. Using creative methods like artwork, storytelling, and poetry to address gender inequality.
3. Encouraging parental involvement to emphasize the importance of education for girls.

This experience underscored the power of grassroots campaigns in fostering awareness and inspiring action within communities.

- Community Development in Vivekananda Village: VYK organized a kho-kho event for children in Vivekananda Village. The program aimed to foster enthusiasm, discipline, and teamwork among participants. Observing the children's energy and passion for learning was heartwarming. Post-event, essentials were distributed to encourage future participation.

Workshops and Training Programs

- Social Media Management: An interactive session with Anand Sir introduced us to the fundamentals of social media management. We learned about creating impactful blogs, posts,

and reports, highlighting the importance of leveraging digital platforms for social change.

- Skill Development Initiatives: Through workshops on vermicomposting, hydroponics, and financial literacy, we gained insights into sustainable practices and the role of skills in community resilience. The She Leads Change program empowered young girls with knowledge in agriculture, leadership, and financial planning, preparing them for a sustainable future.

Achievements and Reflections

Achievements

- Gained a deeper understanding of VYK's objectives and operations.
- Successfully contributed to awareness campaigns, including the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao drive.
- Enhanced skills in report writing, event coordination, and digital engagement.
- Interacted with marginalized communities, gaining firsthand insights into their challenges.

Personal Reflections

Working with VYK was a transformative experience. It reinforced the value of empathy, compassion, and collaboration in community development. Engaging with individuals from diverse backgrounds broadened our perspectives, reminding us that sometimes people don't need material aid but rather understanding, care, and a listening ear.

Conclusion

Our journey with VYK has been profoundly enriching, fostering personal growth while contributing to society. Through campaigns and skill-building workshops, we learned the value of serving with love and understanding. As youth, we hold the power to shape the future. Inspired by VYK's focus on inclusive development, we are committed to continuing our path of service and empowerment.

STEPPING BEYOND COMFORT: LESSONS FROM A COMMUNITY OUTREACH JOURNEY WITH IGSSS

BY AVNI GUPTA, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - SOCIOLOGY

Over the course of 60 hours, I embarked on a transformative journey through a Community Outreach program. This review reflects the knowledge, skills, and perspectives I gained during this tumultuous, exciting, and eye-opening experience. Pushed out of my comfort zone and immersed in the diverse communities of Delhi, I found lessons in resilience, collaboration, and empathy that left an indelible mark on me.

Background

My journey into social work began long before this program. I had previously volunteered to teach English and Math to children of daily wage workers, conducted SEWA projects, and participated in donation drives through my school. However, this community outreach initiative promised a larger scale of impact—demanding not just a few hours of effort but a consistent commitment over weeks. It required me to engage with the broader communities of Delhi, stretching far beyond my neighborhood.

Working with IGSSS

Assigned to the Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS), I was introduced to an NGO dedicated to causes such as youth development, gender equality, and sustainable livelihoods. Their advocacy work with government offices and comprehensive programs left me in awe.

Our task focused on the Youth Leaders' Program, which empowers local youth to become catalysts for change within their communities. Unlike other initiatives, this program fosters self-transformation among participants rather than relying on external interventions. Our role was to interview youth leaders, document their transformative

journeys, and contribute to a booklet capturing their success stories.

Additionally, we supported events such as Sports Day and Yuv Utsav, which required travel and adaptability as each week brought new challenges.

Key Experiences

- **Facilitating Youth Adda at Khichripur:** During my first visit to Khichripur, I co-facilitated a Youth Adda—a discussion group for local youth. Surrounded by participants ranging from 11-year-old children to peers my own age, I learned a valuable lesson: despite their limited resources, they had practical wisdom and resilience that taught me as much as I taught them. This interaction broadened my perspective, teaching me to appreciate a kind of intelligence shaped by life's hardships.
- **Conducting Interviews:** Engaging with youth leaders from different backgrounds highlighted my improved communication skills. Building rapport, active listening, and fostering trust allowed me to connect with the participants on a deeper level. The process taught me to:
 - Plan and organize effectively.
 - Collaborate with a team.
 - Communicate empathetically and openly.
 - Practice patience and active listening.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** As a group leader, I handled communication between students, faculty, and NGO staff, managed logistics, and ensured smooth execution of tasks. While it was challenging, the experience honed my leadership skills and taught me to rely on a team.

