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Keystone Human Services International
Liaison Office, India



Our work is made possible through our partnership with the Rural India Supporting Trust, an organization committed to improving the well-being of communities across India.

Message from the President & CEO



Dear Colleagues, Supporters, and Friends,

The work of Keystone Human Services is grounded in values and actions. For 50 years, we have worked to build a better, more inclusive world, and we remain committed to that ideal. We have confronted many challenges over the years, but we have continually found ways to move over, under, and around barriers to inclusion as we walk alongside people with disability and create pathways to full, rich lives in the community.

When the global pandemic set in almost three years ago, none of us could fully comprehend the changes and challenges it would bring. With no tried-and-true guidance to turn to, we relied on our unwavering commitment to supporting people with respect. While the pandemic has starkly highlighted the systemic exclusion faced by people with disability, it also sparked innovation and creativity as visionary leaders continued to drive change, explore new ideas, and move forward with a vision of inclusion.

Keystone India has been a catalyst for change, energizing the growing national movement towards a more inclusive Indian society where all people are valued and belong. Working with people with disability and their families, other advocates and allies, and leaders, the organization is bringing the ideas and implementation of inclusion and inclusive practice into focus.

As Keystone India continues to provide foundational education in nearly every state throughout India, we have added languages, now offering courses in Bengali, as well as Hindi and English, so learners can explore the nuances of the ideas of Social Role Valorization in their first language. We have presented a five-session certificate course on Campus and Community Leadership in Inclusion with Lucknow University, strengthening the next generation of leaders in this work. We have also launched a national curriculum for direct support practitioners, creating a valued, respected, aspirational profession where supporters walk alongside people with disability as equal partners in moving towards a full, rich life. In partnership with The Hans Foundation, Rural India Supporting Trust, and the Government of Uttarakhand, we launched our Family Reunification work to help people find their families, untie bureaucratic knots, strengthen ties with families, and create pathways for life in the community.

Building a better, more inclusive world for all of us takes all of us working together. Our work is predicated on partnerships with people with disability, families, talented staff, communities, like-minded organizations, and volunteer boards who are dedicated to change.

Please join us in celebrating our accomplishments this year. No matter who you are, we welcome you to add your voice as we move towards a future where all people are included and belong.

Charles J. Hooker III
President and CEO
Keystone Human Services





Message from the Executive Director, KII

Dear Allies,

Within India, and around the world, we are living through a time when unity and partnership is greatly needed. In our work towards a world where everyone, including people with disability, has a place at the community table, our role in modelling human connection, respectful partnership, and working in a way that lifts all boats has served as a powerful model. With this in mind, we invite you to have a look at the powerful change work that has happened over the course of the year. Our work finding exit paths from the hopelessness of institutions led us to open a new way by locating, fortifying and supporting estranged families to welcome their sons, daughter, mothers, and brothers back home. We continue to demonstrate that community life benefits institutionalized person in every way that we can measure, and also that communities get stronger when people with disabilities are a full part of them.

Our work in teaching and promoting foundational ideas have created a small but potent group of leading-edge change agents, comprised of family members, professionals and people with lived experience of disability working towards a common goal of the good things of life for all people. As well, we have worked to create a new and valued profession of direct support practitioners, ready to work side-by-side with people with developmental disabilities in a respected and valued profession. Indeed, the work we do has great bearing on each of us learning to be together, to live together and to join together towards a world that works for everyone. Our small team at KII is only part of the picture - our colleagues, allies, and associates far and wide across the country have been the biggest part of a movement of change which we have the privilege of tending, fostering and nourishing. Together, we are finding our way towards a world that works for everyone, much needed in the days we are all living through. Together, we are strong, and everything is possible.

In Partnership,

Elizabeth Neville

Authorized Representative, Keystone Human Services Liaison Office
Executive Director, Keystone Institute India

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Who We are



The Keystone Human Services International, Liaison Office (KHSI LO), India was established to help improve the lives of people with disability across India and to contribute towards a national movement for a more inclusive, just, Indian society where all people are valued and belong. KHSI LO seeks partners and collaborators to work alongside us and with people with developmental and psychosocial disabilities. Together we join a movement of change, and provide opportunities for people to experience home, friends, family, work, and full participation in the community.

