



Chimata Leelavathi Foundation Project

Neighbourhood Centers

Annual Report 2022-2023

Commitments Public Trust

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Annual Report - Indian Fiscal Year 2022-23

Chimata Leelavathi Foundation Funded Project

1. Commitments Trust:

Commitments is a Public Charitable Trust established in 1985 by eminent personalities, late Sri S.R. Shankaran IAS (Retd.), late Sri B.N. Yugandhar IAS (Retd.), and Sri T. Gopal Rao IAS (Retd.) to work for poverty eradication and equality in the society, collaborating with government and various developmental organizations. For the past two decades, Commitments Trust has been working for development of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in the most backward areas of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It has successfully applied the principles of social mobilisation to promote Self-Help Groups (SHGs) exclusively for PwDs and their federations to access their rights and entitlements and improve their livelihoods on a sustainable basis. To promote a community led approach for empowerment of PwDs, the Trust promoted a steering committee known as Bissa for a cluster of mandals with representatives of the PwD SHG federations. This unique model has helped in playing a crucial role for advocating with the government departments and facilitate access to rights and entitlements, education, nutrition, micro credit, livelihoods and rehabilitation PwDs.

Commitments Trust has been implementing Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach for Children with Special Needs (CwSNs), Children with Disabilities (CwD) and PwDs collaborating with different sections of the society, NGOs and Government for nearly two decades. Commitments believes that poverty, lack of awareness, and early/ consanguineous marriages are the major causes of disability. CwSN suffer from neglect due to lack of full-time care-givers. Especially in rural/ remote areas, they face many difficult circumstances and are not able to access adequate food, water, sanitation and other basic facilities. Since they are vulnerable to access education, health and other facilities at household and community level the Commitments has been implementing Neighbourhood Centers (NHCs) to provide day care facilities, medical rehabilitation, hospital follow ups, nutrition support, physiotherapy, speech therapy, special education, counselling, referrals for surgeries/artificial limbs/callipers etc. for CwSN in erstwhile Guntur district (now Guntur and Palnadu districts) of Andhra Pradesh.

2. Introduction

Neighborhood Centers for Children with Disability - Divyangjan (CwDs)¹ are run by COMMITMENTS with support from Chimata Leelavathi Foundation (CLF). The main objective of the project is to provide CBR by providing day care facilities, medical rehabilitation, special education, counseling and referrals. The CLF project is being implemented since 2018-19 in collaboration with the Government of Andhra Pradesh covering seven mandals spread across to Palnadu and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh. The project had 7 functional NHCs in FY 22-23 each managed by a trained Female Activist. The 7 NHCs covered 165 CwSNs from 27 villages. One of these centers was

¹Children with disabilities (Divyangjan) include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

opened in November 2022.

Based on the recommendations of the midterm evaluation of the project conducted in 2021, implementation strategies were suitably changed. The changes include (i) reorganization of the NHCs based on the distance of the village and the strength of CwDs, (ii) increased physiotherapy services, hospital and medical care services, (iii) mainstreamed CwDs in government schools and also facilitated to get the Sadarem² certificate; and (iv) capacity building of the project team in collaboration with the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (NIPED) and other NGOs.

One of the major achievements of the project is empowering the parents of CwDs for improved ownership and making them accountable for the project is opening joint bank accounts to be operated by a couple of active parents for managing the project activities, including disbursement of nutrition bills. The collaboration with Bhavitha Centers³ for mainstreaming the CwDs, networking with NGOs, government line departments, and local governing bodies has helped to cover additional CwDs during the reporting year.

3. Annual Progress:

During FY 22-23, the CLF-funded project has made considerable progress in implementation of the planned activities. Neighborhood Centers are the main platform for implementing the activities in the project locations. Progresses against each of the activities are described below.

3.a. Neighborhood Centers:

Geographical Reorganization of NHCs: Based on the mid-term assessment recommendations and considering the operational challenges, geographical reorganization of the NHCs was felt necessary. Two of the centers located in Kondramutla and Vejendla villages were closed down by October 22 and November 22 respectively. In place of these centers, one new center was opened in Nagulavaram village in December 22 and one center in Nandigama village in April 23. With this, the total operational NHCs by the end of the of the FY 22-23 remained to be seven. The equipment which was in use in the Kondramutla and Vejendla villages have been shifted to the new centers to make the new centers operational.

² It is a certificate generated by the software for assessment of disabled for access, rehabilitation and empowerment. The objective of the Sadarem initiative is to create a Dynamic Web enable system for comprehensive access, rehabilitation and empowerment, through automation, capacity building, assessment of PwDs and maintaining Decision Support System.