Broader Learnings

1. **Empathy and Open-Mindedness:** Connecting with people from vastly different backgrounds required a non-judgmental attitude and respect for their unique lifestyles. This taught me to value empathy and patience as foundational to social work.
2. **Unexpected Sources of Wisdom:** The practical insights shared by young participants highlighted that learning can come from the most unexpected avenues. Their stories and experiences reshaped my worldview, reminding me to always remain a student of life.
3. **Overcoming Challenges:** The program's tight deadlines and compact schedule pushed me to work harder and adapt quickly. Despite the pressure, I discovered that growth often arises from the most challenging circumstances.
4. **The Gratification of Social Work:** While social work is neither easy nor comfortable, it is deeply rewarding. Facilitating events, interacting with community members, and seeing their gratitude made every effort worthwhile.

Workshops and the NGO Engagement Series

In addition to fieldwork, the program included workshops and talks on topics such as mental health, partnering with NGOs, and social work's scope. These sessions were enlightening, offering practical insights and professional perspectives.

The NGO Engagement Series allowed us to explore other organizations and themes, such as women's empowerment, education, climate change, and health. Hearing the experiences of fellow students reinforced the transformative potential of social work and its far-reaching impact.

Feedback and Suggestions

While the program was enriching, its tight schedule left little time for reflection and deeper engagement. Spreading the program over a few months would allow volunteers to immerse themselves fully and

experience the transformative potential of social work without feeling overwhelmed.

Conclusion

This community outreach journey has been a profound experience of growth and learning. It taught me empathy, resilience, and the power of teamwork while reshaping my perception of privilege and struggle. Above all, it instilled in me a deep appreciation for the transformative power of social work—not just in the lives of those we serve but also in our own.

Moving forward, I carry these lessons with me, determined to continue making a positive impact in the world around me.

Case Studies: Transformative Journeys with IGSSS

Indira Kalyan Camp

Rakesh

Rakesh's association with IGSSS began through the encouragement of youth facilitator Kavita Didi, who helped him and his community understand the NGO's mission. Over the past 4–5 years, Rakesh has undergone a profound transformation through IGSSS's Social Action Program. A two-day leadership training instilled in him self-sufficiency, problem-solving skills, and the ability to guide others.

He actively participated in a cleanliness drive to tackle his community's garbage issues and continues to advocate for access to clean water, despite ongoing challenges. Overcoming his initial hesitations, Rakesh has developed confidence and persuasive skills, inspiring others to join community initiatives. Looking ahead, he dreams of starting a business and envisions placing his community, Gautampuri, on the map of progress through empowerment and collective action.

Madanpur Khadar

Raj

Raj, a 19-year-old college student, has been associated with IGSSS for three years. Initially inspired by the positive transformations in others, he connected with Jai Bhaiya and began his journey of growth. Overcoming his shyness, Raj developed confidence and communication skills in IGSSS's supportive environment.

His commitment to IGSSS's mission reflects his passion for social work and its impact on youth empowerment. Raj plans to continue working with IGSSS, a testament to how the NGO shapes young individuals into agents of positive change.

Parry

Parry, a school student, joined IGSSS nearly a year ago after witnessing her brother's positive experiences with the organization. During this time, she has embraced empathy and shed preconceptions, fostering a nonjudgmental attitude.

Her transformation highlights IGSSS's ability to inspire and empower youth to grow personally and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Parry remains motivated to continue her journey, exemplifying the swift and profound impact of the NGO.

Gautampuri

Anjana

Anjana, passionate about social change from a young age, joined IGSSS after prior involvement with other NGOs. Although family and financial constraints often limit her participation, she values the confidence-building sessions. These sessions have helped her overcome hesitation and speak confidently with others. With her newfound confidence, Anjana aspires to inspire and support her community.