KHSI LO provides extensive consultation and education around developing responsive, effective, and inclusive supports to help move towards belonging, acceptance, and a rich community life, especially for people with developmental and psychosocial disability and their families. We develop and prepare emerging leaders to work towards integrated community development instead of segregation. We offer intensive workshops and presentations on promising practices and ideas, consultation,

and guidance in implementation strategies. We connect organizations and people throughout India and the world who are doing promising work to assist people with disability to take their place in society. Together, we are working to develop an inclusive society, where all people belong and are invited to participate in all the community has to offer. We believe that diverse and welcoming communities experience the gifts of all their members, and that such communities have much to teach us about how to live in harmony together.

Our community of practice stretches across India, and is comprised of activists, people with disabilities, advocates, family members, and those who are allies alongside vulnerable people. We are committed to learning about and using important and high-level idea sets, such as the principles of Social Role Valorization, as well as person-centered inclusive practice in education, community life, vocation, home, and relationships. We are also committed to putting those ideas into practice.

We work each in collaboration with each: all are both teachers and learners, and we share what seems to work toward our vision freely. All of us are leaders in our commitment to better lives, whether through formal teaching, implementation, powerful role modelling, or sharing through media and writing. Our commitment to create a better world is one thing we share, along with a belief that our thinking frameworks, such as our

core framework of SRV, are good guidance on the path towards such worthy work.

We invite you to share in the vision, the partnership, and the hard work of creating change that brings the good things of life to us all. The work sketched in this report brings to life incremental change actions which we think move the world a fraction closer towards the world we want to create.



World Class Capacity to Lead Change



Our programs within India are an extension of Keystone Human Services International, an International NGO and 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA, established to provide services, programs, technical assistance, and support to improve the lives of people with disability across the globe. KHSI brings with it the management strength of its parent company Keystone Human Services (KHS/Keystone), and a long history and broad array of disability services expertise held within its six Keystone subsidiaries operating throughout four states in the US, the Republic of Moldova, and India, with strong established local presence and knowledge in each region where the organization works.

Keystone has provided consultation and technical assistance to programs in Romania, Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, similarly focused on deinstitutionalization, children in difficult situations, and the development of community-based services. These consultancies have provided support to local and national government on the reform of their social care services for people with disability, and to local NGOs implementing related projects. KHSI holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nation's Economic and Social Council and engages particularly with the

Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the High-Level Political Forum.

Keystone provides services to nearly 7000 people in community settings, with a staff contingent of well over 3,000 employees globally and has decades of experience in the design and provision of high-quality community-based services for children and adults with disability and their families.

Keystone began in 1972 with a strong commitment to find community alternatives to the inhumane conditions in segregated institutions for people with psychosocial and intellectual disability. Over the years, the organization has developed a comprehensive array of community-based services for children and adults who are at risk or who have lifelong support needs, including individuals with intellectual disability, autism, mental health challenges, physical disability, and economic vulnerabilities. KHSI furthers this important work by promoting strong community-based human service systems through its own Keystone subsidiary organizations as well as partnerships with aligned NGOs/DPOs and individual international and national consultants focused on the regions where Keystone works.

Our Legal Status



Keystone Human Services International Liaison Office is registered with Registrar of Companies, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt of India. Our Foreign Company Registration Number is F06219. We are also registered with Reserve Bank of

India with UIN: NDLO17008112. The Permanent Account Number (PAN) of the Company is AAGCK7030B and the Tax Deduction Account Number (TAN) of the Company is DELK17326B.

Funding



The work of KHSI LO's flagship program, Keystone Institute India, is made possible by a grant from the Rural India Supporting Trust (RIST), under the leadership of Managing Director, Shweta Rawat, and Executive Director, Paul Glick. RIST has been a long-standing ally and supporter of Keystone's work in India and remains deeply engaged in the direction and reach of this work. Keystone and

RIST hold a common core set of values when it comes to assisting people with disability to lead dignified lives marked by belonging, freely given relationships, personal growth and richness, and the inclusive society that we are all working towards, together. We are grateful for their support and partnership.

Our Mission and Vision



Mission

The Mission of KHSI LO is to create opportunities for growth and meaningful life choices so that all people can be valued, contributing members of their community.

