



Prayas Trust

A Women Led Social Arm of L&T

PRAYAS TIMES

The joy of giving back

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a new life



FOREWORD

Empowering futures through skilling

Skilling initiatives are not merely charitable activities; they are investments for the future. By empowering women and underprivileged individuals with the skills they need to succeed in the modern workforce, we are fostering a more equitable society that not only enhances their individual lives but also contributes to the broader economic landscape by expanding the talent pool and driving innovation.

Women, particularly in underserved communities, face numerous barriers to employment and professional growth. Despite significant strides towards gender equality, they still account for a disproportionate share of unpaid labour and often lack access to the same educational and professional opportunities as men. Our CSR programmes through our affiliates Sparsh, Samarth, and Nai Umang are empowering disadvantaged women through vocational training in tailoring and beautician courses, equipping them with skills to be economically independent. Prayas Trust Astitva’s dedicated efforts illuminate pathways of opportunity through vocational training in computer skills. The OS-CIT course has made 60 local girls proficient in MS Office, Cyber Security, and Digital Etiquettes, paving the way for impactful outcomes such as job placements and academic pursuits. I am proud that through our comprehensive approach to skill development and wellness initiatives, we are witnessing a remarkable transformation – young, disadvantaged women evolving into confident, self-reliant individuals, equipped with the skills to chase their dreams.

Underprivileged communities are often caught in a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break without intervention. Limited access to quality education, economic resources, and professional networks can stymie their potential. Our CSR initiatives at Prayas Tarang Mumbai and Kalpavruksh focus on holistic skill development of such communities that go beyond vocational training to embrace life skills, financial literacy, and mentorship.

While our tailored financial literacy programmes are helping workers manage their income, save effectively, and invest in their future, our mentorship programmes are guiding & supporting underprivileged children and women with access to networks that are critical for their professional growth.

At Prayas, with our broad spectrum of partners including educational institutions, non-profits, and government agencies, we are uniquely positioned to drive significant change in the community, that are comprehensive and sustainable.



Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam
President - Prayas Trust

I am excited to share some updates about our ongoing and future initiatives aimed at making a meaningful impact on our community and beyond.

First and foremost, I am proud to announce the inauguration of our second Mobile Toy Van in Chennai, a project dedicated to inspiring a passion for learning among underprivileged children attending Government and Corporation Schools. This van will visit approximately ten to twelve schools each month and orphanages on weekends, providing supervised fun and educational activities. In collaboration with teachers and Prayas members, the children will be engaged in a variety of activities, such as puppet shows, dramas, and interactive games, including puzzles, board games, memory tests, and IQ-boosting games. These activities are designed to aid in the development of analytical thinking and overall cognitive growth.

Prayas Nai Umang is all set to take Mobile Toy van to the underprivileged children in August. We have selected six schools for this project, with two more in the final stages of selection. This initiative will benefit over 800 children from kindergarten and primary schools, providing them with enhanced learning opportunities and support.

We have outlined plans that support animal welfare which includes an animal shelter that will offer comprehensive care, including medical treatment, rehabilitation, and adoption services. These plans represent our unwavering commitment to creating a compassionate society where both humans and animals are treated with respect and care.

We are deeply grateful for your continued support and look forward to working together to achieve these goals.



Krishna’s journey from dialysis to a new life

In the bylanes of Virugambakkam, 15-year-old Krishna's life had been defined by the beeping machines and the sterile environment of Prayas dialysis clinic. He was undergoing dialysis at Prayas Medical Centre from 13 August 2022, with three sessions per week, until November 2023. Krishna battled chronic kidney disease, a relentless condition that sapped his energy and hope. His days were filled with hospital visits, missed school days, and a constant struggle against the clock. But today, Krishna stands as a beacon of hope and resilience, thanks to a successful kidney transplant sponsored by the generous donation of L&T-ites and Prayas Trust.



Krishna’s ordeal began a couple of years ago. Initially, his parents noticed that he was unusually tired, and his appetite had waned. Frequent visits to the local doctor culminated in a heartbreaking diagnosis: chronic kidney disease. The family was devastated. Dialysis at Prayas Dialysis Centre became a lifeline, but it was a temporary solution with a significant impact on Krishna’s quality of life.

The financial burden was overwhelming. Krishna’s father, an optometrist, and his mother, a homemaker found themselves drowning in medical bills. The cost of medications, and frequent hospital visits was insurmountable. Desperation led them to explore every possible avenue for assistance.

Understanding the urgency of his situation, the Prayas team swiftly arranged for his medical evaluations and consultations with leading nephrologists. The prognosis was clear: Krishna needed a kidney

transplant to reclaim his life. They took up Krishna’s cause with fervor and organized a fundraiser drive across L&T Construction, collecting Rs. 555,915, which was paid to the hospital during his kidney transplant surgery.

The search for a suitable donor began which finally led to a compatible donor. The transplant surgery was scheduled at one of the top hospitals in the region, renowned for its expertise in pediatric transplants.