Laxmi

Laxmi, whose family migrated to Delhi from Uttar Pradesh 25 years ago, joined IGSSS after being invited by a member of the NGO. Her involvement has fostered independence and transformed her thinking. Recently enrolled in IGNOU, Laxmi now believes in paving her own path rather than relying solely on her parents.

Her journey reflects the empowering impact of IGSSS, and her growth inspires hope for her continued achievements.

Khichripur

Vishakha

Vishakha's engagement with IGSSS began two years ago after joining a self-exploration meeting. Confidence-building and leadership training ignited her passion for social work. Despite challenges, such as low male participation in gender equality sessions, Vishakha emerged as a strong advocate for women's education.

Through community action, she has taught essential skills and addressed educational barriers. Overcoming family disapproval, she has become a vocal defender of women's rights. Looking ahead, Vishakha envisions bridging generational gaps and fostering collaboration between youth and the elderly.

Megha

Megha, a second-year BA student, joined IGSSS four years ago. Initially shy and homebound, she discovered her potential through self-exploration and gender equality sessions. Leadership training and community projects, such as cleanliness drives and education programs for women, have shaped her into a confident individual.

From traveling independently to addressing societal challenges, Megha's growth underscores IGSSS's transformative influence. She remains committed to involving others in social work and expanding her impact.

Yasoda

Yasoda began her journey with IGSSS in 10th grade, joining through relatives involved with the NGO. Leadership and gender equality training expanded her knowledge and confidence.

Focused on women's education, Yasoda conducted a survey uncovering entrenched biases. Her transformation from a reserved individual to an articulate advocate highlights the empowering role of IGSSS. Yasoda envisions a future where parents, too, undergo gender equality training to foster inclusive communities.

Soma

Two years ago, Soma rarely left her house or understood her community's challenges. IGSSS changed her life, fostering confidence and a passion for social work. She led initiatives like making newspaper bags to reduce plastic use and participated in cleanliness drives.

Gender equality training solidified her determination to advocate for her rights. Despite initial family reluctance, Soma's success gained their support. Her commitment to community improvement continues to grow, emphasizing action over words.

Kalyanpuri

Sahil

Sahil, a medical shop worker, joined IGSSS two years ago through his mother's encouragement. Drawn initially by sports events, he developed leadership skills and learned the importance of teamwork.

Participating in social actions like cleanliness drives and women's education initiatives transformed Sahil's outlook. His newfound patience and respect for others fuel his continued dedication to social work. He envisions cleaner streets and societal improvements funded by community-driven initiatives.

Simran

Simran, a youth leader since 10th grade, joined IGSSS on her sister's advice. Self-exploration sessions revealed her hidden potential, while gender equality training deepened her understanding of societal issues.

Simran advocates for increased male participation in gender equality programs, believing their involvement is crucial for meaningful change. Her growth from a confrontational to a calm, open individual underscores her dedication to fostering inclusivity.

Yash

Yash's three-year journey with IGSSS began with encouragement from his brother. Through leadership and self-exploration sessions, he gained confidence and a new perspective on gender equality and environmental issues.

Yash's commitment to improving hygiene and sanitation led him to write to local authorities, showcasing his sense of responsibility. His journey reflects a growing dedication to community engagement and personal growth.

Karan

Karan, an 18-year-old from Aligarh, connected with IGSSS through NYKS during the pandemic. Leadership training and gender equality sessions challenged stereotypes, fostering confidence and respect for others.

Engaged in climate discussions and community initiatives, Karan has become a vocal advocate for environmental awareness. His journey exemplifies the transformative power of social work in shaping future leaders.

Ajay

Ajay, a 12th-grade student from Budaun, joined IGSSS after prior experience with NYKS. Leadership and gender equality

sessions highlighted the value of teamwork and self-reflection.

Through practical activities like Sports Day and movie screenings, Ajay developed confidence and a deeper understanding of social issues. His journey reflects the growth possible through consistent engagement in community work.

Ankit

Ankit's five-year association with NYKS and IGSSS began during the pandemic. Open

discussions on self-exploration and gender equality changed his perspective and enhanced his confidence.