Our Vision

Our vision is that of creating an environment where all people, regardless of background and ability, can grow, make choices and be valued and contributing members of our community. In this vision, we see the welfare of all people being vested in the welfare of each individual. We believe that all human life is sacred, having equal and unconditional value. We believe that it is important to recognize and value individual differences and diversity as a means of validating our own uniqueness and affirming the great diversity of the human community. Our services will value, be responsive to and reflect the great diversity of the communities, individuals and families we serve. We will strive to assure that all levels of our organization reflect this diversity. Within our intent is a deep commitment to decrease the dependence of individuals and families on formal services. All that we do should contribute to the strength, independence, community presence and capacity of each individual. When an individual or family does need formal services, those services must be effective and, where appropriate, time limited. Our vision is that of supporting people within their communities, in natural settings such as home, work, neighbourhood and school.



We believe that we have a deep obligation to serve as a change agent, sharing our experience with others both individually and within the public policy and service delivery processes. We believe that it is important to live in an environment where all of us have the opportunity to consider the moral and spiritual aspects of our work. We desire that the many people associated with Keystone will experience their work as a

calling and wish to encourage and nurture deep commitments, friendships, nonpaid relationships, and life sharing. In this time of rapid social change, much of what we do encompasses the creation of social forms and structures that have value for all people. We believe that our striving to accept, value, and understand great diversity in human qualities is linked to our role in creating a safer world.

The Numbers

Training Events:	74
People Attending:	1890
Participant Hours:	4779

In the year 2021-22, other than Tools Workshops organized in Delhi from 29th to 31st March 2022, all the KII hosted events were online, with participation from most states in India as well as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Since our beginning in November of 2016, we have provided **293** events across India, providing direct impact to family members, professionals, and community members.

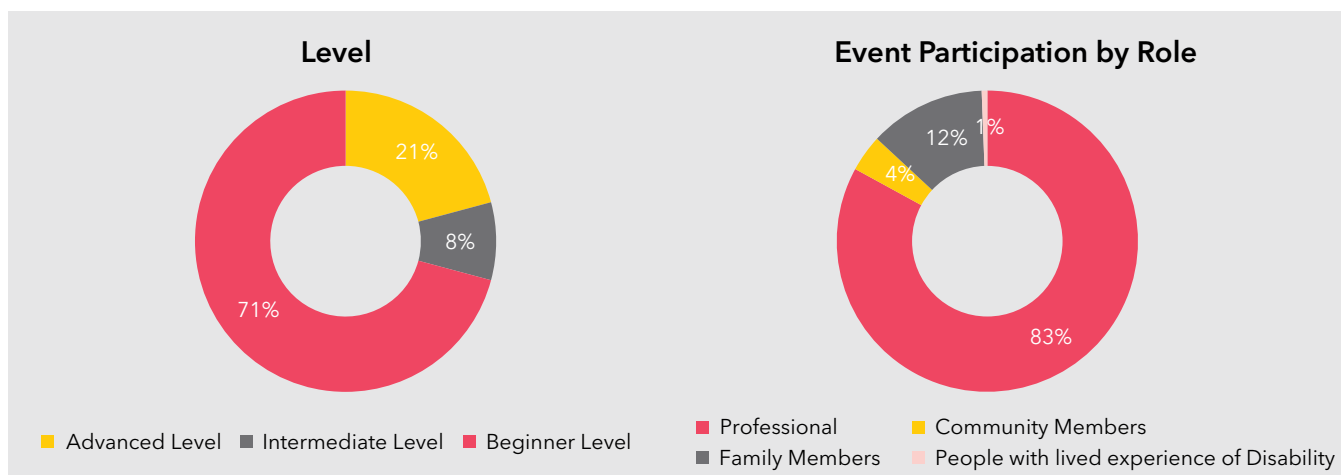


Powerful Change through Keystone Institute India's Education and Consultation Program



Keystone Institute India (KII) was formed as a flagship program of KHSI in 2015 and established our Liaison Office in Delhi. KII is a national training institute focused on creating opportunities for Indian citizens experiencing disability to lead full, rich lives, and be included and valued in the community. The KII program centres its activities on five pillars:

