



ANNUAL REPORT
DEVISE (DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION)
CHARITABLE TRUST – 2021-22

1. ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW OF DEVISE

DEVISE (Developing Inclusive Education) was formally registered as a Charitable Trust on 30th June 2018. The Co-founders of the organisation, P Avinash Reddy and Ananye Krishna took up the role of Managing Trustees, both of them were Fourth Year Students of NALSAR University of Law at that point of time. In addition to this there were three other trustees, who have since resigned and adequate board resolutions have been adopted to reflect this change.

The organisation began operations in June 2016 as a student group at NALSAR University of Law. The need to undertake this initiative was felt because it was observed that a lot of children in government schools have no functional understanding of English and for them the language is just a set of symbols which they copy on to their notebooks. In such circumstances it was imperative to have a system in place which could ensure that children have a functional understanding of the language, which is so crucial for communicating with the world at large. Not having this tool at their disposal would make it difficult for the children to lead a fulfilling life as a lot of opportunities get closed off just because one doesn't have functional understanding of English.

Over the past five years the organisation has been growing and learning to ensure that the most effective methods are used to reach out to the children and to create a learning atmosphere where the child is internally compelled to learn rather than being forced to do that because of an external pressure. In order to do this we have been working on developing an experiential pedagogy where the child learns through the experiences she/he has while performing various activities and exercises. In addition to this we provide all our reading material in a bilingual format, i.e. English and the Native Language, along with both transliterations and translations to ensure that the children have complete clarity.

Our efforts were recognised on a National Scale when we were one amongst five NGOs shortlisted across India for the Prestigious Herbert Smith Freehills Community Engagement Awards, 2019.



2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORGANISATION

2.1 Why was DEVISE needed?

Education is a vital equipment for survival in society. A plethora of initiatives have been undertaken both by the government as well as non-government organizations to ensure that no particular individual is deprived of it. In spite of that, there is a dire need to improve the quality of education being imparted to the children who are dependant on government schools, without which the very objective of “*education for all*” becomes redundant. The poor quality of education is reflected in the learning outcomes which are surveyed annually by Pratham foundation Education and published as Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER). The 2019 report states that in rural India by grade III half the children are at least two years behind the expected level of learning as they are unable to read grade I level text.¹

Education in general and understanding of English language in particular possesses the potential to dissolve the prevalent socio-economic inequalities in society. The same hasn’t been achieved because the education system itself has fallen prey to the gradations and inequalities, where the privileged have access to high quality – expensive education and the governments schools which serve the masses are in a deplorable state.

Lack of quality education leaves children from underprivileged backgrounds unable to move beyond the fringes of society, thereby alienating them from the larger society and opportunities for socio-economic upward mobility. Even when the students gain access to education, they end up doing menial jobs due to the lack of appropriate skill development within the educational environment available to them. Their inability to communicate in English further acts as a barrier to their personal development and growth and also limits the number of opportunities available to them. Students often fail to capitalize the immense potential they possess, owing to the constraints placed by their dismal communication skills. While a multitude of languages are spoken throughout India, English is one language the knowledge of which can facilitate the interaction among people across linguistic divides.

¹ASER 2019

<http://img.asercentre.org/docs/ASER%202019/ASER2019%20report%20/nationalfindings.pdf>

Professionally, they would be able to well integrate into the wider society and become capable of asserting their dignity. Socio-culturally they would avail the opportunity of interacting with the world at large and add to the global knowledge system by bringing in their lived experiences.

We at DEVISE, aim to facilitate this inclusion of children from the underprivileged and marginalized sections of the society into the larger arena of education by equipping them with an appropriate understanding of English. Our objective is to transcend the barriers of socio-economic inequalities within the education system, which in return would open up a myriad avenues and opportunities for the students, to traverse and excel at.

2.2 Our Journey

In 2015, while pursuing law at National Academy of Legal Studies And Research (NALSAR) University of Law, P Avinash Reddy and Ananye Krishna started conducting teaching sessions every weekend at an orphanage in Shamripet, Telangana. It was during these sessions that they realized that the children, all of whom attended the nearby Zilla Parishad High School, did not even have a basic understanding of English even though most of them were studying in 7th grade or above. This lack of basic understanding of English language hinders the children from accessing numerous opportunities in higher education and careers. In order to overcome this barrier it was decided to conduct training sessions - specifically to improve their understanding of English.

Following this in 2016, they started conducting sessions at the Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS), Shamirpet instead of teaching at the orphanage so that they could reach out to a larger group of children. A volunteer group of around 50 volunteers from NALSAR University of Law conducted these training sessions during the academic year 2016-17.

In June 2018 training sessions were shifted to Zilla Parishad High Schools located in Pudur and Muneerbad, Telangana because of administrative difficulties faced at ZPHS Shameerpet. It was at this point in time that DEVISE was incorporated as an NGO. Following incorporation a large corpus of books and workbooks was developed with the aim of having requisite reading and writing material suitable to various stages of learning. Some of these were bought and some of them were donated.

Later, with the objective of integrating the local youth; parents; and the village administration in this process, a Community Base for Learning (CuBE) was established in Muneerbad with the

help of the Gram Panchayat in 2019. Understanding the importance of helping the children in developing a reading habit, a “Reading Room” was also set up in Zilla Parishad High School, Pudur in 2019.

Despite the initial difficulties in administering these sessions, the team has relentlessly worked with the objective of addressing the English language barrier faced by the underprivileged children. As long as the underprivileged children are denied access to quality education, by the public education system itself, they will be excluded from accessing various opportunities. Our work, in the form of various activities, strives to ensure that the higher education system and the subsequent professions become accessible for our beneficiaries.



3. OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2021-22

3.1 OPERATING IN A PANDEMIC

In 2021-22 DEVISE was in sixth year of its operations in real terms and in the fourth year of operations since its registration as an NGO. This being the second year of the coronavirus pandemic, operations of DEVISE at Pudur and Muneerabad (both villages within the Medchal District of Telangana) were kept suspended due to the lack of availability of on-ground volunteers. This did not mean a total suspension of activities as we were able to continue fellowships in the villages of Gunipally (Medak, Andhra Pradesh) and Ramchandrapally (Nizamabad, Telangana). The fellows co-ordinated with us remotely; with their primary on-ground work being the distribution of our study material and conducting training sessions as far as permitted under the covid-19 restrictions.

3.1.1 PANDEMIC ORIENTED MODIFICATION OF THE STRUCTURE OF OPERATIONS

Due to the physical restrictions and a smaller on-ground volunteer base, it was decided to not go ahead with conducting two distinct programs, as was being done in 2019-20 by way of the CuBE(Community base for learning) and the Reading Room. Keeping in mind the reduced physical interaction it was felt important that we need to keep to give much greater emphasis on material development rather than focusing on distinct training methods. The reason for the same being that we felt we should develop such a material which can help the children even without the physical presence of a teacher or a volunteer. We took a mixed approach where we relied on video lessons and traditional paper study material. It wasn't feasible to have a fully online setup because of the lack of penetration of high speed internet and general absence of requisite devices. Both types of lessons were delivered once a week and at the time of delivery the requisite masking and social distancing standards were maintained all along.

3.1.2 DEVELOPING STUDY MATERIAL TO ENABLE REMOTE GUIDANCE

3.1.2.1 Paper Based Material

The paper based material was presented to the children in the form of bilingual (English-Telugu) comic strips. An attempt was made to deliver lessons in English communication by way of these comic strips as this format helped in presenting lessons as stories to which the children could relate and learn without much guidance and without feeling burdened as they might be in case of traditional classroom lessons. Taking in account the extremely adverse situation prevalent through out the country, it was considered important that the lessons be delivered in a manner which achieves the basic minimum of not letting children get disassociated with education. The material so prepared is sent to the fellows online and therefrom they get it printed and distribute to the children.



3.1.2.2 Video Lessons

When it comes to video lessons then these were divided into levels. The level one lessons were power point presentations with narration in English and Telugu, these dealt with development of basic vocabulary by introducing new words associated with each alphabet of

the English language. The level two videos explained the comic strips, again bilingually, and thus helped in clearing any doubts which the children might have had while going through the comic strips on their own. In additions to the technical inputs done in 2020-21 we secured a projector for Gunipally and also sent a second hand laptop to Gunipally to improve access to digital learning in that area.



3.1.3 RESPONDING TO NUTRITION AND COVID SECOND WAVE

We continued supporting the nutritional needs of the children in 2021-22 for a short time till the school re-initiated the mid day meal scheme.

At the very beginning of 2021-22 the second wave had struck and we had to suspend all our operations because of the havoc raged by covid – 19. During that time we collaborated with individuals and Bansa Community Library to distribute masks and sanitisers at all the places where we could reach. Our primary contributions were in Hyderabad and Ramchandrapally in Telangana; Gunipally in Andhra Pradesh; and Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh.



DEVISE Mask Donation Drive

3.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

From 2019-20 it was decided to decentralise the organisation as we had started operating in two villages since 2018 and it was felt that we need to have a set of dedicated teams to focus on various aspects of the organisation. Thus the organisation was split into four teams and two Heads of Operations who took over the supervisory role from the managing trustees. The teams were:

Operations
Team

Material
Development
Team

Training Team

Social Media
and Fundraising
Team

On the basis of our experience in 2019-20 it was decided that since, for the time being, the functions of the social media team and Fundraising Team are mostly overlapping so it would be better to merge the two teams to form a combined Social Media & Fundraising Team. Leading to a total of four teams for the year 2020-21.

All these teams were lead by two Team Leads in order to have a reduced work load and to ensure that the functioning of the team does not become myopic by being infused with only one point of view. Further this re-organisation helped to improve the overall efficiency.

Like the previous years the responsibility of managing the finances continued to be in the hands of the managing trustees. Also as this was a novel situation, the co-ordination with the fellows on the ground was being done by the managing trustees while the Heads of operations managed all the internal work-load.

As mentioned earlier, the physical constraints did not allow us to conduct two separate forms of training sessions by way of CuBE and Reading Room. Despite of that we decided to continue with both the Training Team and the Reading Room Team for the sake of operational efficiency. The primary tasks being performed by these two teams were preparation of video lessons. As mentioned earlier we were creating two different types of videos, so each week both the teams focused one video each

3.3 FUNDRAISING

In the year 2021-22 Funds were raised by one major source and one small institutional donation. These were:

1. Individual Donations
2. Institutional Donations



DEVISE Charitable Trust: Managing Trustees 2020-21

Mr. P Avinash Reddy, 24, Male, BA LLB,
LLM Candidate at Leiden University, Co-Founder of DEVISE

Mr. Ananye Krishna, 25, Male, BA LLB,
Co-founder of DEVISE

Responsibility Statement by the Management

Mobilization of Funds

Total funds mobilized during the year	Rs. 127984
Self generated & internal Accruals	Rs. 0
Organization's dependency on external support	100 %
Application of fund	Rs. 65822.75
Remuneration to Trustees approved by the Board	Rs. 0

Awards received

None

Declaration

None of the Trustees are related to each other

There were no major complaints received from volunteers, stakeholders or members during the year.

We comply with all social security scheme as laid down by the law of the land and applicable to NGO sector.

Finance & Accounts

Accounts have been prepared on the cash basis.

Sufficient care was taken for the maintenance of accounts as per the Income Tax Act of 1961 &

Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010.

Internal Audit has been conducted.