Engaging in climate discussions and community action, Ankit emerged as a leader advocating for social and environmental causes. His journey highlights IGSSS's role in nurturing well-rounded individuals committed to societal improvement.

LESSONS FROM WORKING WITH HELPAge INDIA

BY ANSHUMITA SHARMA, B.A. (H) HISTORY

Introduction

HelpAge India is a leading charitable organization that has been working with and for the elderly in India for over 40 years. Through its Agecare, healthcare, and livelihood programs, it provides holistic elder care, enabling seniors to live active, dignified, and healthier lives. From running one of the largest mobile healthcare programs to supporting elder self-help groups, conducting cataract surgeries, and offering digital literacy programs, HelpAge India addresses the needs of older people with compassion and purpose.

Our journey with HelpAge India was an eye-opening experience, filled with challenges, moments of connection, and valuable lessons. We interacted with elders who, despite facing abandonment or health issues, displayed immense resilience and strength. This journey not only deepened our understanding of the elderly but also taught us the importance of empathy, patience, and compassion.

Understanding the Work of HelpAge India

Our first visit to the HelpAge India head office

introduced us to the scope of the organization's work. Guided by Ms. Rojibala, we learned about the NGO's initiatives, including their healthcare programs, support for elder self-reliance, and advocacy for elder rights. This session laid the foundation for our subsequent visits to their centers, where we had the opportunity to engage directly with the elderly and witness their stories of resilience.

Experiences at the Centers

- Govind Puri Center: Govind Puri houses the only old age home run by HelpAge India. Here, we met elderly individuals who shared heart-wrenching stories of abandonment by their families. One elderly man narrated how his children had left him, yet he lived independently with dignity and confidence. Another, who had held a high-ranking position in the finance commission, now resided without his family. These stories highlighted the harsh realities faced by the elderly, but also their unwavering strength.
- Palam Center: At the Palam center, where physiotherapy services are

provided, we faced challenges in engaging with the elderly. Many were focused on their health checkups and found it difficult to participate in activities due to physical discomfort. Despite this, we managed to organize painting sessions, during which we tried to connect with them through conversations. Although some were reluctant, we listened attentively to their stories, which were often deeply moving.

- **Memorable Activities:** One of the most touching experiences was watching Ramayan with the elders at the Palam center. It brought a sense of nostalgia for them, as they recounted fond memories of watching it with their families. Their stories of shared moments from the past underscored the emotional void they now felt, making this activity particularly poignant.

Another memorable session was playing Tambola with the elders. This activity was less about asking questions or gathering information and more about bringing them joy and showing them love. It was a heartwarming experience that deepened our bond with them.

Challenges Faced

Working with the elderly was not without its challenges:

1. **Age Gap:** The generational divide often made it difficult to initiate meaningful conversations. It took time to understand how to communicate effectively and find common topics of interest.
2. **Uninterested Behavior:** Many elders were initially hesitant to engage, often due to deteriorating health or lack of energy. Patience and persistence were essential in building rapport with them.
3. **Time Constraints:** Limited time meant we couldn't carry out all the activities we had planned.

Despite these obstacles, we persisted, forming meaningful connections with many of the elders.

Lessons Learned

Our time with HelpAge India taught us several valuable lessons:

- **Empathy and Compassion:** We learned the importance of listening and offering emotional support to those who have experienced loss and abandonment.
- **Resilience:** The elders' ability to find joy and maintain dignity despite their hardships was inspiring.
- **The Need for Care:** This experience reminded us of how much our parents and grandparents need our love and attention, which we often overlook in our busy lives.
- **The Reward of Service:** Social work, while challenging, is deeply fulfilling. Every smile we brought to the elders' faces was a testament to the impact of our efforts.

Conclusion

Working with HelpAge India was a transformative experience that broadened our perspectives and deepened our understanding of the challenges faced by the elderly. Despite the difficulties, this journey was filled with moments of connection, joy, and learning.

This experience has inspired me to continue contributing to the betterment of others' lives in the future. It reinforced the idea that even small acts of kindness can bring immense happiness to those in need, making the effort worthwhile.