- Establish the Institute as a powerful source of ideas and action towards the full participation and engagement of Indian people with disabilities in everyday life.
- Work closely with partner organizations towards equality, inclusion, and citizenship for all.
- Strengthen and support families and people with disabilities to be in leadership roles in the movement towards an inclusive society.
- Work across numerous disability sectors to become a trusted resource for the exchange of ideas and promising inclusive practices in the areas of home, personal growth, work, relationships, recreation, community, and spiritual lives.
- Identify talented change agents and build a national leadership base capable of moving Indian citizens towards a future of promise; the "Good Things of Life" for all Indians, including those with disabilities.



Our Involvement, Engagements, and Activities 2021/2022



Growing the Landscape for Full and Rich Lives: The National Training Institute

Keystone Human Services International holds a compelling core set of values when it comes to assisting people with disability to lead dignified lives marked by belonging, freely given relationships, personal growth and richness. This shared commitment led to the launch of Keystone Institute India in 2015, a values-based national training institute established to facilitate broad-based approaches to elevating the possibilities for people with developmental and psychosocial disability to lead full and rich lives. These first four years have led to real change in not only mindsets and attitudes, but also changes in practices and actions that have changed individual lives and transformed organizations.

Since our inception, the national training institute, Keystone Institute India, has conducted learning events and workshops, touching the minds, hearts, and lives of close well over 9000 participants across nearly all states and approaching nearly 45,000 participant training hours. We teach with an emphasis on understanding the deep societal devaluation experienced by many vulnerable

people and the impact of such experience, with the importance of assisting people with disability to hold valued roles in every aspect of life to combat such devaluation. From this framework, we focus on inclusive practice, participatory planning tools, consciousness raising, change agency, program design, and service evaluation. We have a special interest in developing responsive residential services that are firmly embedded in community, and our faculty have great expertise and experience in such programs.

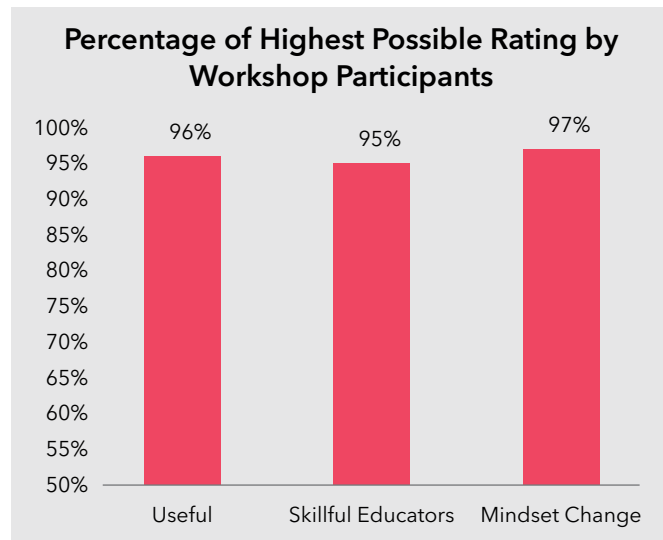
With the advent of the global pandemic, all events were conducted online using a distance format. Highlights of our program include:

- A focus on more advanced materials, building on the skills of our partners and collaborators to apply ideas in practice, utilize seminar formats for learning, and scaffold learning for emerging national content experts.
- An introduction of many new materials and content in Hindi, Bengali and Punjabi, including a focus on establishing a base of emerging leaders of inclusive practice using regional languages.
- A host of new educators, building on the expertise of in-country allies across India

taking forward the Foundations of Direct Support Practitioner training.

- Advanced online course entitled **“Visual Language: A mini-institute on Graphic Facilitation”** held for emerging Graphic Facilitators to continue with the person-centered work across the nation.
- A strong collaboration with the University of Lucknow as part of MOU with Keystone Institute India started with a five-part certification course during this reporting period.

Feedback from events indicates that not only do participants appreciate the world class training events they attend but also note that such events shift their perspectives towards disability in a positive way. We consider this just one way to measure the change happening in the mindsets and attitudes of the people whose lives we touch through our training courses, and the powerful learning around Social Role Valorization



principles, person-centered approaches, and tools for inclusion.

