



A Celebration of 20 Years



MI celebrates 20th Anniversary

As a run up to its 20th Anniversary Celebrations, MI organised a unique dance programme on wheelchairs at the Good Shepherd Auditorium in Bangalore, on Sunday, July 13, 2014 and a 'Free Preventive Health Check-up Programme' at its JP Nagar Campus, on July 25 & 26, 2014. A grand finale of celebrations took place at its centre on Saturday, August 2, through half a day Orientation on 'The Way Forward – Towards an Inclusive and Enabling Future' followed by an evening of awards, recognitions and showcase of talent by the staff members. Many eminent dignitaries, service users, friends, and partners of MI graced the various events, as MI looked back at its journey of 20 years. MI also renewed its promise to gear up for the newer challenges being posed by the changing times.

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The Way Forward – “Towards an Inclusive and Enabling Future”

Mr Chapal Khasnabis, Technical Officer, WHO-Geneva and founder-director of MI was the Chief Guest at the inaugural session on August 2. Other distinguished invitees included Ms Meera Saksena, Acting Chairperson, Karnataka State Human Rights Commission; Mr K.S. Rajanna, Commissioner for Disabilities, Govt of Karnataka; Mr David Nash, Global Employee Engagement Manager, Zurich Community Trust (UK) Ltd; and Ms Marika Millar, Executive Director, Miblou-Switzerland and Dr Gift Norman, Deputy Director, Bangalore Baptist Hospital.

Delivering his keynote address on the theme 'Global Health Scenario and Assistive Technology', Mr Khasnabis cautioned that, while in the last century the world was under serious threat from Communicable Diseases, now it was increasingly under threat from Non-communicable Diseases (NCD), Mental Health Diseases (MHD) and Road Traffic Injuries (RTI) and ageing, accompanied by gradual functional decline. In fact, the elderly populations in the developing countries had been rapidly increasing. The WHO had, therefore, shifted its focus from vaccines, medicines and medical devices to Assistive Health Technology (AHT) with the objective of sustaining 'active and productive ageing', Mr Khasnabis said.

Speaking on the topic 'Ageing, the Elderly and Disability', Dr Norman observed that traditionally ours was an 'elderly-friendly' society. However, recent studies showed that nearly 25 per cent of senior citizens in India were being abused. 'Accessibility' and 'Social security' are two areas which called for immediate attention in the context of inclusive development of the elderly, Dr Norman said. Ms Saksena, who spoke on 'Human Rights and Disability', suggested that NGOs like MI could diversify into related areas like creating public awareness about the rights of senior citizens, women, children, and sexual minorities. Mr Rajanna, while lauding MI's services, suggested that it could reach out to remote rural areas and larger populations.

Mr Nash and Ms Millar in their brief addresses acknowledged that they were proud to associate with MI. Earlier, the guests were welcomed by Ms Romola Joseph, President-MI. The vote of thanks was presented by Ms Albina Shankar, Director-MI. The inaugural session was followed by lunch and a cultural presentation by the MI community. Staff members who had completed 5 years, 10 years and 15 years and above were honoured. Among them, the long service five members were Ms Albina Shankar, Ms Ritu Ghosh, Mr Soikat Ghosh Moulic, Ms Jaikodi and Mr Amit Kumar.



Dazzling Dance on Wheels

MI organised a unique dance programme in the city called 'Dazzling Dance on Wheels', presented by Ability Unlimited Foundation (AUF), New Delhi. An ensemble of singularly gifted performers, the AUF showcased a rich repertoire that drew on Bharatanatyam, Bhagwad Gita, Sufi Dance and Yoga - choreographed beautifully by Guruji Syed Salladdin Pasha and staged brilliantly by



wheelchair-bound artists. The performance more than lived up to its reputation as 'a new natya shastra for the differently abled' leaving the audience unanimous in that there could not have been a better way for MI to ring in its 20th Anniversary!

Free Preventive Health Check-up Programme

The preventive health check-up programme saw as many as 365 people residing in and around the Jayanagar and JP Nagar areas of South Bangalore come to MI center and get themselves screened. Some leading hospitals in Bangalore participated in this voluntary effort. This includes Apollo Hospital, Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital, Bengaluru Hand Centre, Dr S R Chandrashekhar Institute of Speech and Hearing, Kidwai



Memorial Institute of Oncology, Narayana Health, Nethradhama Hospital, and R V Dental College & Hospital. Consultation services were offered by specialists in Bones & Joints, Breast Care, Dental, Diabetes & Footcare, Eyes, Heart & General Health, and Speech & Hearing. The programme had a special focus on women and the elderly.

