



Lions Club Klein-Brabant, Belgium Support to Indian Children



NEWSLETTER # 3 | NOVEMBER 2021

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

Dear well-wishers and Lions Club Members,

Since our latest news from Dec 2020, we are very happy to contact you again through this Newsletter.

Since March 2020, in addition to covid pandemic situation and lock down, livelihood of our communities is heavily affected. During the covid 2nd wave (April - May 2021), some of our community members were infected, some passed away and others were discharged from hospital. This vulnerability to Covid made it more challenging to poor families to survive and pushed them further into a position of acute poverty. In this context, IRCDS has also taken up efforts in supporting 4000 most deserving families with food rations, masks, sanitizers and creating awareness about myths and misconceptions about covid vaccination. We are facilitating people to participate in covid vaccination camps in collaboration with the Government Health Department. Around 60 % of our community people are vaccinated so far.

We also supported Tiruvallur Medical College & Hospital to install an Oxygen generator plant 333 LPM capacity with the support of one of our funding partners. We also donated 42 oxygen concentrators to 12 Government Hospitals located in remote villages, improving significantly their health infrastructure.

IRCDS has celebrated 35th year Anniversary on 21st October 2021. Many well-wishers greeted IRCDS for its tireless and dedicated service from the year 1986 in the journey of **TRANSFORMING THE LIVES** of 35000 families.

We are pleased to share remarkable impact in transitional of students pursuing higher education in our program area:

- ❖ We have done a survey in September 2021 among 311 students who have completed 10th grade in 43 villages (Poondi Block – one of the clusters IRCDS is working) . Survey in other clusters is going on.



- ❖ We also have done survey among 228 students who have completed 12th grade and pursuing higher education.

	Data collected in Sep 2018	Data collected In Sep 2021	Percentage increased after 3 years
After 10th grade, how many Boys are continuing studies	77 %	96. 68%	19.68%
After 10th grade, how many Girls are continuing studies	84 %	96.49%	12. 49%
After 12th grade, how many Boys are continuing studies	62 %	95%	33%
After 12th grade, how many Girls are continuing studies	59%	75%	16%

Looking at the table we can conclude that there is a clear increase of continuity in the studies between Sept 2018 and Sept 2021:

- ❖ In Sept 2021, about 95 % of the boys continue their studies after 10th and 12th grade
- ❖ While 95% of girls continue their studies after 10th grade, but this % drops to 75% after 12th grade. It clearly shows that for girls there is still some improvement possible!

The reasons for this increased percentage of continuity in studies, can be found in concentrated and multisectoral efforts (Motivational talks, Career guidance sessions, Psycho-social counseling and financial support) of IRCDS along with Government Institutions, local volunteers, Women self-help-groups, different Partners including Lions Club Klein-Brabant and many well-wishers, supporters and Citizens of Belgium.

We are really grateful for your donations: each and every euro counted to shape and change the lives of Youth in rural areas of Tiruvallur District!

From the 539 students covered through this survey, 45 students (11 boys and 34 girls) have dropped out from studies as of now. It clearly indicates gender disparity. Our staff team is working with local volunteers and community-based organizations (such as women self-help-groups) to identify the underlying reasons for dropping out and explore the possibility to extend support allowing students to continue their studies. These 45 students are most vulnerable to early, forced marriage, child labour and get very often into other unwanted wrong behaviors. We need to protect them from these social evils and make them educated, well productive and responsible youth.

In this context we are looking forward your continued support for “Breaking barriers to Education” and bring sustainable changes in the lives of youth especially girls by saving them from social evils (child early/forced marriage, child labour and other forms of violence).

- Editorial Team



We would also like to share some stories that clearly indicate the impact of the “Scholarship Program” on the lives and future of young students:

“After completion of my studies; surely I will help not only my two younger sisters but also other girls in my villages”

- Devika, B.SC Nursing Student

Devika, belongs to dalit (lower caste) community living in Kam-mavarapalayam village. Her father is a cook and rarely gets work for daily wages and her mother is an agricultural daily wage earner. There are three girl children in the family and all three are studying. Due to a poor financial condition, this family is finding it very hard to pay the fees of her elder daughter Devika, who has joined Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Her parents decided to discontinue the studies due to pressure from the college to pay fees. College management scolded Devika in front of other students for not paying fees in time; this makes Devika upset in the education and about to discontinue. Her mother shared this information with other women while taking drinking water in the street pipeline.



There she was informed about the existence of IRCDS and Lions Club support in education. Then she approached IRCDS and received Rs 25000 financial support allowing her to continue her studies.

Devika's father says...

“I felt depressed and guilty about; I was not able to meet the educational expenses of my elder daughter who should be a role model for my other two daughters. Lions Club financial support has filled my dream “my daughters should get good education” which I was unable to get due to acute poverty.

Devi pledged “After completion of my studies, surely I will help not only my two younger sisters but also other girls in my villages”.





**“This financial support has lightened up my life”
– Nirosha, BA (Tamil) student**

Nirosha is a dalit girl living in Ramathandalam village. Her father's right hand is disabled. Hence he is unable to go for work. Mother Anjala is a landless agricultural labourer and she got married at the age of 17. Nirosha's elder sister Revathy got married at the age of 18 due to the family's poor financial situation : due to a lesser dowry, Revathy was married to a relative boy without her consent. Actually Revathy wanted to study Nursing course, due to lack of money, unfortunately that didn't happen.

