

## The Self Empowerment

Most NGOs adopt what may be termed as either charity/institution/medical model. Few extend this to rehabilitation as well. But a question arises in ones mind on where we need to draw a line from where a person with disability can take on himself further. Does NGOs need to be part of its target people for their lifetime?

It can be realised that the medical and institutional model of service provision can and need to be extended further. A model of self-help in which differently-abled people take responsibility for their own development is required. It is not a question of creating extra projects or building new organisations to deal with disability; existing development organisations can include disability in their current programmes, especially if those programmes are based on the principle of animation for social action viz., stimulate the formation of disability associations which would assume responsibility for the needs of persons with disability, the members of which would be persons themselves, to mobilise and to take action on their own behalf, and to use existing structures to secure services and benefits.



Managing a petty shop - Mr. Shivanna, Malavalli Project

But the basic fact that all of us need to understand and promote is to include the persons with disability into the mainstream not as a concession but as the right. An individual with the disability is just like any other individual. With examples like Christopher Reeve, Stephen Hawking, Terry Fox and others does one need to be convinced that self-empowerment is all in the attitude?

Self-empowerment means that the persons with disability becomes active partners with those experts to mutually determine what's best for them and/or what course of action they need to pursue regarding their plans for the future, treatments and the likes.

Often, a personally empowered individual will realize that many of his or her problems are caused by societal forces. This realization enables that person to stop self-blaming, inferior complexes and he will want to become active in the community, to challenge discrimination or to help others. The fact that differently-abled people have now formed their own associations places them on a similar footing and attitudes towards them are changing accordingly: They too are seen to be striving for social justice, like everyone else. Being in such a group also enables them to be heard and to be self-empowered.

## Karnataka Common Entrance Test (CET) – Counselling

Around 163 Students with disabilities seeking higher education, successfully got admissions in various colleges.

Though CET Cell announced a fresh seat-selection process for professional courses, the medical and engineering seats selected under special categories by the physically disabled quotas will remain unaltered. The ratio may be less at the moment but let's hope to see good results in the coming years.

**163 disabled students get seats on Day One**

**Times News Network**  
Bangalore: Day One of the CET - counselling saw 335 physically challenged candidates at the CET Cell who all medical and dental seats were filled whereas three engineering seats remained unfilled. Of the total students who arrived at the Cell on Tuesday, 163 were found eligible to select seats. On Wednesday, the Cell will conduct a seat-selection process for sports and the NCC category students. Seat-selection process for special category will go on as scheduled.

Meanwhile in Mysore, VTU VC Balaswamy told reporters that a committee has been constituted by the VTU and government to finalise the module and procedure of e-counselling where students and their parents sit at regional centres. They can select the seat and college from the available quota through video conferencing.

**SPECIAL CATEGORY SEATS**

Category	Medical	Dental	ISM&R	Engineering
Physically Challenged	12	03	04	123
Sport	08	03	04	75
NCC	08	04	07	88
Sports and Games	03	01	06	03
Defence	03	01	00	76
Ex-servicemen	03	01	07	54
Anglo-Indians	05	04	06	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>369</b>

**TAKING UP A NEW CHALLENGE:** One of the aspirants for professional courses attends counselling held for disabled students at the CET Cell in Malleshwaram on Tuesday.

### It is all in the attitude – From Sumanahalli project

55 year old Anjali is all smiles as she plays with the children in her charge. The 30 children in the pre-nursery school she works in, are fond of her. After work, Anjali returns home to a living family and neighborhood. That her faces and hands are deformed owing to leprosy has made no difference to the quality of her life. The illiterate people in the slum that forms her neighborhood have never discriminated against Anjali. The signs that the disease has left on her is an accepted fact - not a cause for stigma.