The day of the surgery was filled with a mix of anxiety and hope. Krishna’s parents waited with bated breath, praying for a miracle. The skilled surgical team worked meticulously, and after several hours, the operation was declared a success. Krishna had a new kidney, a new chance at life.

Recovery was a gradual process, but Krishna’s resilience shone through. With Prayas’s support, he received the necessary post-operative care and medications. Regular check-ups showed promising results, and slowly but surely, Krishna’s health began to improve. The pallor of illness was replaced by a healthy glow, and the constant fatigue gave way to boundless energy.

Krishna’s story is a testament to the power of community, compassion, and resilience. It underscores the incredible impact that dedicated organizations like Prayas Trust can have on individuals’ lives.

For Krishna and his family, life has taken a turn for the better. As he steps into the future with renewed vigour, his story serves as a beacon of hope for countless others facing similar battles. It reminds us all that even in the darkest times, hope and help can come from the most unexpected places.



Mrs SNS inaugurates the second Kutty Chutty Van

In collaboration with the Greater Chennai Corporation's Education Department, Prayas supports students in Chennai Primary and Middle Schools to enhance their learning performance. For the past seven years, the Kutty Chutty Van - 1 has successfully served ten Chennai Primary and Middle Schools. This year, the initiative expanded with the launch of Kutty Chutty Van - 2, which will cover twelve schools in North Chennai, benefiting approximately 3,000 students.

Prayas Trust promotes the idea that educational and family board games can significantly influence how children perceive and engage with play. These activities foster useful habits for the future by encouraging children to view situations from multiple perspectives.

On 15 July 2024, the Kutty Chutty Van - 2 Project was inaugurated by Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, President of Prayas Trust, along with its members and senior dignitaries of the Corporation at MGR Nagar – I Chennai Primary School. The event was marked by enthusiastic participation from the school children, teachers, and Prayas members.

The Kutty Chutty Van - 2 will visit approximately ten to twelve schools each month and orphanages on weekends, providing supervised fun and educational activities. In collaboration with teachers and Prayas members, children will engage in a variety of activities such as puppet shows, dramas, and interactive games. These activities include puzzles, board games, memory tests, and IQ-boosting games, all designed to aid in the development of analytical thinking and overall cognitive growth.

The inauguration of the Kutty Chutty Van - 2 represents Prayas Trust's continued commitment to enhancing the educational experiences of underprivileged children in Chennai. By providing innovative and interactive learning opportunities, Prayas Trust aims to foster a generation of children who are better equipped with the skills and perspectives needed for future success.



Empowering women through Self-Help Groups

The journey of Prayas Sparsh



In 2013, Prayas Sparsh started a basic tailoring course for women and drop-out girls within a Bengaluru community. As part of this endeavour, quarterly training sessions on basic machines commenced in 2014, followed by an affiliation with the Usha Sewing School in 2015. Successful trainees were awarded diploma certificates in sewing & garment design. Subsequently, the centre was upgraded with the installation of smart tabletop sewing machines. Post-training, beneficiaries successfully secured employment in garment industries, launched their own tailoring ventures, or pursued work-from-home opportunities.

Though the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020 posed challenges, the ladies united to stitch cotton face masks. This period marked a significant turning point as women became primary earners in households where husbands had lost employment. Following the

pandemic, Prayas Sparsh facilitated sessions on banking literacy, facilitated the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and supported by installing industrial sewing machines for advanced training.

The SHG members underwent theory classes and banking literacy sessions, opening zero-balance bank accounts and enrolling in government schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Yojanas. Under the Mudra Yojana, ten trainees acquired sewing machines through bank loans at a nominal interest rate of 4%.



A crusade against Thalassaemia



In 1984, a group of determined Thalassaemia parents came together to establish the Thalassaemia Society of India, the nation's first organization dedicated to combat this formidable disease. That was a time when few doctors, particularly in Kolkata, possessed adequate knowledge of Thalassaemia diagnosis and prognosis, leading to many cases going undetected, with life expectancy averaging only five years for such patients.

In this challenging landscape, the Thalassaemia Society of India embarked on its mission to establish an effective treatment protocol. Thalassaemia patients, due to a genetic disorder, require regular blood transfusions, typically twice a month, as they cannot produce sufficient blood on their own. Most blood donations then used to come from professional donors, prompting the society to spearhead a movement for voluntary blood donation camps to ensure a safe and sustainable blood supply. Over time, this movement gained momentum, with the society now organizing approximately 150 voluntary blood donation camps annually.

However, while blood transfusions save Thalassaemia patients' lives, they also pose the risk of iron overload in the body, necessitating the use of chelation therapy to remove excess iron. Initially, the treatment was Desferal, a costly injectable medication administered arduously over several hours. The society sought alternatives, eventually collaborating with research organizations to develop oral chelators, providing much-needed relief, albeit with the cost-related challenges persisting.

Prayas Shraddha – Kolkata has been crusading against Thalassaemia. Since 2012, their contributions in the form of medication for iron chelation, leukocyte filters for transfusions, and moral support, have significantly aided patients. Testimonials from patients attest to the

life-saving impact of these interventions, enabling them to afford treatment and lead healthier lives, inspiring new-found hope among Thalassaemia patients, several of whom are pursuing successful careers and starting families. Life expectancy of these patients have improved too.