We have continued to attract many family members and professionals to events and are working towards greater engagement by people who themselves experience disability.

What Our Allies and Participants Say....

“This session was very inspiring and awakening. Information and thoughts which are shared here are very valuable and excellent for pursuing disability studies. Such sessions help us to reconsider our thoughts on disability and motivate us for research and work in this field.”

“It was an enriching seminar and I'm glad that I could be a part of it. Some very pertinent and important issues were raised. I would love to be a part of more such seminars or workshops.”

“This workshop enlightened me on some of the new aspects related to disability and how it is/should be perceived. By listening to the lived experiences of people having a disability and catering to people with a disability, a new approach was envisioned.”











Establishment and Empowerment of the All-India Social Role Valorization Leadership Network



The All-India Social Role Valorization Leadership Network, founded and chartered in 2020, has continued to form the national leadership group in the core unifying theory of practice of Social Role Valorization. About 60 active members from across India work together, continue to learn,

and put their heads, hearts and hands together to inspire real change. This year, the national leadership group of AISRV group has forged relationships with experts from around the world as colleagues and role models, and puts our shared work on the global stage.

Global Experts

 <p>MILTON TYREE (US) Customized Employment Expert 18 Members</p>	 <p>CATHY LUDLUM (US) Living Well with A Disability 15 Members</p>	 <p>DARCY ELKS (US) Productive Family/ Staff Relationships 22 Members</p>	 <p>SUSAN THOMAS (US) Social Role Valorization and Model Coherency 5 Members</p>	 <p>BRITTANY CURRY (US) Graphic Facilitation 18 Members</p>
 <p>JANET KLEES (CA) Family Alliances 6 Members</p>	 <p>ANDREW OLIVER (US) Forging Relationships 16 Members</p>	 <p>RAYMOND LEMAY (CA) Change Agency 5 Members</p>	 <p>HOPE DITTMER (US) Service Transformation 9 Members</p>	 <p>CHARLOTTE KNIGHT (IRE) Service Transformation 9 Members</p>

Connections with ISRVA Members

AISRV Members provided training, mentored others, published about inclusive practice, and have put India on the global map in terms

of expertise and leadership in Social Role Valorization.

JHALAK: From Theory to Action

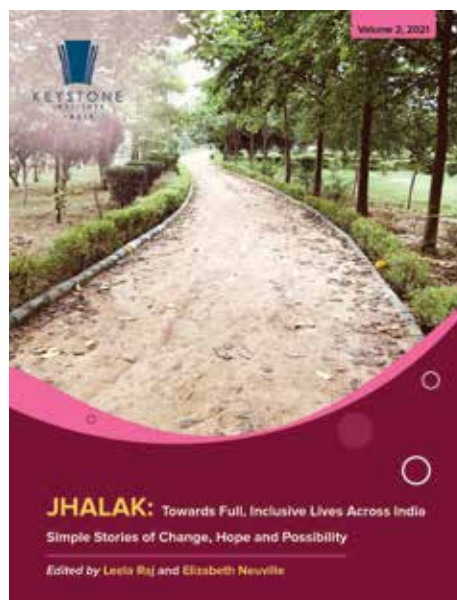


This year we completed the second volume of Jhalak | झलक and duly published it in print and online, both in English and Hindi. This volume gave voice to 13 poignant, powerful vignettes of individual and organizational transformation. Jhalak first premiered online in December 2019, to offer a glimpse into some of the inspired actions, large and small, taking place across India towards an inclusive Indian society where there is a valued place for everyone. Jhalak seeks to depict, in words and powerful images, to highlight, inspire, and challenge our community across India.

Over the past four years, thousands of us across India have been exposed to ideas and ways of thinking that are exciting, challenging, and a bit daunting. These idea sets include the introduction of tools to advance highly individualized inclusive practices, with the higher-order framework of Social Role Valorization laying the foundation. Our purpose within Jhalak is to offer a glimpse of some of the ways that people and organizations across India have put the elegantly simple but also paradoxically complex roots of Social Role Valorization to work in transformative ways, even if they are seemingly small steps. Consider it a bit of a curated "clearinghouse" of vision converted to action, of small steps forming the fabric of our movement towards equity, justice, and full,

rich, meaningful lives. We encourage all to share and celebrate the work of building this inclusive house.

