



# SNEHAGRAM

Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Center  
for adolescent Children Living with HIV

## ACTIVITY REPORT 2016

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

Snehagram was conceived as a humble attempt to respond to the needs and challenges of adolescent children living with HIV. Sneha Charitable Trust had the experience of working with PLHIV and younger children through Snehadaan, Snehasadan and Sneha Care Home. With the advancement of medical interventions, the children were growing up into youth and it was our responsibility to groom them and prepare them for a successful adulthood. Which needed a different approach and focus on vocational skills, life skills and preparation for independent living.

First batch of 23 children (10 girls and 13 boys) moved to the campus in Nachikuppam village of Krishnagiri Tamil Nadu on February 12, 2013.

### VISION & MISSION:

Snehagram envisions to ensure quality of life and future of the orphan and vulnerable children living with and affected by HIV and lead them to a healthy and productive adulthood by comprehensively addressing their needs on education, health, psycho-social and emotional well-being, vocational training, life skill education and value formation.

### EDUCATE FOR LIFE IS OUR MOTTO

### OBJECTIVES:

- To create a home away from home for Children Living with and Affected by HIV to rebuild their lives.
- To encourage children to attain optimum education for building their lives for future,
- To ensure quality of life through comprehensive and holistic care integrated with adequate psycho-social and emotional well-being.
- To build self-esteem and confidence through life skill training, guidance and support.
- To guide and support the young adolescent to transition into responsible, healthy and hope filled adults.
- To enable the children to develop their skills for securing job through vocational training based on their aptitude.
- To mentor and rehabilitate the young adolescents to settle in life.



## SCENARIO OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV IN INDIA

While estimates for children orphaned by AIDS are unavailable there is evidence that nearly 0.1 million children living with HIV/AIDS in India. UNICEF estimates that there could be about 4 million affected children in India, located mostly in the high HIV-burden states of south and northeast India (affected children include those living with HIV or those who are orphaned by AIDS, and children whose parents are living with HIV). By the end of 2015, around 75 thousand children below the age 15 needed ART.

As per December 2015 data, in India, there is an estimated number of 138456 children are living with HIV. In Karnataka in the estimated number of 244156 people living with HIV, around 12000 are the children below the age of 15. Another 83 plus thousand children are affected by AIDS (CABA) in Karnanaka. It is in this context intervention for children living with HIV is crucial in our fight against HIV / AIDS.

Snehagram has catered so far to:

| No. of Children | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|
| Girls           | 13   | 22   | 24   | 25   |
| Boys            | 12   | 21   | 27   | 36   |
| Rehab care      | 0    | 2    | 5    | 10   |
| Total           | 25   | 45   | 56   | 71   |

### OUR TEAM:

Fr. Mathew Perumpil, MI (Director of Snehagram)  
Fr. Joy Inchodi, MI (Administrator)

### TEAM MEMBERS

Sr. Rani  
Sr. Prasanta  
Mr. Shyju  
Mr. Jithin Sebastian

Mr. Antony Maria Joseph  
Mr. Subin  
Mr. Prabhakaran  
Ms. Nirmala



## ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES:

The academic programme in Snehagram is student centered. Most of these children lack formal education as they have not attended the school for a considerable time. Hence National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) of Central Government has been adopted to complete the Secondary Education. This offers the student the choice to select any five subjects of his/her interest and clear them at one shot or in parts. Participatory and activity based pedagogy is being followed. Each class has three to four study groups which learn together and their discussions and progress are monitored by the respective teachers. Teacher mentored sessions followed by group discussion and individual learning. This helps the students reflect and personalise the learning content and meaning.

The students of Snehagram are divided into three groups; The NIOS group, the Pre-NIOS group and the skill training group. A continuous and comprehensive evaluation is conducted in both the semesters to assess their progress.

List of the children as per the class..

| SL no | Class                            | No of children. |
|-------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 01    | Post NIOS & Skill Training group | 19              |
| 02    | NIOS                             | 20              |
| 03    | Pre NIOS                         | 22              |
|       | Total no Of children             | 61              |

## FIRST BATCH OF NIOS/ RESULTS:

All our students who appeared for the 10th in the year 2015 have passed. Of the 19 students, 13 students secured more than 60 percent marks and 3 of them scored above 80%. We are proud of our students as they have fought against all the obstacles with the help of groomers at the centre and tasted success. Many of them infarct struggle with learning challenges and lower IQ.