Moreover, recognizing that Thalassaemia patients are born only when both parents are carriers of the trait, the society, along with Prayas Shraddha, undertook various initiatives, including seminars, walks, and media stories, to raise awareness and prevent Thalassaemia. Their activities centred on ensuring safe blood transfusions, monitoring patients' health through diagnostic tests, providing comprehensive treatment, organizing cultural events, and maintaining an ongoing awareness campaign.

While challenges persist, Prayas Shraddha remains resolute to their commitment. As they wish upon a falling star for a world free from Thalassaemia, they are determined to see that such dreams become a reality, echoing Robert Frost's sentiment that they have "miles to go before they sleep."



By 2021, all the members had obtained PAN cards and opened savings accounts. A Joint SHG Account was established, with regular meetings conducted to pool savings and discuss financial matters. Each member accumulated a substantial sum in their savings account, making them eligible for loans. Notably, the SHG maintained meticulous documentation and procedures, ensuring transparency and accountability.

The SHG operates under the ethos of "Savings first – Credit later," providing loans to members without collateral at a minimal interest rate of 1%. Capacity-building programmes towards self-employment are conducted regularly, emphasizing skill enhancement and financial independence.

The support extended by external entities, such as Jamewaar Fabrics and DriveX, bolstered the SHG's initiatives, opening access to resources and market opportunities. With Prayas Trust's continued guidance, the SHG diversified its activities, venturing into boutique management and product sales.

Going forward, the SHG aims to replicate its success by initiating similar groups and scaling up its operations. As part of its sustainability efforts, the SHG plans to register with local authorities and expand its participation in government schemes.

Through its commitment to women empowerment, Prayas Sparsh envisions a future where SHGs evolve into self-sustaining entities, driving socio-economic progress within communities.



Prayas Tarang empowering villages

Prayas Tarang is on a journey to empower women for their growth in Shahpur taluka, which comprises 73 village clusters. As a tribal belt, the livelihoods of families there heavily rely on their women. The Prayas Tarang team is committed to improving the health and well-being of these women to ensure their families are well cared for. They selected the projects after consulting with villagers and addressing their needs for drinking water, basic education, and sanitation requirements for women.



- Key initiatives undertaken by Prayas Tarang**
 - Installation of incinerators in residential schools, along with the construction of girls' toilets and hostel buildings.
 - Implementation of a rainwater harvesting system to ensure continuous water supply to schools and girls' hostels throughout the year.
 - Donation of a steam cooking system and roti and dough maker for girls' residential schools, ensuring the provision of fresh and hygienic food daily. Additionally, renovation of kitchen roofs in some schools.
 - Provision of complete sets of notebooks/guidebooks to ZP schools annually.
- Installation of 10 Smart TVs in ZP schools to introduce digital learning systems.
 - Conducting periodic health camps in villages and schools to improve the health index of residents.
 - Construction of wells to provide clean water within walking distance.
 - Establishment of a Skill Development Centre at Milind Nagar, Powai, aimed at training girls above 18 and women to make them financially independent. Tuition teachers were hired to teach basic computer courses and conduct remedial classes. Basic medical screening for eyes and dental care was provided ensuring comprehensive care for the girls and boys attending the centre.

By providing these essential resources, the community benefitted significantly, directly impacting all villagers, uplifting their lives, and bringing smiles to their faces.



Mrs SNS inaugurates kitchen at C. R. Mhase Agriculture College

Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, President of Prayas Trust, inaugurated a kitchen with storeroom and washroom facilities at the C. R. Mhase Agriculture College, Ware Village, Taluka Karjat, Dist. Raigad, Maharashtra, on 26 December 2023. She was accompanied by Mrs. Ranjana Bansal, Secretary of Prayas Mumbai, Mrs. Kalpana Chatre, Project Coordinator from Mumbai; as well as Prayas members Mrs. Sushmita Mishra, Mrs. Sai Mahadik, Mrs. Sarika Pandey, Mrs. Rinky Kamble, Mrs. Bhavna Chandira, and Mrs. Alka Mahapatra. This initiative by Prayas Trust – Mumbai is intended to benefit 80 students.



Vital eye and dental care to underprivileged children

Prayas Trust, Nai Umang, organized a health camp for underprivileged children at Pathshala, Pochanpur, Dwarka Centre on 30 January 2024. The camp focused on eye and dental care, in collaboration with the PHD Family Welfare Foundation and Drishti Eye Hospital, Faridabad. Similarly, another camp was conducted on 27 February 2024 at Santosh Nagar Government School, Faridabad, for Primary School children. At both locations, the camps screened 120 students per day. The eye check-up involved various tests, including trial cases with different lenses, trial frames, portable vision chart tests, and

the use of an auto refractor machine (AR) by ophthalmologists. Approximately 10 to 20 underprivileged children were recommended to visit the Centre for Sight for further examination. In addition to eye care, the camps also emphasized on dental health. A dental tool kit, equipped with instruments, facilitated dental examinations by dentists. Children received check-ups and were educated about the importance of oral hygiene. Doctors provided guidance on how to protect both their teeth and eyes, ensuring comprehensive care and health education for the children.