³ Bhavitha centres are created under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan program for inclusive education. The centres have a duty to educate children with disabilities in general education classrooms.

A Neighbourhood Centre is a welcoming and inclusive space that plays a key role in supporting in the growth and development of disabled children. Every day, the children come together at the centre to engage in a variety of enriching activities that cater to their specific needs and challenges. In local dialect these centres are called *Mano Vignana Vikasa Kendrams*.



A total of eight centers were functional during fiscal year 2022-23 and provided the following services to the enrolled 165CwDs and/or their families. Involvement of the parents, community, and PwD groups is a continuous process and has improved through regular house visits and physiotherapy services.

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|--|---|
| 1. Form and strengthen disabled social groups | 10. Distribution of nutritious foods |
| 2. Form and strengthen parents' committees | 11. Livelihood support facilitation |
| 3. Provide medical emergency assistance | 12. Hospital follow ups |
| 4. Advocacy and networking | 13. Hospital referrals |
| 5. Educating parents/caregivers | 14. Facilitate to get aids and appliances |
| 6. Awareness creation | 15. Provide timely counseling |
| 7. Observe special days | 16. Regular home visits. |
| 8. Health screening camps | |
| 9. Transporting children for care and services | |

3.b Daily Activities at NHCs

Different activities were conducted regularly at the NHCs by the Female Activists and the project team as explained below:

- a) **Play and Social Interaction**-NHC provides a safe and engaging environment for disabled children to play games, interact with their peers, and build essential social skills. Through play, they learn to communicate, cooperate, and develop friendship, fostering a sense of belonging and emotional well-being.
- b) **Physical Activities**-physical activity sessions are not only fun but also provide various physical and cognitive benefits. Dancing helps improve coordination, motor skills, and body awareness for disabled children. It also promotes self-expression and boosts self-confidence, allowing them to explore their creativity and enjoy the joy of movement.

- c) **Daily Living Activities**-The centre focuses on teaching disabled children on important daily living activities to promote independence. These activities include



tasks like, dressing, grooming, combing, brushing and using bathroom etc. By learning these skills, children gain a sense of autonomy and develop a foundation for leading more self-sufficient lives.

d) **Speech Therapy**-Many disabled children may face challenges with speech and communication. The centre provides specialized speech

therapy sessions, tailored to each child's needs. Speech therapists work with the children to improve their language skills, articulation, and communication abilities, helping them express themselves effectively and connect with others.

- e) **Special Education**-The centre offers special education programs designed to accommodate the diverse learning needs of disabled children. These programs employ various teaching strategies and adaptive tools to ensure that each child receives an education that suits their individual strengths and challenges. Special education teachers work closely with the children to help them learn, grow, and achieve their potential.

3.c Records and Registers maintained at the NHCs:

The Chimata Leelavathi supported NHCs are located in 7 villages covering 27 villages. Each of the center has several records to be maintained by the Activists. These are listed below:

1. Children Attendance Register
2. Children individual files
3. Hospital Follow-up Register
4. Physiotherapy Register
5. Daily Work Done Record
6. Assets/Material Register
7. Vendor Register
8. Parents Committee Meeting Minutes
9. Visitors Register

3.d Nutritional Support:

During the year, children in the neighbourhood centres were provided with milk and eggs. Each enrolled child as provided with a boiled egg and 200 ml of milk in the noon. Those who received nutritional support experienced better physical and mental growth. These foods are nutrient-dense and offer the vital proteins, vitamins, and minerals required for overall development, bone health, and brain health. Children's overall health, immune system, and academic performance can be improved with regular consumption of protein and calcium. Eggs are a good source of high-quality protein and versatile and milk is one of the best sources for calcium and children prefer to consume.



Consistent access to milk and eggs at NHCs has been helping the CwDs in addressing nutritional deficiencies and also promoting and assisting in a decreased risk of problems associated with malnutrition. NHCs help create healthier communities and promote a sense of social inclusion by providing these aspects. This strategy also informs parents about the value of feeding their kids with nutritious foods, which may have an impact on their eating habits. Children also learn good eating habits, like hand washing, sitting in a circle with co-children when they sit and eat under the supervision of the Activist. The food also acts as an incentive for the CwDs to attend the centre. Overall, providing eggs and milk at NHCs is a proactive move towards guaranteeing the holistic development of young people in the neighbourhood. The Female Activists also sensitize the parents not only on the importance of good foods but cover water, sanitation and hygiene practices also.

During the year, about 31% of the enrolled 165 children received for about 70% of the days during FY 22-23. The low participation was due to the fact that neighbouring village's children and the bed-ridden children and some children in the schools were unable to attend the NHC for feeding. The low feeding days was due to Sundays, public holidays, meetings and the personal priorities of the Activists.