INTERVIEWS AT HELPAGE INDIA

Sunya Prasad — (63 yrs)
 Bhar
 4 boys & 2 girls
 PA - finance commission
 2 years in Help Age
 → avoid my family
 → simple living, no hobby, no interest
 → his pastime is → visiting tuition, newspapers, games provided by Help Age.
 → physical abuse — at home by children
 → children studying.
 → fav. memory — when he was posted as the PA in finance comm.
 → विद्या और संस्कार
 → good bond among all children
 → teaching for self generation — एमएन करते माँ, बाप को सुनाओगे सब कुछ है लेकर
 → loved his wife, but is opp. interests.

Hari Prasad (Hari Prasad)
 physically impaired (one leg injury)
 UP (Agriculture) → 3 girls, 1 boy
 5 years (since 2015) → अपने मन से यहाँ आए → good relation with family
 goes to visit his family back in village
 श्रम - बाड़ी का काम करते थे, सिलाई करते हैं।
 → हॉस्पिटल बुलंद रखने की शीख।
 • some sort of ~~...~~ "kard" thinking.
 • बालों समय के लिए काम निकालना पड़ता।
 सिलाई - सबसे अच्छी लगती।
 → heavy accident से पैर "खराब"।
 → काम करना, शीख लो। [no looking back at PAST, focusing on present future]

sessions highlighted the value of teamwork and self-reflection.

Through practical activities like Sports Day and movie screenings, Ajay developed confidence and a deeper understanding of social issues. His journey reflects the growth possible through consistent engagement in community work.

Ankit

Ankit's five-year association with NYKS and IGSSS began during the pandemic. Open

discussions on self-exploration and gender equality changed his perspective and enhanced his confidence.

Engaging in climate discussions and community action, Ankit emerged as a leader advocating for social and environmental causes. His journey highlights IGSSS's role in nurturing well-rounded individuals committed to societal improvement.

EMPOWERING FUTURES: A JOURNEY WITH PRATYEk NGO

BY TANVI DALAL, B.A. (P) PSYCHOLOGY - SOCIOLOGY

Introduction

PRATYEk NGO was founded in 2013 by Steve Rocha with a vision inspired by Edmund Rice's teachings. Its mission is to ensure happier childhoods for all children by addressing their educational, emotional, and social needs. Over the past decade, PRATYEk has collaborated with 100 local NGOs and 300 schools across 29 states, positively impacting the lives of over 2.5 million children.

This organization is committed to nurturing children's growth and development through education, skill-building, and creative expression. During our visit, we had the privilege of engaging with the children and contributing to their learning journey. The experience was both enriching and fulfilling, providing us with valuable insights and unforgettable memories.

PRATYEk's Multifaceted Approach

- **Education and Teaching:** PRATYEk recognizes the transformative power of education in shaping a child's future. The NGO employs engaging, interactive, and child-centered teaching methods that foster curiosity and a love for

learning. During our visit, we taught children using these techniques, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and other essential subjects. The inclusive atmosphere created by PRATYEk educators ensures that every child feels supported in their educational journey.

- **Development and Growth:** Beyond academics, PRATYEk emphasizes children's physical, emotional, and social well-being. Activities such as sports and games promote fitness and teamwork, while workshops and role-playing exercises nurture emotional intelligence and social skills. These initiatives help children build strong relationships, manage emotions, and develop empathy, preparing them for life's challenges.
- **Play and Creative Expression:** Play is an integral part of PRATYEk's approach. By incorporating activities like art, music, dance, and drama, the NGO encourages creativity and imagination while fostering joy and self-expression. During our time there, we facilitated similar activities, helping children develop cognitive and motor skills while inspiring exploration and wonder.

- **Presentations and Public Speaking:** PRATYeK provides children with opportunities to showcase their talents and ideas through presentations. This builds confidence, communication skills, and self-expression. We supported this initiative by offering constructive feedback, helping the children articulate their thoughts effectively and preparing them for future successes.

