



PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

by the people; for the people; pro people
a rights-based social welfare organization

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Centre for 'Special Needs Children'



West Bengal 'State Award Winner' on 'Persons with Disability-2020'

Organization Vision and Objectives:

Who are we: We take the opportunity to project this organization as a representative of the under privileged/weaker section of the society for their continuous up gradation in all spheres for last fifteen years.

As we look back on another year and reflect on achievements and obstacles, let us reiterate the key elements that make **People's Participation** unique—its replicable and strong foundation, a broad vision encompassing an inclusive geographical approach, a complete coverage, coupled with close links and co-operation with the Government.

VISION of 'People's Participation':

We are committed to social justice, sustainable development and human rights. The right to communicate freely is a basic human right and a necessity for sustainable development. Access to information is essential to informed decision-making at all levels. We are committed to the dissemination of information and promotion of sustainable development initiatives, in response to the needs of underrepresented and marginalized sectors of society.

Mission: Our mission is to utilize the available resources in such a way that their uses can lead to substantial improvement in the quality of life of the people with whom work is being done.



Activities:

Our Activities towards ‘Special Needs Children’ and ‘Mental Health of Homeless/beggars:

- ✚ E- learning Training-
- ✚ Community Based Rehabilitation-
- ✚ Workshops with guardians-
- ✚ Mental health of homeless people—
- ✚ Day Care Center for Special Needs Children & Adolescent-

In order to empower the targeted children with disabilities within Chanditala Blocks-I & II along with Dankuni Municipal areas of Sreerampore Subdivision; Hooghly District. Counselling to children and their parents, and legal support for availing benefits meant for **children with special needs** from the government at state level and central level. **PP** have identified and provided support through networking, creating awareness and training for a number of **children with special needs** to get education services in the mainstream schools. The community members are also deriving satisfaction by helping other families with similar challenges. The emphasis is given on dissemination of information, demystification, capacity building, training and orientation.

PP is engaged in working with the beggars’ communities at Dakshineswar, Nimtala Ghat and Kalighat temple areas as well as Sealdah Railway Station areas. We have seen lot of beggars suffering from mental health problems. We do counselling them, help them for free Government shelters, free one-time food from ‘free food distribution’ organisation and temples; also linkage them with free treatment centres and Govt hospitals. Send many beggars’ to NILD-Bono Hooghly for free treatment. Till date more than 63 beggars’ assisted through our initiatives.

Home Management:

This programme will empower and train parents while training the children. This programme is also the first point of contact as it houses the Advisory and Referral Clinic where the person with disability is first assessed and a plan for the future is created with the family.



The Home management programme is designed to specifically suit Indian conditions. The focus is on demystifying disability, empowering and training the parent /family/caregiver to effectively meet the special needs of their child.

This programme caters to children who are not able to access rehabilitation services like special education, physiotherapy, communication therapy on a daily basis. **People's Participation'** visits to these children once a week along with the mother or caregiver. Parents are an essential part of the team that assesses the child's requirements, plans for his or her specific needs and later evaluates the success of the programme. Both mother and child receive training and parents taught the skills required to train the child on their own.



People's Participation' do train them to achieve maximum independence in self-help skills. PP helps them socialize and create a friends and buddies circle. Regular home visits will be conducted to help the extended family participate in the progress of the child.

The programme helps in:

- Formation of parent to parent support groups
- Effective early intervention and inclusion for children with cerebral palsy, mental retardation, intellectual disability and autism
- Empowering parents to play a more proactive role in the child's programme and in handling societal pressures



Out-Station Programme: This programme is based on the 'family based rehabilitation' model. It started on 2019 to make it convenient for outstation parents to avail of quality rehabilitation services. It is a comprehensive two/three- day counselling programme where the person with disability, and the family access this counselling training. The whole team of volunteers make itself available. The programme is schedule over holidays to provide this service without denying services to children who attend other programmes. Follow up programmes will be conduct once in three/six months and parents trained to continue the programme when they go back.



Our mission of sharing information and reaching out where services are not available for persons with disabilities is fulfilled through the community based rehabilitation programme. The first initiative is an outreach programme of **People's Participation'** within Dankuni Municipal areas and Chanditala Block-I & II, Hooghly District in West Bengal.

Today PP is an independent organization with its volunteers.



This programme focus on capacity building to other people in rural, semi urban areas and slum communities. Grassroots workers do train to work with the persons with disabilities. Depending on the needs of the community, specific partnership details will be plan, work out and evaluate together by both organizations in terms of objectives, time, and modality.

The objective, typically, is for the organization to become self-sufficient over a period of time, in working with people with disabilities. It is also the aim of the programme to build a perspective to disability in the community.

The programme:

- » Provide initial and ongoing training to CBR workers
- » Build up resource centres /programmes as required
- » Organize periodic visits to the specific organization by **People's Participation**'
- » Provides linkages to other Govt & Non Govt organizations



This programme will result in the empowerment of CBR workers. They will be able to reach the unreached in remote pockets within Chanditala Blocks-I & II, along with Dankuni Municipality in Hooghly District of West Bengal.