42 year old Enan Bhim Dural was not so lucky. A cook for engineering students, Leprosy cured patient Dural had only a mild claw to show for the affect of the disease. Life was normal until the day he met with an unfortunate accident on the road. Hospitalized with multiple injuries, Dural's trauma had just begun. The engineering students who discovered that Dural was a cured leprosy patient changed suddenly. Discharged from the hospital, Dural returned home only to find his employers shunning him. Isolated, Dural spent days of emotional and mental trauma before a few young persons came to his rescue. He was taken to Sumanahalli where he was welcomed whole-heartedly.

The irony is that the *so called educated* section of the society did not understand and accept Dural like that of masses in the slum accepted Anjali. Let us understand that the deformity and the disability are not the sign of activity of the disease. Let us open our hearts to the Durals of this world too.



### **AMICI announced Dr. V. Ekambaram PAL's children's Education Fund**

On 17-June-2005, the day of AMICI's trust meeting, AMICI selected Kumari Mamata, aged 4 years, daughter of Mr. Ramesh and Mrs. Ratna Ramesh as the first recipient of Dr. V. Ekambaram PAL's children's Education Fund.

### **Bare-Facts – Compiled by NCPEDP**

- ☞ *5-6% of India's population is disabled. There are over 70 million disabled people in our country.*
- ☞ *Less than 1 % of children with disability receive education of any kind.*
- ☞ *The first Special Employment Exchange for the physically disabled was established in Mumbai in 1959.*
- ☞ *In 1977, the Government of India reserved 3% of vacancies in identified jobs in Government and the public sector, in Groups C & D.*
- ☞ *Since the setting up of the first Special Employment Exchange, in almost 41 years, only about 1 lack disabled persons have been employed!*
- ☞ *According to the National Sample Survey of 1991, there are 7 million employable disabled people waiting to get a job.*
- ☞ *A disabled activist had to file Public Interest Litigation in the Supreme Court in order to make air travel accessible and disabled-friendly. However, our buses and trains continue to be inaccessible for an average disabled person.*
- ☞ *study conducted in 1999 on top 100 corporate houses in the country,*
  - *the average percentage of employees with disabilities is a dismal 0.4%*
  - *public sector ---- 0.54%*
  - *private sector ---- 0.28%*
  - *multinationals ---- 0.05%*
- ☞ *Out of these 'top' 100 corporate houses, 30 did not respond in spite of several reminders. Out of the 70 who responded, 20 did not employ a single disabled person!*

## Activities of Thiruvur Project

*Mr. Jayanth Kumar, our CBR Co-ordinator had a visit to Thiruvur Project in Andhra Pradesh recently. He had an opportunity to see some of the activities being implemented there and also had a one-to-one discussion with the target groups. Here is a brief report*

This project is implementing an integrated approach of CBR & Leprosy which is financially and technically supported by AIFO. The project started by leprosy control activities with a vertical programme approach in the year 1993. Later in 1999, realising the need for the rehabilitation of other persons with disability, the project incorporated different rehabilitation components with CBR as an approach. Now a series of rehabilitation intervention for persons with disability including leprosy affected persons is being implemented.

The aim of the project is to facilitate people with disabilities to enjoy equal opportunities in the society and protect their rights within the general community. This will be carried out through inclusive – sustainable developmental approach of CBR. Hence PWD's life can be improved in terms of health, economy, education and socio-cultural life. The project area includes 3 mandals viz., Thiruvuru, Konduru & Gampalagudem. The target area covers 70 villages with a population of 171726 of which 1679 are direct beneficiaries. This group comprises of persons with physically impairment. Speech & hearing disability, visual disability, intellectual impairment and leprosy affected persons. The working team is conducting various rehabilitation activities like awareness & socio-economic programmes, vocation training and Inclusive education programmes and medical support to name a few, for the target groups, their family members and general community.



These activities are regularly implemented and monitored by the project. Since four years of CBR implementation basic needs of the PWDS have been seriously considered by the project and number of facilities has been mobilized from the government. Construction of houses through Indira Avaj Yojana scheme(IAY) for families with PWDS is one among the major activities implemented by the project. The project was able to enable/facilitate 189 differently-abled persons to receive loan for constructing there own houses.

**TO,**