



RAYS OF HOPE

JANUARY - MARCH 2021

VOLUME- III ISSUE 1 TO 3



WHAT'S INSIDE

Status: COVID-19

Globally, with an increase in the number of cases and deaths from COVID-19, the situation remains “serious” in all the regions of the world. At the end of 2020, India witnessed a declining trend in infections but the numbers began rising again in mid-February 2021.

On 15th April 2021, India accounted a record 217,353 new COVID-19 cases and 1,185 deaths, taking the total fatalities to 174,308. Due to the surge in cases, especially in the initial two weeks of April 2021, there has been a huge stress on the country’s existing health infrastructure facilities. The worst affected states in India are Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab.

During this crises time, we wish you all and your loved ones to stay safe, calm and healthy!

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KIRAN FOUNDATION, SWITZERLAND

a few words....

Since Sangeeta Judith Keller traveled to India in 1972 to take care of people affected by leprosy as a part of the religious efforts of the "Little Sisters" and founded the KIRAN Village in Varanasi in 1990, she has always been in contact with her family and friends in Switzerland and abroad sought and cared for. Philipp Hautle, a long-time friend of Sangeeta, founded the "KIRAN Circle of Friends" in Switzerland in 1992 to provide ideas and financial support for the KIRAN Village. Eleven years later, in 2003, the non-profit "KIRAN Foundation" was founded with its headquarters in St. Gallen, Switzerland. The purpose of the entity is to promote integrated education and healthcare of children and young people with and without disabilities in India.

The Kiran Foundation enables the KIRAN Village to run smoothly in everyday life through regular contributions to the operating costs. Thanks to good relationships with well-known companies in Switzerland, which supports various training and education projects for youngsters after passing out school can be financed (for example Hoffmann-LaRoche, Geberit). Projects to maintain the property and the surrounding area, such as wastewater and sewage systems, the financing of the renovation of various buildings such as Girls Hostel, Boys Hostel, Suryodaya, etc. It is also the task of the KIRAN Foundation to generate income from donations through donor foundations, authorities, and private individuals in Switzerland. The cooperation between the management of the KIRAN Village and the Board of Trustees, resp. the President of the Board of Trustees of KIRAN Foundation is intense and committed. Many of the foundation board members visited the KIRAN Village personally and are warmly connected to the people there. The six board members work on a voluntary basis for the KIRAN Foundation. Their personal motivation to work for Kiran Village:



"An open and multicultural India is important to me. That is why I am committed to the work of the Kiran Village for children and young people from very poor families, regardless of their ethnicity, religion and their physical and mental abilities."

Susann Möhle-Hüppi, President

"I have always been deeply impressed by Judith's tireless commitment and absolute devotion to the needy in India. As Sangeeta Judith's nephew, I would like to make at least a small contribution to ensuring that her life's work continues."

Jürg Weder, Vice President



"Even if we cannot improve the whole world, it is worth working for every single child. This will help us improve their lives and the world will be happier with every child's laughter."

Peter F. Siegen, Legal advice

"At first I was primarily concerned with the joy of passing on my professional skills (orthopedic and wheelchair technology). The longer I have known the people at Kiran, the greater the desire to accompany and support them on their way."

Hanspeter Stastny, Orthopedics





"My family journey began at Kiran for which I am infinitely grateful. I now like to give something back by participating in the Circle of Friends and the Foundation."

Bernadette Joseph, Volunteers

"My father has been involved in Kiran Village since it was founded. So I'm honored to make a small contribution to a wonderful organization."

Matthias Hautle, Administrator



"Those who have been blessed with the good fortune to grow up in a privileged environment should support people who have not been so fortunate. Since I believe in this from the bottom of my heart, I gladly support the KIRAN Village."

Schwizer, Finance

The office is professionally staffed. The two employees handle administrative tasks for the KIRAN Foundation and the KIRAN Circle of Friends.

"I find the work exciting because it allows me to deal with a completely different culture. Our work benefits the poorest of the poorest, who otherwise would hardly have a chance in India."

Vera Hinder, Administration



"I am happy to invest my energy for children with a disability. Their education, integration and participation in (Indian) society is important to me."