Workshops and Skill-Building Activities

We conducted several interactive workshops during our visit, addressing key areas of growth and awareness:

1. **Body Hygiene and Health:** This workshop highlighted the importance of personal hygiene and self-care. Children learned proper handwashing techniques, dental care, and menstrual hygiene, fostering healthy habits and a positive body image.
2. **Menstruation and Reproductive Health:** Focused on educating children about puberty and reproductive health, this session provided clarity on the menstrual cycle and physical changes, empowering them to navigate these transformations with confidence.
3. **Cyber Safety and Digital Literacy:** In this digital age, online safety is paramount. Our workshop equipped children with essential skills for navigating the internet responsibly, emphasizing privacy, etiquette, and awareness of potential dangers.
4. **Life Skills and Emotional Intelligence:** This session aimed to develop crucial life skills such as time management, goal-setting, and decision-making. Emotional regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution were also key components, helping children build resilience and navigate relationships effectively.
5. **Creative Arts and Self-Expression:** Encouraging creativity through painting, drawing, music, and dance, this workshop provided children with an outlet for self-expression. These activities not only honed their artistic abilities but also brought joy and fulfillment.

Reflections on Our Experience

Our time with PRATYeK was transformative. While teaching and engaging with the children, we learned as much from them as they did from us. Their intelligence, enthusiasm, and willingness to participate were inspiring. Despite initial challenges in connecting due to age and experience differences, we found ways to bridge the gap through meaningful activities and conversations.

The children's resilience and positivity, even in the face of challenges, left a profound impact on us. Their energy and curiosity were a testament to the importance of providing nurturing environments where they can thrive.

Conclusion

PRATYeK's holistic approach to child development is truly commendable. By addressing education, skill-building, emotional intelligence, and creative expression, the NGO empowers children to grow into confident, compassionate individuals.

Our journey with PRATYeK allowed us to contribute to this mission and gain invaluable insights. The experience reinforced the importance of empathy, patience, and creativity in fostering meaningful connections. It was a privilege to be part of this initiative, and we are grateful for the opportunity to learn, grow, and create lasting memories with the incredible children at PRATYeK.

MY VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE WITH LITERACY INDIA

BY JEMI BABY JOHN, B.A. (P) POLITICAL SCIENCE - SOCIOLOGY

As part of a community outreach initiative, I had the opportunity to volunteer with an NGO called Literacy India. This experience was deeply fulfilling, as it not only allowed me to serve others in need but also gave me hands-on exposure to social work. Alongside two other volunteers, I was placed at Literacy India's center in Mohammadpur, a densely populated area with a significant migrant population facing numerous challenges.

Understanding Literacy India's Mission

Established to promote quality education, especially for girls, Literacy India also focuses on health and responsible citizenship. The NGO's relentless efforts have enabled many children to transition into regular government schools, providing them access to better educational opportunities. Additionally, Literacy India runs vocational training projects tailored to community needs, enhancing livelihoods and fostering self-reliance.

Volunteering Journey

During my ten days of volunteering, we conducted computer classes for students and women. Initially, we taught the basics of typing and later introduced them to software like MS Word and MS Excel. It was inspiring to see their enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Younger students gradually improved their typing skills, while older ones began to efficiently use computer functions, such as adding hyperlinks or formatting documents.

One memorable moment was when a group of older students, who were preparing for their twelfth board exams, shared how they valued every spare moment to enhance their future prospects. Their dedication was a reminder of the power of perseverance and the importance of utilizing every opportunity.

Another unique task involved creating over 80 identity cards (DMS IDs) for students using Excel. Guided by our computer instructor, we learned the technical process and appreciated how such initiatives enable students to gain formal recognition within the NGO system. We also observed how engaging parents in the educational process provided valuable insights into their financial struggles. Many parents expressed gratitude for the NGO's support in providing after-school care and supervision for their children, which met both educational and basic needs.

Interactions and Insights

Interacting with the children was an eye-opening experience. Many students aspired to unconventional careers like becoming a bike racer, despite their current socio-economic challenges. Their dreams and innocence were inspiring and reinforced the importance of nurturing ambition in young minds.