This on-going initiative serves as a vital checkpoint, ensuring the continuous monitoring of the children's eye and dental health at the Centre.



Empowering women Prayas Trust's menstrual hygiene initiative

An Awareness Program on Menstrual Hygiene was organized by Prayas Trust at Meethapur, Faridabad, and Pathshala, Pochanpur, Dwarka on 6th and 7th February. This awareness session was led by Dr. Shubangi, associated with the NGO Gramalaya.

Gramalaya focuses on promoting Menstrual Health Management (MHM) in the southern states. Recognizing that a significant number of adolescent girls and women in India lack awareness about menstruation, the programme aimed to raise awareness about menstrual health and hygiene, debunk myths, and empower women and girls with knowledge and resources for proper menstrual hygiene management. Engaging workshops led by Dr. Shubangi, and interactive sessions facilitated open

dialogue, allowing participants to ask questions, share experiences, and learn about best practices of menstrual hygiene. Prayas Trust distributed Gramalaya's Gio care eco-friendly reusable cloth pads to 120 beneficiaries (women and adolescent girls), encouraging the switch from unhygienic menstrual practices to eco-friendly alternatives. The Menstrual Hygiene Awareness program demonstrates the importance of grassroots initiatives in promoting women's health and dignity. By providing education, access to sustainable solutions, and fostering community engagement, this initiative aims to break menstrual taboos and ensure that every woman and girl manages her periods safely, confidently, and sustainably.



Distribution of winter wear for underprivileged children



Prayas Trust, Nai Umang distributed winter wear and shoes to 119 underprivileged children at Patshala Pochanpur-Dwarka and Asha Grih impacting the lives of 52 boys and 40 girls from Patshala and 27 orphan boys from Asha Grih.



Prayas Nai Umang awarded in CSR category at the 9th Women Astitva Samman 2024

The PHD Family Welfare Foundation, known for its extensive work in the social service sector, organized the 9th Women Astitva Samman on 9 February 2024 at PHD House, New Delhi. This year, Prayas Trust, Nai Umang, Faridabad, was selected for the award in the CSR category. It was heartening to hear renowned Kathak exponent Mrs. Shovana Narayan reading out the citation about Prayas Trust. She emphasized that Prayas, true to its name, is making significant efforts to bring about positive change in the lives of many in the marginalized sections of the society. The Nari Shakti of Prayas, silently and diligently carrying out their work, is a force to be reckoned with. This award is a recognition of all the team's efforts. The Award Ceremony was attended by esteemed guests and an engaged audience, showing keen interest in learning about the work being done by Prayas Trust. It also provides a platform to interact with other agencies engaged in similar work across various domains. Prayas aspires to reach out to more beneficiaries through its various programs in the coming days.



From Darshan Ladies Welfare Association to Prayas Samarth

In 2007, amid the challenging environment of Vadodara's Ekta Nagar slum, the Darshan Ladies Welfare Association's Skill Development Centre was founded. It began in a modest one-room kholi, marking the beginning of a remarkable journey of determination and resilience. This centre was equipped with nothing but two donated sewing machines and a reservoir of determination. Guided by the visionary Mrs. Mallika Shrinivasan, the association set out on a formidable quest to weave a better future for the underprivileged girls and women of the community through tailoring.



In the confines of that small room, the air buzzed with the sound of hope and the whirr of machines, as young faces leaned in to catch every word of instruction. The resources were meagre, but the spirit was titanic. Each thread woven by the eager learners was a silent anthem of hope, singing of possibilities and new beginnings.

The journey from a local initiative to a beacon of empowerment took a significant turn in 2011–12. Under the new leadership of Mrs. Archana Pande, Darshan sought the support of Prayas Trust Chennai. This affiliation was a game-changer, injecting much-needed funds and a sense of belonging to a larger movement dedicated to social change.

By 2013, the echoes of success outgrew the Skill Development Centre's initial confines, propelling them to relocate to a more spacious and better-equipped facility, thanks to the generous support of Mr. A.M. Naik. This new chapter added beauty parlour and mehndi classes to their curriculum, painting broader strokes on their canvas of offerings. The space transformed into a lively hub of dreams and dynamism, filled with laughter, lively conversations, and the perpetual hum of sewing machines operating in full swing with multiple batches rolling out to accommodate the swelling number of women whose appetites for learning and growth were as vast as their aspirations.

In 2015, under Mrs. Kavita Malhotra's inspired leadership, the Skill Development Centre was aptly renamed "Samarth," meaning empowered – a fitting label for a place transforming lives so profoundly. Samarth – the Prayas Unit in Vadodara – resonated with the spirit of every woman who walked through its doors, each carrying the flame of empowerment further into their communities.