Franziska Benz Brändle, Administration

The association KIRAN Circle of Friends was founded in 1992 according to Art. 60 ZGB with the aim of supporting the KIRAN Village. Its tasks are:

- the announcement of the KIRAN Children's Village in Switzerland (e.g. through the general meeting, circulars, etc.)
- Maintaining contact with KIRAN association members (Groupe romande)
- Fundraising

On the board of the association work with:

- Philipp Hautle, Rebstein, President
- Walter Germann, Degersheim, actuary
- Marianne Hofmann, Zurich, Editorial staff of the newsletter
- Bernadette Joseph, Degersheim, Volunteers
- Jonas Raschle, Waldkirch, Product sales
- Sangeeta Judith Keller, India



NEURO-PEDIATRIC REHABILITATION CAMPS

HEALTHCARE

In the first quarter of year 2021, seven medical rehabilitation camps were organized by the Community Based Rehabilitation team in four districts of Uttar Pradesh (Varanasi, Mirzapur, Mau, and Ballia). A total 254 children and persons with disabilities were assessed in these camps. Parents of children with disabilities were guided and individual rehabilitation plan of each child developed in consent with parents. Many children were found out/suspected delayed in their development due poor nutrition and care. Their mother was counselled and needed medicines were given at that time and an early intervention programs was designed to improve the development of these children.



Children from low economic background were supported for further evaluation and diagnostic tests. An appointment for follow up have fixed with parents of children with disabilities. Children who were need of vigorous rehabilitation procedure, referred for multiple disciplinary team approach in order to promote the overall development of child. We are very thankful to our donor and mentor Dr. Christa Einspieler for her support.

POSITIONING THE CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY



HEALTHCARE

Children with Cerebral Palsy need external postural support in different positions (positioning) with the aim of enabling them to experience and develop more normal ways of moving and prevent secondary complications.

KIRAN team organized assessment sessions for children with cerebral palsy in the month of February 2021. In these sessions children with cerebral palsy, who needed a special seating system and seat modification were invited and after their assessment a seating modification plan and a proper seating system was provided to them.

GROUP THERAPY

HEALTHCARE



This Group therapy session was a fun based activity session to encourage children to have a prolonged sitting tolerance and improved concentration capacity. Each year KIRAN organize these kind of sessions for students of KIRAN School, amid covid-19 pandemic this year so far only one such session was organized. In this session children were assigned different creative task and closely monitored by Physio-Occupational Therapist.



WORKSHOP ON EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM

HEALTHCARE

A two days capacity building program on early identification and intervention was organized in Kiran Society at HRTC Auditorium on 16th & 17th March 2021. The workshop was taken by Dr.Christa Einspieler from Graz University, Austria and facilitated by Dr.Moreno Toldo, medical director, Kiran Society to enhance the understandings of early brain development. More than, 35 professionals from diverse background such as Physiotherapist, Occupational therapist, psychologists, Speech therapist, special educators and community health worker have taken part in it. This workshop will enhance their understanding in identify new born babies with neurodevelopmental disorders efficiently in rural settings.

ENABLING INCLUSION THROUGH IMPLEMENTING TECHNOLOGY BASED SOLUTION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

HEALTHCARE

KIRAN Society has taken initiation to improve the delivery of rehabilitation services in rural setting through implementing a technology-based solution in partnership with an organization “Amar Seva Sangam” Ayukudi, Tamil Nadu. To implement this program a two-layer capacity building training program organized for the team. Through this initiative, 100 children with different types of disabilities will be provided real-time rehabilitation services at door steps in consent with their family/parents in rural community.



COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

HEALTHCARE/EDUCATION

KIRAN Society works to create awareness towards the health and education of children with disabilities and from marginalized communities.

In order to create awareness, a total of 09 sensitization sessions were organized in the month of January and February 2021 in Kashi Vidyapeeth block, Majhwa block & Sikhad block of Varanasi. Community members were sensitized towards a better education and healthcare facilities for their children. They were also told about the new government guidelines and facilities that are being provided to them in these changing times. This program is supported by T.S. Elliot Foundation.

REOPENING SCHOOLS

EDUCATION

After closing school for almost 11 months to prevent the spread of COVID-19. KIRAN School has resumed the classes of upper primary level in the month of February 10, 2021, as per the government guidelines.

Students were suggested to follow the safety measures strictly and were suggested not to share their belongings with other students to avoid any physical contact. A special timetable was made for the students. A two-day lesson weekly organized for each class to avoid huge gatherings.





ANNUAL EXAMINATION 2021

EDUCATION

Exams are conducted just to assess student's memory, learning, and patience. Like every year KIRAN School has conducted an annual examination this year also from 12-19 March 2021 as per the new government guidelines amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The examination was conducted on both online and offline mediums and students can choose any medium as per their convenience. 95% of students participated virtually in the examination and the rest 5% of students opted for an offline medium because of the unavailability of smartphones. To assess a wide range of topics in limited time question papers were prepared with multiple-choice questions.

