



Cognizant Foundation
Yearbook 2021/22

**TOGETHER,
BETTER.**



Contents

Together, Better.

Messages from the Board

2021/22 at a Glance

Healthcare

Education

Livelihood



At Cognizant Foundation we are building a sustainable ecosystem at the intersections of technology, inclusion and collaboration.

Our programmes are designed and implemented with a core focus on inclusion. We believe that inclusion does not mean exclusion; inclusion for us is promoting equity and enabling participation of people who are disadvantaged by enabling opportunities and access to resources.

Our Interventions have a strong focus on child and women welfare, gender equality, prevention of disability and supporting persons with disability and our interventions are primarily in the thematic areas of Healthcare, Education and Livelihood

Cognizant Foundation. Together, Better.



Message From

RAJESH NAMBIAR

Chairman, Cognizant Foundation and Chairman & Managing Director, Cognizant India

At Cognizant, we are deeply committed to creating conditions for everyone to thrive in. The Foundation continues to support underserved individuals across the country in three key focus areas: Healthcare, Education and Livelihood.

Under Cognizant's 'Operation C3—Cognizant Combats COVID-19' programme, the Foundation continued its efforts towards strengthening the country's public healthcare infrastructure, which was under severe strain, working closely with our partners.

I would like to acknowledge the guidance and contribution of our board member and former union health secretary, Mr. Keshav Desiraju, who passed away last year. He was passionate about our healthcare projects and his insights guided us in our efforts to support women and child welfare and mental health programmes.

In 2021, the Foundation realigned its goals and launched initiatives focused on the welfare of children, women, and persons with disabilities. We are pleased that the Foundation's 'Preventing Childhood Blindness' initiative was selected as the winner in the 'Healthcare (Large)' category at the 7th CSR Impact Awards.

As the uptake of digital tools and solutions accelerate globally, it is important that persons with disabilities and women from underserved communities are not excluded from the workforce of the future. In 2021, the Foundation also launched its flagship programme – Tech4All, which empowers these groups to build careers in technology and technology-enabled services.

While we continue to champion initiatives on promoting digital inclusion and equity in India, we are focused on supporting programmes that harness the power of technology to improve lives and drive social impact. We deeply thank our partners for helping us in our journey towards leveraging technology for social good.



Message From
N. R. KRISHNAN, IAS (Retd.)
Director, Cognizant Foundation

With seventeen years of experience, Cognizant Foundation has come of age and this graduation has been marked by an encouraging recognition of its work by industry peers and social media. These eventful years have taught us that things which everyone does could be done differently and to better effect. The shift from mundane philanthropy to focussed intervention has proved effective in sectors like Healthcare and Education. Pan India projects with substantial financial commitments from Cognizant Foundation have recorded notable success not only in urban areas but in rural locations as well. Credit for this achievement goes largely to the institutions that the Foundation is associated with.

COVID-19 gave us yet another opportunity to demonstrate what timely and adequate intervention can do and how government and industry can hit-off together to serve a common cause.

With more innovations like deploying the special skills of Cognizant in digital tech applications to assisted projects and partnering with leading research institutions in technology incubation, the coming years may have many interesting stories to report.



Message From
K. BALAJI
Director, Cognizant Foundation

The year under review saw Cognizant Foundation firmly pivot its operations towards fulfilling the goal of “Empowering Communities through Inclusive Development.” Evidence of this focus was to be found even in its COVID-19 relief work. The Foundation supported vaccination for persons with disabilities in partnership with NGOs and in collaboration with Government Primary Health Centres (PHCs): over 4000 people with disabilities and over 4000 of their caretakers in Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka, and over 5000 people with disabilities and over 5000 of their caretakers in the slums of Kolkata, West Bengal benefitted. Support for COVID-related work continued to figure prominently, and at times – especially during the “oxygen crisis” – with the same frantic urgency of the previous year.

Two other initiatives to further inclusion and diversity we would like to mention here are Tech4All – a skilling programme for empowering women in underserved communities and persons with disabilities to build careers in technology and technology-enabled services, and ‘Blimey’ – a cloud-based learning platform developed in partnership with EnAble India to make digital learning accessible in multiple local languages for the visually impaired. In the area of healthcare Cognizant Foundation’s “Preventing Childhood Blindness” initiative came in for top recognition (in the ‘Large’ category) at the 7th CSR Impact Awards. Since 2019, over 123,800 infants and children have been screened across six states in partnership with five premier eye health institutions of which over 1,300 infants and children have received sight-saving treatments, and 2,700 children now have prescription eyewear.

Cognizant Foundation’s robust partner ecosystem continues to grow from strength to strength. One is also very happy to see the Foundation’s own staff resources being enhanced to meet the demands of the sharper strategic focus as well as the increased scrutiny and accountability requirements of CSR activities.



Message From
Dr. NANDINI RANGASWAMY
Director, Cognizant Foundation

I am glad that Cognizant Foundation has continued its commendable work during the current year, despite the impact of the pandemic. All of us realise how difficult recent months have been and, on behalf of the Board, I want to commend and appreciate the work carried out by the team.

The three focus areas of the Foundation – Healthcare, Education, and Livelihood – have experienced tectonic changes due to the advancement of technology. All these three areas have been impacted significantly and forced organisations to rethink their strategies. In some cases, even the very purpose of their existence. Employees have once again emerged as the centre of an enterprise. In this context, the Cognizant Outreach programme is aptly placed to augment its reach to a larger community and society. I pray that humanity gains compassion, service, and love for fellow humans from this unexpected and unprecedented calamity. Cognizant Foundation can and should play a significant role and we will continue to encourage and support its initiatives.

Overview



304,700+ Lives Reached



53 NGO Partners



Engagement in 11 States



**Winner 7th CSR
Impact Awards 2021**

The year under review saw Cognizant Foundation enter its 18th year of empowering change for the most marginalised and disadvantaged communities in India. Over the last 17 years, the Foundation has successfully implemented over 500 projects by partnering with over 300 not-for-profit organisations and impacted the lives of millions of underprivileged individuals across the country.

In 2021, Cognizant Foundation undertook a strategy realignment exercise. As a result, our focus going forward would be inclusion as an anchor with a deeper focus on gender and disability across the three sectors of healthcare, education and livelihood. We will also seek to leverage the power of digital technology to amplify and scale the impact of our programmes in order to serve the greater good.

The year saw the Foundation making key advances in its goal to promote inclusion. We worked to prevent disability through healthcare interventions while our education and livelihood interventions sought to integrate women and persons with disabilities into society through inclusive education and skilling. The Foundation, along with our partners, hosted events aimed at enabling dialogue in the impact ecosystem to aid collective impact and collaboration.

The healthcare flagship programme ‘Preventing Avoidable Blindness’ worked to make timely, quality eye care services accessible and affordable to underserved communities. The ‘Preventing Childhood Blindness’ initiative under this programme seeks to combat childhood blindness to prevent disability in children and won the “Healthcare (Large)” category at the 7th CSR Impact Awards 2021. Through another key initiative, ‘Promoting Women and Child Health’, the Foundation worked to provide access to maternal and child healthcare with a special focus on preventing infant disability.

Overview

As part of our rapid response to the deadly second wave of COVID-19 in 2021, Cognizant launched 'Operation C3' with the aim of protecting the health and safety of not only the employees and their families but vulnerable communities across the country. Under Operation C3, we collaborated with several NGOs and health authorities to mobilise lifesaving care and delivered over 800 oxygenated COVID-19 care beds for free. To address inequities in access to vaccination, we arranged special COVID-19 vaccination camps for persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

In line with our increased focus on inclusion and technology as an enabler, the year saw the Foundation launch 'Blimey' - a cloud-based learning platform to make digital learning accessible for the visually impaired in multiple local languages. We also laid the groundwork to launch a pilot programme in education towards teacher development for an inclusive school system. This pilot will seek to demonstrate models for digital integration in inclusive education through a free and open digital ecosystem. The Foundation supported trajectories of inclusion in higher education through scholarships for visually impaired students. It continued to provide equitable access to higher education for graduate study across social sciences and teacher education for children with special needs.

Committed to creating a social environment of inclusivity and diversity, Cognizant Foundation announced the launch of our flagship skilling programme - Tech4All - on the International Day of Disabled Persons. Tech4All aims to empower persons with disabilities and women from underserved communities and help them build careers in technology and technology-enabled services. During the year, the Foundation also provided skills training in the services and engineering sectors to persons with disabilities and women enabling them to gain employment.

In the year under review, Cognizant Foundation reached over 304,700 lives, in partnership with 53 not-for-profit organisations. While the primary geographical focus was on eight states - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, NCR, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal - some projects were pan-India and others extended to states beyond these eight, depending on the need.

We thank Cognizant and our partners who joined hands with us in our mission to promote inclusion through impactful programmes that enabled some of the most underserved communities, including children, women, and persons with disabilities to lead better lives. We look forward to amplifying the scale and reach of our interventions in the coming years.

Overview



Cognizant Foundation aligns to UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Cognizant Foundation's initiatives align with the following SDGs:



Good health and well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



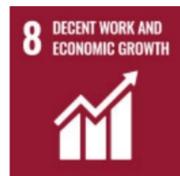
Quality education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



Gender equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Decent work and economic growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Reduce inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries



Partnerships for the goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development





Message From
RAJASHREE NATARAJAN
CEO, Cognizant Foundation

As we enter our 18th year of empowering change for India's most marginalised and disadvantaged communities, we are pretty excited about how our projects across the years are adding up to building an inclusive society.

Thanks to our committed partners, our work in Preventing Childhood Blindness, a part of our healthcare interventions to prevent disability, was recognised at the CSR Impact Awards 2021. What is truly rewarding for us is that, despite the pandemic posing significant challenges to implementing some of our projects like Screening and Treating 'Retinopathy of Prematurity' a medical emergency that, if not treated within the first month of birth, can result in permanent blindness, our implementation partner agencies took all steps to reach out to the newborns.

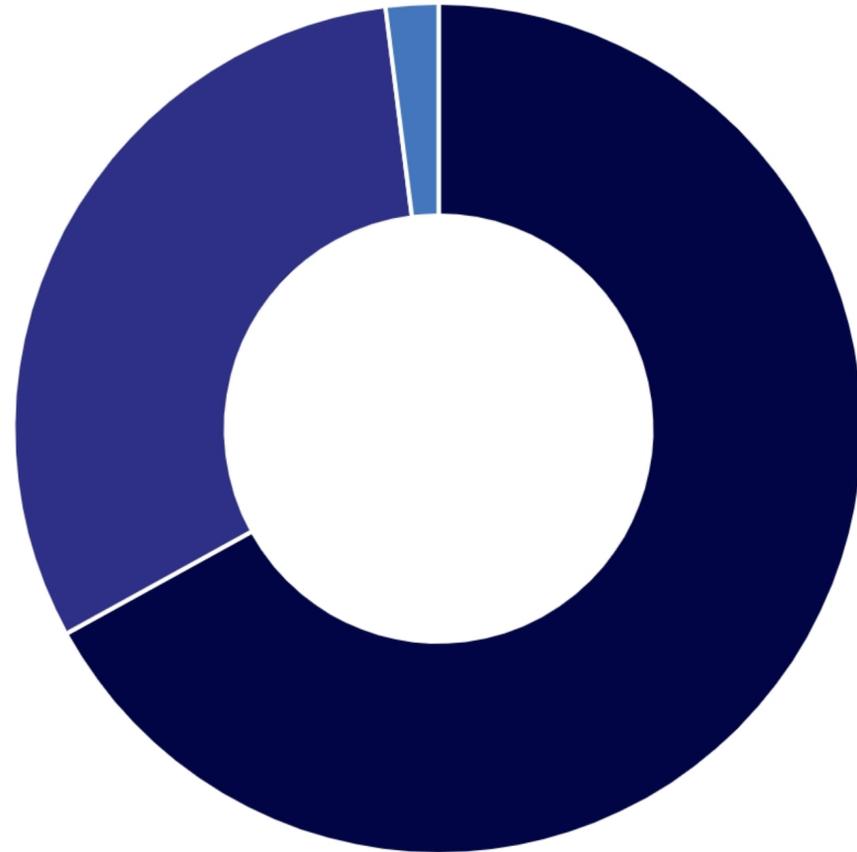
We thank Cognizant leadership and the Foundation's Board of Directors for guiding us to widen our focus to the outcome and impact created for the beneficiaries over just the output numbers. Though the cost per beneficiary treated in an ROP project is almost 20 times that of a Cataract project for adults, we could look beyond the number of beneficiaries we could reach for the same investment and measure Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs), which helps us understand the impact created by an ROP intervention. We miss the wisdom shared by our beloved member of the Board of Directors, Mr. Keshav Desiraju, who passed away last year. The passion and insights he shared will continue to inspire and guide us in our efforts to prevent disability through our Healthcare interventions.