The story of Samarth's growth continued to unfold magnificently across Ekta Nagar and beyond under Mrs. Anita Shah's guidance, reaching a crescendo in 2022 with the inauguration of a new learning centre under the continued patronage of our Chairman and Managing Director Mr. S.N. Subrahmanyam. This wasn't just a building; it was a fortress of opportunity, standing tall as a testament to years of perseverance and dedication. With ample space now available, the centre broadened its educational offerings, introducing new classes in embroidery and computer basics. These additions not only enriched the curriculum but also ushered women into new realms of learning—from the delicate art of needlework to the expansive digital world. As they mastered essential skills like typing, browsing, and using basic software applications, their confidence soared, opening up broader horizons for their futures. In 2023, during Mrs. Anjum Monga's tenure, Tally classes were introduced, equipping the women with crucial financial skills to navigate today's economic landscapes.

From its origins in a modest kholi to an institution with separate units for each class, seven dedicated teachers, and a capacity to educate a

hundred and twenty students simultaneously, Samarth's growth mirrored the blossoming of its community.

Samarth's narrative is a testament to resilience, progress, and the transformative influence of united efforts. Today, several beneficiaries earn as much as Rs. 15,000 monthly, while others have established their own ventures, such as beauty parlours. Even the mehndi artists make a significant contribution, with earnings ranging from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 7,000. Tailoring students have turned their new skills into successful businesses, affirming that the right training can empower individuals to dramatically reshape their futures. From its humble beginnings, Samarth has emerged as a vital beacon of hope and opportunity, profoundly demonstrating the power of empowering those who are underprivileged.

At Samarth, more is done than merely educating and enhancing livelihoods; the well-being of the women is also a priority. Essential sanitary napkins are provided, and comprehensive medical check-ups, including eye examinations, are organized to ensure holistic care. Samarth is more than a skill development centre; it's a community of care and trust.

Mrs. Amisha Patel, current unit head, and her team continue to champion this cause, each day adding a spirited stitch to the grand tapestry of empowerment and resilience that is Samarth.



Prayas Spandana empowers hearing-impaired children

For the past nine years, Prayas Spandana has continuously supported the Ashray Akruti Institute for hearing-impaired children. This year, the team provided 12 hearing aids to hearing-impaired children from poor backgrounds. Over the past nine years, Prayas Spandana donated close to 200 hearing aids to children in need.

In a special initiative, the team started a tailoring project at Ashray Akruti to train mothers of hearing-impaired children. These mothers, who come from poor backgrounds, bring their children to school and wait to take them back. To utilize their time productively and help them earn income for their families, the Spandana team initiated this project. In Batch One, they successfully trained 25 female members with the support of Ashray Akruti.



To build confidence and provide a source of income, the team trained hearing-impaired students in the art of tiles painting. This initiative was well-received by visitors and family members, and it motivated the students. The project also won the Best CSR Award at the DMN Conclave. The art tiles painted by the hearing-impaired students were presented to top management, including Mr. J.D. Patil, Mr. M.V. Satish, Ms. Bhavani, and other dignitaries. Training was provided to 150 students from Classes VIII and IX at Ashray Akruti.



Prayas Ujala builds communities through compassion and care



Prayas Ujala affiliated with L&T Defence in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, embarked on a noble journey in 2009. With a vision to uplift the underprivileged, the trust has been instrumental in providing education, healthcare, and sustainable environments to those in need. Particularly focused on aiding specially abled children and physically challenged individuals, the trust has consistently worked towards creating a positive impact in the community.

The Prayas Ujala operates a Medical Inspection room in Bhupesh Nagar, providing free health check-ups and medicines to the urban slum community. Special attention is given to pregnant women, lactating mothers, and the elderly. Health awareness sessions are also conducted, addressing psychological challenges faced by older adults, such as social isolation, loneliness, and reduced self-esteem.

A free health camp was organized at Ashreya School, catering to students in low-income urban slum areas. The camp aimed to identify and address health issues early on, thus preventing serious problems in the future. Specialist doctors from general, dental, and eye fields participated, screening and treating students. Key issues identified included indigestion, dental cavities, and vision problems, with necessary treatments and referrals provided.

The tailoring training project of Prayas Ujala aims to equip underprivileged women with skills in tailoring and embroidery, empowering them to earn a sustainable livelihood. The training includes basic and advanced courses, along with the provision of sewing machines and toolkits. This initiative fosters economic independence and helps women break the cycle of poverty. The long-term impact includes enhanced income, self-reliance, and the ability to contribute to the community by teaching these skills to others.



Prayas Tejasvi ignites young minds



higher studies. Additionally, many students were struggling with low self-esteem, drug addiction, and lack of interest in academics.

Students submitted reports detailing their family backgrounds and passions. Based on these reports, the Tejasvi team conducted basic life skill classes to improve discipline, moral values, conduct, and communication skills. Experts such as career counsellors, psychologists, yoga trainers, soft skill trainers, and remedial class teachers were selected to conduct sessions.