INCEPTION WORKSHOP

EDUCATION



KIRAN works on the development of children with disabilities through different intervention. One of the major interventions is the promotion and implementation of the inclusive education. An inception workshop was organized for a project title "Improving access and promoting inclusive quality education for marginalized children" on March 24, 2021 at HRTC Auditorium of KIRAN Society. This initiative is supported by CSI Luxembourg. The motive of this workshop was to create a common understanding among team members on project goals, objectives, implementation plans, timeline and available resources.



MASTER TRAINERS TRAINING PROGRAM

EDUCATION

In continuation of the capacity-building initiative, five primary teachers of KIRAN School have participated in the five-day master trainers training program for the identification of children with Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) organized by the Disability Empowerment department of Uttar Pradesh. This training program was organized at Amarawati Purushottam Rajkiya Bahuddeshiya Divyang Sansthan, Khushipur from 17 to 21 February 2021.

The training program was facilitated by Disability Empowerment Officer, Mr. Rajesh Mishra. The training was adorned by Mr Satish Mishra from Kiran Centre, Mr. Yogendra from Banaras Hindu University, Mr Ajay Tiwari from Nai Subah Organisation,

Mr Mukesh from Jeevan Jyoti, Ms Neela Vijaya Lakshmi, Ms Rashmi Chaudhary and Mr. Manoj Tiwari. The purpose of this training was 'How to find out the symptoms of dyslexia and ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) in the early age of students and how to provide remedial therapy and apply special teaching aids to benefit the child.'





TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP

EDUCATION

A one-day teacher's capacity building workshop organized by KIRAN Society in Sikhar block in coordination and support with Additional basic Shiksha Adhikari. In this workshop 27, government school teachers from the different primary and upper primary schools participated. They were orientated on the basic principle of Inclusive Education and its challenges. Teachers have shown keen interest to adopt the inclusive system model in their respective schools.

WORKSHOP ON ORIENTATION PROGRAM & TASK ANALYSIS

EDUCATION/HEALTHCARE

For the capacity building of SLF project staff, a one-day workshop on orientation program & task analysis was conducted by Jan Vikas Samiti. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Neeladri S. Chakraborty from Jan Vikas Samiti. Participants were introduced to the methods of task analysis of the students.

BASANT PANCHAMI CELEBRATION

EDUCATION

Basant Panchami, the festival which marks the arrival of the spring season in India, was celebrated in KIRAN Society on February 16, 2021. Amid COVID-19 pandemic a small level celebration was organized with KIRAN staff only. In the morning prayers were offered to the goddess of knowledge and after that sweets were distributed among staff and students.



STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN

EDUCATION

In order to give better opportunities, the KIRAN team is in process of improving the existing educational facilities which will give these children a better and barrier free environment. The efforts are also focused to renovate the existing classrooms to have adequate natural light and air. CSI Luxembourg has supported this project financially and has made it possible to have such a great place for children with and without disabilities.



During the visit, it was found that almost all the parts of the roof were completely damaged. Walls had conspicuous cracks and crevices and were giving an ugly look; so to speak they were in a very dilapidated state. The renovation process is based on adopting the layout to the needs of the given standard. The surrounding of the building also needs to be set in order and needs to be made child friendly. Water and sanitation facilities to be repaired to ensure accessibility of safe and pure drinking water for the children. The renovation work is going on at full pace, workers are leaving no stone unturned to give it a look of the set standard.

UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT

INCLUSION

KIRAN Society along with National Institute for Urban Affair (NIUA) is participating in a research study of Global Disability Innovation Hub, University College London. The overall aim of this study is to learn how people with disabilities experience the built environment in their everyday lives and to understand how we can better develop guidance to design more inclusive and accessible spaces and infrastructure for people with disabilities. KIRAN Society along with National Institute for Urban Affair (NIUA) is participating in a research study of Global Disability Innovation Hub, University College London. The overall aim of this study is to learn how people with disabilities experience the built environment

A study led by the
Global Disability
Innovation Hub,
University College
London
in partnership with
the National
Institute for Urban
Affairs
and
Kiran Society



with participants' markings and highlighting areas of interest



Participants sketches and post-it notes demonstrate the barriers and opportunities



in their everyday lives and to understand how we can better develop guidance to design more inclusive and accessible spaces and infrastructure for people with disabilities. With this aim in mind KIRAN Society has conducted number of interviews with various stakeholders and persons with disabilities in the city of Varanasi in the months of January- February 2021.

In addition to individual interviews, a workshop was also organized to understand the barriers and challenges faced by persons with disabilities in accessing basic infrastructure services, identifying key priority areas for improvement and recommendations for city stakeholders. A total of 17 participants of varied impairments, age and gender attended and shared their experiences and ideas on how to improve the city from the perspective of accessibility, inclusivity and safety.