We sharpened our efforts on promoting inclusion and scaling our impact by leveraging technology in our Education and Skilling initiatives. With the support of partners, we could provide not only scholarships for the underprivileged and visually impaired to pursue their dream education but provide necessary skill training that empowers them to pursue a fulfilling career.

We provide necessary technology skilling as part of our programmes and deploy the power of digital technology to scale our programmes, creating a more significant impact and delivering maximum value to our beneficiaries to thrive and grow in the digital world.

Thanks to the continuous support from our partners, our team, and Cognizant Volunteers, we were able to brave the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to stay focused on our mission of building an inclusive society.

Impact by Sectors



Healthcare

206,800+ lives impacted by bringing quality healthcare within reach

Education

97,000+ learners impacted by enabling access and facilitating inclusion for quality education

Skilling

780+ lives empowered by enabling underserved persons with skill-training programmes



Healthcare Overview

206,800+ People Received Access to Quality Healthcare in 2021/22

In 2021/22, Cognizant Foundation continued to support healthcare programmes of deserving organisations to make quality medical services more accessible to underserved people in the country. Under this focus area, “Preventing Avoidable Blindness” and “Promoting Women and Child Health” have been adapted as the two flagship programmes with an aim to prevent disability and promote good health, particularly among children and women. The year also saw the COVID-19 pandemic enter its second year, raining untold misery on millions. Cognizant Foundation rendered extensive support to Government and not-for-profit institutions to help alleviate the stress on the country’s health system.

Preventing Avoidable Blindness

According to a report by The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, globally 1.1 billion people live with vision loss. The same report estimated that in 2020, India was home to around 270 million people who were suffering from vision loss, of which 9.2 million were blind. The unfortunate part is that around 90% of this could have been prevented had they received proper, timely care.

Blindness and vision impairment are major health problems in India that cause profound human and socio-economic impact and Cognizant Foundation has chosen “Preventing Avoidable Blindness” as our flagship healthcare programme with the objective of making quality eye care services accessible and affordable to underserved communities. The programme aims to nip degenerative vision conditions in the bud and help adults and children lead brighter, more colourful lives.

**130,200+ Lives
Impacted in 2021/22**

**12
NGO Partners**

**Operations in
9 States**

Preventing Childhood Blindness



Increasing Access to Quality Eye Care for Underserved Communities



Preventing Childhood Blindness

School & Community Eye Screening For Children

Uncorrected refractive errors are the single largest cause of visual impairment, especially among children since they tend to be unaware that they have a problem in the first place. Many visually impaired children in developing countries tend to either not attend school or drop out, increasing their likelihood of entering the poverty trap.

The Foundation's projects in this area provide comprehensive eye health services to children in the community and schools. Children are screened for refractive errors and other eye conditions, while they are at school or right at their doorsteps. Those in need of spectacles are given prescription eyewear in the presence of their parents or teachers. Children needing surgeries and other treatment are referred to the base hospital where the treatment is provided free of cost or at subsidised rates. Periodic check-ups are done to monitor the efficacy of the interventions and ensure compliance. Counselling support is also provided when needed.

In 2020, Cognizant Foundation commissioned a school eye screening project in 250 schools in North-West Delhi. However, COVID-enforced school closure compelled us to pivot to a community screening project instead wherein the team went door-to-door to screen kids, while taking the necessary precautions. The project was executed using PEEK, a smartphone app that helps community healthcare workers deliver eye care anywhere. The app can scan the eye to check for diseases as well as other problems. It works by looking at visual acuity, visual field, colour vision and contrast sensitivity. By using a smartphone, it replaces bulky traditional equipment which is expensive, fragile, and often requires a continuous power source.

48,700+ Children Screened in 2021/22

1476 Spectacles Given

82 Surgeries Conducted

LOCATION **NW Delhi**

PARTNER **Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, New Delhi**

School & Community Eye Screening For Children

Case Study

“Our daughter always has a big smile on her face, and now she dreams of being a doctor.”

She was six years old when Shilpa* realised that she couldn't see as well as her friends could. She was not able to clearly read what the teacher had written on the blackboard or the flavours of ice cream sold by her neighbourhood street vendor. While she tried to hide it as best as she could, one of her teachers realised that Shilpa was not able to read clearly and immediately informed her parents.

Shilpa was born into an economically disadvantaged family. Her family consisted of her father, a daily-wage labourer, her mother, a housewife, and two siblings. After her vision impairment was detected, her parents took her to a nearby hospital where she was diagnosed with squint in both eyes. But the cost of treatment was too much for them to bear. They tried a lot of different clinics and hospitals hoping to find a solution that they could afford, all to no avail. Eventually, they were forced to give up with Shilpa resigned to a lifetime of blurred sights.

Luck. Divine intervention. Call it what you will. But a few weeks afterwards, Shilpa's home was visited by a team from Dr. Shroff's Eye Hospital as part of the door-to-door community eye screening programme supported by Cognizant Foundation. Her eyes were re-examined, and squint reconfirmed by the team who advised her parents to visit the hospital for further investigation and free treatment.

At the hospital, the counsellor explained the treatment plan to the family and calmed their fears regarding the surgery. He also helped them complete the requisite pre-surgery paperwork. Finally, within a month of being visited by the screening team, Shilpa was successfully operated upon.

“Our daughter always has a big smile on her face, and now she dreams of being a doctor. This is because of the excellent care she received from the doctors at Dr. Shroff's Eye Hospital,” says Shilpa's father. “I will always be thankful to Cognizant Foundation for supporting the Community Eye Screening programme which has helped my daughter and others like her,” he added.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



School & Community Eye Screening For Children

Case Study

“Thank you to all the doctors and nurses at the hospital and everyone at Cognizant Foundation for helping me and my family.”

In 2014, when Sourav* was 2 years old, his mom noticed squint in both his eyes. A single mom from an economically disadvantaged background, she knew that she did not have the resources to give him the best available care. But, she still took him to Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital to see if they had any options. Back then, there was no free treatment facility available at the hospital and they had to leave empty-handed.

When he grew older, Sourav joined the local government school. There, other children passed comments about his squint eyes which drained his self-confidence, and slowly he started withdrawing from attending family functions and school events. He even stopped going outside to play badminton, a game he loved.

In November 2021, almost 7 years after his squint was detected, Sourav was screened by a team from Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital as part of the community eye screening programme supported by Cognizant Foundation. The medical team appraised the mother of his condition and advised them to visit the hospital for further care. The glow on her face when she was told that the treatment would be free could’ve lit up the entire room.

Sourav has now completely recovered after his surgery and dreams of being a soldier. “I don’t feel bad about myself anymore, and that is thanks to the care I received. Thank you to all the doctors and nurses at the hospital and everyone at Cognizant Foundation for helping me and my family,” Sourav said, before running out to play with his friends.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Screening and Treatment of ROP

Screening and Treatment of ROP

Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) is an eye disorder that affects pre-term infants within the first month of birth. Left untreated, ROP can lead to irreversible blindness or lifelong vision impairment. Some of the key challenges for the treatment of ROP include the lack of awareness among parents and the availability of skilled ophthalmologists and the necessary medical equipment to treat the condition. Moreover, ROP does not produce any obvious symptoms, making it hard to diagnose.

In 2021/22, we continued our efforts in the screening and treatment of ROP by partnering with NGOs and specialist eye hospitals and supporting projects in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu. The babies identified with ROP and needing treatment are treated with laser, injection or surgery depending on the stage of the disease. This treatment is administered either at the district hospital or at the city neonatal centres, depending on the severity of the case.

The project uses the 3nethra Neo, a compact, portable, and easy-to-use mydriatic wide-field imaging camera used for the photo documentation of ocular diseases that manifest in the human eye. It is an indigenous lower-priced alternative. Neo Camera at a lower cost with the same functionality has facilitated ROP programs that were not possible earlier due to prohibitive cost.

3,900+ Babies Screened in 2021/22

426 Babies Treated

LOCATION

Andhra Pradesh | Maharashtra | Odisha | Tamil Nadu | Telangana

PARTNER

**Aravind Eye Hospital, Chennai | H.V. Desai Eye Hospital, Pune
L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad | Mission for Vision, Mumbai**

Screening and Treatment of ROP

Case Study

"Without H.V. Desai Hospital, Cognizant Foundation and Mission for Vision, our son would've gone blind."

One of the happiest moments in any married couple's life is when they become parents. For the Zayed, however, the joy was quickly replaced by anxiety.

Residents of Satara, Maharashtra, Mrs. and Mr. Zayed* were the happiest people in town when the pregnancy was confirmed. Even though they were not well-off, Mr. Zayed did his best to make sure that his wife was made as comfortable as possible. He had lost his job because of the pandemic and was working as a daily-wage labourer earning a meagre 400 rupees a day. This was not enough to support his pregnant wife and widowed mother, but they made do in the hopes of being blessed with a healthy and happy child.

When she was 7 months pregnant, Mrs. Zayed was rushed to the local government hospital with sharp abdominal pain where she was recommended immediate C-section. The baby boy was born pre-term at 30 weeks and weighed only 1,500 grams. Due to the infant's poor health condition, there was a dire need for intensive care, and he was shifted to a private NICU. The little soul had developed respiratory distress syndrome, jaundice and anaemia which required comprehensive medical assistance.

After 17 days of treatment, the baby was stable and ready to get discharged. When Mr. Zayed went to the billing counter with a few notes he had managed to arrange, he was shocked to see the six-digit bill that had accrued. Faced with no alternative, he had to borrow at a high interest rate from a money lender to make the payment.

At discharge, the paediatrician advised getting the baby's eyes checked for ROP at District Hospital, Satara (DHS) where regular screening is done by the team from H.V. Desai Eye Hospital (HVDEH) and Mission for Vision, as part of the project supported by Cognizant Foundation.

The baby was assessed and ROP was confirmed in both eyes, with the right being severe. Immediate treatment was given at DHS and the baby was shifted to HVDEH, Pune to further care. Amidst the uncertainties, Mr. Zayed was worried about one thing – the treatment costs. With a spluttering speech, he explained about his debilitating debt and asked the team about the costs of the ROP treatment. When he learnt that the entire procedure would be free, he was overwhelmed with happiness.

Baby Zayed underwent laser surgery on both eyes within 24 hours of visiting HVDEH. Since ROP was severe in the right eye, a second bout of surgery was required which was done a week later. The baby is now recovering well and is on his way to a bright future.

"Without H.V. Desai Hospital, Cognizant Foundation and Mission for Vision, our son would've gone blind. Your support came at a crucial time and I will forever be grateful for it," Mr. Zayed said.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Screening and Treatment of ROP

Case Study

“A tragedy has been averted today and many babies have been saved from a lifetime of blindness thanks to LVPEI and Cognizant Foundation.”