Jhalak is not just about highlighting the work of those who are learning from our workshops and consultations, but also of showing that the ideas we teach bring authentic transformative change in the lives of people as well as in communities, making the good things of life accessible to all, and facilitating full, rich and meaningful lives.



Towards Real Work: Our Initiatives in Supported Employment



Employment is one of the primary pathways for people to contribute and find life purpose. It can contribute significantly to getting people the good things of life. For many, work defines our identity and is a source of pride and self-worth. Work also helps enhance confidence and competency and is an important avenue for building relationships, social connections, and social integration. For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have historically been excluded from typical life opportunities, work provides a level playing field for inclusion in the community.

With a vision to drive a national effort at building expertise in employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the Certification Course in Applied Customized Employment was set to roll out in 2020 with Milton Tyree, leading international expert in supported/customized employment strategies, and an associate with Marc Gold & Associates (MG&A), as the Lead Trainer and we anticipated the creation of the first cadre of fully trained core leaders in customized employment by April 2021. The pandemic impeded this roll out once again last year. With strong resolve and hope, we pulled up our sleeves to get the launch back on track for a September launch. The dates were

finalized, and we reconfirmed the participation of the original partner organizations who, we are happy to report, continue to be invested in the training and recognize its value in changing lives of people with intellectual disability.



Certificate Course in Applied Customized Employment

Work gives people a sense of purpose and self-worth. For many, it defines our identity and is a source of pride. Employment not only provides income and economic independence but also opportunities for rich social interactions and a sense of belonging. All individuals, regardless of disability, deserve the opportunity to be full members of the community where they can live, learn, work, and grow. Yet people with disabilities, especially developmental disabilities, are frequently not considered potential members of the workforce. While myths abound, evidence shows that people with disabilities are more than capable if only we understand their interests, conditions, and contributions.



YOU are specially invited to join us in an intensive 8 month course to gain the skills to be among the pioneer group of fully trained customized employment specialists in India. A rich combination of face-to-face workshops, supplemented by practical application and supervised mentoring will enable you to gain proficiency in such essential skill sets as discovery, writing vocational profiles, working with employers on job design, and systematic instruction from one of the foremost leaders in customized employment for people with developmental disabilities.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT WORKS: A deep-dive exploration of customized employment for individuals with intellectual & developmental disabilities

Let us get together to explore, learn, and understand Customized Employment, a universal employment strategy that can expand employment opportunities for people with significant impact of disability. Join us for an event that explores how individuals with disabilities can contribute their gifts and talents to intersect with employer needs.

Using a foundation of Social Role Valorization, Milton Tyree, leading international expert on supported/customized employment strategies and an associate with Marc Gold & Associates, leads an intensive, practical, and mentored learning experience laying the foundations for creating core Indian leaders in new ideas and frameworks of training in employment.

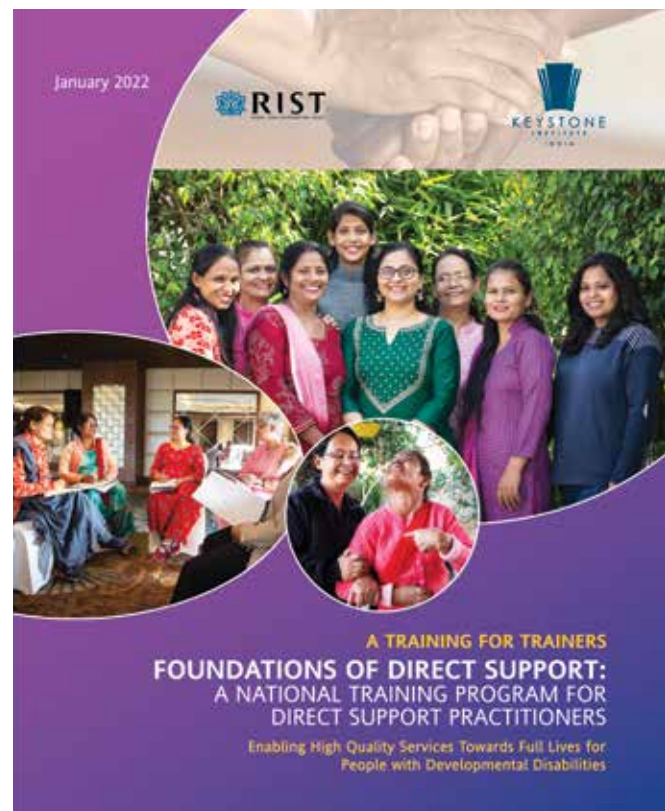
A National Curriculum for High-Quality Direct Support Practitioners