Renovation of Suryodaya

The building of Kiran Society, Suryodaya, which is situated at Lanka in Varanasi city comprises of Kiran's Bakery and Café. Sometimes, it also works as a city office of the Kiran. The building is 40 years old. Therefore, a renovation is planned to improve the condition of the building and better utilization of the premises.



Republic Day Celebration

Republic Day of India is celebrated on January 26 to mark the day when the Constitution of India came into effect.

Amid COVID-19 pandemic this year, the event was celebrated with just staff in the KIRAN village. The celebration begins by paying tribute to the great freedom fighters. The flag hoisting was done by Sr. Sangeeta JK, Founder and President of KIRAN Society. After the flag hoisting and the national anthem, the music teachers presented a patriotic song. A short speech was delivered at the end by Sr. Sangeeta JK, as the concluding part of the ceremony. The event ended with distribution of some sweets to everyone.



On the occasion of Mahashivratri (a popular and local religious festival) which was celebrated on 11th March 2021, the KIRAN team organized some stalls to display the variety of products made by youngsters with and without disabilities.

Display of products made by youngsters



With an aim to mobilize the children with different abilities Marwadi Yuva Manch, Varanasi visited the KIRAN Society on January 22, 2021 and provided financial support for the aid & appliances of 10 children with disabilities.

ONE MORE HELPING HAND



International Women's Day

International Women's Day, 8 March 2021 "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world." The theme celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Every year Kiran team celebrates International Women's Day on 8th March. This year also it was celebrated in a grand way. On this occasion, three female personalities (Ms. Abha Bhaiya, Dr. Barbara and Ms. Claire Martignier) were present to render their views on women's empowerment. During the discussion with the youngsters, it was stated that the situation of women won't get better if we dedicate just one day of the year to them. They should be provided with equal rights and opportunities throughout their lifetime. On this occasion, a small rally and plantation activity were also held. Along with the guests, the President and Executive Director of Kiran Society, some female students with and without disabilities, teachers, and staff members took an active part in the activity. Thus, the day was filled with many joyful and memorable events.





Foundation Day of KIRAN

Every year the 27th of January is awaited with excitement by children and staff, since it was on that date, in 1994, that our KIRAN Society got registered as a Society.

I remember quite well the time before January 1994, when, with our companion Johny Bhai, a so-called "bare-foot-social worker" originally from South India, we sat for hours together to put on paper, as a Memorandum, our dreams, and hopes for this new adventure KIRAN. We wanted it to become a loving service to disabled and neglected children and youth; a service through rehabilitation and education and skill-training. We imagined also that this service should be inclusive, holistic, and outreaching to the villages where people are more in difficult living conditions. At last, when we proudly submitted our draft of the Memorandum and Bylaws, we were shocked to hear that "don't worry, your document has to be in the Hindi language, and we will do it.... We suddenly understood that in our in-experience and youthful enthusiasm the many hours of hard work during which we put so much of heart and mind in this important text, simply vanished....

But nothing could stop our eagerness to build up this new service which we felt so much needed, especially for children affected by poliomyelitis. We were just a handful of idealistic young people, caring by that time already for some 30 children through non-formal education and taking the help of local Doctors for the medical needs. Then, to our great joy, on 27th January 1994, we received the news that our KIRAN got officially registered as a Society. So happy and proud we were!!

This is now 27 years ago..... Our family has grown much since.....the years were filled with so much beauty, love, joy as well as struggle, sadness and disappointments.

Being somehow still under the restrictions imposed during COVID-19 lockdown, this year our Foundation Day could not be celebrated as usually with all children, ex-students and staff. So, it was instead declared a holiday for all. Since this 27th January happens to be also my birthday, I was quite happy that this time I could escape the usual too many celebrations and signs of affection. Instead, I went for lunch to the few youngsters in our Karuna Hostel to have lunch with them. Then we all together, even with the caretakers also, played the very much loved "Rummy card game". Also Ravi, who is now some 30 years old but is with us since he was abandoned in a hospital at age of four, could enjoy the treat. It was such a fun! What a lovely Birthday-Foundation-Day this year.





FOUNDATION DAY
CELEBRATION



DONATE

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Your
support
is valuable

Write to us at mail@kiranvillage.org
reach us at +91-7571010009

for more information visit us at
www.kiranvillage.org

International donors please write to finance@kiranvillage.org

Diversity is the mix.
Inclusion is making the mix work

Andres Tapia