3.e Awareness about Disability and Early Interventions in the Community:

Disability awareness is a critical aspect of



building an inclusive and empathetic society. In order to foster a more inclusive environment, it is essential to raise awareness about disabilities at the grassroots level. This explores how the coordinated efforts of various community stakeholders, including Anganwadi Workers of the Integrated Child Development Services program, Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM) of the National Health Mission, *Gram Sachivalayam* staff of the state, village leaders, and government officials of allied departments, can play a pivotal role in creating awareness about disability within the local communities. CLF-Activists and Coordinators have been participating in all forums of the village and at mandal level to heighten these aspects through discussions and negotiations. During the year, several of such meetings were held in the villages with the active participation of the Activists and other project team.

3.f Benefitting from Rights and Entitlements

Commitments Trust has played a big role in assisting the disabled children realise their rights and entitlements in the society. Like their healthy peers, children with disabilities need equal chances, inclusion, and access to basic services. The Coordinators and Activists have been playing a facilitative role for getting Sadarem certificates, Pensions, *Amma Vadi*, Adhar Card, bus /train pass etc. A total of 118 CwDs as shown in the following table accessed various benefits from the government during the year under the facilitation of the CLF team.

Location	Sadaerm	Amma Vodi	Aadhar Card	Bus pass	Train Pass
Vinukonda	14	26	10	6	4
Sattenapally	16	24	8	5	5
Total	30	50	18	11	9

3.g Hospital Follow-ups:

Physical barriers can hinder CwDs accessing healthcare. The team supported by Chimata Leelavathi Foundation scrupulously mobilizes the families for timely care. The team ensures



regular hospital follow-up and access to specialized medical institutions for disabled children, by coordinating with specialized institutions like BIRDS-Tirupati (Balaji Institute of Surgery, Research and Rehabilitation for the Disabled), NIEPIED

(National Institute of Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities), NIHH - Hyderabad (National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped), and the Guntur Government Hospital.

Commitments ensured that every child is assessed completely once in a quarter and regular hospital follow-up played pivotal role in the well-being of the disabled children. These visits allow medical experts to closely monitor the children's progress, track their growth, and identify any emerging medical or developmental concerns. Such proactive measures ensured in early identification of that potential issues, enabled timely interventions that significantly helped in improving the children's overall health and quality of life.

In FY 2022-23, 57 CwDs accessed regular health follow-ups. There was a total of 99 hospital follow-ups in FY 22-23. The total coverage indicates multiple visits by some children based on the medical advice. Of them, 22 were referred to BIRDS, Tirupati and 4 members had corrective surgeries in BIRDS-Tirupati as per the details shown in the following table.

Data on hospital follow-ups and surgeries

Mandal	NIMPIED, GGH, BIRDS	Surgeries in BIRDS-Tirupati
Vinukonda	22	2
Sattenapally	35	2
TOTAL	57	4

The children who underwent surgery were able to walk gradually and independently. Consistent exercises demonstrated to them by the physiotherapists helped the parents to practice at home.

3.h Regular Physiotherapy and CwDs-Assessment:

Children with disabilities need regular physiotherapy for better rehabilitation because it helps them become more physically capable, strengthens their muscles, and encourages better mobility. Development of a child's motor skills might be difficult for disabled children, but physiotherapy can be of great help. Children with disabilities can improve flexibility to their joints, coordination, and posture by performing focused exercises, which improves their overall quality of life. Physiotherapists help the children to improve the physical condition.



To support this, the project has hired two qualified physiotherapists, who make periodical visits to the project location. The



two physiotherapists hired under the CLF project regularly visit to provide therapy to the children. They have been providing regular physiotherapy exercises to 56 CwDs. A total of 763 sessions were conducted to the CwDs. The maximum sessions were held in Ganapavaram and Komerapudi NHCs due to high need of

physiotherapy services. They monitor each child and record the effectiveness of the physiotherapy exercises in their individual files and also guide their parents. Based on the pre-planned schedule, they also make regular home visits, help the parents learn about the physiotherapy exercises through learning-by-doing method and check the progress in their next visit. Such efforts are helping the parents on care to be taken at the household level and for early rehabilitation.