The values-based, robust curriculum developed to develop a niche, valued profession and a competent workforce of Direct Support Practitioners finally bore fruition with a successful pilot launch in July. We envision Direct Support Practitioners as people who work alongside individuals with developmental disabilities supporting them to lead full, rich, and valued lives in a wide array of community settings including but not limited to residences, day centers, workplaces, and schools. This year witnessed this initiative make great strides that started with the pilot launch and then moved on to the live training launch of Phase 1 comprising five foundational modules in January, followed by the Phase 1 practicum in March from which emerged 27 fully certified Master Trainers for Phase 1 of the Foundations of Direct Support Training.

A comprehensive compendium of all the resources the trainers will need was made available to the trainers in the form of a Trainer Manual. The manual is available not just online, but also as a personal owner's printed copy. Besides the manual, the trainers were also provided access to an interim home page online. We strongly believe that a high-quality training

must be accompanied by high-quality training materials that value the trainers, the students they will train, and eventually the people they serve.



International Change Agency



This year saw a number of big contributions to the world at large in terms of building inclusive practice. Co-Authors Elizabeth Neville, Percy Cardozo, Mitu Day, and Raymond Lemay wrote a chapter on *Social Role Valorization in the Indian Context* which was accepted for publication as a textbook chapter. As well, Geeta Mondol and Betsy Neville submitted a paper for the Bright New World Consultation organized by the International Center for Promotion of Enterprises in Slovenia, which was accepted to be published in the proceedings. Betsy Neville presented a multi-service approach towards inclusive

practice at the Light for the World Conference in the northeast.

Finally, we are thrilled that a host of national leaders have joined the International SRV Association and have increased their voice and participation within this world-class group of SRV experts. Participation in many events over this year have brought together practitioners from across the globe to share best practices. This speaks to the rising expertise and passion around the foundational ideas of Social Role Valorization as a unifying theory of practice.

An International Membership Organization Committed to SRV Implementation



Community Lives: Uttarakhand



Creating inclusive societies is a vision that continues to grip us at Keystone Institute India. A society where each person has valued roles and is a genuine and important part of the community contributes towards a society where the welfare of all is in the welfare of each individual. We have continued our work over time to assist 8 women with disability to fully belong in the community of Herbertpur. This year, we have seen a daily embedding into the fabric of the community and collaborating through the choices the women make, one step at a time, towards valued roles and the good things of life. This year was a full year, as the women took part in festivals, and joined a friendly neighbourhood yoga group. The women are actively included in birthday parties, weddings, and potlucks, and are well established, well thought of, and well-known in the neighbourhood.

We were able to increase the number of women to leave the institution by two, and their transition to a new life has been both dramatic and smooth. Our commitment to the 8 women and the team remains strong. In the last one year we have seen the women stepping into many valued roles, getting stronger in them, and energetically defending them and building many more roles through each role. It could be their valued roles of

neighbour, friend, employee, yoga practitioner in the neighbourhood yoga club and so many more. Walking to the day program and back, greeting neighbours as you go by, and having a neighbour bring you back when they see you walking in the hot sun, are all part of that inclusive society.

When the women left their congregated and segregated setting, which included a life of deprivation and loneliness, it was with the information that they had no family and/or were





not interested in having any relationship with them. That too changed. We were able to connect with the sister of one woman and the mother and siblings of another. There was much rejoicing when we were finally able to locate the family of one woman. Neighbours and friends, all came to visit the home where a lost daughter was found, thanks to the determination and good detective work of the team.

Having family visit them and visiting their own family, rebuilding connections long lost and understanding each other, builds bonds not just in one's own community but also in the community of the family.