## THE PRESENT NIOS:

We have registered 20 students for their 10th level examination under NIOS in this year. The students are preparing to write their exam in April 2017. The great achievement of Snehagram is that, the students are learning most of their subjects through the group study mentored by the teachers. The batch who completed the 10th level guides them. The support from Christ University is avail to understand difficult concepts in the learning process. Different departments from Christ University conduct workshops on different subjects like Business studies, economics, psychology etc.

## THE PRE NIOS BATCH:

Students who will be appearing for their public examination the following year are trained in different aspects of English like grammar, comprehension, vocabulary building and communicative English in the first semester. In the second semester they are introduced to different subjects of NIOS to be able to choose their subjects for NIOS. This year we have 23 students for pre NIOS. The goal is to introduce and prepare them for the 10<sup>th</sup> NIOS exam



## SKILL TRAINING PROGRAMMES:

Those children who have completed the formal education of 10th through NIOS are focussing on different vocational training programmes. Others who have stopped formal education also joined them for various skill development programme. Currently we have; Tailoring and Embroidery, Dairy farming, agricultural farming (organic farming), and one recycling unit. We are also introducing poultry farm from next semester.

### A. TAILORING, EMBROIDERY AND CRAFT WORK

The interested students are selected to give basic tailoring training. The candidates who are really enthusiastic have selected this as their choice of profession in future. It will help them to work either in shops & garment factories or they can start their own unit after the completion of their plus two education. Four of our students have already received certificates in advance tailoring training upon the completion of basic training program.



### B. AGRICULTURAL FARMING

Right now we have thirteen acres of land exclusively for agriculture. A portion of this land has been using for cultivating organic vegetables and fruits. In order to learn about organic cultivation, children visited organic farming fields and observed the farming methods. Thus, they had the privilege to learn vermin-composting techniques, seed treatment techniques using bio fertilizers and bio inoculants and preparation of herbal insect repellents. Children have been given a plot of land to cultivate and they successfully cultivate enough organic vegetables and fruits for domestic use. The excess vegetables are sold either directly to customers or to wholesale dealers at nearby market. A portion of the profit is deposited to children's bank accounts.





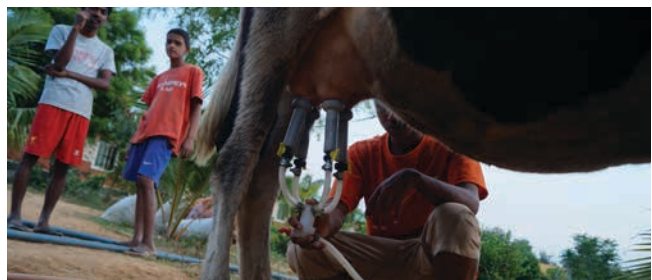
### C. BANKING & SAVINGS:

All our skill training group students opened a saving bank account. All these students who are engaged in skill training are provided a stipend, which are deposited on their saving account of their name. This will help them to appreciate the value of work and learn the basics of budgeting and finance management.

### D. DAIRY FARM:

Dairying is an important source of subsidiary income to Snehagram, the requirement of the milk is supplied by the cows in Snehagram itself. The manure from animals provides a good source of organic matter for improving soil fertility and crop yields. The goober gas from the dung is used as fuel for domestic purposes. The surplus fodder and agricultural by-products are gainfully utilized for feeding the cows. Since agriculture is mostly seasonal, there is a possibility of finding employment throughout the year for many persons through dairy farming. Thus, dairy also provides employment throughout the year. Ten children from Snehagram underwent one week dairy farm training from government training institute, Karnataka. We have 7 cows at present in Snehagram.

All the children are engaged in some farming activities as well as daily cleaning and maintenance activities around the campus. Specialty of our farming is that we follow 'Organic Farming' gives a good learning for them in management and when the produce is sold, they get part of the money into their bank accounts.



### E. COMPUTER EDUCATION:

All the students are trained the basics of computer. As the part of their school curriculum the children are gaining the basic knowledge of the computer. All students are given basic training in computer as part of their education. Those who show interest are given advanced training in various computer application to prepare them for future job possibilities.