On 22 January 2024, the team conducted interactive sessions to explain the ill effects of social media addiction, such as increased isolation, decreased physical activity, restlessness, and brain fatigue. At KV Palayam School, primary students were trained for effective reading and comprehension.

Prayas Trust – Tejasvi's efforts at Vellalore Government School have significantly impacted students' lives. Through comprehensive guidance, skill development, and awareness programs, the initiative has successfully addressed critical issues, paving the way for a brighter future for these young minds.

Prayas Trust – Tejasvi, the women-led social arm of L&T in Coimbatore, has embarked on a noble initiative to uplift students of Vellalore Government School, from Classes X to XII, focusing on professional mentoring, career counselling, awareness about child and drug abuse, and the provision of lab equipment.

The primary objective of the project is to support and guide 620 students from Classes X to XII at Vellalore Government School. The aim is to enhance their self-esteem, broaden their awareness of various career opportunities, and mitigate issues related to drug addiction and social media overuse.

During a field visit, the Tejasvi team interacted with the principal, teachers, and students. It was evident that the students needed guidance to improve their awareness of career opportunities and



Prayas Tarang Chennai's women safety initiative

Prayas Tarang, in collaboration with Prayas Trust, Chennai, has launched a programme aimed at enhancing the safety of women. This initiative, conceived in response to the rising crimes against women, seeks to instill self-confidence in women and girls, helping them navigate interactions at home, in schools, colleges, on roads, in malls, and while using public transport.

The first phase took place at Prayas Medical Centre, Tuition Centre, Tailoring Centre, and Mobile Toy Van, engaging 30 female staff members. The subsequent phases were conducted at the L&T Construction office in Manapakkam during October and November 2023. These sessions targeted housekeeping, security, canteen staff, and women employees of DMN and DC HR, involving a total of 400 participants.

The training module featured a presentation by Ms. Judaline Srinivasan of L&T Ship Building, followed by a four-day self-defense training led by Mr. Suraj Sunil from the FUDOKAN Karate Association of India. Participants learned essential self-defense techniques, including strikes, blocks, and kicks, along with practical strategies for real-life scenarios. Discussions on awareness, assertiveness, and safety precautions were also integral to the programme.



To further ensure safety, Prayas Trust distributed pepper spray to female staff. The initiative has significantly boosted the confidence of the participants, who praised the practicality and effectiveness of the training. This pioneering programme by Prayas Chennai Zone promises to extend its reach to adolescent girls in government schools and colleges in its next phase, marking a vital step toward women's safety and empowerment.

Prayas Ananya boosts livelihood opportunities

Prayas Ananya has partnered with the Vidyavruksha Foundation to support Class IX students by offering personality development training and career guidance. This initiative aims to enhance self-discipline, time management, effective communication, creative thinking, hygiene and grooming, stress management, teamwork, digital literacy, and mobile de-addiction among students.

In addition, Prayas Ananya has extended its support to the blind community at Jebamalar Trust. The objective is to boost the morale of blind individuals and provide them with livelihood opportunities by supplying materials for wire bag making, which helps the inmates earn a living.

These collaborative efforts underscore a commitment to improving education and supporting vulnerable communities.



Prayas Snapshots

Empowering futures

An Educational Assistance Programme was held at Prayas Medical Centre, where 51 beneficiaries received aid for their educational fees. As it was a working day for the students, their parents turned up to collect the amount. There were tears of happiness in the eyes of many as they received the aid meant for their wards' fees, each expressing gratitude and appreciation for Prayas Trust.



A journey through personal hygiene

Dr. Banumathi Eswaran, gynaecologist, accompanied by Senior Manager, Revathy, and Head Nurse, Jeevitha, conducted an informative session on personal hygiene for 300 6th-grade girls at Jaigopal Garodia Girls Higher Secondary School, Saligramam on 22 June 2023. The interactive session addressed various topics, including the definition and significance of personal hygiene, grooming practices, and toilet cleanliness. The school headmistress extended gratitude to the Prayas Management for organizing this beneficial session for their students.



Thirst quenchers for all

Prayas Medical Centre initiated the annual tradition of distributing refreshing Neer Mor in summer to passers-by. Each day, approximately 200 cups were distributed, free of charge and open to all.



Healing through yoga



In the spirit of International Yoga Day 2023, the theme embraced was Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, symbolizing the global aspiration for 'One Earth, One Family, and One Future.' At the Prayas Medical Centre, staff members gathered for a modest session where Dr. Lavanya, a counsellor at the centre, led a session on basic yoga asanas and mudras aimed at relaxation and fitness. Patients also expressed interest and joined in, engaging in discussions about the benefits of yoga and seeking further understanding. Dr. Lavanya addressed their inquiries, encouraging them to integrate yoga into their daily routines.

Crafting futures, stitching dreams

A certificate distribution programme took place at Prayas Medical Centre for the trainees of the tailoring unit Batches 20, 21, and 22 on 5 June 2023. Many of the trainees arrived dressed in their creations, showcasing well-stitched kurtas and blouses. Each of them received certificates from Skill India and small tokens of appreciation from Prayas Trust. Members engaged with the trainees, discussing the formation of self-help groups to foster self-sufficiency. They were also encouraged to partake in advanced training programs offered at the centre-an initiative that was warmly welcomed.