The day started like most other days for the paediatrician in MKCG Medical College Hospital in Behampur, Odisha. He had made a rough plan of how his day was going to pan out and the patients he had to check up on. But just as he was going to start his morning rounds, he received a frantic phone call from the ophthalmologist at the medical college – there were 11 babies in the hospital that day who were at imminent risk of blindness due to severe ROP!

Apart from being born premature, the babies also had other conditions which affected their health including septicaemia, respiratory distress and arrhythmia. All of them were on oxygen support in the NICU and some even had had multiple blood transfusions.

L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) in Bhubaneswar was the closest hospital equipped to treat ROP. However, the health condition of the babies meant that transporting them over the 170-odd kilometres which separated the two cities would be extremely risky. The paediatrician from Berhampur decided to contact LVPEI anyway to ask for their help.

As soon as the call came in, the ROP Mobile Unit at LVPEI swung into action. The unit, created with support from Cognizant Foundation, is well-equipped to travel to remote areas and provide effective treatment. The team rushed to Berhampur and within a few hours, the babies were screened and ROP re-confirmed. Emergency assistance to arrest the spread of ROP was given then and there through intraocular injections for babies needing treatment. Once the babies were strong enough to travel, follow-up care was provided at the LVPEI campus in Bhubaneswar.

The parents of the babies and the paediatric staff were relieved knowing that the kids would be all-right, and thanked LVPEI and Cognizant Foundation for promptly delivering skilful services. “There is nothing worse than the helplessness you feel when you see infants with a preventable, blindness-causing disease and you know that you don’t have the equipment to save them. A tragedy has been averted today and many babies have been saved from a lifetime of blindness thanks to LVPEI and Cognizant Foundation. Initiatives like this truly change the world in small, yet significant ways,” a healthcare professional at Berhampur said.



Increasing Access to Quality Eye Care for Underserved Communities

Setting Up and Running of Vision Centres

First envisaged in 'Vision 2020: The Right to Sight' - a global initiative of the International Agency of Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) - Vision Centres are set-up in easily accessible areas and provide free treatment which can range from prescription eyeglasses to surgeries. While minor issues such as refractive errors are treated at the Vision Centre, patients requiring further interventions are referred to partner hospitals for treatment. Each Vision Centre caters to a population of 50,000 people and is designed to be sustainable from the third year of operations so that they can continue to exist and thrive in the community beyond the support from the donor.

The Foundation has supported the setting up and running of five Vision Centres one each in Barpeta, Barpeta Pathsala, Nalbari, Udalguri and Goalpara districts of Assam. It continued its support for the running of the Vision Centre set up in Chalisgaon, Maharashtra. The Foundation also supported the cataract surgery of patients identified from the Vision Centre supported in Kolar district, Karnataka. These projects jointly supported the eye screening and treatment of underserved patients at no cost to the patients. The Vision Centres in Assam and Maharashtra have telemedicine facility which enables consultation with experts in the base hospital helping immediate and accurate diagnosis without the cost of travel and loss of wages for the patients.

PARTNER

**Globe Eye Foundation, Kolar | Mission for Vision, Mumbai
Operation Eyesight India, Hyderabad | Sri Sankaradeva Netralaya,
Guwahati Tulsi Eye Hospital, Nashik**

8 Vision Centres

4800+ Patients Screened in 2021/22

1740+ Patients Treated

LOCATION

Assam | Karnataka | Maharashtra

Setting Up and Running of Vision Centres

Case Study

“I have new meaning to my life now and can spend my days with dignity once again.”

Most people wake up in the morning with new optimism, looking forward to the day ahead. For 60-year-old Mrs. Shubha*, the opposite was true. From a very young age, she had lived a life of independence, not seeking help from others for her tasks and always ready to lend a helping hand to her parents, husband, children, relatives or friends. However, when her eyesight started decreasing, her life changed drastically.

A resident of Chalisgaon, Mrs. Shubha had developed a cataract in her left eye and was unable to see clearly. She was facing a lot of difficulties in her day-to-day but kept it a secret from her family since they were struggling with their own problems. Their income had halved due to the pandemic and her husband had been bed-ridden for months. She had no choice but to continue working. As the cataract matured, she started losing her ability to do even simple tasks properly, and feelings of hopelessness, despair and depression slowly started taking over.

One day, when Mrs. Shubha was at the local clinic to collect medicines for her husband, the doctor there noticed that she was struggling to read. One look at her cloudy eyes and he was sure that it was cataract. He asked her to visit the Chalisgaon Vision Centre, which was run by Tulsi Eye Hospital with support from Cognizant Foundation and Mission for Vision, for treatment.

When she visited the Vision Centre, Mrs. Shubha had mixed feelings. On the one hand, she was happy knowing that her vision could be restored, but on the other, she was worried about the cost of treatment and her zero capacity to pay. Her fears were allayed when she was informed that all her treatment, including surgery, would be done free of cost.

Since the cataract was severe, she was operated on the very next day and discharged after another 24 hours. Her vision has now improved considerably, and she is going about her day with confidence once more.

“I have new meaning to my life now and can spend my days with dignity once again. This is thanks to Tulsi Eye Hospital, Cognizant Foundation and Mission for Vision. May God bless the noble work that they do,” Mrs. Shubha says.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Setting Up and Running of Vision Centres

Case Study

“I had started to believe that I would never get my sight back. I am forever grateful to Cognizant Foundation.”

Janardhan Reddy*, a 78-year-old man, lives with his wife in a small, rented kutchra house in Bangarpet (a part of the Kolar district in Karnataka). He used to work for a daily wage as a mason at construction sites, and since they had no kids, it was his meagre income that sustained the couple.

It was around two years back that Mr. Reddy realised that his eyesight was weakening. It started gradually – he started not being able to see clearly in the evenings and moving around after sunset became especially hard. Gradually, his ability to work suffered, affecting the family income which slowly pushed the couple to the brink of starvation.

During a routine door-to-door survey by a team from Bangarpet Vision Centre, Mr. Reddy was screened and referred to the Vision Centre for final analysis. After a comprehensive examination, he was diagnosed with mature cataracts on both eyes and blindness in the right eye. The optometrist advised him to undergo surgery, but the high cost of the procedure meant that it was beyond Mr. Reddy's means.

The couple felt helpless about their situation – the solution to their problems was a simple surgery but it was beyond their reach. Mr. Reddy was worried that he would have to live out the rest of his life as a blind person.

A few weeks later, as Mr. Reddy was losing hope, he received wonderful news – he was shortlisted for free cataract surgery supported by Cognizant Foundation. He underwent the procedure at Global Eye Foundation's secondary hospital in Kolar and his post-operative vision has now improved to normal.

He can now perform his daily chores independently and is back at work as an agricultural labourer and financially supporting his wife.

“I had started to believe that I would never get my sight back. I am forever grateful to Cognizant Foundation, Globe Eye Foundation and Operation Eyesight India for not just supporting my surgery, but also providing for my transportation, accommodation and food at the hospital. I have also gotten surgery done for my wife, and now we can live out days in happiness,” Mr. Reddy says.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Increasing Access to Quality Eye Care for Underserved Communities

Support for Retinal Injections to Underserved Patients

Sankara Nethralaya provides free retinal injections to patients from underserved sections of society for complicated conditions like Diabetic Macular Oedema, Age-related Macular Degeneration and Diabetic Retinopathy.

Cognizant Foundation has supported the institution with 124 free retinal injections for patients in their Chennai and Kolkata campuses in 2021/22.

124 Injections Administered in 2021/22

PARTNER
Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai

LOCATION
Chennai, Tamil Nadu | Kolkata, West Bengal

Support for Ophthalmic Research by Premier Eye Health Institutions

Fungal Keratitis is an infection of the cornea, which, if left untreated, could cause permanent vision impairment. While anti-fungal treatments can be effective, a large number of patients do not respond to medication if the corneal ulcer has progressed. Cognizant Foundation supports Aravind Medical Research Foundation (AMRF) in their research which aims to identify the infecting organism and predict disease progression and specific host response. This would enable AMRF to arrive at an evidence-based method to personalise treatment for patients affected by the disease.

Cognizant Foundation has supported AMRF's research project for the sequencing of metagenomes and helped procure medical equipment, consumables and manpower.

PARTNER
Aravind Medical Research Foundation, Madurai

Promoting Women and Child Health

Unfortunately, most maternal and child deaths occur despite known and affordable treatments being available. The need of the hour is to improve access to quality basic health services for women and children, which can save millions of lives. Improving maternal and child health is also a key National Health Goal under the National Health Mission (NHM).

In 2021/22 Cognizant Foundation continued to support programmes that provide quality and timely healthcare to underserved women and children. These programmes focus on reducing infant mortality, infant disability, and maternal mortality.

**28,800+ Lives Impacted
in 2021/22**

**6
NGO Partners**

**Operations in
3 States**

Technology-enabled Post-discharge Care for New-borns



Project Suraksha



Project SAMARTH



Medical Equipment for Underprivileged Women and Children



Technology-enabled Post-discharge Care for New-borns

There has been an undeniable improvement in perinatal care over the last decade which has resulted in better survival and reduced morbidity in the neonatal population. But there is still a large population of children, especially those born preterm or sick at birth, who are at great risk of developing health and development problems. These infants need regular follow-up care at multiple levels to avert postnatal complications.

Follow-up rates for at-risk neonates discharged from SNCUs in Tamil Nadu are high for the first one or two visits but fall precipitously thereafter. This can be due to a number of factors such as not understanding the importance of follow-up care, reduced accessibility, lack of community connect, failure to identify a sick child in time, etc. To tackle these issues and improve post-discharge care, Cognizant Foundation is supporting IIT Madras for a project to roll out a technology solution for temperature monitoring of new-born babies.

Launched in 2020, this 3-year project is an end-to-end intervention that connects hospitals, mothers and new-borns using a wireless monitoring device and connectivity platform. The monitoring device – 98.6 Fever Watch – is a compact continuous fever monitoring system with a Bluetooth-enabled sensor. Parents receive the device for use for one month from the date of discharge. The device was developed by Helyxon Healthcare – a company incubated by the IIT Madras Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre.

Fever Watch is helped by My+ Health mobile app, installed in parents' mobile phones, which sends periodic, personalised and protocol-based messages to the parents. Kid Care Provider app, installed on the community health worker's tablet/mobile phone, is used to follow-up and monitors post-discharge at-risk infants.

Aim: Reach 10,000 babies and families/caregivers over 3 years

LOCATION Tamil Nadu

PARTNER

**Chengalpattu Medical College Hospital, Chengalpattu
IIT Madras, Chennai | Institute of Child Health, Chennai
Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Chennai
JIPMER, Puducherry | Saveetha Medical College Hospital,
Chennai**

Project Suraksha

Launched in 2020, Project Suraksha is a five-year project which aims to reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality in Bhiwandi and Malegaon, Maharashtra. The project raises awareness of the importance of ante-natal care (ANC) and post-natal care (PNC), improves access to information and facilitates communication and transportation for pregnant women and lactating mothers. It also facilitates continual medical care, immunization and micro-nutrient supplements to high-risk pregnant women and lactating mothers throughout their pregnancy and to children between 0-2 years of age.

Project Suraksha makes use of digital technology to improve impact. The field staff record the data of the women and children through tablets with specially designed software and use this information to provide continued care. Since the launch of the project, it has reached over 35,000 women and children and over 7400 of them in the high-risk category.

18,750+ Women & Children Reached in 2021/22

4000+ High-risk Women & Children Supported

LOCATION

Bhiwandi and Malegaon, Maharashtra

PARTNER

Committed Communities Development Trust, Mumbai

Project Suraksha

Case Study

“Thanks to this initiative, my daughter is growing up well. I am also passing on everything I know to other expectant mothers in the area.”

21-year-old Sana Banao* is originally from Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. Her husband is a daily-wage worker at construction sites and had shifted with his wife to Bhiwandi, Maharashtra in search of job opportunities. Initially, the couple had a tough time adjusting to their surroundings, but soon they were able to make it home. A few months later, they were overjoyed to know that Sana was pregnant.

