

# DEEP GRIHA SOCIETY

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*“Empowerment of the marginalised through capacity building and sustainable rural and urban development programmes”*

## ANNUAL REPORT

**2020 - 21**



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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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2020-2021 the year that the world, as one, went through the same storm together, albeit with very different vessels to carry them through. For Deep Griha, in Pune, the lockdown announced by Maharashtra in March 2020 led to all DGS programmes being shut down with immediate effect. The community that Deep Griha works with was severely affected by the pandemic, due to the lockdown and the subsequent loss of income. Daily wage earners, house maids, helpers, small entrepreneurs, everyone was hit hard. The stress and anxiety caused by the pandemic and its effects are a close second to the loss of livelihood.

Field workers who live in the community, made it possible for DGS to understand and address the immediate needs of the community. We were able to provide support through essentials kits, for over 2000 families, not including kits distributed to the families of children from our sponsorship programme. Apart from the kits, we collaborated with other organisations to bring awareness around: COVID 19 – precautions and care, dealing with stress and anxiety, identifying depression and suicide prevention, domestic violence and options available to individuals, importance of self-care, are some of the topics covered.

Six months into the year, we needed to make some extremely tough decisions at DGS, with regard to programmes and teams, of the eight programmes run through Deep Griha, we had to completely shut down three – Childcare, Medical (except the DOTS programme) and Women Empowerment that pre-COVID 19 focused on literacy and adult education for women in the community and it was one learning programme we were unable to move online during the lockdown.

Over 45 years DGS has consistently reinvented itself to keep up with the changing needs of the community as well as the changing environment of the development sector. The pandemic and the post-COVID world demand the same from Deep Griha, yet again. An opportunity to reassess pre-COVID programmes, their impact and a fresh look at current needs of the community, organization strength and bring these together for high impact interventions. Interventions will continue to focus on supporting the most vulnerable and marginalized in the community, especially as they deal with the aftermath of the pandemic.

Through lockdown the world has moved online, as have some of Deep Griha's programmes, in keeping with the changing needs of the current environment. Online education brings with it a world of possibilities as well as a fair share of challenges and restrictions. Education across the world has gone online and it is an opportunity that Deep Griha was quick to adapt to, through the Tech Smart Centres and Deep Griha Academy as well as the Aadhar Kendra Sponsorship Programme.

Through trying times for everyone, Deep Griha is grateful to you for your continued support as our local and international partners. Your support allowed us to continue to respond to the community's needs. We look forward to your continued presence and support as we move ahead with courage and optimism, the one positive side effect of the pandemic has been to show us just how small the world really is and how easily we can connect despite physical distance.

Thank you.  
Ashlesha Onawale



# CITY OF CHILD

The aim of the programme is to provide a safe and secure residential facility to 50 marginalised boys.

## **Objective 1**

To provide a safe and secure environment for boys from vulnerable family situations.

## **Objective 2**

To provide access to education.

## **Objective 3**

To ensure access to regular health check-ups and counselling for overall healthcare and also provide a balanced nutritious diet that is age dependent.

## **Objective 4**

To ensure overall development of the children

## **Activities**

### **1. Safe and secure environment**

As soon as the lockdown was announced and schools were declared shut, parents came to pick up their children from the City of Child, with all the uncertainty and fear at the time, families wanted to be close to each other if possible. Of the 42 boys, 18 stayed back at the CoC. With no visitors allowed into the CoC, the team had the tough task of ensuring the young boys were positively engaged in learning activities, staying safe, healthy and above all entertained.

### **2. Education**

While at CoC the education of the students is taken care of and with schools being shut through most of the year, we ensured that the students had continued access to learning through online sessions with partner organisations. Doorstep School focused on Marathi literacy; they mapped the students' growth through the weeks of learning. As a wonderful side effect, the students were seen to read more books during the time.



### 3. Healthcare

The number of students at CoC ranged between 15 to 20 through the year. The children at the centre continued to have access to nutritious meals every day. Two health check-up camps were organised through the year, one of them was through the group of doctors that visits Kasurdi village from Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC).