Our conversations with the center head, Teena Ma'am, were equally enlightening. She shared how her work with Literacy India was both a profession and a passion, emphasizing the importance of blending dedication with genuine interest in any endeavor. She also highlighted the NGO's growing popularity among parents, resulting in full enrollment at the center.

Observing the teachers further deepened my respect for their commitment. Many traveled long distances to teach at the center, dedicating themselves to the children's progress despite their own challenges.

Challenges and Achievements

We faced several challenges, from

student admissions to managing logistical hurdles, but teamwork helped us navigate these effectively. One task involved entering pretest scores for subjects like Hindi, English, Math, EVS, and Value Education into the record register. Later, we were assigned the task of updating the syllabus for classes 2–5, which, though daunting, was completed successfully as a team.

We also participated in reading tests, assessing students' skills in Hindi and English. While some students excelled, others needed more practice, reminding us of the importance of patience and consistent effort in teaching.

Key Takeaways

- **Breaking Barriers:** The NGO plays a pivotal role in helping students overcome societal barriers and misconceptions about education.
- **Teamwork and Leadership:** Observing Teena Ma'am and her team underscored the value of effective leadership and teamwork in achieving goals.

- **Empathy and Dedication:** The compassion shown by the staff and volunteers inspired me to approach social work with greater empathy and selflessness.
- **Importance of Education:** The students' testimonials and aspirations highlighted the transformative power of education in shaping lives and breaking cycles of poverty.

Conclusion

Volunteering at Literacy India was an enriching experience that not only allowed me to contribute meaningfully to the community but also taught me invaluable lessons in perseverance, leadership, and compassion. The dedication of the students, parents, and staff reaffirmed my belief in the importance of NGOs like Literacy India, which provide a platform for individuals to overcome challenges and build a better tomorrow.

EMPOWERING THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY: MY JOURNEY WITH SWECHHA INDIA

BY HARSHITA, B.A. (P) HISTORY - PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The third-semester skill enhancement course led me to Swechha, a multifaceted NGO committed to environmental conservation, education, and sustainable development. My time at Swechha was transformative, providing diverse learning opportunities and enriching my understanding of social and environmental responsibility.

Learning Through Green the Map

- **Digital Marketing Mastery:** Managing Green the Map's social media channels offered a hands-on experience to refine

my digital marketing skills. Crafting content, analyzing metrics, and fostering online engagement helped me understand the nuances of effective online advocacy.

- **Entrepreneurial Insight:** Immersion in the operations of an eco-conscious enterprise gave me valuable insights into sustainable business models. Balancing profit with environmental consciousness became a dynamic learning experience, offering a practical understanding of ethical entrepreneurship.

Engagement with Children: Two Phases

Phase 1: Nursery to Grade 7

1. Child Psychology Insights: Planning and executing creative workshops deepened my understanding of child psychology. Observing varied responses across age groups highlighted the importance of tailoring activities to developmental stages.
2. Environmental Education Techniques: Integrating environmental themes into workshops fostered eco-consciousness in young minds. This experience allowed me to explore effective methods for teaching environmental sustainability.

Phase 2: Grades 8 to 12

1. Effective Communication Strategies: Conducting career counseling sessions required a nuanced approach to facilitate meaningful discussions. This experience enhanced my ability to engage with older students in thoughtful and constructive ways.
2. Empathy and Counseling Skills: Stress management workshops underscored the importance of balancing empathy with practical solutions. This experience emphasized the educator's role in addressing students' mental well-being.

Remedial Classes

1. Personalized Teaching Techniques: Designing and conducting remedial classes based on individual student needs underscored the importance of personalized education. Understanding diverse age groups highlighted the need to adapt teaching styles for better engagement.
2. Adaptability in Education: Flexibility in teaching approaches proved essential to accommodate various learning styles. This adaptability became a crucial factor in ensuring effective academic support.

Overall Reflections

- Holistic Development Philosophy: The diverse activities at Swechha reinforced the importance of holistic development. Recognizing the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and creative well-being deepened my understanding of comprehensive growth.
- Community-Centric Learning: Working with the Jagdamba Camp community emphasized the significance of tailoring programs to address unique community challenges. Understanding these needs became a cornerstone of impactful educational initiatives.
- Life-Long Learning Mindset: This experience highlighted the continuous nature of learning. Every interaction, whether with an eco-enterprise or a child, offered valuable insights and contributed to shaping my educational philosophy.