Nurturing mothers and young ones

A Mother and Child Health Camp was organized at PMC, conducted by the Medical Centre doctors, Dr. K. Vijaya (Gynaecologist), Dr. Bhanumathy Easwaran (Gynaecologist), and Dr. Madhusudan (Paediatrician) that benefitted 47 women and 43 children (18 boys and 25 girls). The focus of the camp was to assess the nutritional status of mothers and children, evaluating the gynaecological health of mothers for conditions like anaemia or thyroid issues, and monitoring the overall health of the children. Women were advised lab tests included CBC, urine routine, random blood sugar, thyroid, and USG. Further investigations were recommended for those needing additional evaluation. Apart from taking their height and weight, children were assessed for their general health, hygiene, and nutritional intake. Infant care included checking immunization schedules and milestone achievements, with mothers receiving guidance on breastfeeding and weaning practices. Iron and calcium supplements were distributed to women, and children received gifts. Additionally, Abbott Laboratories conducted a free random thyroid test programme, benefiting 90 participants across all age groups.



Promoting education

Prayas Trust extended educational assistance to 25 girls, comprising 9 students in the Class X and 16 students in the Class XII of Saint Antony's School. Alongside this support, each student was gifted a salwar set, while their mothers received a saree, marking a gesture of appreciation for their dedicated efforts in single-handedly raising their children, many of whom work as domestic helpers. The day was filled with deep emotions as attendees interacted with the students and their mothers, fostering meaningful connections. Through heartfelt conversations, aspirations were shared, highlighting the immense sacrifices made in the pursuit of a better life for their families. Saint Antony's School, along with its management, expressed sincere thanks to Prayas Trust for its unwavering and invaluable support, which continues to positively impact lives year after year.



For a better vision

Prayas Trust, in association with Shankara Netralaya, organised an eye camp where 149 patients comprising 57 males and 92 females underwent eye screening. Among them, 92 patients were provided with spectacles, including 19 for single vision and 73 for bifocal lenses. Additionally, 26 patients were diagnosed with cataracts, while 17 others received various treatments, with 67 undergoing fundus examinations.



Embracing rainbow hues

In the spirit of the Joy of Giving, October witnessed a heartfelt celebration as 321 employees of L&T answered the call to support the transgender community. Jointly organized by Prayas Trust and the CSR arm of L&T Construction, Rs. 4,50,000 was raised and evenly distributed between two NGOs—Born2Win and Sahodaran—dedicated to uplift transgender individuals. Mrs Meena Subrahmanyam, in a valedictory function held at L&T HQ campus on 31 October 2023, presented the cheques to these organizations. She emphasized that supporting trans people was not only about embracing diversity but also about recognizing the authenticity of each individual's journey of self-discovery. She applauded the remarkable efforts of Born2Win and Sahodaran, affirming Prayas Trust's on-going commitment to empower transgenders through various initiatives. The evening was further enriched by a captivating classical dance performance by members of the transgender community, illuminating the event with their talent and grace.



From laptops to lifelines

Prayas received 25 laptops from L&T in excellent working condition, of which 12 have been retained, and the remaining 13 generously donated to the Kalpavriksh Seva Trust located in West Mambalam. The Prayas team members, accompanied by L&T officials, visited Kalpavriksh Seva Trust, which is managed by a senior couple, operating a tuition centre for underprivileged students of government schools in West Mambalam since 2017. Their services extend to providing training in various computer skills, including the basics of MS Office, desktop publishing, Google applications such as spreadsheets and forms, and English and Tamil typing, among others. The Digital Centre at Kalpavriksh Seva Trust serves students from schools, colleges, job seekers, and disadvantaged housewives. The curriculum includes instruction in E-Seva, desktop publishing, teaser creation, project report preparation, animation, basic coding, computer languages, web

page development and maintenance, as well as Tally ERP 9 and other accounting software.

The remaining desktops will be donated to the corporations of Manthoppu Boys Higher Secondary School in West Saidapet and Mettupalayam Middle School, Therady Higher Secondary School, Annappoorani Middle School, and Vandikkaran Middle School, all in West Mambalam.



Supporting domestic abuse survivors

During the Members meeting, Ms. Sajitha from PCVC apprised the Prayas team of their work supporting women, victims of domestic violence and burn injuries. Her detailed presentation shed light on the severity of these issues and emphasized the importance of supporting these women, especially when their families abandon them. In alignment with the Joy of Giving month, the Prayas team initiated a fundraising campaign to assist PCVC in their commendable efforts. Thanks to the generous contributions, the team presented a cheque of Rs. 1 lakh to the PCVC team, aiding domestic violence and burn victims at Cenotaph Road.