During the 7th month of her pregnancy, Sana became a beneficiary of Project Suraksha. The outreach workers who spoke to her almost immediately realised that she didn't have any awareness of modern delivery and childcare techniques. She was inclined towards a home birth using the services of a Dai (traditional birth attendant) – something which was prevalent in the area. Through consistent communication, awareness and education, Sana understood the importance of institutional delivery. She also started ensuring that her immediate surroundings were kept neat and tidy to prevent infections and improve overall health.

To ensure a nutritional diet, Sana was provided with a grocery kit, which she used in a productive way. She used the jaggery in it to make Chikki and Til Ladoo; the rice was used to make a traditional dish called Dhudi while the Soyabean chunks were fried with egg and consumed, all of which helped improve her haemoglobin levels. She also had a constant intake of protein powder, helping her grow stronger.

On D-Day, Sana delivered a baby girl at Indira Gandhi Memorial Government Hospital, Bhiwandi. Baby Zainab* was healthy, albeit a little underweight at 2.2 kgs.

The outreach workers continued to educate Sana about childcare and impressed upon her the importance of breastfeeding, which she did for six months. From the 7th month, Zainab was given semi-solid food. The baby is now completely healthy and growing up to be a strong, intelligent child.

“Project Suraksha gave me vital information which I didn't know I needed. Thanks to this initiative by Cognizant Foundation and CCDT, my daughter is growing up well. I am also passing on everything I know to other expectant mothers in the area so that they also get the same benefits that I did,” Sana says.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Project Suraksha

Case Study

“I had started to think that motherhood was beyond me, but Project Suraksha gave me a wonderful gift.”

For 39-year-old Mehrunissa*, it had become now or never. She had suffered two miscarriages earlier, and even though she was pregnant, she couldn't help feeling that maybe her dream of having a child was beyond her. Age was not on her side, she weighed only 39 kg and she also had low haemoglobin levels, adding to her worries.

During the 6th month of pregnancy, Mehrunissa was registered under Project Suraksha, an initiative by Committed Communities Development Trust and Cognizant Foundation. She was visited by an outreach worker who counselled her about the appropriate diet to take pre- and post-pregnancy. To improve her health, she was supplied with a grocery kit along with two bottles of protein powder to have daily. The latter in particular was so effective that Mehrunissa went out and bought a bottle of her own after the initial two ran out. She followed the outreach worker's guidance and went for regular check-ups and sonograms and did not skip on any supplements (mostly iron and calcium that were prescribed).

With proper diet and care, her weight increased to 48 kg and she eventually gave birth to a healthy baby boy (weighing 3 kg at Indira Gandhi Memorial Government Hospital, Bhiwandi. This was a welcome departure from the prevalent practice of home birth in the area.

The baby was exclusively breastfed for the first six months, post which he was slowly weaned off and given semi-solid food. He continues to grow well and is a source of great joy for the entire family.

“I had started to think that motherhood was beyond me, but Project Suraksha gave me a wonderful gift. My son is my noor and he's growing well thanks to the counselling I received from the outreach worker. My heartfelt gratitude to Committed Communities Development Trust and Cognizant Foundation for undertaking a project like this,” Mehrunissa says.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Project SAMARTH

The urban poor is the most vulnerable section of the population in India when it comes to health indicators such as access to health facilities and child nutrition. Project SAMARTH, launched in 2022 by Cognizant Foundation in partnership with People to People Health Foundation, aims to improve the health and well-being of urban poor women and children in the slums of Kolkata and support the Government's effort to reduce maternal and infant mortality. The project will improve access to the Maternal, Newborn, Child Health, and Nutrition (MNCHN) services of the Government, improve community and key influencer knowledge and health-seeking behaviour on MNCHN and build capacity of health and nutrition care providers for strengthening MNCHN skills.

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation, New Delhi

Aim: Reach 20,000 pregnant women and lactating mothers over 3 years

LOCATION Kolkata, West Bengal

Medical Equipment for Underprivileged Women and Children

CRI Charitable Trust, a renowned social service organisation and the CSR arm of CRI Pumps, runs a medical centre where they provide quality healthcare services to needy women and children. Cognizant Foundation supported the organisation by aiding the purchase of various medical equipment which can be used to treat paediatric and women patients in and around Coimbatore.

PARTNER CRI Charitable Trust, Coimbatore

LOCATION Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Capacity Building

Cognizant Foundation has been supporting projects that address the issue of access to affordable and quality medical care for the marginalised sections of society. Over the years, the Foundation has provided grants to numerous healthcare institutions across the country to enable them to procure state-of-the-art medical equipment and better serve the underserved. In 2021/22, projects supported under this programme in the areas of blood bank, cancer care, kidney care and mental health have reached over 28,600 beneficiaries.

28,600+
Lives Impacted in 2021/22

5
NGO Partners

Operations in
2 States

Supporting Community Mental Health Programmes





Supporting Community Mental Health Programmes

The Banyan, founded in 1993 in Chennai, has two Community Mental Health programmes – one for rural areas and the other for urban populations. The aim of this initiative is to address barriers to mental health care and thereby promote early access, enhance well-being and reduce disability, burden of disease, and over the longer term, reduce the risk of homelessness due to mental ill-health.

Cognizant Foundation has supported The Banyan with medicines for provision of pharmacotherapy for persons with mental health issues accessing their clinical services. Since 2020, the project has benefitted over 1650 patients.

1300+ Patients Benefitted in 2021/22

PARTNER

The Banyan, Chennai

LOCATION

Chennai and Thiruporur (Kanchipuram), Tamil Nadu

Supporting Community Mental Health Programmes

Case Study

It's been over a year since that fateful day when the team first met Ganga, and in this time, she has come a long way.

Sometimes, things that happen by chance can change the course of someone's life. Like in the case of Ganga*.

The team from The Banyan, as part of their Community Mental Health Programme supported by Cognizant Foundation, had been monitoring an individual who had suddenly become inactive. So, they decided to pay a visit to his last-known address to check and see if everything was alright. While that client turned out to be ok, one of the team members spotted the silhouette of a woman through a window in a shabby-looking house next door and decided to investigate.

The eyes, they say, are a reflection of the soul and Ganga's were filled with darkness and pain. She had sequestered herself within the walls of her small house and had pulled back from the world after the death of her elder sister. She was mentally unwell and refused to even speak to her ageing mother and younger sister who were living with her.

When the team visited her house, she refused to interact with anyone and argued that she was ok and did not need anyone's help. The evidence said otherwise.

Over the next few weeks, the team started visiting Ganga on a regular basis, and slowly but surely, she started opening up to them. She spoke about the freak accident which took her father's life, which was shortly followed by that of her sister. The more they spoke about the different traumatic incidents of her life, the lighter the emotional weight on her seemed to become.

As her mental well-being improved, the team supported Ganga with financial assistance through disability allowances which helped improve the family's living condition.

In one routine visit, the team realised that she could tie flowers well. They got her a bag of flowers to string together and sell as a small business idea, which ended up working really well. Ganga was elated to get her first income, and with support from the Banyan team, she was able to set up a small flower shop in her locality.

It's been over a year since that fateful day when the Community Mental Health team first met Ganga, and in this time, she has come a long way. She now keeps herself busy by selling flowers in the by-lanes of Royapettah (a locality in Chennai). To notice the change in her, all you have to do is look into her eyes – eyes that now shine with joy and the aspirations of a bright future.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



Cognizant Combats COVID-19

When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit the country, Cognizant created a roadmap to help add resilience to a healthcare system that was creaking as a result of an exponential rise in cases. As part of Operation C3 (Cognizant Combats COVID-19), the Foundation, on priority, supported the setting-up of COVID-care facilities in cities across India, while supplementing existing centres with critical medical equipment and oxygen supplies.

Cognizant Foundation also supported frontline healthcare workers with critical protective gear to help them stay safe, while they worked to protect society.

In 2021/22, the Foundation's activities were split into two phases to help tackle both Wave 2 & Wave 3 of the pandemic. The support extended varied depending on the demands placed on the system during these two waves.

8
Cities

13
Hospitals Supported

800+
Oxygenated Beds

COVID Wave 2



COVID Wave 3





COVID Wave 2

Setting-up and Supporting COVID Care Facilities

When the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic swept the nation in April 2021, it was observed that the disease was having a disproportionate impact on children and the elderly. The virus spread with phenomenal speed and was considered much more lethal than the variant in Wave 1, which put a lot of stress on resources and manpower.

During Wave 2, there was an acute shortage of hospital beds, oxygen, medicines and ventilators across the country. Due to an alarmingly high number of infections, the overall death rate was also high. There was an urgent need for the timely establishment of temporary COVID-care facilities and the augmentation of resources in existing centres to treat patients.

As part of Operation C3, the Foundation worked closely with Government and reputed not-for-profit partners to mobilise and operationalise our response in Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, New Delhi, and Pune.

Bengaluru

HOSPITAL

Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation

SUPPORT

Critical medical equipment including PICU cots, oxygenated beds, ventilators, high flow nasal cannula machines and multipara monitors

COVID Wave 2



Chennai

HOSPITAL

**Voluntary Health Services | Government Medical
College Hospital, Omandurar**

PARTNER

Rotary Club of Madras East Trust

SUPPORT

**Equipment for running an additional 40-bed COVID care
facility and oxygen concentrators**

Coimbatore

HOSPITAL

CRI Trust Hospital | Government Medical College & ESI Hospital

PARTNER

CRI Trust | Ekam Foundation

SUPPORT

**Equipment to set-up a new 90-bed COVID-care facility and
oxygen generator**

Hyderabad

HOSPITAL

Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences and Research

PARTNER

NIRMAAN

SUPPORT

Equipment for upgrading capacity by 40 beds

Kochi

HOSPITAL

Kalamassery Government Medical College

PARTNER

CBM India Trust

SUPPORT

**Critical medical equipment for 80 COVID care beds (ventilators,
ECG machines, X-rays etc.)**

COVID Wave 2



Kolkata

HOSPITAL

Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation

SUPPORT

Equipment for upgrading 100 COVID care beds

New Delhi

HOSPITAL

Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation

SUPPORT

Critical medical equipment (Ventilators, ECG Machines, Multipara Monitors etc.)

Pune

HOSPITAL

COVID Care Facility in MHADA, Mahalunge-Ingale, Chakan Khed

PARTNER

Ekam Foundation

SUPPORT

Equipment to set-up a 100-bed COVID care facility

COVID Wave 2



Supporting Vaccination of Persons with Disabilities

The WHO categorises Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) as vulnerable populations during public health emergencies as they face increased risk of contracting infections due to existing health conditions, inequities in access to quality healthcare and challenges in reaching support service providers for vaccinations.

Under Operation C3, the Foundation supported COVID-19 vaccinations for PwDs and their caregivers in the Bengaluru Rural district of Karnataka and the slums of Kolkata. We worked with local NGOs and Government Primary Health Centres in both locations to identify and mobilise the beneficiaries in order to provide them with both doses of the vaccine, along with post-vaccination support.

19,000+ PwDs and Caregivers Vaccinated

LOCATION

**Bengaluru Rural District, Karnataka | Kolkata,
West Bengal**

Supporting Vaccination of Persons with Disabilities

Case Study

“Thanks to this initiative, we were able to better protect ourselves from the pandemic, and I was able to finally go back to work.”

Padmini*, 36, is a resident of Solikunte, a small village in the Bengaluru Rural district with her ageing parents – both of whom were bedridden. A PwD, she works as a maid in nearby houses to earn enough to pay for their regular expenses which are mostly food and medicines.

When the pandemic struck, Padmini was forced to stay indoors just like the rest of the country, which meant that she could not go to work. The launch of the vaccine was supposed to give her the opportunity to start working again. But the closest vaccine centre was too far away, and she could not take her parents with her or leave them alone for such a long time.