### 4. Overall Development

City of Child, before the lockdown had received funding to open an E-Resource Centre on the premises to help the boys at CoC as well as for young people from the villages around Kasurdi. An undisguised blessing, given the year to come, and CoC was able to have an operational computer centre within months after the first lockdown was lifted. The students were able to access online classes, and were able to connect with learning initiated by other partner organisations.

The Doorstep School programme worked on strengthening Marathi literacy (regional language of Maharashtra), Badlaav worked on an online awareness session around reproductive health,

SAATHI conducted spoken English classes for the boys, Pratyek worked on creating awareness around Child Rights and Advocacy through fun activities, to name a few organisations that CoC interacted regularly through the year.

Students, volunteers and interns also engaged with students remotely through fun activities, games, and online quizzes. The children helped out with tasks around the farm at CoC as well as helping the caretaker with repairs and maintenance required on the grounds. The children had spent so much time at CoC in one go, for the first time, since they could not go home for the summer holidays and were able to go home only for Diwali, which was one year after the last time they had visited home. The year came with its set of challenges for the children as well as the team, through it all we are grateful for the collaborations with other organisations that led to continuous learning for the children.

## Special Events



### Support to Migrant Communities

Vegetables grown on the CoC farm were distributed to 10 families of migrant workers in and around Kasurdi village.



### Support to Migrant communities

Migrant workers live in temporary shelters as they travel from village to village for work. The monsoons, lead to leaky roofs and unpleasant living conditions. The team at City of Child facilitated the distribution of plastic sheets (Tadpatri) and raincoats to 6 families near Kasurdi.

## Key Performance Indicators

**2**

New admissions

**28**

Number of Children

**36**

Counsellor Visits

## Stories of Achievements



### Ganesh Dixit

Ganesh stayed at City of Child from class 6<sup>th</sup> till class 10. He moved back with his father for his higher studies. Despite counselling and offers for support Ganesh ignored advice, missed college and soon fell behind. With Covid and all jobs drying up, he struggled to make ends meet. After reaching out to DGS, he was helped to find a job as a watchman and now aims to simultaneously study with the eventual goal of joining the police or the military.



### Shankar Nitin Bhalerao

Shankar came to City of Child in 2008, as a 5-year-old. No parents and no extended family, his family has been Deep Griha. Shankar was enrolled into Deep Griha Academy pre-school. He graduated from Grade 10 and due to the pandemic was unable to attend regular college. In his words, “Deep Griha helped me from my childhood till my 10th. And I will never forget the people who helped me. And I promise I will also help my Deep Griha in any condition. Thank you DEEP GRIHA.”



# AADHAR KENDRA

To ensure holistic development of children from socially and economically deprived backgrounds with special emphasis on orphan or semi-orphan children.

## **Objective 1**

To provide the participating children with an opportunity to pursue their education and to encourage parents to support their education.

## **Objective 2**

To ensure that the children are healthy and their nutritional and healthcare needs are being met.

## **Objective 3**

To create access to non-academic activities conducted during the year that promote general well-being.

## **Activities**

### **1. Education**

The Education system as a whole was upset by the pandemic. Many schools and institutes went online but many were unable to do so and remained shut. The students did not all have access to devices needed to attend the online classes. Deep Griha was able to provide tabs at the centre for students to use. Quite a few of the older students decided to work to support the family income, especially since colleges were already closed.

### **2.a. Health and Nutrition**

The daily meal at the Deep Griha centres was replaced by grocery kits for the family. The team did whatever was necessary to get the kits to children in need.

### **2.b. Counselling Session**

Counselling sessions, like most other interaction moved to online platforms or good old phone calls. The counsellors and field workers stayed in regular contact with the participants to ensure the students' well-being.



### 2.c. Awareness Session

Around 20 awareness sessions were conducted through Aadhar Kendra's sponsorship programme. Topics covered included COVID 19 awareness, emotions and self-care, and suicide prevention.

### 3.a. Non-academic activities

We would like to share activities that students engaged in, as their own initiative. Akash Kotle, worked as an assistant salesperson in a pharmacy and distributed grocery from his own salary to families living around his home. We discovered this after a counsellor spoke with him, he had gone about and 'done what needed to be done', without pictures or social media posts.

