

Site Visit Report

Name: Sense International India

Place: Baroda, Gujarat

Date: 19th Jan 2022

Visit Details

Sense International India supports Disha by providing multiple services like training for teachers, staff members, parents for spreading awareness around deafblindness etc. Disha Charitable Trust is the primary organization we are funding.

Disha has a center in Vadodara where it supports 24 children on the site. Sense does not have a physical presence in Vadodara. However, since Sense is supporting Disha; our effective site for Sense would be the Disha Center in Vadodara. I am hereby sending you the observations that I made during our virtual visit for Disha Foundation during Asha Silicon Valley's weekly meeting on 19th January 2022. We had representatives from both Disha and Sense on the call.

Mr. Parmar (Project Coordinator) gave us a virtual tour of the Disha Center. The center has two floors (Ground and 1st) and has been divided into units for children with different types of disabilities. Due to the pandemic we were told that there were only 10 children able to visit the center thrice a week. We were introduced to the kids present at the center at the time of the visit. The remaining kids are being provided services online.

Deafblind Unit

This is on the first floor. There were a couple of staff members individually teaching and monitoring activities for two deaf blind children. This unit has various facilities to enable the kids to learn and perform basic daily actions like independent eating, toilet training etc. There is a deafblindness classroom on the first floor. There was an ongoing online session for a child, so we could not interact with Ms Alka who is the Vice President at the center.

Speech Therapy Room

Next, Mr. Parmar showed us the Speech therapy room where there was a training session in progress for one of the kids, Ishrat. Her speech therapist gave us a demonstration of how a kid is taught at the center. Ishrat, blind and partially deaf, was

being taught how to sense daily objects like glass, plate etc by touching the objects using fingers. Then she was asked to describe the use of each object and to distinguish between different types of objects.

Physio Area

Mr. Parmar then proceeded to show us the physio area. Between the physio area and the speech therapy room, there is a reception desk with a waiting area. There were a few parents waiting here, after having dropped their kids to the center. In the physio area, an instructor was training one of the kids, Sana Patel. Sana is an intellectually disabled kid with hearing impairment in both her ears. She has problems in balancing and coordinating while walking. The instructor, Dr. Twinkle was teaching the kid to walk in a straight line. There were weights tied to Sana's legs and the room had double bars. The double bars provided both support while walking and a practice path (between the bars) that she could walk on. The weights helped Sana orient her walking using slow steps. There was a wooden boundary marked on the path for steps with the right and left foot. Dr. Twinkle showed us equipment they use for other physio training like gripping boards, an exercise bike etc.

Vocational Unit

Mr. Parmar then took us to the Vocational Unit where trainer Ms. Heena Mansoori was monitoring activities by children 15+ years of age. Ms. Heena introduced us to Zubair who has hearing and speech disability. However, Zubair was independently making masks using a mechanical device similar to a sewing machine. The materials needed like cloth, thread bundles, scissors etc were being provided by Yunuj (unsure about the name as the audio was unclear). Ms. Heena mentioned different kids specialized in different vocational skills like mask making, embroidery, beeding, mask cutting, grafting masks, buttoning etc. We then met Parvez who was stencil painting on purses.

Exhibition/Sale Area

Ms. Heena went over the products created by the children in the exhibition area. There were multiple types of products where each product was created by groups of children with special skills at each step of the manufacturing process. The products being created were jewelry, purses, pouches, towels, masks, table mats, clay paintings, greeting cards, pen stands, (Diwali) candles. Each skill has a separate teacher.

Assessment Room

Each new child is assessed prior to enrolling into Disha. Mrs. Shashi working here described how an assessment is performed. The child's hearing ability, vision, socialization etc is assessed. Once determined to be a deafblind kid the children are then taken to the Sensory room for functional assessment. A file, itinerary, planning and

reporting is done in the assessment room for each kid. This is performed simultaneously, with the Doctors as well as staff members in Disha.

Sensory Room

The center also has a sensory room on the first floor. Mr. Parmar showed us the room. However, it was being refurbished. Here the kids are assessed for and taught sensory activities. Tiles and walls are tactile with pebbles so that children can feel and differentiate. Every 4-5 years new amenities are added.

Ms Nupoor, Sensory Room Manager, at the Center went over the changes planned after refurbishing. There was a space issue which is being resolved, introducing touch screen, outlook changes to the room. The Disha team would be sharing the updates once complete. This is expected to be done in a month.

Miscellaneous Facilities

Support Team:

- The center also has a team dedicated to supporting children by helping them use the Government provided benefits like Aadhar card, bus and railway passes, insurance schemes etc.

Food:

- Midday meals are provided to all the children visiting the center. The meal includes curries, rice, sweets, dal etc. Baroda has a Jalaram Trust that provides food to schools, such institutions, twice per week. On other occasions, Disha sponsors it.

Restrooms:

- There are restrooms on both the floors. Mr. Parmar showed us a restroom on the ground floor. It had all the basic necessities like a working toilet bowl, shower, basin and the required toiletries.
- Kids have two attendants at the center to take care of any restroom related issues.

Play Area:

- Mr. Parmar showed us the play area which included a small garden at the Center. The play area had a small ground, slides and playground climbers.

Autism Area

- There are separate classes for Autism.

There is also a drinking water area on the ground floor in the center.

My observations

- The center has adequate facilities and upgrades planned for achieving the goals for this year.
- The staff members seemed qualified and dedicated in their services during our interactions.
- All basic necessities for the children are being covered by the center.
- Mr. Parmar was prompt in answering all our questions during the visit regarding the regular functioning of the center
- Disha Foundation, along with the partner Sense International India have significantly improved the life of the identified deafblind and other multiple disability children, by making them not just independent but socio-economically productive in some cases.
- In doing the above, they have also greatly helped the kids' families in adapting the consequent different way of living

Hope the observations will help you decide on our donation for the cause.

Reporter,
Siddharth Deshpande

Center Photos

Kids performing vocational activities



Deafblind class



Physio Room



Ground Floor Restroom



Ishrat



Zubair (left), Ms Heena (center) and Yunuz (right)



Jewelry by children



Playground



References

- [Site visit](#) (recorded meeting - Site visit starts from 56:32)
- [Annual Report 2021](#)