Special kids treated to a fun day

As part of the Joy of Giving initiative, children from the Muscular Dystrophy School were treated to a visit to the Marine Kingdom in VGP. The group was intentionally kept small to ensure their comfort. Marine Kingdom is equipped with wheelchair-friendly facilities, a detail ensured considering all the students rely on wheelchairs. Following the visit, the students, parents, and accompanying school staff were treated to lunch on-site. The headmistress expressed her gratitude, saying, "Hearty thanks to Prayas Trust members for creating such sweet memories for the parents and our children. Today was truly a memorable day."



All about the skin

To celebrate Independence Day, Prayas Trust organized a special skin camp at Mettukulam, Koyambedu. The location was chosen due to its lack of easy access to specialized medical treatment, particularly for the underprivileged community of daily wage earners. Ms. Vasanti Satish, Managing Trustee, along with Dr. Gopikrishna and Dr. Ramya, dermatologists, and Dr. Priya, a general physician, attended the camp, accompanied by several medical centre staff.

Also in attendance were Mr. Rajasekharpandy from L&T CSR and Ms. Gomathy and Ms. Tamilselvi from Hand in Hand NGO. The doctors delivered an awareness talk on maintaining healthy skincare habits, followed by consultations. Free medicines were provided, and patients were advised on the necessary follow-up procedures. Certain patients were asked to check blood sugar, CBC, and urine analysis. A total of 83 patients benefited from this camp.



A holistic approach to community development

Prayas Kalpavruksh adopts a holistic approach to community development, addressing both medical needs and overall quality of life enhancement, extending to marginalized regions and demographics, profoundly impacting the individuals they serve. Through a range of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, the organization is dedicated to fostering community welfare and their comprehensive journey encompasses various facets of support and empowerment. Sharing some of their CSR activities:

Skilling through mehndi: Underprivileged women are empowered by teaching them the traditional art of mehndi. This skill, deeply rooted in Indian tradition, has the potential for substantial income generation without requiring formal education. After two successful batches, many beneficiaries are already earning. Prayas connects them with artists, wedding planners, and beauty salons to expand their clientele.



Tailoring initiative: Kalpavruksh teaches tailoring skills, empowering underprivileged girls with economic independence. In a society grappling with the aftermath of the pandemic, learning tailoring provides stability and income, working from home. Despite challenges like limited space in Mumbai's slums, the initiative shows promise, with some students already earning. The goal is to achieve 100% success and sustained self-reliance for all participants.



Construction of ladies' toilets: Prayas addresses the pressing need for sanitation by constructing toilets for female students at an agricultural college that has led to an increase in the number of female students.



Medical camps in the remote villages of Karjat: Prayas Kalpavruksh organizes medical camps in four remote villages in Karjat, providing essential screenings for eye health, haemoglobin levels, sugar levels, and gynaecological issues. Corrective lenses and iron supplements are distributed and data is collected to identify individuals in need of further medical interventions.



Celebration at orphanage & old age home: Prayas celebrates Christmas with the children and seniors of Kharghar Orphanage and Old Age Home, distributing stationery items for kids and utilities for the seniors, such as lungis, nighties, and bedsheets.

Additionally, Prayas Kalpavruksh fosters community spirit through small gatherings such as Holi celebrations and Women's Day events, serving as opportunities for members to recharge and strengthening organizational bonds.





Kids' play area in Aundhe School, Lonavala: Prayas Kalpavruksh has established a play area at a Zila Parishad school with equipment that teaches the children not only sharing and caring but also enhances their social skills through interaction with peers and adults. This initiative has resulted in increased school attendance, aided by nutritional support, significant improvements in student behavior, including increased confidence, self-esteem, social skills, curiosity, and self-discipline, that have been observed by the Principal.



Water pipeline installation in Bhaguchiwadi: Kalpavruksh installs a water pipeline, bringing significant relief to women who previously endured long treks multiple times a day for water. This initiative allows them more time for constructive activities.



Prayas Trust Astitva promotes computer education

In today's world, computer proficiency is essential for everyone. To empower women and enhance the skills of local girls with limited facilities, Prayas Trust Astitva provides an 8-month OS-CIT (Odisha State – Certificate in Information Technology) course, conducted by professionals at the Prayas Trust Vocational Training Centre.

Designed by the Government of Odisha, the OS-CIT course aims to provide basic computer education to improve the students' eligibility for recruitment processes in government, PSUs, and other organizations. While Odisha Knowledge Corporation Limited (OKCL) conducts the course, the Odisha State Open University handles the examination and certification.

The course covers topics such as MS Office, MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, MS Access, MS Outlook, cybersecurity skills, digital etiquette and netiquette, remote working skills, ergonomics, 'Go Green', and English & Odia transcription.

Virtual training through ERA Software and interactive sessions have ensured an easy understanding of the topics.

The course commenced in July 2023 and concluded in February 2024, with 60 students successfully completing the training and passing their exams. Their certificates will be issued by the university within 2 to 3 months.

Post completion, many trainees have secured jobs and started earning, while others are pursuing higher studies.



28.08.2023

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Make a life meaningful, even a small contribution towards any of our causes will go a long way in making someone happy, If you are interested, reach out us at **93609 57783** or mail us at **prayastrust@gmail.com**

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