## COLLABORATION WITH CHRIST UNIVERSITY:

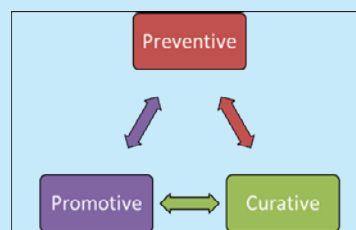
Technical resource and support in a remote village setup is always a challenge. It is in this context, Christ University from Bangalore came forward to support us. This collaborative venture was inaugurated on the fourth anniversary of Snehagram on July 20th 2016. Christ University will send a team of students from 6 departments on alternative weekends along with two faculties. They will train Snehagram students in the following areas:

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Capacity building    | 6. Sports              |
| 2. Job oriented courses | 7. Organic farming     |
| 3. Career guidance      | 8. Videography skills  |
| 4. Skill building       | 9. Cultural activities |
| 5. Employability skills |                        |



## HEALTH MANAGEMENT:

Managing the health becomes a key goal for our program. To reach our goal, we have divided our health management functions into three levels:



### PREVENTIVE CARE:

We follow the golden rule of Medical care "Prevention is better than cure". We have made prevention practices integrate into the daily lives of our children.

Children start their day with Yoga, which helps them to have a healthy body and mind and align with nature.

Children are practicing the regular running of 5 K and 10 K. It is not only to help them to be healthy but also they learn to build discipline of life.

Balanced nutritious diet is the backbone of our preventive health management. Diet includes mix of vegetarian, non-vegetarian and seasonable fruits. Children are taught hygiene practices and Health Ministers from among the children ensure all follow the healthy habits.

### PROMOTIVE CARE:

We believe that "health is a state of complete mental, physical and psychological wellbeing" and focus on creating A healthy mind in a healthy body.

We avail the services of an external counsellor with the support of KHPT (Karnataka Health Promotion Trust) to provide the mental health services to the children. Individual and group counselling is provided on need basis. We are also blessed by the support of a psychiatrist on referral.

Well-being groups are formed of children especially among girls who meet every week and discuss their issues and provide mutual support in dealing with life challenges and in goal setting. A Well-being tool developed by Boston University is followed by Snehagram in order to assess the psychological health of the children and implemented every six months.



## CURATIVE CARE:

### - ART (anti-retroviral therapy)

ART is the drug that keeps the HIV positive children alive. 51 of our children are on ART. Adherence to ART is a key parameter for its success and we have managed it by following certain best practices. The pills are counted and written with the name and date on each child's ART box. All those who are on ART have high adherence level and zero viral load outcome. Very rarely any children report of any opportunistic infections.

### - In-house nursing facility

The in-house nurse plays a major role in the health management of children. She monitors, records and keeps track of each child's CD4, ART follow up dates. When the children need inpatient care they are admitted in Snehadan.

### - Tie up with St. John's Medical College Hospital, Bangalore:

There is regular follow up available from St. Johns Medical College ART Centre who visit and check the ART adherence and health of all children. We also have support through electronic media for consultations related to any other health issues. We are also referring our children to IGCH (Indira Gandhi Children Hospital) Bangalore for second line ART and special consultation.

### - EMR (electronic medical record)

We maintain EMRs (electronic medical record) for all our children. This has enabled us to get the health parameters of a child in single click of a button and diagnose the child quickly and accurately.

### - Home remedies

We encourage the children to adopt home remedies and naturopathy for common ailments. We believe that the immunity has to be generated by the body and not by the antibiotics. Hence, our pharmacy includes less than 5 types of antibiotics.

## CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The co-curricular activities strengthen the base of curriculum. These activities enable children to share their emotions and strengthen the bond of friendship. In extra-curricular activities, creative works are given importance which facilitates skills and ideas of children. Adolescent stage is a period of turmoil and restless, where energy of children has to be tapped for productive work. These are the activities which motivate students for learning and make their lesson enjoyable.





## LIST OF THE CO CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

| Sl no | Date          | Events & trainings   | No of Participants |
|-------|---------------|--|--------------------|
| 01    | 12/05/2016    | Music & dance training   | 10                 |
| 02    | 27/04/2016    | Volunteered summer camp in Kolar   | 8                  |
| 03    | 3,4/9/2016    | Personality development workshop conducted by Christ University  | 60                 |
| 04    | 02/02/2016    | Career guidance workshop by Quest Alliance, Bangalore.   | 53                 |
| 05    | 30,31/07/2016 | Spiritual supportive programme by Jesus Youth, Bangalore   | 60                 |
| 06    | 20,21/08/2016 | Psychometric assessment by Christ University, Bangalore  | 60                 |
| 07    | 20-25/06/2016 | Dairy farm training in animal Husbandry and vetnary state level breeding and training centre, Bangalore. | 10                 |
| 08    | 19/06/2016    | Paper bag production training  | 10                 |

## EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS:

Throughout the year, we conduct events and celebrations to engage our children and showcase their talent. Sometimes the events are of national significance such as Independence Day, Republic Day, sometimes they are of religious nature; Christmas, Diwali, Dusshera, sometimes they are of social significant days such as Children's Day, AIDS Day etc. Children work in groups, prepare for days and put up great talent shows. They also get to meet people and get appreciated by them.