Akash Kadam, another young man, who had a part-time job at a bank and created graphics for COVID awareness in his own time, provided meals to homeless individuals near his home for 15 days. Akash also fed stray animals during the lockdown.

Deepak Sonawane, a student of Engineering, has been providing tuition for school going children from the community for years now. He enjoys poetry and writes poems too. He organised an online poetry competition to motivate people during the lockdown.

These stories reminded us of the privilege we have of playing a part in creating a space for young inspiring individuals to be everything they want to be and more.

## Special Events



## Grocery Distribution

Adapting to the ensuing lockdown that was imposed once the pandemic unfolded, the staff from the Aadhar Kendra programme decided to move away from the traditional everyday cooking of meals for children to providing grocery packages to families. All essentials such as rice, pulses, oil and sugar were provided in each package.

Key Performance Indicators		
<b>237</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>
Number of children enrolled	Number of awareness sessions	Number of new admissions

## Stories of Achievements



### Vaishnavi Mallesh Mantri

Vaishnavi, was enrolled in the Aadhar Kendra sponsorship program at the age of 9, she was being raised by a single



### Pragati Suresh Jadhav

Pragati joined Aadhar Kendra sponsorship program at the age of 12. She was enrolled after her father, who worked as a helper at



mother, unemployed at the time. A few years later, Vaishnavi lost her mother to suicide. Vaishnavi went on to complete her schooling from an English medium school and even completed her Bachelor of Business Administration with a First Class, while working part-time to keep the house running. She earns around Rs. 15,000 (\$200) per month today.

Deep Griha, passed away suddenly, due to a heart attack. Given the family's need, she and her sister were enrolled under the programme. Pragati completed her Bachelor's degree in Commerce



# TECH SMART CENTERS

The goal of the programme is to facilitate economic empowerment for young people, particularly young women. This is done through job placements after the participants have acquired basic computer skills, and communication skills in English.

## Objective 1

To connect with young people who have only attained basic education and are unable to find employment.

## Objective 2

To provide training that is industry specific and ensures the students build on their employable skillset.

## Objective 3

Offer adequate databases for job placements with tips and guidelines on how to face job interviews that will help them secure employment soon after they complete their Tech Smart course.

## Objective 4

To build on their communication skills with a focus on English language development.

## Activities

### 1. Mobilisation

Mobilisation looked different this year, instead of home visits and door-to-door surveys, mobilisers were required to mobilise students remotely through the first half of the year. People were a little fearful of sending their young children out for work, some didn't have the luxury of choice. The teams organised webinars and workshops to reach out to students for mobilisation, since the normal routes were closed to them.

### 2. Training

The facilitators with support from the Tech Mahindra Foundation (TMF) team was able to move their classes online quite early on in the lockdown. Challenges were many, right from access to a smart phone, decent network, limited data, which the teams, along with the TMF team were able to find solutions for. The number trained through the year was lower only by 20!

### 3. Placements

Job placements for the students at the end of the course was tougher than the training in many ways. With students in various locations and home visits not possible, it was harder to bring the students to interviews. Even with malls being closed for most of the year, many shops shut down and generally a fall in demand for retail work, both the centres were able to get a placement rate of over 60% eventually.

### 4. English Language Development

The facilitators had to work twice as hard to prepare the students, with multiple calls to tackle technical issues, and ensuring that all the students attended the online class on time. The facilitators needed to reach out to students without smart phones, separately to ensure that they could continue to learn as well. Facilitators had to use other tools, including you tube videos and other videos to teach the children.

## Special Events

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### Webinar on Stress Management

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Mr. Sanjay Gawai, spoke about addressing and managing stress instead of ignoring it. He elaborated on ways one could manage stress and overcome it through better time management.



### Government Schemes for Youth

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Prof. Dr. Devanand Shinde (M. Phil, PHD) provided the students a comprehensive look at all the government schemes that students could avail of, and their benefit to them.

### Key Performance Indicators

62

Differently Able Students

405

Number of students  
trained

62%

Placement rate

### Stories of Achievements



#### Krishna Laxman Rangdal

Krishna was very motivated to complete this education and support his family because his father works as a security guard and his brother is a differently abled student. Upon joining SMART, he required encouragement to overcome his shy demeanour and lack of confidence. His sincerity and hard work in class paid off as he landed a job as a supervisor at X-Metric Water Solutions Private Limited earning Rs. 20,000/- per month.