Nirosha says...

“I am studying 3rd year Bachelor of Arts in Tamil and became worried about the payment of my 3rd year fee due to joblessness of my mother due to the covid situation.

IRCDS helped me through Lions Scholarship support to pay my 3rd year fee. This financial support has lightened up my life, or else I would have missed 3rd year studies”. I am the first graduate in my family; this boosted me to study well by overcoming challenges”.

**Now I am continuing B.Sc computer science
2nd year – Krishna**

I am Krishna, living in Narayanapuram village. When I was studying 6th grade, my father passed away. My elder brother dropped out from the school and had gone for work to feed our family. Mother is not able to go for work because she is physically very weak. During the first year B.SC computer science, we managed somewhat to pay my college fees. The second year however, we were struggling to pay, due to the loss of employment of my brother, the breadwinner for my family (who also got married meanwhile and has two daughters now). He had to take care of five members including myself and my mother. In this situation, I had an opportunity to get scholarship through one of our village Volunteers who is associated with IRCDS . Now I am continuing BSC computer science 2nd year.



My sincere gratitude goes to the good hearted people who are rendering support to India!



'Thankfulness to donors who are supporting for shaping the lives of rural girls who are excluded in many ways in our villages'

- Deepika

Nirosha is a dalit girl living in Ramathandalam village. Her father's right My Name is Deepika. 17 years old. My mother's age is 40 and father age is 42. I have one younger brother. My father is severely addicted to alcohol. He used to beat my mother in the late evening. Due to this, I had difficulties to concentrate on my studies. Most of the nights, we went to bed, without adequate food. Sometimes we took rice water as dinner. My mother always encouraged me and my brother to study well. Last two years we faced a lot of challenges for getting jobs and food. In such situation, IRCDS helped our family by giving food dry rations.

After completing 12th grade, I was planning to stop my studies and go to work in a shop because, my parents were not able to pay fees as family income was affected due to covid.

Luckily, I heard about IRCDS – Lions club support for education through my friend. Then I joined Bachelor in Accountancy & Commerce in a reputed College by getting scholarship support from IRCDS.

This kind of support should reach more girls like me who are struggling to pursue higher education. I am very thankful to the donors who are supporting for shaping the lives of rural girls who are excluded in many ways in our villages.



"This support is a turning point for my life which is required to realise my life dreams" - Munusamy

Munusamy is a son of a dalit, landless agricultural labour family from Thimmaboopalapuram village. He has one younger sister. Due to sickness, his mother is not able to go for work.

Monthly, there is a budget needed of Rs 800 (10 Euro) to get medicines for his mother.

Munusamy says ...

"I used to go for agricultural work during Saturdays and Sundays to earn money, which is very much needed to meet our family food expenses and my college travel cost (daily two euros).



Sometimes I go to do night shift work in a nearby company to earn money.

During daytime I go to college. One day, I thought to discontinue studies and get fully involved into earning income which is very much needed to take care of my parents and younger sister. I shared this thought with my parents. Both felt very sad and I spent some sleepless nights. I was very worried about my future and felt depressed.

In this situation, I approached IRCDS, through one of our village leaders and got Lions scholarship support allowing me to meet the educational expenses. Now I am continuing Diploma in Mechanical Engineering. This support is a turning point for my life which is required to realize my dreams"

Sandhya, fatherless girl continuing B.Sc

Sandhya is a fatherless dalit girl living in Ponthavakkam village. Her mother is a young widow doing flower vending. Sandhya is living in a dilapidated house and is studying third year Bachelor of science.

Sandhya says...

"During Covid pandemic, schools & colleges were closed down. As my mothers' flower vending business had gone down due to covid, I faced difficulties in managing food expenses and I started to work for five months in a small industry as a daily wage earner. In this situation, I had an opportunity to participate in training conducted for adolescent girls about breaking barriers to gender equality organized by IRCDS. Subsequently I firmly took the decision to continue education and set my goal.

I received Lions Club scholarship support to pay my education fees through our village development committee. Now I am continuing 3rd year B.Sc. If there would have been no support during this crucial time, I would have discontinued my studies and would be working now as a daily wage unskilled labour. I am really happy that I am in college now and would like to pursue Post graduation as well"



Scholarship Project - Lions Club and IRCDS joint initiative

Financial Overview upto 30th October 2021

Income	Amount Rs.	Expenditure	Amount Rs.	No. of Students Benefitted
Opening Balance available with IRCDS up to June 2018	232418	Scholarship Issued upto 30th September 2019	865000	48
Grant received for scholarship on 24th October 2018	303940	Scholarship Issued from March 2020 to 10th November 2020	460000	27
Grant received on 26th June 2019	339036	Scholarship Issued upto October 2021	590000	37
Grant received on 17th March 2020	466747	Closing balance	915	
Grant received on 13th May 2021	573774			
Total	1915915	Total	1915915	112

No. of Boys 42 (38%)	No. of Girls 70 (62%)	Total 112
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On top of these 112 students, 64 other students have been able to start new scholarships thanks to the loan repayments received from the previous students

Sincere thanks and gratitude to the contributors of the educational scholarship project,

Private well-wishers

Members of the Lions Club Klein Brabant, Sarchinium (Belgium), Perambakkam (India) and Medico LCB

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