The healthcare system, which was creaking because of the sheer number of COVID cases, did not have the necessary resources to look after people like Padmini.

As part of the vaccination campaign by CBM India and Cognizant Foundation, Padmini was visited at her home by a medical team. She was overjoyed when she learnt that she could be vaccinated, along with her parents, at home. Padmini was initially reluctant though – she had a crippling fear of needles. But the doctor and nurse who were part of the team managed to ease her worries.

After the first dose was done, Padmini was provided with a hygiene kit and a food kit. After a few weeks, the team visited her once again for the second dose of the vaccine.

“I am grateful to CBM India and Cognizant Foundation for their home vaccination programme which has been a lifesaver for me and my parents. Thanks to this initiative, we were able to better protect ourselves from the pandemic, and I was able to finally go back to work,” Padmini says.

*Name changed to protect patient privacy



COVID Wave 3

Supporting Hospitals with Critical Medical Equipment

Thankfully, the third wave of COVID-19, driven by the Omicron variant, was not as severe as Wave 2. Even though a large population was infected (especially among children since they were as yet unvaccinated), the symptoms were much milder.

During Wave 3, Cognizant Foundation supported a few hospitals with critical medical equipment and protective gear to help treat COVID-19 and other critical-care patients.

Bengaluru

HOSPITAL

Government HSIS Gosha Hospital

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation

SUPPORT

Equipment for treating pregnant women and new-born babies

COVID Wave 3

Chennai

HOSPITAL

Kanchi Kamakoti Child Trust Hospital | Hindu Mission Hospital

PARTNER

Rotary Club of Madras East Trust

SUPPORT

Critical medical equipment to upgrade diagnostic facilities

New Delhi

HOSPITAL

National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi

PARTNER

People to People Health Foundation (PPHF)

SUPPORT

Medical equipment for treating COVID-19 and other critical care patients



Education Overview

97,000+ Learners Reached in 2021/22

Enabling access to quality education for underserved communities and facilitating inclusion in classrooms has been one of the cornerstones of Cognizant Foundation's activities since its inception. The Foundation supports various educational programmes, either directly or through partner organisations, to help beneficiaries acquire knowledge that is relevant in the modern world. The COVID pandemic has had a crippling impact on the education sector, and our projects and partners have responded to this challenge in unique and relevant ways to make sure that our beneficiaries continue to receive access to educational resources.

The Foundation's education initiatives across India have jointly reached over 97,000 beneficiaries, comprising of school-going children, teachers and teacher educators, and students pursuing higher education.

In 2021/22, keeping our revised strategic focus in mind, programmes were designed and pivoted to leverage technology, while keeping inclusion at its core. Two thematic areas – Higher Education & Vocational Skilling, and Capacity Building for School Education - were identified for our activities to focus on. Fresh flagship programmes were designed while pivoting and realigning the existing ones to be in line with the new strategic focus.

Higher Education & Vocational Skilling

Strengthening the quality of higher education and ensuring meaningful livelihood has always been a key focus area in our interventions in education. Our programmes have been designed to improve access to higher education for underprivileged youth through scholarships and support the creation and delivery of vocational skilling programmes, including for persons with disabilities.

In 2008, the Foundation instituted merit-cum-means scholarships to motivate and provide opportunities to deserving meritorious students as they pursue higher education in reputed, NAAC-accredited institutions. These scholarships are given out directly or with the support of our partners to students from diverse sections of society. This is our largest programme under the focus area of education and will continue to grow and evolve in line with the new strategy.

Employability skilling, including digital skilling, is also a key area of intervention. The job market in India demands specialised skill sets, which is reflected in the increased demand for students to take up vocational education courses. Our programmes in this area have focused on supporting technical institutes to build state-of-art infrastructure to promote inclusion in vocational education and creating learning platforms for digital skilling for people with vision impairments. These projects have had to leverage digital technologies in a big way to pivot and adapt their programmes to reach the students even when physical classes have been impacted.

Scholarships for Higher Education



Vocational Technical Education



Scholarships for Higher Education

For Graduate Study in Engineering & STEM

Strengthening the quality of higher education and ensuring meaningful livelihood has always been a key focus area in our interventions in education. Our programmes have been designed to improve access to higher education for underprivileged youth through scholarships and support the creation and delivery of vocational skilling programmes, including for persons with disabilities.

In 2008, the Foundation instituted merit-cum-means scholarships to motivate and provide opportunities to deserving meritorious students as they pursue higher education in reputed, NAAC-accredited institutions. These scholarships are given out directly or with the support of our partners to students from diverse sections of society. This is our largest programme under the focus area of education and will continue to grow and evolve in line with the new strategy.

Employability skilling, including digital skilling, is also a key area of intervention. The job market in India demands specialised skill sets, which is reflected in the increased demand for students to take up vocational education courses. Our programmes in this area have focused on supporting technical institutes to build state-of-art infrastructure to promote inclusion in vocational education and creating learning platforms for digital skilling for people with vision impairments. These projects have had to leverage digital technologies in a big way to pivot and adapt their programmes to reach the students even when physical classes have been impacted.

536 Scholars Supported in 2021/22

95+ Colleges

PARTNER

Christel House, Bengaluru | Cognizant Outreach | Foundation for Excellence India Trust, Bengaluru

For Graduate Study in Engineering & STEM

Case Study

“If I hadn’t received the support I did from Cognizant Foundation and FFE, I would not have been the success I am today.”

Manisha hails from Nalagarh, a small town not too far from Shimla in Himachal Pradesh. Hers is a small family consisting of her father and a younger brother who is now in class 11. She was around 8 years old when a fatal fire took the life of her mother. Her dad has been a farmer for many years – he owns a small field where he grows wheat – and his hard work is what sustains the family. But their annual income is meagre ₹65,000 which is insufficient to meet the family’s growing needs.

Despite the distress, Manisha has always been academically brilliant. Her dad had wanted to pursue engineering in his younger days but was not able to. This was a dream he had passed on to Manisha as well. She completed her school education from Government schools scoring an impressive 95% in class 10 and 92.7% in class 12. She wrote JEE Advanced and got a rank of 6510 which secured her admission at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, where she opted for Civil Engineering.

Her dream of studying her dream course in her dream college would have remained a distant reality had it not been for the scholarship support from Cognizant Foundation, facilitated by Foundation for Excellence India Trust (FFE).

After learning about the Cognizant Foundation-FFE scholarship programme from one of her college seniors, Manisha applied for it and was selected. She is now in her final year and her grit and determination have helped her land an impressive job at Jaguar Land Rover with a package of ₹21 LPA.

“If I hadn’t received the support I did from Cognizant Foundation and FFE, I would not have been the success I am today. I am able to give my family better opportunities and I hope to, in the future, support others like me who need a helping hand to achieve their full potential,” Manisha says.

She is excited about the future and looking forward to moving to a new city – Bengaluru – and starting her journey in the corporate world.



For Graduate Study in Engineering & STEM

Case Study

“The scholarship by Cognizant Foundation and Christel House has been like a canopy over my head, giving me the strength to aim high.”

“Hi! My name is David Simon and I am an alumnus of Christel House India. I have been pursuing my B.E. in Medical Electronics from Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering and am currently in my third year.

I have three older siblings and my parents could not afford to educate everyone. It's thanks to the support I received from Cognizant Foundation that I am able to study and work hard to achieve my dreams. In fact, thanks to this support, I have been able to dream bigger as well. If it weren't for this scholarship, I probably would have had to take a loan to pay my college fee and drop out halfway through my education to get whatever job I could to pay it back.

The scholarship by Cognizant Foundation and Christel House has been like a canopy over my head, giving me the strength to aim high, and reducing the burden on my parent's shoulders.

Because I don't have the stress of tuition fees weighing down on me, I have been able to focus on academics and excel. I have attended numerous Technical Symposiums and been in top positions in almost all of them. I also try to be a role model for juniors taking up technical workshops in my department.

I am forever grateful to Cognizant Foundation's generosity without which none of this would have been possible.”



For Graduate Study and Skill Training for Visually Impaired Students

For Graduate Study and Skill Training for Visually Impaired Students

Since 2018/19, Cognizant Foundation has been supporting visually impaired students with scholarships to pursue degree courses in institutions shortlisted by Help the Blind Foundation (HTBF). A value-added programme called Education Mobility Employability and Training (EMET) was introduced in 2019 for building digital skills and a sense of independence and mobility in students.

283 Scholars Supported in 2021/22

100 Laptops Provided

PARTNER

Help the Blind Foundation (HTBF), Chennai

For Graduate Study and Skill Training for Visually Impaired Students

Case Study

“I am independent, confident, and positive in life thanks to Cognizant Foundation and HTBF.”

“I am Manish Kumar from Jehanabad in Bihar. Even though I am a totally blind person now, I was not blind from birth. I lost my vision when I was in class 6 and unfortunately there was no way of bringing it back. It was a hard time for me – I went from being a child who could see all the magnificence the world has to offer, play with his friends and watch TV to someone who could only see darkness.

My parents tried to find a special school for me to attend, but it was easier said than done. Somehow, after a lot of searching, they found a school in Delhi and we shifted to the big city. Looking back, I realise how hard it must have been for my parents. My parents did not have a lot of money, but they did all they could to give me a good future.

Since I was blind late in life, mobility was really challenging. Initially, I was completely dependent on my family and friends. I slowly got the hang of it and was able to move around better on my own. After completing schooling, I got admission to Satyawati College and consequently, an opportunity to build my life.

It's thanks to Cognizant Foundation and Help the Blind Foundation that I was able to excel in college. With the scholarship, I was able to get a recording device which helped me revise and study better, pay transport fares and hostel fees, and get study material. The EMET programme also helped me develop the skills needed to get a job as well in a tough market.

Today, I am working as a clerk in DRDO at Civil Lines, Delhi. Thanks to my training I was able to crack the interview and impress my superiors. I am independent, confident, and positive in life thanks to Cognizant Foundation and HTBF.”



Scholarships for Higher Education

For Graduate Study in Special Education

A recent estimate by the Association of Special Educators and Allied Professionals estimates that there are 40 million children with “special needs” in India. To address the needs of a population this size, the country needs at least 1.5 million special educators. Cognizant Foundation has implemented a scholarship programme to support students pursuing B.Ed. (Special Education) in institutions approved by the Rehabilitation Council of India which have an outstanding NAAC rating and an excellent reputation in the field of special education.

92 Students Supported Since Inception

For Graduate Study in Arts, Science and Commerce

There is a growing need for graduates in arts and science courses in the job market today. To support deserving candidates in this sphere, Cognizant Foundation provides scholarships to deserving students partnership with not-for-profit organisations.

33 scholars supported across 11 colleges in 2021/22

PARTNER

Andhra University, Visakhapatnam | National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan), Chennai | Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, and others

PARTNER

Cognizant Outreach | Christel House, Bengaluru | Swadha Foundation, Bengaluru



Scholarships for Higher Education

For Post-graduate Study in Social Sciences

To truly realise society's developmental goals, India needs professionals with the right skill-set and vision. Recognising this need, the Foundation has partnered with reputed universities to provide scholarships to deserving candidates pursuing post-graduate degrees in social sciences and development studies.

140 Students Supported Since Inception

PARTNER

College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai | Kashmir University, Srinagar | Madras School of Social Work, Chennai | Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kochi | Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai | The Maharaja Sayajirao University Baroda, Vadodare | University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, and others

For Post-graduate Study in Social Sciences

Case Study

“Without the generous investment from Cognizant Foundation, I would not be where I am today.”

“My story is the journey of a girl coming from a family of first-generation learners in a tribal community who travels to Mumbai, one of the biggest cities in the world, for higher education.

This process was not a smooth one and one of the biggest hurdles in my way, and you would have guessed it already, was finance. I had the passion to pursue a career in social sciences, but not the money to make it happen.