#### Aarti Sawant

Aarti was very keen to stand on her own feet and prove to her family that girls could also work and be successful. She found out about the SMART programme through a mobilizer and understood that she had to develop certain skills in order to achieve her dreams. She joined the programme and worked on her English communication skills. Upon completing her internship at Star Bazaar and was offered a job to work as a Sales Executive. Due to her commitment, hard work & customer management skills she was promoted as Counter Head for billing.



# DEEP GRIHA ACADEMY

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## **Objective 1**

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To provide quality English medium education through child-centred methodology for children between 3-16 years of age.

## **Objective 2**

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To ensure relevant education that focuses on holistic development is imparted to children at the school.

## **Objective 3**

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To provide vocational and agriculture training for young people.

## **Objective 4**

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To build local capacity through training for teachers at Deep Griha Academy.

## **Activities**

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### **1. Methodology**

DGA was one of Deep Griha Society's projects that adapted to online existence within a month of the lockdown. The teachers were trained and ready to conduct online classes. This outcome required training of the teachers, training of parents with regular follow up to ensure that parents could help their children connect to online classes. The teachers were required to speak to parents far more regularly than they ever had to do. Teachers ensured that parents were on the same page so that the students didn't miss their online lessons. With only one device per home in some cases, the teachers had to ensure class schedules were planned

with siblings and access to devices in mind, not an easy feat.

### **2. Holistic Development**

The school aims to develop the students holistically, not as easy to follow through with online lessons, initially. The teachers came up with brilliant solutions when it came to home work and classroom activities were replaced by tasks that the students had to perform at home or around their homes. The teachers were sure to balance their academic lessons with relevant conversations, in keeping with the pandemic and its side effects.



### **3. Vocational and Agricultural Studies**

Vocational and Agricultural studies were a little more difficult to carry through online platforms. The respective teachers found a way and followed up conversations around the topics online with tasks to perform at home connected to their subject and learning. One such project was to repurpose a used oil can as a bird feeder. The students demonstrated incredible creativity when it came to projects, they had to complete at home. The school was able to ensure that learning continued to be relevant.

### **4. Teacher Training and Development**

The teachers retreat planned for May, the second year in a row, unfortunately needed to be cancelled. Teacher training for the first few months looked at the various options available for online classrooms, the tools available on each platform and how to use them. The

regular teacher training calendar needed to be altered and more sessions around COVID 19, care and support, mental health, self-care were conducted and fewer ones purely based on facilitation of learning. The teachers, students and parents demonstrated resilience and an appetite for learning that was incredible and a determination to overcome challenges that helped everyone get through the year. Around November, the records showed 70% attendance for online classes.

### **5. COVID 19**

Apart from regular school work and some reaching out to communities with awareness sessions, the school was able to join hands with the Government to fight COVID, by giving the school building to be used as a COVID centre.



## Special Events



### Switch to Online Teaching

As a result of the lockdown that ensued due to Covid, teachers had to switch to Online Teaching in order to ensure that educational progress of the students was not hampered. Even awareness sessions for COVID 19 were conducted online by sharing videos and information.



### Virtual Exposure Visit

Courtesy Hyatt Regency for the initiative, our students from Grade 10 were given a virtual tour of the Hotel. Students also learnt about the various departments and how one could get into the hotel industry.

## Key Performance Indicators

**0.67**

Girl/Boy Ratio

**351**

Number of Students

**6**

Number of Staff trainings

## Stories of Achievements

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### Switch to Remote Working

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A testimony to the team at DGA, as the pandemic unfolded, they were quick to adapt and shift to online teaching so that classes continued uninterrupted. The teachers engaged children through various activities, gave home assignments, spread awareness about COVID-19 and related precautionary measures and provided study guidance. The teachers made sure to stay connected with all the parents through regular phone calls; Teachers made over 700 calls to parents throughout the academic year in order to,

- Understand their challenges during the pandemic
- To share their child's progress with them and to ensure their child attended class regularly.
- To help them better handle the stress of managing their children.