In September, 2014 Kolkata witnessed the launch of a unique community based care and support program for the Beggars Community under the guidance of 'People's Participation'. It was a pilot project in Dakshineswar & Bhutnath/Nimtala Temple area to conduct a study on the prevalence of Homeless Mentally ill (HMI) along with the Community Resources available to evolve a Community Based Care and Support Program for Homeless Mentally ill. The project aimed to initiate emergency care and support including treatment for identified population. Generate awareness in the community

about mental health related issues, needs of homeless mentally ill, develop linkages between GOs/NGOs/CBOs to evolve strategies to help the HMI and thereby developing the ground for a sustainable community care model in the long run.



In 2021, from 12th January, **People’s Participation** is going to open its free cost open ‘Day Care Centre for the Special Needs Children’ at “Rail Gate-9-North, Mallickpara, Dankuni, Hooghly, West Bengal-712311”; with its minimal financial donations, along with its educated volunteers’.

Discussion:

In keeping with our mission of providing critical support for the empowerment/ advancement/ betterment of the most disadvantaged groups in society, we have started working with **children with special needs (CWSN)** since 3rd December;2016 (World Disability Day). We aim that children with special needs, who are entitled to the same human rights as all other Indian citizens, should have adequate opportunities for their holistic development, empowerment, and integration in mainstream society. Towards these goals, we are working with CWSN, their parents, educators and other state and non-state actors who work with them. Since 2016, we are conducting a Community-based Rehabilitation programme for ‘Special Needs Children’ residing in different villages of Chanditala Blocks and Dankuni Municipality areas. **People’s Participation** has identified more than 400 children

with special needs in these two areas and has been providing support through networking, awareness generation and training so that children with special needs may get education services in mainstream schools. In the process, we have also built capacities of the community who, in turn, are helping other children /families facing similar challenges. However, the targets of complete and continued integration into mainstream education are still a long way off.

The inclusion movement offers a variety of positive academic, social, and behavioural opportunities for students with special needs. In India, as also globally, inclusive education policy considers different subgroups with special educational needs (SEN). However, some subgroups of SEN students do not receive enough attention. Most vulnerable subgroups are students with disabilities are Intellectual Disability, Autism, whose educational needs are often neglected even by special education programmes of state and non-state actors. This lack of educational opportunities results in a lifetime of poverty, unemployment and exclusion.

Our approach is to work with different stakeholders such as School teachers, local Panchayats, Block Development Office, Sarbasikhsa Mission, & through dissemination of information, demystification, capacity building, training and orientation in order to improve the access of all children with special needs and different educational disabilities to educational and allied services.

The education of children with different kinds of learning difficulties can be achieved through the combination of home-based and alternate educational settings/ mainstream educational settings with additional support systems. While a major focus of these educational programmes is to enable them to achieve independent living skills, they can also help nurture capabilities and talents that can help these individuals lead richer, fuller lives and facilitate their inclusion and integration into mainstream socio-cultural and economic systems. Towards this end, we are seeking (and working in) partnership with state and resource-rich non-state actors to identify critical systemic and information gaps so that resources can be most effectively channelized for services most needed by the community of CWSN.

At the same time, we are working closely with parents of CWSN, often their primary caregivers and the most emotionally involved, enabling them to become effective teachers for the overall development of CWSN. The aim of our community-based programme is “school preparedness and preparation for life” where parents, especially from low income families with pressing concerns of income generation and with little or no education, are being equipped to take on the role of parent-teachers.



Technology is being increasingly integrated into educational programmes to increase effectiveness and outreach. E-learning technologies can promote the inclusion of students with various disabilities in education. **People's Participation (PP)** has started an e-learning center (alternatively, integrated learning center) for providing support for the holistic development of CWSN. The e-learning (integrated learning) center will currently focus on children with special needs residing in Chanditala Blocks and Dankuni Municipal areas of Hooghly District (West Bengal, India). In the future, **PP** aims to provide various kinds of support to children with special needs residing in other areas through the online mode.

Started in 2019, the e-learning (integrated learning) centre provides (i) counselling to children with special needs and their parents; (ii) regular training on 'how to train those CWSN in home (Drawing, Sports and training related specific indoor games, exercises in homes, daily education, counselling, speech therapy, etc) through online mode who have Android phones only. And who does not have android phone we do call their guardians or caregivers and counselling them as regular basis. This online training centre consists of special educators, Govt officials, trainers, social workers, other volunteers.

In addition, **People's Participation** is going to create a support group that consists of parents of children with special needs from target areas, social workers, therapists and government officials working in the relevant departments, and has connected all the members of the group through a social media platform. This platform is used by **PP** to disseminate information about special needs and build awareness about these conditions. This platform is also used for counselling and therapeutic and psychological support of CWSN and their parents.



People's Participation also uses this social media platform to provide information about legal rights of children with special needs and about the various Central and State governmental schemes that CWSN can avail.