When I learnt that I had been selected for the scholarship from Cognizant Foundation, I felt both honoured and humbled. Thanks to the support, I was able to focus on my studies and complete my post-graduation from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) without having to worry about things that a lot of other people take for granted.

Today, I am working as a Management Trainee in SOS Children’s Villages of India, a leading international non-governmental and non-profit Child Development Organisation. Without the generous investment from Cognizant Foundation, I would not be where I am today.”

Celesty Hakmausa
M.A. in Social Work,
School of Social Work, TISS





Scholarships for Higher Education

For Promoting Excellence

Very few higher educational institutions in India provide computation science learning blended with problem-based learning – a key requisite in the software industry – and Chennai Mathematical Institute (CMI) is one of them. To encourage bright students in such an environment, Cognizant Foundation has constituted the “Scholarship for Promoting Excellence” in Computer Science. The programme supports 10 meritorious students at the institute who are pursuing M.Sc. Computer Science and have shown exceptional academic discipline.

10 Scholars Supported in 2021/22

PARTNER

Chennai Mathematical Institute, Chennai

For Promoting Excellence

Case Study

“We are extremely fortunate that Cognizant Foundation sponsors the tuition fees for 10 students each year, making it accessible to students from varied economic and social backgrounds.”

“The Chennai Mathematical Institute is a centre for excellence for teaching and research in the mathematical sciences, with internationally renowned research groups in Mathematics, Theoretical Computer Science and Physics. It was the vision of Prof C.S. Seshadri (FRS), the founder of CMI, that the institute should combine top-class research with top-rate research-oriented teaching. Therefore, CMI has very selective B.Sc. and M.Sc. programmes, whose cohorts are voluntarily kept to a small size to enhance student-faculty interaction and achieve these goals.

The M.Sc. (Computer Science) programme is aimed at producing students who are very well trained in algorithms, logic, complexity theory and automata theory – subjects which are the foundations of computing. An overwhelming majority of these students go on to complete PhDs at some of the best institutions across the world. CMI alumni are prominent among the ranks of graduate students in premier Indian institutions – IITs, IMSc, ISI and TIFR, not to mention CMI itself.

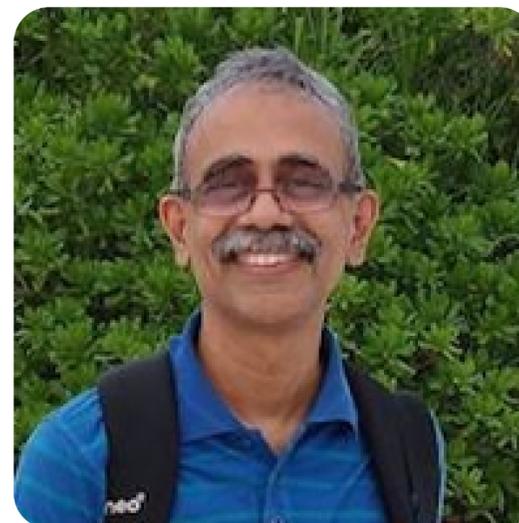
For many years, CMI levied very nominal fees. However, in recent years, the Institute has been forced to put in place a more realistic fee structure, in line with comparable institutions in the country.

Data collected over the years suggests that almost 40-50% of our M.Sc. (CS) and almost 50% of M.Sc. (Math) students come from families where the annual income is less than 8 lakhs. We are extremely fortunate that Cognizant Foundation sponsors the tuition fees for 10 students in the M.Sc. (CS) programme each year, making it accessible to students from varied economic and social backgrounds.

The fact that Cognizant Foundation sponsors fees for students is now very well known, and as a result, students from economically weaker sections are more encouraged to take the entrance examination for admission to the M.Sc. (CS) programme.

The testimonies from recipients of the Cognizant Foundation scholarships say it all – bright, motivated students whose family incomes would not have allowed them to pursue an M.Sc. in CS at CMI, but for the generous support of Cognizant Foundation. We thank Cognizant Foundation for providing invaluable support to help them realise their dreams.”

K.V. Subrahmanyam
Dean of Studies,
Chennai Mathematical Institute



Digital Learning Platform for Persons with Vision Impairment

Digital Learning Platform for Persons with Vision Impairment

In 2020, Cognizant Foundation partnered with EnAble India to build a self-learning digital literacy platform called EYE (Educate Yourself Easily) aimed at supporting Persons with Vision Impairment (PVI). Seeing its success, the Foundation funded its redevelopment which turned EYE into a cloud-enabled solution with global reach.

Rechristened “Blimey”, the new platform was launched on World Disability Day and has been designed to allow centralised functioning while being light-weight and providing application-specific extensions. Blimey is extremely scalable in terms of global users and usage of content across devices. Available in both online and offline versions, the platform is also available in Indian languages and is expected to enable over 60,000 PVIs in the next 3 years.

Blimey features a self-learning tool that digitally empowers PVIs and prepares them for 21st-century jobs. Using this service, PVIs can learn to use a computer with little or no external help and work with screen readers like NVDA, JAWS and magnifiers. Users can choose from more than 400 computer exercises and master concepts at their own pace. With the built-in test mode, learners can also evaluate their progress using real-world scenarios and job simulations.

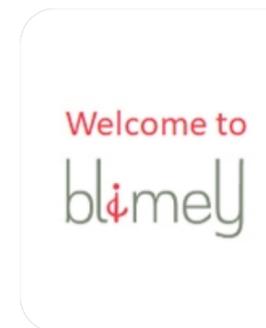
The platform is open-source and all content is available as open educational content for those that need it.

1309 Users Reached in 2021/22

21 States

PARTNER

EnAble India, Bengaluru



QUOTE

“The software gets updated automatically, which means that I always have the latest material at hand to teach my students.”
- Madhavi, Computer Trainer at EnAble India



QUOTE

“I like the feature of emailing reports to the trainer as it helps them see it remotely & give me individual feedback.”
- Mallika, Candidate from Trainer Certification Course



Promoting Technical Skills for Young Women and PWDs

Moulding Differently-abled Technicians

Cognizant Foundation partnered with Nettur Technical Training Foundation (NTTF) to support PwD students (across 3 batches) pursuing a 2-year NCVT-certified course in the Electronics Mechanic trade. After the course is complete, students are given apprenticeship training opportunities in PSUs like Bharat Electronics Ltd. and placement opportunities in companies like Tata Electronics.

48 Students Supported in 2021/22

PARTNER

Nettur Technical Training Foundation, Bengaluru

Promoting Women Healthcare Technicians

Under this initiative, young women from underserved rural communities are trained to be Vision Technicians, helping improve their employability while making quality eyecare more accessible and available. Trainees are able to provide eyecare services to both adults and paediatric patients. They also create awareness in the community about various preventable and curable eye disorders. Once their education is complete, the women are either placed in partner networks or encouraged to set-up their own optical outlets.

40 Students Supported in 2021/22

PARTNER

Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, New Delhi | L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad



Promoting Technical Skills for Young Women and PWDs

Nursing Training for Young Women in Jharkhand

Jharkhand is among the lowest-ranked states in India when it comes to the Multidimensional Poverty Index and is home to more than 16 million poor people.

In 2020, Cognizant Foundation partnered with PanIT Alumni Reach for India Foundation to support 120 young women from underprivileged sections of society, especially those from Naxal-affected districts, to be trained in ANM Nursing – a 2-year vocational course offered at Nursing Kaushal College in Latehar. 97% of the candidates who enrol for this programme are either first-time workers or working in unskilled jobs earning low wages under unsafe conditions.

Once the course is complete, trainees are able to get jobs in hospitals and geriatric care centres, or as home nurses.

120 Students Supported since 2020

Institute: Nursing Kaushal College, Latehar

PARTNER

PanIT Alumni Reach for India Foundation, Mumbai

Capacity Building for School Education

According to UNICEF, India has the largest adolescent population in the world – 253 million. The country stands to benefit immensely if these kids are given a proper education from a young age, especially science education. Unfortunately, many educational institutes in the country find it difficult to keep pace with technological innovations, affecting their ability to impart quality STEM education.

Enhancing the quality of schools, especially Government-run institutions which cater to underserved communities, is critical for creating students who have the vision to create a better tomorrow. Cognizant Foundation is leveraging its expertise in technology to make STEM experiences more accessible while building capacity within and for the school system.

Digital Learning and STEM ▶

Enabling Inclusive Classrooms through Capacity Building & Resource Centres for Teachers ▶

Building Teacher Capacity for an Inclusive School System ▶

Digital Learning and STEM

Mobile Science Laboratories and Science Centre

Cognizant Foundation had commissioned the setting up of a Science Centre and Mobile Science Lab in Pune, Medak and Coimbatore as part of our special focus on enabling access to quality STEM education for Government school students.

The objective of the project is to provide experiential science learning by setting up a Science Centre in a Government high school and operating a Mobile Science Laboratory covering multiple schools. The project has enabled over 283,000 student and 2,400 teacher exposures over 3 years. Apart from its physical location, the programme has also evolved to include online classes and teacher training as a response to the COVID pandemic.

89,400+ Students Reached in 2021/22

PARTNER

Agastya International Foundation, Bengaluru

LOCATION

Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu | Medak, Telangana | Pune, Maharashtra

Mobile Science Laboratories and Science Centre

Case Study

“Thanks to these classes, I am more confident and innovative in life and in school than I used to be.”

The eldest of three siblings, Payal Pradip Ray is a student of class 8 in the Government school in Someshwarwadi, Pune. She comes from a low-income family – her father is a cook in a small hotel while her mother is a housewife – and dreams of one day becoming an IPS officer who can do good for society.

It was in 2020 that Payal was introduced to the learning programme by Agastya International Foundation, supported by Cognizant Foundation. She vividly recalls her first face-to-face interaction with an Agastya instructor – it was at a science fair organised by the NGO where she got to present the model she was working on and spend quality time learning from fellow competitors and instructors. She found a significant difference between Agastya’s sessions and her usual school classes – in the former, concepts were taught through activities that helped her grasp concepts more clearly.

During the pandemic sessions, which were held in-person till then, shifted online. “I thought Google Meet wouldn’t be as effective as classroom sessions but to my surprise, online sessions were incredible and effective. I really enjoyed them as they were just like the classroom experience. At the same time, I was able to help my mother with some household chores and help my brother with his studies,” Payal says.

Since Agastya sessions are aligned with the school’s curriculum, Payal was able to do well in class as well. Through a series of exercises and activities, she learned a lot about force and motion, standard measurements, light and its behaviour, and more. She is interested in making models to help understand concepts better and she shares her knowledge with friends in the neighbourhood.

“I have prepared a model of teeth by using hard cardboard, sheets of white paper, scissors, glue and various other materials.

The model explains the functions of the teeth. It took about 2-3 days to complete,” she said when asked about her interest.

By asking questions, Payal says she is able to connect better with a subject and increase her knowledge in it. This is a trait she picked up from Agastya classes where instructors encourage students to boldly ask questions, without worrying about how good it may be.

“The classes by Agastya and Cognizant Foundation have helped me increase my imagination and generate new ideas. I have also made a lot of like-minded friends here and we often work as a group on challenging concepts. Thanks to these classes, I am more confident and innovative in life and in school than I used to be,” Payal says.



Digital Learning and STEM

Digitally Enabled Learning for Out-of-School Children

The Digital Equaliser (DE) programme seeks to provide technology-based education to under-privileged students, and digital literacy to students and teachers at selected Government schools in Ganjam, Odisha. Launched amidst the COVID pandemic to support continuity of education, it reached students through a blend of online and offline interventions. Through a combination of WhatsApp classes, remedial classes and other offline activities, DE has shown that a blended model can be extremely effective in supporting children's learning.

19 Schools

56 Teachers

2667 Children

180 SMC Members

PARTNER

The American India Foundation Trust, New Delhi

LOCATION

Ganjam, Odisha

Digitally Enabled Learning for Out-of-School Children

Case Study

“Thanks to DE and remedial classes, I am able to understand better. Now I really like studying and I hope I can get good marks and fulfil my dreams.”