## CULTURAL EVENING PROGRAMME:

Last Saturday of every month will be celebrated as the cultural day in Snehagram. This is a great opportunity to develop their talent and leadership skill.



## PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES:

Along with academics, all round development and sporting aspirations have been given equal attention. Life in this 17-acre sprawling campus is bustling with activities from the crack of dawn where children have a daily exercise routine which starts with morning yoga and running then classes at the NIOS and afternoons spent training for athletic competitions. Sports occupies a central place among all their other activities and plays a significant role in maintaining not just physical health, fitness levels among the adolescents living with HIV but also ensures attaining mental health. The ecology- friendly, green and luscious haven provides the ideal environment for children in sporting activities.

The sports that are played regularly include football, throw ball, basket ball and cricket. The children are motivated to excel in whatever activity they are engaged which causes them to be mindful of how they care for their own bodies.

## RUNNING EVENTS:

| Sl no | Month          | Event                          | Category | No of participants | Result   |
|-------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--|
| 01    | February 2016  | Auroville Run, Pondicherry.    | 10 K     | 28                 | 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> in Open Men category     |
| 02    | May 2016       | TCS World 10 K, Bangalore      | 10 K     | 1                  | 9 <sup>th</sup> in open men category   |
| 03    | June 2016      | Anandayana Run, Bangalore      | 5 K      | 25                 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> on open men category   |
| 04    | June 2016      | Phuket Marathon, Thailand      | 10 K     | 1                  | Open   |
| 05    | July 2016      | Gold Coast Marathon, Australia | 10 K     | 1                  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> in 13 – 18 Age category  |
| 06    | July 2016      | Bangalore 10 K challenge       | 10 K     | 10                 | 1 <sup>st</sup> in 13- 18 age category   |
| 07    | September 2016 | Bangalore 5 k                  | 5 K      | 25                 | Open   |
| 08    | October 2016   | Colombo Marathon, Sri Lanka    | 10 K     | 2                  | 1 <sup>st</sup> in 13- 18 age category   |
| 09    | November 2016  | Delhi 10 K challenge           | 10 K     | 5                  | 9 <sup>th</sup> in open men category   |
| 10    | November 2016  | Bangalore Ultra                | 12.5 K   | 12                 | 1 <sup>st</sup> in open men category, 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> in open women category |
| 11    | December 2016  | Sneha Run 5 k                  | 5 K      | 35                 | Open   |

This year we introduced sports and matches in league format. Throughout the year the matches will be conducted on a group basis and the prizes are given at the end of the year.



## LEADERSHIP BUILDING PROGRAMS

Adolescents living with HIV have a challenge to transition into healthy adult life. Snehagram is meeting this challenge by developing leadership skills among them. Child Parliament system that is implemented within Snehagram is a clear example for this. Apart from this students are also groomed to attend conferences and workshops and influence the stakeholders to take actions that will uphold the rights of Children Living with HIV.

### CHILD PARLIAMENT:

Child Parliament is a system of self-governance by children. INSA India, a partner of Snehagram supported in setting up the Child Parliament system within Snehagram which is actively functioning since 2013 and has become an inspiration to many more organisations working for Children Affected by AIDS (CABA) in the country.

Under these system children select their own Parliament; Prime Minister, Health Minister, Law Minister, Sports Minister, Education Minister, Environment Minister and Opposition Ministers. Cabinet meetings and Parliament meetings are held regularly and children take active part in managing and guiding the affairs of Snehagram. Mr. Kaleshwar is the current Prime Minister and Ms. Shruthi is the Deputy Prime Minister for the year 2016.

*“ child parliament helps us to take up a decision for our self and help us not to be dependent on others. It helps us to become a responsible citizen in the country. So I am happy to be a deputy prime minister in Snehagram child parliament to develop my leadership skills”. Shruthi*

### SUMMER CAMP SUPPORT TO KOLAR:

Six Snehagram students went to Kolar to animate and guide summer camp conducted for community children. They shared about the child parliament system and helped the children to form a child supportive group. Child Parliament in Snehagram is now an example for many other institutions. In September 2016 six Snehagram children visited to Snehasadan Mangalore in order to strengthen their child parliament system by sharing the experience in Snehagram.