NHC-wise CwDs details from April 2022 to March 2023													
S.No	Name of the Activist	Name of the Centre	Name of the Mandal	Outreach by disability type						Total	Providing Physio and hospital services	BIRD-Tirupati	Total Children received services
				OH	ID	SHI	VI	LV	Multiple disabilities				
Palnadu district													
1	Jhansi Rani	Vellaturu	Bollapally	8	9	1	2	0	4	25	8	2	27
2	Yesu Rani	Nagulavaram	Vinukonda	4	9		2	0	1	16	5	3	19
3	Durga	P. Kancharlla	Vinukonda	5	7	7	2	0	1	22	5	3	25
4	Anitha	Kondramutla	Eepuru	8	6	1	0	0	1	16	7	4	20
5	M.Parvathi	Ganapavaram	Rajupalem	11	3	3	0	0	7	24	8	2	26
6	K.Meerabi	Komerapudi	Sattenapally	7	12	0	3	0	1	22	8	3	25
7	Sk.Mallika	Vejendla	Chebrolu	8	6		2	0	2	18	6	3	21
Sub Total				51	52	12	11	0	17	143	47	20	163
Guntur district													
8	Santhosham	Varagani	Pedda Nandipadu	9	9	0	0	1	3	22	9	2	24
Sub total				9	9	0	0	1	3	22	9	2	24
Grand Total				60	61	12	11	1	20	165	56	22	187

3.i Teaching-Learning Material Kits:

Teaching-Learning Material (TLM) kits are one of the important interventions that have had a



tremendous effect on the lives of the children with intellectual disability. These kits have been created to meet specific educational requirements of mentally retarded kids. The TLM kits create a supportive learning environment that promotes active engagement and skill development by adapting instructional materials and activities to their cognitive ability. The CLF Project Team successfully negotiated with

National Institute for Empowerment of Disabled, Hyderabad and got 12 kits free of cost. Each kit costs Rs. 10,000 and these were distributed to the CwDs. The parents were trained at home on the use of the kit.

3.j House Visits:

The Female Activists are dedicated individuals who engage in regular house visits to provide invaluable support to disabled children. These compassionate prioritized visits encompass not only emotional encouragement but also crucial physiotherapy sessions that aid in enhancing the children's physical well-being. The house visits help in developing rapport with the family and improve inter-personal communication to understand the barriers in promoting positive behaviours. During their visits, the activists strive to motivate parents to send their children to nearby NHCs. Each Activist visits 2-3 families of CwDs per day and guide the parents.



The Activists observe the physiotherapy exercises done by the family members to the children to ensure they are following correct practices and guide them, where required. They use their observations to share with the Physiotherapists in their next visit to help the parents. They also discuss on the dietary practices of the family with the parents, foods given to the CwDs, observe and guide the family on water, sanitation and hygiene to ensure overall improvement of health and nutrition of the CwD.

3.k Health Screening and Follow up:

Date of Health Camp and NHCs covered	#s screened			Villages covered	Follow up activities			
	CwDs	PwDs	Total		BIRDS	GGH	Aids and Appliances	Sadarem and Pensions
29.07.2022 Varagani	30	50	80	11	2	5	20	7
13.9.2022 Vejudla	24	15	39	3	3	3	5	4
10.2.2023 3 NHCs Vellatur, PeddaKancharla and Nagulavaram NHCs	62	12	74	7	3	2	0	3
3.2.2023 Ganapavaram Komarempudi NHCs	40	7	47	6	0	0	0	0
Total covered	156	84	240	27	8	10	25	14

As per the plan, the Commitments Trust had organized health screening events in collaboration with the SIMS-Physiotherapy College and the local district administration. 156 CwDs and 84 PwDs from 27 villages were screened over the year in four 4 camps organized in July22, September 22, and February 23. Post screening, appropriate medical follow-ups and needed assistance was provided. 18 were referred to the medical institutions based on the severity of the problem, 25 people were certified eligible to receive aids and appliances, and 14 got Sadarem certificates.





3.1 Strengthening of Parents and Parents Committees

Every NHC conducted monthly parent meetings discussing various topics such as the status of CwDs, their health, hospital follow-ups, Sadarem, pension support etc. The parents' meeting includes information sharing, mentoring, and feedback gathering for specific CwD issues so that the Activists and Coordinator can follow up on any specific requirements.



In addition to the normal monthly meetings, every NHC supported different training sessions for parents. The purpose was to inform parents of PwDs about the Disability Act -2016, improving awareness on various government benefits they can receive, and sensitise them about how to treat and instruct intellectually disabled children on their daily living skills, such as brushing, bathing, dressing up, playing, and use of toilet. Along with the parents, the Female Activists and Project Coordinators took part in these activities actively, learnt new information that helped them understand and deal with a variety of disability-related difficulties. In all, in the six NHCs 136 parents attended the sessions in January 2023 as shown below. Of the total attendees, 68% were female.