Sompraksha Panda is a shy, class 8 student from Bipulingi (a village in Ganjam district of Odisha) who studies in the local Government school. He was an earnest student but was among the lowest performers in his class. He found it hard to express himself properly and understand what the teachers were trying to say. Gradually, he mentally withdrew from class and stopped participating in group activities.

Fortunately for Sompraksha, his school was one of the institutions supported by the Digitally Enabled Learning programme of The American India Foundation Trust, facilitated by Cognizant Foundation.

Because of his low grades, Sompraksha was asked to attend remedial classes where he was able to get more personalised attention. There, he started opening up with the tutors and told them about the difficulties he was facing, especially when it came to language and communication. Simultaneously, in school, when his teacher introduced the Digital Equaliser programme in their class, he realised that he enjoyed watching videos and learning from them.

The teachers in school started to make it a point to pay more attention to Sompraksha, and others like him, and integrate them into daily learning activities. Slowly, he was able to better understand what was taught in class, and he started looking forward to coming to school.

Sompraksha is now an active student who participates enthusiastically in class. His grades have improved considerably, his reading and writing skills have gotten much better and his confidence has grown.

“Thanks to DE and remedial classes, I am able to understand better. Now I really like studying and I hope I can get good marks in exams and fulfil my dreams,” Sompraksha says.

He is determined to finish his education and get a good job so that he can financially support his family and give them a better life.



Enabling Inclusive Classrooms through Capacity Building & Resource Centres for Teachers

‘Connected Learning & Research on Inclusive Education’

Currently in its pilot phase, the “Connected Learning & Research on Inclusive Education” (CLear on IE) project supports research on inclusive education with the following two primary objectives:

1. To study the challenges in human resource development for inclusive education and explore the way forward
2. To enable the setting up of Inclusive Education Resource Centres

With a focus on strengthening teacher education, this research project has developed a certificate course for inclusive school education, developed a competency framework for teacher education and has partnered with National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD) and Avinashilingam University (ALU) to set up Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERC) as part of these teacher education institutions. Both NIEPMD and ALU are institutions supported by Cognizant Foundation under our scholarship programme for special education.

Assets developed as part of the research are being turned into Open Educational Resources for wider dissemination among teachers and teacher educators. The research findings are expected to inform policies and programmes of several states in the areas of inclusive education and teacher development, and this will have a multiplier effect on the formation of a more inclusive school system.

3 IERCs

230 Teachers

39 Teacher Educators

125 Students

PARTNER

**Centre for Education Innovation and Action Research at
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai**



Enabling Inclusive Classrooms through Capacity Building & Resource Centres for Teachers

Resource Rooms for Dyslexic Children

Dyslexia is a neurological condition that negatively affects a child's ability to read, write and spell. This condition is often called a Specific Learning Disability since it can exist in children/individuals who are otherwise of average or above average ability. The Dyslexia Association of India estimates that 10-15% of children suffer from some form of dyslexia. However, early intervention with expert teaching techniques and the use of specialised strategies can help children overcome this situation.

Many teachers are not equipped to identify this condition, and dyslexic children could be overlooked, or their condition mislabelled due to lack of awareness. To prevent this, Cognizant Foundation partnered with Madras Dyslexia Association in 2020 to set-up and manage resource rooms in six Government-aided schools run by the Greater Chennai Corporation. Through this project, a well-structured process is being created to monitor and hand-hold school management and special educators to ensure children receive quality remediation. Teachers are also trained to provide strategies for reading, writing, spelling and mathematics within the classroom.

853 Children Supported in 2021/22

6 Schools Reached

PARTNER

Madras Dyslexia Association, Chennai

LOCATION

Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Building Teacher Capacity for an Inclusive School System

Our new flagship programme in education leverages the use of modern technologies to build teacher capacity and catalyse the creation of an inclusive school system. Projects under this vertical have been designed with the following objectives:

1. To demonstrate the possibilities of using technologies (digital technologies, in particular) for creating and supporting inclusive pedagogies for children with special needs
2. To strengthen the capabilities for designing and delivering STEM learning in school education, with a focus on building computational thinking
3. To demonstrate equitable learning paths for children in marginalised contexts in STEAM education
4. To create and strengthen the knowledge base within the education system through the creation of open educational resources and a free and open digital ecosystem

With these goals in mind, two pilot programmes will be implemented in the upcoming year – one for creating technology-enabled pedagogies for inclusive education in schools for children with different learning abilities, and the other for strengthening STEM learning and computational thinking for children with visual impairments.



Livelihood Overview

780+ Lives Reached in 2021/22

In 2021/22, Cognizant Foundation underwent a strategic shift with more focus on inclusion and technology. In line with this change, we launched our flagship “Tech4All” programme which supports technology-centric training for women and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) for placements in various IT/ITeS sectors. We also continued to support other strategic programmes for skills training in other sectors for people from underserved communities.

Tech4All

India is the second fastest growing digital economy in the world and according to India Skill Report, the country's tech sector will deliver \$1 trillion in economic value and sustain 65 million jobs by 2025. Through Tech4All, our flagship programme in Livelihood, we are aiming to convert the demand for IT-trained professionals into employment opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and women from economically weaker sections of society.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought in a "new normal" which is technology-centred. The new livelihood initiatives under the Tech4All programme aim to leverage advances in technology to make skilling efficient and improve the lives of the beneficiaries. Training is provided through a hybrid model which combines traditional classroom learning with self-paced online learning modules from MOOC platforms.

Cognizant Foundation has partnered with credible skill-training providers and organisations in identifying, training and supporting job placements which are done through a collaborative, multi-stakeholder partnership effort. Since this programme has a strong tech-training component, placements are targeted for tech-related roles.

Aim: Train 680 PwDs and 100 women over 1 year

70% guaranteed placement

Operations in 5 States

Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Tech4All)



Skilling Women (Tech4All)



Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Tech4All)

BPO Voice and Non-voice Training

Under this project, skilling is provided to PwDs between 18-35 years of age who have an educational qualification of 10th pass or above. They are trained in both voice and non-voice BPO processes for a period of 60 days. Once the course is complete, eligible candidates are placed in technology-enabled jobs in IT/ITeS and allied sectors with an average monthly salary from ₹10,000 to ₹12,000 and above.

Aim: Train 480 youth over 1 year

PARTNER

Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad

LOCATION

Delhi-NCR | Karnataka | Telangana | West Bengal

BPO Voice and Non-voice Training

Case Study

“With my new skills, I know that I will be able to build a better future for my family.”

“My name is Sudipta Samanta. I come from Uluberia, a small village in the Howrah district of West Bengal.

I was born with a physical disability in my lower limbs, which means that I am not able to walk properly. As a child, I was constantly made fun of by children in my school. My disability was not something I had a choice in. It was something I was born with, and yet, I was called names and bullied. I remember going to bed at night crying and asking my mother what I had done to deserve this treatment.

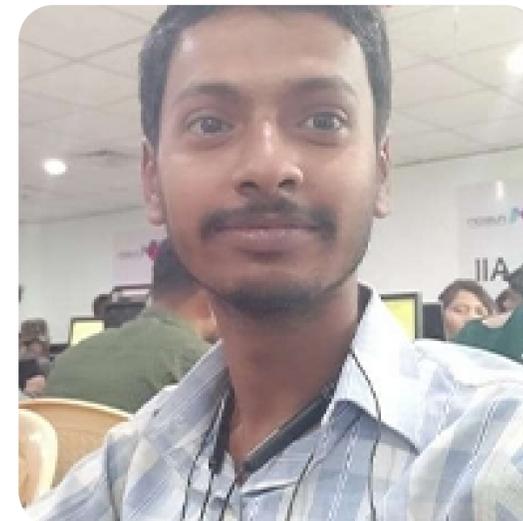
My father used to be a daily wage labourer. He never saw me as a burden and always motivated me to study and do better. It was thanks to his support that I went to college and did my graduation and post-graduation in Geography, a subject I am really interested in.

I wanted to support my parents and give them a better life. But, no matter how hard I tried, I wasn't able to get a job. Some companies rejected me because of my lack of soft skills while others did so because of my disability.

My father is now too old to work, and I lost my mother recently to heart disease. One of my greatest regrets is that we couldn't afford to give her proper medical care.

It was then, during one of the lowest moments of my life, that I got to know about the training programmes offered by Dr. Reddy's Foundation (DRF), as part of the Tech4All initiative by Cognizant Foundation. I attended the sessions regularly and worked hard to improve my tech and communication skills. The classes also helped improve my confidence, giving me the courage to express myself better.

Thanks to this training, I am now working as a Customer Care Associate at Window Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and drawing a good salary. With my new skills, I know that I will be able to build a better future for my family.”



Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Tech4All)

Banking and Finance Training

Under this project, skilling is provided to PwDs (specifically orthopaedic disability and hearing impairment) in the 18-35 age group who are 12th/2nd PUC pass or have a diploma/graduate qualification with skills in finance, accounting or banking. Training is provided for 30 days to help them get into tech-enabled corporate jobs in the banking/finance sector with an average monthly salary of ₹12,000. The curriculum for this project has been developed in partnership with Christ University, Bengaluru and it also prepares candidates for various banking exams.

LOCATION

Bengaluru & Mysuru, Karnataka

Aim: Train 200 youth over 1 year

PARTNER

Cheshire Disability Trust, Bengaluru | Christ University, Bengaluru

Banking and Finance Training

Case Study

“Now I earn a decent salary that can support my family and have also had the opportunity to move to a big city like Bengaluru.”

Her hunched back (a disability that she was born with which also affected her left leg, making it difficult to walk) is obvious to everyone who takes one look at Shanthamma. But what people often miss noticing is the self-confidence and determination to succeed which is written all over her face.

Shanthamma was born into an underprivileged family in Kalluru, a small village in Karnataka. Her family consists of her parents, four younger siblings and her grandmother, all of whom shared space in their small house. She studied in the local Government school and went on to graduate from the Government college in Gubbi (travelling 30 km every day), thanks to her mother’s support. Many of her family members had felt that there was no point in teaching a disabled girl, but Shanthamma’s mother ignored them all and motivated her daughter to achieve more. Even though she was a graduate, Shanthamma lacked the necessary skills to work in a corporate set-up. Her disability, coupled with financial constraints, meant that she was not able to pursue any skills training either.

It was through a friend that Shanthamma learnt about the skilling programmes offered by Cheshire Disability Trust (CDT). She wasted no time in enrolling, and soon finished her training in accounting. CDT was so impressed by her performance that she was hired by the NGO in their accounting section. Later, looking for better opportunities, she attended a job fair where she was hired by Infosys – winning their Best Performer Award in the first year itself.

There was no stopping Shanthamma’s drive to improve, and soon, she joined the Tech4All online banking sessions offered by CDT, with support from Cognizant Foundation. She was the top performer in the post-training assessment test conducted by Christ University and is on the lookout for bigger and better career prospects.

“If not for the support from CDT and Cognizant Foundation, I would have remained stuck in my village. Now I earn a decent salary that can support my family and have also had the opportunity to move to a big city like Bengaluru. My achievements so far have been thanks to your support and I hope many more people like me receive it in the future,” Shanthamma says.



Skilling Women (Tech4All)

Fin-Tech (TALLY)

Under this project, skilling is provided to women from marginalised families in Basic IT and Advanced IT (TALLY) with the aim of motivating them to opt for higher studies or take up accountant/fintech jobs in BFSI and other sectors. About 80% of students trained in Basic IT are either employed or go for advanced studies, and around 70% of students trained in Advanced IT choose jobs in the financial sector. Most candidates earn a minimum monthly salary of at least ₹10,000.