In the PTM and PTA, parents appreciated the school for not just teaching but also for taking care of the children and their families.

# DISHA

Deep Griha's Integrated Service for HIV and AIDS, means direction in Hindi and Marathi.

## Objective 1

To conduct HIV awareness sessions in hitherto un-targeted communities in Pune and surrounding villages.

## Objective 2

To assist people living with HIV to have a more fulfilled, happy and complete life through counselling and matrimonial events.

## Activities

### 1. Awareness

HIV awareness took a backseat through the year as most of the awareness conducted was COVID 19 related.

### 2. Melava

The Melava was not conducted this year.

## Special Events



## Medical Camp

Once a month at both Tadiwala Road and Ramtekadi, the DISHA organises medical

## Grocery Distribution - Transgender

Given the unprecedented circumstances created as a result of the pandemic, other



camps for people living with HIV. They gain access to specialist doctors and receive medicine for no charge. Typically, the number of participants who benefit from these camps ranges between 120-150 participants.

vulnerable groups in the community were also provided support. Once a month at both Tadiwala Road and Ramtekadi, about 125 people from the transgender community were provided large grocery packages.

Key Performance Indicators		
<b>150</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>3</b>
Number of individuals supported	Attendance for health check-up camps	Number of health check-up camps

DISHA this year focused on supporting individuals and families living with HIV through grocery distribution and access to regular health check-ups.

# INCOME GENERATION PROGRAMME

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The programme aims to improve the socio-economic status of the women in financially deprived communities of Pune.

## Objective 1

To improve the educational level amongst women living in the targeted communities.

## Objective 2

To improve financial security of women in the targeted communities.

## Activities

### **Income Generation Programme (IGP)**

This year the focus for the IGP was making masks. Early in the year, sessions were conducted to teach women from the community how to make cloth masks, which were distributed within the community along with the package of essentials given to families. Awareness sessions were conducted on various topics. Since many women lost their jobs during the lockdown, the IGP women had many new women sign up to be part of the initiative. The team is working on training women for new products.

### **Special Events**



### **Entrepreneurship Development**

Over two days, the Bhartiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) conducted a workshop to encourage women from the community to start their own business. During the workshop, steps to start one's own business and the different strategies one can employ to market one's own products were explained. About 30 women participated in this workshop.

## Stories of Achievements

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### Kaveri Sagar Kamble

Kaveri is 26 years old, with three children and a husband. Kaveri joined the programme in July 2017 because she enjoyed sewing and wanted to learn new skills. She was introduced to the uniform project and trained. She was instrumental in completing orders received in the past, ensuring the quality was maintained. Quoting Kaveri, “I came out of the house learnt a new skill and so much more, I am very happy, I learnt about teamwork”.



### Khairunisa Shaikh

Khairunisa was very keen on learning something new and supporting her family. However, the main challenge here was that her husband needed to be convinced to allow her to leave home and to participate in the programme. Once her husband was on board, she joined the quilt making project where she was trained in the craft. Her confidence and overall joy have grown since then, she has enjoyed learning something new.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Everything that we have been able to achieve over this year would not have been possible without the support of many individuals, organisations and corporate offices. We may not be able to include everyone in this list, but we would not be here if it wasn't for each one of you.

All the donors and sponsors. Our partner organisations

All the volunteers who have invaluable contributed to our various projects.

Deep Griha USA

Friends of Deep Griha UK

First Community Church

BNY Mellon/UWW

Druva

ECF – Equal Community Foundation

EXL

Institute for Study Abroad

Nursing Colleges

Sahara Aalhad

SANGAM (International Guild Centre)

SCHOOL (Society of Community Health Oriented Operational Links)

Tech-Mahindra Foundation

WNS



Would you like to be a part of our journey?

This is how you can.....

- Be an ambassador for Deep Griha Society
- Sponsor a child
- Adopt a project
- Donate to a program
- Make a Deep Griha wish come true
- Help us organise a fundraising event
- Volunteer with us

For more information, please write to us at [info@deepgriha.org](mailto:info@deepgriha.org) or [ashlesha.onawale@deepgriha.org](mailto:ashlesha.onawale@deepgriha.org)