Date of training	NHC	Total participants	Male	Female
07-01-2023	Pedakancharla	30	08	22
10-01-2023	Vellaturu	27	05	22
11-01-2023	Nagulavaram	16	06	10
20-01-2023	Ganapavaram	24	09	15
21-01-2023	Komerapudi	18	11	07
22-01-2023	Varagani	21	05	16
Total participants		136	44	92

Details of Parents Training



3.m Transfer of responsibilities to Parents Committees

In order to boost CwD strength, hospital follow-up, and enrolment of new CwDs, Parents Committees have been strengthened in all NHCs, and regular monthly meetings to review NHC operations have been organized. To cover the costs of nourishment in all NHCs and to conduct online transactions, the Parents Committees have created joint bank accounts. Five accounts are being maintained for the purpose of procuring nutritional diet.

Details of Parents Committee Accounts

A/c number	Bank name	Village
7009 1003 1059	Chaitanya Godavari Grameen Bank	Komerapudi
110099782293	Canara Bank	Pedakancherla
110099145988	Canara bank	Vellaturu
5345163105	Central Bank of India	Ganapavaram
05180100024012	Bank of Baroda	Varagani

3.n Convergence with Bavitha Centre

The Education Department operates Bavitha Centers, which are inclusive education programmes for CwDs at mandal head quarters. To access the servicers for the CwDs, the Commitments Trust has collaborated with the Bavitha Centers.

After rigorous follow up with the Education Department of the state two teachers from the Bhavitha Centers in Palnadu district have been visiting the NHCs and providing physiotherapy and special education services to the children enrolled in the NHCs.

Designation	Name of the Bavitha staff	NHC
Special Educator	Babu Rao	Vellatur
Physiotherapist	NagaRaju	
Hearing Specialist	Sambasiva Rao	Pedda Kancharla
Special Educator	Martha	Ganapavaram
Physiotherapist-	V.Rajesh	



3.0 Training to team and Parents

NPWD team conducted training to the Vinukonda Bavitha Center team and parents on Disability Act -2016. All the Commitments CLF staff and parents of children with disabilities have also participated in the training and learnt about the importance of rights of their children and avail them for betterment of their children's life. Totally 30 participants attended the training.



In addition, conducted a 2-day training for CLF staff at NIMPIED Hyderabad on disability casues, early interventions and how to deal and teach daily living activities to mentally retarded children.



3.p Program Management and Management Information Systems

The overall guidance and directions for the project was provided by the Commitments Board of Trustees. The board met periodically to review the program and provided needed support. The Executive Director located in Hyderabad managed the program with the help of a Project Manager, a Project Coordinator and Female Activists.

The Project Manager and Coordinator are located in the field sites and made frequent visits to the NHCs to provide supportive supervision to the Activists, coordinate with the local government departments, elected body representatives and participated in Parents Committee Meetings. They also ensure timely support for all referral cases and where needed accompanied the patients to health facilities. The Activists report their daily progress to the Project Manager who consolidates the data and prepare trends to understand the project progress. The data use for preparing the Annual Report is derived from the field reports.

A total of 10 monthly program review meetings were conducted with the team during the

year. The meetings were attended by the Physiotherapists also. In the monthly review meetings, issues discussed include CwDs progress, nutritional support, Monitoring visits and quality, medical rehabilitation services, updating individual child files, field level challenges. Apart from the regular monthly meeting, the project team also focused on maintaining child profile, CwD data and tracking their attendance and regularly motivating the parents to avoid absenteeism.



3. q International Disability Day Celebrations:

International Disability Day was celebrated on December 3 by the NHCs to create awareness and sensitize the community to deal and treat the disabled with dignity. On this day, the activists took all the children to the Mandal Bhavitha Centers and celebrated the special day.



This was done to remove stigma and encourage the parents to provide enough care to their wards. Participants in the celebrations included, the local community, parents, career givers, media. Officials from the village and mandal took part in the activities and expressed their appreciation and committed to support the Commitments Trust. To engage the CwDs, simple and small games, singing and dancing activities were conducted. A total of 74 CwDs (31 female and 43 male) and 44 parents participated in the event. The print and electronic media helped in wider coverage of the events. The CLF staff could also negotiate and mobile small funds for the events from local community.





4. Fund status

Following is the status of receipt and utilization of funds in FY 2022-23. The mandatory external audit has been completed and no major discrepancies were reported by the auditors.

Status of funds received and utilized (INR)

Closing balance of fund as of 31-03-2022	5,58,340
Fund received from CLF on 15-6-22	50,00,000
Total fund available in FY 22-23	55,58,340
Total funds utilized in FY 22-23	29,64,724
Balance funds available for FY 23-24	25,93,616



Chimata Leelavathi Foundation