At the same time, we are committed to build the capacity of the team that works alongside the women. Besides regular workshops, a relaxing, yet informative, and reflective retreat was organized for the team. The program manager participated in the training of trainers for Direct Support Practitioners further equipping her to assist and facilitate the training of the whole team on different aspects of their work.

Part of the commitment we hold is also providing consultation and training to the many family groups and organizations across India to develop and design high quality residential services, especially for those people who are currently living with aging family members. This is the need of the hour in India, often discussed, and

rightfully so. We have been requested to share our story of personalized community integration and participation with many others.

Each of the four partners - the Rural India Supporting Trust, The Hans Foundation, the Government of Uttarakhand, and Keystone - have worked together at each step to not just ensure the success of this program but also look for other exit pathways for the women in Nari Niketan. Now we must turn our attention to program replication across India. In fact, 2022 marks the completion of outcomes measurements demonstrating the growth of the women in irrefutable terms. From independent living skills, to perceived quality of life, to choice and autonomy, to earnings, to integrative activities, and to individualization, steady and even dramatic improvement can be seen and proven. This is powerful data which will drive replication across India.

In the last three years we have seen the women step into many valued roles of neighbour, friend, hostess, employee, community member, yoga club member and many more. It has been a slow, step by step, planned and intentional entry into the many roles to have access to the good things of life. In fact, the success of the Community Lives program has led to the establishment of the Unity Uttarakhand (Family Reunification) Project for the men and women at two government institutional facilities in Uttarakhand.

THE UNITY UTTARAKHAND (Family Reunification) PROJECT



People do not belong to institutions. They belong to themselves, their families, their communities, and loved ones. It is this thought and belief that energized our commitment to creating exit pathways from 2 institutions in Uttarakhand. The Unity Uttarakhand is our second project towards this vision. It creates yet another step towards meaningful relationships as it reunites families with long lost members of theirs, some separated for a few years and some for decades.

We do not only look at reuniting families but also providing the necessary supports to the family and the person to ensure a smooth transition. It is not just about locating families, but also about counselling families, assisting in the transition, and facilitating all the supports that are required for the person and his or her family, supports which would be sustained for a year.

For this purpose, a designated team was hired to work exclusively towards reuniting people from Nari Niketan as well as Selaqui Mental Health Institute, back with their families. This team of two people facilitates and operates the reunification efforts besides also serving as liaison with the

administration, staff, government, local NGOs, and others.

The process began with setting up the office in Nari Niketan along with preparing the initial screening tool and assessment forms. Simultaneously, regular interactions were held with the women in Nari Niketan to build relationships with them. The idea was to build trust amongst the women so that they are comfortable enough to share their story that could help us in reunifying them with their families. With the support of the Nari Niketan staff, detailed information about all the women was collected to help us understand what was already known about them.

Permission from the Women Welfare Department was received to share, judiciously, photographs and address details of the women to aid the process of reunification. Soon after, we were able to reunite one woman, who was separated from her family for 5 years, back to her family in January 2022. The team also travelled to various regions of Uttarakhand to conduct pre-reunification home visit to assess the viability of the reunification and ensure that the person would be safe and how



can they be supported post reunification, should that happen. In February 2022, the MOU was signed by the Chief Medical Superintendent of the Selaqui Mental Health Institute which allowed us to start the reunification process for the people living there too.

It is our belief that initiating a collaborative approach will not only enrich the lives of the people currently living at Nari Niketan and Selaqui Mental Health Institute but will also open the doorway to offering other living alternatives for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as psychosocial disorders. There may be some people for whom reintegration with family is impossible or inadvisable. For that, there must be a dignified non-institutional option developed over time.

Unity Uttarakhand project is the second such exit pathway out of institutions with such positive options. This vision is with the hope that with the establishment of projects like Community Lives and Unity Uttarakhand will develop an alternative vision to the despair and loneliness of these institutions.



Our Staff and Associate Faculty



MS. ELIZABETH "BETSY" NEUVILLE
Executive Director



DR. IMRAN ALI
Director of Administration



MS. GEETA MONDOL
Project Leader/Program Specialist



MS. LEELA RAJ
Project Leader



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