The programme was unveiled by Dr K S Ravindranath, Vice Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences. In his inaugural address, Dr Ravindranath, emphasised the need for such preventive healthcare initiatives to reach out to rural India where women were singularly undernourished and infant mortality rates were very high. He pointed out that the new trend was that the rural populations were also under threat from non-communicable diseases, especially lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, heart ailments, and accidents. The incidence of disability on account of these was on the rise. Routine health check-up programmes like the one organised by MI, therefore, helped in identifying problems at early stages and taking preventive measures, Dr Ravindranath said.

The other guests present on the occasion were Mr N Chandrashekar Raju, BBMP Corporator and Ms Kate Hodges of Zurich Financial Services. Congratulating MI, Mr Chandrashekar offered to extend all possible infrastructural and other support for any such activities in the future. Ms Hodges said that she was proud of her long association with MI which had trained several Prosthetic & Orthotic technologists and been instrumental in transforming lives. Earlier, the guests were welcomed by Ms Romola Joseph, President, MI. The vote of thanks was presented by Ms Albina Shankar, Director, MI.

Jo Millar Memorial Award



An important feature of the inaugural session of the 20th Anniversary Celebrations was the presentation of the first 'Jo Millar Memorial Award' to two of the outgoing students of the MI rehabilitation training course, Mr Madhesha Naika and Ms Sarojini Raita, in recognition of their 'Outstanding performance both in academics and in overcoming barriers'. Madhesh, a poor youth

from an obscure village in Chamarajanagar District of Karnataka, who had to take up part-time work to support his family even as a student of MI's 4-year Bachelor of Prosthetics & Orthotics (BPO) course, finally emerged as the topper of his batch. Polio-affected Sarojini, the fourth of six children of a poor Odisha farmer, completed MI's one-year Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant (RTA) course overcoming multiple barriers - physical, financial, social and linguistic. Both were fully supported students of MI.

The award sponsored by Miblou, the Geneva-based international charity, was instituted by MI this year. Miblou has been a well-wisher and supporter of MI's activities for the past 20 years. The award is dedicated to the memory of Ms Jo Millar, who founded Miblou along with her husband Mr Brian Millar.

A Micro Enterprise for Women's Empowerment

MI has been promoting Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) since 1999, with increased focus on poverty alleviation and social change. The programme seeks to make the development sectors such as health, education & livelihood accessible to persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups, with a view to achieving an inclusive community.



As part of MI's CBR activities and its efforts to enhance the livelihood opportunities of women, particularly those with disability, in the urban slums of Bangalore, a Natural Masala Manufacturing Unit was set up at LR Nagara, Koramangala. This unit was formally unveiled on August 1, 2014, by Ms Marika Millar, Executive Director, Miblou, in the presence of Ms Albina Shankar, Director, MI. The unit is supported by Miblou and dedicated to the memory of its co-founder, Ms Jo Millar. It has started manufacturing chilli, dhaniya, coriander and sambar powders. Marketing of these products have commenced and the micro enterprise has started receiving orders from local SHG and community members.

CRE on 'Trends on Rehabilitation Therapy & Inclusive Development'

MI conducted a CRE (Continuing Rehabilitation Education) workshop on 'Rehabilitation Therapy and Inclusive development' at NEIGRIHMS, Shillong, Meghalaya from September 27- 29, 2014. The workshop was attended by 36 participants from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, and West Bengal. Dignitaries at the workshop included Dr Alicia Gatphoh Vice Chancellor, ICFAI University, Prof A.G. Ahangar, Director, NEIGRIHMS, Ms Albina Shankar, Director, Mobility India, Dr Bhaskar Borgohain, HOD Orthopedic Department, NEIGRIHMS and Prof Vandana Raphael, Dean, NEIGRIHMS.



Little emphasis is given in upgrading knowledge and skills on rehabilitation therapy. A CRE workshop such as this enable develop the capacities of trained health professionals and rehabilitation professionals in order to meet the need of disabled population. The workshop also sought to enhance knowledge about CBR.