Conclusion

The skill enhancement course with Swechha provided an immersive and comprehensive learning experience. From mastering digital marketing and gaining entrepreneurial insights to understanding child psychology and community-centered education, the program significantly broadened my skill set and perspective. This journey has undoubtedly shaped my future endeavors, fostering a deep commitment to sustainability, community empowerment, and lifelong learning.

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH THE SATYARTHI GLOBAL COMPASSION MOVEMENT

BY MAHIMA YADAV, B.A. (H.) HINDI (TR. FROM HINDI)

The Satyarthi Global Compassion Movement (SGCM) is a significant social organization that has been working since 1980 to combat child slavery and oppression, contributing profoundly to social progress. The movement has initiated impactful campaigns such as Bal Mitra Gram Mandal, which has reached over 600 villages, empowering communities and promoting awareness. Other notable initiatives include the Youth Summit Event, Karunamay Diwali Karyashala, Women Empowerment, and Bal Mitra Mandal. These programs aim to inspire women and youth, fostering literacy, awareness about higher education, career prospects, and independence through education.

Raising Awareness on Menstrual Hygiene

Under the umbrella of SGCM, we visited Vivekananda Camp and Sanjay Camp to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene among women and girls. During these visits, we mobilized women, encouraging them to participate in discussions about menstrual health. This effort successfully drew several women who shared their experiences and challenges.

In the sessions, we emphasized the importance of menstrual awareness, explaining hormonal changes, and addressing orthodox practices and beliefs. We encouraged the women to stand up against restrictive ideologies that limit their freedoms, such as refraining from bathing or cooking during menstruation.

These interactive sessions were both enlightening and empowering. The women were enthusiastic and engaged, sharing their stories and gaining confidence to challenge societal norms.

Literacy Workshop for Women

As part of the initiative, I conducted a workshop focused on teaching Hindi and basic grammar to women at Sanjay Camp. Many illiterate women joined the workshop, showing a strong desire to learn. We began by understanding their goals and decided to focus on foundational vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar at the basic level.

The women actively supported the initiative, and their enthusiasm made the sessions impactful. They recognized the importance of literacy in achieving independence and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to learn.

Dispelling Myths and Promoting Hygiene

In another session, we addressed common myths and misconceptions about menstruation. By creating a safe space for discussion, we encouraged women and girls to ask questions and share their concerns. We provided practical solutions to improve their health and fitness, ensuring they left the session with a clearer understanding of menstrual hygiene and well-being.

Celebrating a Pollution-Free Diwali

During Diwali, we organized a workshop to promote eco-friendly celebrations. Through this initiative, we raised awareness about the harmful effects of pollution caused by firecrackers and encouraged the community to adopt sustainable practices.

Additionally, in an SGCM workshop, we discussed the importance of compassion—towards ourselves, others, and the environment. This conversation helped foster a sense of togetherness and mutual respect within the community.

Reflections and Goals

The primary goal of my involvement with SGCM was to empower women and make them independent. These workshops and discussions play a pivotal role in raising awareness, breaking societal barriers, and creating a communal sense of solidarity.

Empowering women is essential for the progress of society. Initiatives like these not only inspire individuals but also catalyze social change, fostering equality and communal well-being.

This journey with SGCM has reinforced my belief that collective action and education can transform communities. I remain committed to fostering awareness and compassion to contribute to a more inclusive and progressive society.

Note from the Editors

This journal is a reflection of the dedicated fieldwork undertaken by the students of Jesus and Mary College as part of their Community Outreach course. All the photographs featured in this issue were captured by the students during their work in the field, documenting their engagement with various communities.

The essays included here are the result of their coursework, where students reflected on their experiences and insights gained during their fieldwork. The best essays were carefully selected to be featured in this journal, showcasing their commitment to social work and community engagement.

We commend the students for their hard work and meaningful contributions, which form the heart of this publication.

— *The Editorial Team*