## INFLUENCING OVC PROGRAMS WITHIN AND ACROSS INDIA:

Snehagram has been recognised as a Learning site for the USAID OVC program implemented by KHPT. Children in Snehagram are being mentored for sharing the best practices of Snehagram across other institutions and stakeholders and bring about a positive change. There were more than 20 visits by staff, partners and institutions working with OVC to Snehagram where Snehagram children got the opportunity to present about Snehagram and the best practices they have.



## ATTENDING WORKSHOPS AND SENSITISING ON OVC:

Children of Snehagram engage in active advocacy with the government and other stakeholders who can make a difference to the Children Living with HIV (CLHIV). Due to their unique grooming, they have the confidence to address large audience and raise issues of importance to CLHIV. Some of the key workshops that children from Snehagram attended and influenced for change are; National Strategic Planning Workshop on OVC held by NACO and USAID at Bangalore, CME training for Doctors on Paediatric HIV, Social Security for HIV Positive persons, International Youth day Conference at Goa. Participating the NACO conference in Delhi.

## SNEHAGRAM. LEARNING SITE REPORT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Snehagram, an institution in Tamil nadu, an initiative of Camillians India under the Sneha charitable trust functioning as a vocational training and rehabilitation centre for CLHIV is devoted to filling that gap and is on preparing adolescent children infected and affected with HIV/ AIDS for transitioning into healthy and professionally productive adults. For children who are likely to grow into adults with an uncertain future, Snehagram is an abode for them. The approach has been able to achieve the quality of life, heightened self esteem and confidence among the children. Snehagram is a learning site of Karnataka Health Promotion trust (KHPT) for its HIV/AIDS orphan and vulnerable children social protection project which is funded by USAID.

## THE ACTIVITIES OF SNEHAGRAM, AS A LEARNING SITE.

| Sl no | Activities   | Total no |
|-------|--|----------|
| 01    | No of institutional children visited Snehagram for learning visit    | 149      |
| 02    | No of institutions visited Snehagram as exposure visit               | 25       |
| 03    | No of counsellors undergone training in Snehagram                    | 22       |
| 04    | No of institutions visited Snehagram for capacity building           | 12       |
| 05    | No of community children reached by Snehagram through various events | 357      |
| 06    | No of staff sensitized in Snehagram (partners & Collaborators)       | 80       |

## VOLUNTEERS CORNER

Volunteers come to either be involved in academics (teaching) or vocational skill-based trainings. Possible options include short term and long term periods at Snehagram Campus.

This year we had 17 volunteers to work closely with the activities Snehagram from different countries. Added to that we also had 109 visitors from different institutions who came to learn, contribute and give to the family in Snehagram.



## VOLUNTEER VOICE:

I was staying at Snehagram for about 5 weeks. The first few days I was participating as an observer in the daily activities the students have after some days I started a goal setting/ personal power course with the girls. The aim was to improve the unity feeling between the girls, and that every girl gets clearer about how they and build the future they would like to have. So they wrote down goals/ wishes they would like to achieve in the future. I had the feeling that awning and after the short course the girls felt more connected and supported with each other. Furthermore it feels like they understood more what steps they have to take to have the future they want and to be more self-responsible. The course might not have the same positive effect on every girl, but I do have the feeling that every girl learned more about themselves and about how to better interact and support each other. Very nicely for me and to see that the girls really appreciated my time and effort with the course. It was the first time for me that I was doing a course like this. I didn't really know if it would have the impact on the girls that I was hoping for. Though the very welcoming and appreciating commitments of the girls to the course was very committed and enthusiastic that the course will have success. After wards I can say that words I can say that I'm very happy to have taken time to visit snehagram and trying to help. It is very inspiring to see how a place like Sneha care and snehagram have been build. It is easy to see all the work and effort which have been put into establishing these paces I will go back to Germany with a very inspired mind, and of course the time here was very unique for me and I learned a lot, although I was only staying for a short time. I definitely would like to come back to see the progress and of course to see how the students are doing and to maybe do another projects with the students.

**Barbara, Germany.**  
18/11/2016

To my Snehagram family,

The experience I have had over the past 4-5 weeks has been invaluable. I came in with only a general understanding of the programme, but I understood the passion with which the staff and students work. My goals upon arrival where to involve myself in every aspect of the Snehagram experience. Despite o rough lonely childhood, these kids have a bright future. Overall I hope that I impacted them half as much as they impacted me. I fully intend on doing whatever I can to benefit Sneha charitable trust by volunteering in US. Thank you again for a wonderful month that I will never forget.

Love

**Nikhil Anna**  
17/07/2016.



## Snehagram – Camillians

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