Some of the topics covered in the workshop include, 'Global Scenario of Disability and Inclusive Development',

'Role of health personnel in managing Conflict Situations', 'Biomedical Engineering and Rehabilitation', 'Assistive Technology and Mobility Devices', and 'Gait Training Protocols for Orthotic / Prosthetic users and Outcome Measures for person with Mobility Problems'.

WHO 'WSTP - Basic level', Under Wheelchair ACCESS Project



MI conducted a five day training programme on 'Wheelchair Service Training Package - Basic Level' from September 16 - 20, 2014. The programme was supported by USAID, World Vision, and Advanced Partners and Communities.

The objective of the workshop was to, "Increase service and training capacity of participants from academic institutions and

rehabilitation centers in India, especially from Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand as well as to increase the profile of and commitment to appropriate wheelchair provision at National level."

The training programme was based on 'WHO guidelines on the Provision of Manual Wheelchairs in Less Resourced Settings'. The workshop focused on building the skills and competency in basic level wheelchair service delivery. Participants were from different states of India, of which 40 per cent were from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and remaining 60 per cent were from the rest of India. Many of the participants expressed interest in attending the intermediate level training programme.

Gitty Shefa forges ahead

Eight-year old Shefa is known to everyone in her locality of Yarab Nagar, Banashankari. Born with several defects such as hydrocephalus, spina bifida and valgus foot, she had a childhood fraught with struggles. Shefa acquired some kind of an infection while in the womb. Though born as a bubbling 3.5 kg baby, Shefa was anything but a healthy child.

According to Nayan, Shefa's mother, "She was put on a ventilator as soon as she was born. We consulted various hospitals like NIMHANS, KIMS, and St. John's to get our daughter treated. She was given a daily injection costing about a thousand rupees per dose for 12 continuous days in order to bring down the infection. When she was just 15 days old, she underwent a spinal cord operation."

When she was three months old, Shefa was identified by an MI field worker, on whose suggestion she started undergoing regular therapy at MI. She was also referred to a doctor through MI, who continuously guided Shefa's parents regarding her treatment. Due to spina bifida, Shefa had a deformed spinal column, and due to valgus foot, the bones of her legs had an outward angulation. Little Shefa underwent a leg surgery as a seven month old baby at the Maharaja Agrasen Hospital, Bangalore. The hydrocephalus or cerebral fluid build-up was treated when she was nine months old. With continuous medical intervention and therapy, Shefa gradually began to show improvement. When she turned three, MI provided Shefa with a calliper and also guided and treated her at various stages of growth. Over the years, MI provided her with various devices like the walker, gaiters and elbow crutch. MI field staff keep visiting Shefa at her house to monitor her growth and development patterns.

Today, Shefa can walk with the help of her elbow crutches. She has come a long way from being a child born with multiple defects to being an active student at a popular school in her locality. This academic year, she was admitted to a good private school, thanks to the RTE (Right to Education) Act. Though very shy by nature, Shefa proudly announces that she is a front-bencher at school and has a good time there with her friends.



Donate >>

- ☐ Developmental Aid per unit Rs.4,000
- ☐ Assistive Devices (Calipers, artificial limbs, crutches, walkers)..... Rs.2,000-5,000
- ☐ WheelchairsRs.8,000-9,000
- ☐ Nutritious foodRs.1,000-2,000
- ☐ Therapy servicesRs.2,000-4,000
- ☐ Education per child per year.....Rs.2,000-5,000
- ☐ Any amount you wish to contribute

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I would like to introduce a friend.
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Pin.....Telephone: E-mail :

(DD/Cheques to be made in the name of Mobility India)



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Towards an Inclusive and Enabling Future

SAARC LEVEL CONFERENCE on *Best Practices in Rehabilitation Therapy*

December 10 -12, 2014

Mobility India, Bengaluru



For more information log on to www.mobility-india.org

1st & 1st 'A' Cross, 2nd Phase, J. P. Nagar,
Bengaluru - 560 078

Phone : +91-80-26492222 / 26597337

Ext - 9 (Reception)

Telefax : +91-80-26494444 Ext - 110(Fax)

Email : e-mail@mobility-india.org

Regional Resource Centre

P-91, Helen Keller Sarani, Majerhat,
Kolkata - 700 053

Telefax : +91-33-24013914, 24012190

Email : mik@mobility-india.org