Aim: Train 100 underprivileged women over 1 year

PARTNER

Association for Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW), Chennai

LOCATION

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Other Programmes

Over a billion people worldwide, 15 percent of the world's population, live with some form of disability, and disability prevalence is higher in developing countries. Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are more likely to experience adverse socio-economic outcomes such as less education, poorer health outcomes, lower levels of employment, and higher poverty rates. The challenges become multi-fold if they are from more impoverished communities.

In India, PwDs have poorer health, lower education achievements, less economic participation, and higher rates of poverty compared to people without disabilities (The World Disability by WHO (2011)). The reason is partly that PwDs experience barriers in accessing services that many of us have taken for granted, including health, education, and employment. Improving the vocational training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities is not only a critical element for enhancing the quality of life of these individuals and their families, but there are also substantial gains for the broader economy.

To improve the lives of persons with disabilities, Cognizant Foundation has adopted 'Skilling Persons with Disability' as one of its focus areas under Livelihood. The Foundation supports short-term skill training programmes that offer skill-building, life skills, soft skills training, and job placements for persons with disabilities. PwDs trained in these programmes graduate with specialised skills and become economically independent.

Women's empowerment is a critical part of a nation's development, and it needs a balanced equation of her education, health, employability, and decision-making power. India needs to adopt a gendered lens in education and skilling programmes to overcome the challenges of an underrepresented section in the workforce and support women in securing and retaining jobs. The basic need for empowering women is to identify their skills, prepare them for jobs, and boost their performance by improving the quality of work in which they are involved. Providing skill training for women from underprivileged sections of society leads to the economic betterment of the women and their families.

Cognizant Foundation has adopted 'Skilling Women' as one of its focus areas under the pillar of Livelihood. In partnership with reputed not-for-profit organisations, women are provided training in specialised skills paving the way for them to become economically independent. Women are encouraged to take up industry-linked jobs or consider self-employment.

Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Other)



Skilling Women (Other)



Skilling Underserved Youth



Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Other)

Service Sector Training

Cognizant Foundation supported setting-up skills training centres to provide industry-specific skill training and to upskill individuals with various disabilities. The sessions focus on the development of core employability skills which include different levels of English and communication skills, computer operations (including typing aptitude), soft skills, sector readiness skills and interview skills. Many beneficiaries are from rural areas and come from low-income backgrounds. Even though some have bachelor's degrees, they lack the skills needed to succeed in a competitive work environment, which is addressed through this initiative.

2000+ Candidates trained over 3 years

70% Placement

Trades: BFSI, Hospitality, IT/ITeS, Retail and Tourism

LOCATIONS

Bengaluru, Karnataka | Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu | Devanahalli, Karnataka | Noida, UP

PARTNER

Cheshire Disability Trust, Bengaluru | Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad | Sarthak Educational Trust, New Delhi

Service Sector Training

Case Study

“The training sessions allowed me to develop my skills and reshape my personality.”

Mukesh Meher was born into a low-income, farming family in a small village (around 20 km away from Kolkata) in West Bengal. When he was born, his entire family was overjoyed, but their happiness turned into anxiety within two months.

One day, his mother noticed that baby Mukesh was having a lot of discomfort in one arm and one leg. Concerned, his parents took him to a doctor who diagnosed the baby with a locomotor disability. They heard a lot of stories from friends, neighbours and extended family – stories of kids with disabilities who grow up and live a life of suffering. But, after discussing with doctors and hearing a lot of positive tales, Mukesh’s parents chose to raise him as a self-sufficient man who would hopefully be an example for other disabled people. In fact, at the age of 3, Mukesh was enrolled in a regular Government school just like any other child.

When Mukesh was in Class 11, his mother’s health started to deteriorate, and the family had a lot of financial difficulties as a result. However, Mukesh never lost sight of his goal and worked hard to pass Class 12, and three years later, graduated with a degree from a government institution as well.

Having a successful career was crucial for his family, and soon after graduation, Mukesh started job hunting. But, his disability, poor communication skills and lack of computer expertise meant that he was unable to get work in any industry.

In 2020, when Mukesh was watching an episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati on his brother’s phone, he learnt about Sarthak Educational Trust and the work they do. Feeling optimistic, he called Sarthak’s Kolkata office and learned about the training programme that was being conducted with support from Cognizant Foundation.

Mukesh enrolled in the training programme after receiving therapy. He diligently attended all the sessions and showed the same hard work and dedication that he had shown earlier in life. After three months, he was ecstatic to receive a call from his trainer informing him that he was shortlisted for an interview for the CRM position at Master Education Evam Welfare Society Samiti. He aced the interview and was hired the same day at a salary of ₹12,000 a month.

“It’s thanks to Sarthak and Cognizant Foundation that I have been able to make my dreams come true. The training sessions allowed me to develop my skills and reshape my personality. I wish this programme well and hope that it goes on to improve the lives of many people like me,” Mukesh says.



Service Sector Training

Case Study

“Hopefully, my success will be an inspiration to other disabled people as well.”

Naveen Kumar was born into a farming family in Mothakal, a remote village in the Thiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. His parents have a small piece of agricultural land in the village where they grow seasonal crops and the revenue from selling this produce is the only source of income for the family. His elder sister is married and lives in a neighbouring village while Naveen, who is hearing impaired, is staying with his parents after completing SSLC from the local Government school.

After finishing his schooling, Naveen wanted to study more. But, financial constraints and lack of access to institutions for hearing impaired students meant that he had to give up on his dream. He looked around to see if he could get a job and start supporting his family, but he was not able to due to COVID.

It was through one of the sign language interpreters who support hearing impaired candidates that Naveen heard about Cheshire Disability Trust (CDT) and the skilling programme supported by Cognizant Foundation. He enrolled for virtual training and over the next few months, learnt basic English communication, computer skills and general workplace ethics.

Once the training was complete, he was encouraged to take part in a special recruitment drive organised for Amazon. He passed the interview process and was selected as a Warehouse Executive with a monthly salary of ₹13,140.

“I am very thankful to CDT and Cognizant Foundation for helping me improve my skills and confidence. They helped me in ways I did not expect – from getting a PAN card to finding a PG near my workplace. I want to do well at Amazon, earn well and support my family. Hopefully, my success will be an inspiration to other disabled people as well,” Naveen says.



Skilling Persons with Disabilities (Other)

Engineering Training

Cognizant Foundation supported the skill-training of PwDs from marginalised communities in the 18-35 age bracket from North Karnataka. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional classroom training was replaced by a hybrid model where mobilisation and basic training were provided through virtual platforms. Job training was given physically, as required.

Training is provided for two engineering trades – Fitter and Electronic Mechanic. The former is a six-month integrated course that prepares trainees to work in a factory setting by providing conventional machine training, use of hand tools and machine assembly. The latter is a six-month integrated course in basic Electronics Engineering – circuit design, electronic components, tools and equipment, soldering and de-soldering, repair and maintenance of consumer and industrial appliances.

After the training period, candidates are provided placement assistance and given the support necessary to settle into their jobs. Around 67% of trainees have gotten jobs with most getting an average monthly salary of ₹13,650.

100 PwD Candidates Trained over 2 years

67% Placement

PARTNER

The Association of People with Disability, Bengaluru

LOCATION

North Karnataka

Engineering Training

Case Study

“Thanks to this training programme, I have become financially independent and able to support my family.”

Amaresh is a 19-year-old charming boy from Raichur, Karnataka. His family consisted of his mother, elder brother and younger sister – all of whom worked as daily-wage labourers on a nearby farm. His father had passed when he was 10 and his mother had taken care of all the kids single-handedly since then.

From a young age, Amaresh had wanted to earn money and help his mother, like the rest of his siblings. Unfortunately, he was born with very low vision, which meant that farm work was beyond him. While he was a good learner, his disability and the family’s financial condition meant that he could not study beyond Class 8.

It was through a Foundation course conducted by The Association of People with Disability (APD) that Amaresh first got to know about the organisation. He signed up for the programme which was held in the nearby village of Tavaragera and got to learn basic English, Maths, Team Building and other life skills, along with an overview of the work done by APD.

After the Foundation course, he enrolled in the Fitter programme, an initiative supported by Cognizant Foundation. As part of his training, he got to learn about a wide range of things including the identification of basic hand tools, assembly and disassembly, engineering drawing, and more. To improve his aptitude in other subjects, numerous assignments were given to him and over time, he also learnt sign language.

As part of the Fitter programme, he also underwent pre-employment training which sensitised him to concepts like work ethics, time management, interview skills, dress code, etc. He also had the opportunity to visit industries such as Associated Hydro Pressings Private Limited at Tin Factory, Bengaluru and understand the factory environment.

Once the training was complete, Amaresh was placed at Sahuwala Grains, a company in Kolar, Karnataka, with a starting salary of ₹10,000, along with free food and accommodation. He has since moved on and is now working in his home town and supporting his family.

“It was when I was feeling like a burden to those around me that APD and Cognizant Foundation gave me the support I needed. Thanks to this training programme, I have become financially independent and able to support my family,” Amaresh says.



Skilling Women (Other)

Home Nursing Skill Training for Underserved Women

A collaboration between Cognizant Foundation and Association for Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW), this project provides skill training in the home nursing trade to underprivileged women, mostly first-generation learners. Candidates undergo training in basic patient care, which includes geriatric and paediatric care along with spoken English, self-defence and life skills over a period of six months. Trainees are placed in hospitals/clinics or as home nurses with an average salary between ₹6,000 and ₹12,000. Since the programme's inception, 150 women have been trained with more than 75% placed.

LOCATION

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Aim: Train 300 women over 3 years

PARTNER

Association for Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW), Chennai

Home Nursing Skill Training for Underserved Women

Case Study

“Thanks to this programme, I have grown into a strong individual with the confidence to handle anything.”

“After completing my 10th standard, I had to quit school and join a textile shop as a sales girl to support my family. My father runs a small tea shop in the city and my mother is mostly bedridden because of a spinal cord-related issue. My sister, who was married and living with her husband, returned home with her 3 kids as her marriage had fallen apart.

My father and I were the only earning members of my family and expenses were mounting up.

I decided that I had to learn a skill that would let me have a good career and help me earn well. While I was looking for opportunities, I got to know about the Association for Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW) through some of my friends. ANEW was holding a camp about their home nursing programme, which was supported by Cognizant Foundation, at Pallavan Salai and my friends, who had already enrolled, encouraged me to sign up as well.

It turned out to be one of the best decisions of my life.

I enjoyed attending classes at ANEW and got a lot of hands-on experience working in hospitals. Once my training was complete, I got the opportunity to work as a home nurse at Anna Nagar. I was the happiest when my employer gave good feedback to ANEW about my work.

Thanks to this programme, I have grown into a strong individual with the confidence to handle anything. My elder sister was inspired to see me learn and earn and has enrolled in the same programme. I am sure that both of us will be able to lead a dignified life as we are able to earn for ourselves and support our families too.”

– Velanganni V., ANEW Home Nursing Batch 118



Skilling Women (Other)

Apparel Sector Skill Training for Underserved Women

Under this programme, women from impoverished backgrounds are identified and training provided in sewing and tailoring for six months. The trained women are either placed in suitable jobs in the textile industry or encouraged to take up entrepreneurship, either individually or as part of a collective, for which periodic mentorship will be provided.

Train 240 women over 12 months

LOCATION

Karnataka | Tamil Nadu

PARTNER

**Sarvodaya Integrated Rural Development Society, Koppal |
Women's Organization for Rural Development, Namakkal**

Skilling Underserved Youth

India has a large population of rural youth, and an important aspect in achieving the country's development goals is to provide them with employment opportunities. Cognizant Foundation has supported several initiatives which provide skill training for young men and women from economically weaker sections of society, enabling them to improve their prospects.

180 youth skilled in CNC operations in Ahmed Nagar

120 youth skilled as General Duty Assistants in Amaravati

PARTNER

Pratham Education Foundation, Mumbai

LOCATION

Maharashtra

Cognizant Foundation

FOLLOW US ON

