



Dear all,

After a small technical glitch, we are finally able to bring to you our August edition of Inclusion. This edition is all about our amazing change agents! At Oasis, we believe in creating a sustainable community and that can only happen when we create responsible individuals who are persistent in creating a community safe for all. To achieve this, we use the change agents model to train and help individuals grow in their personality and to inculcate a sense of responsibility .



### *Who are change agents?*

Change Agent Groups are those who are committed to their own transformation and the transformation of others in the group and their community.

### *How do they work?*

We identify and form a group of like-minded individuals who are interested in the betterment of their community. We have change agent groups of children and adults across all our hubs. They meet once per month and develop mutually supportive relationships. Our team engages them in reflective activities and assists them in their

personal development. These groups discuss issues and undertake initiatives within the local community to bring about transformation.

## RHYTHM OF LIFE



Our change agent groups are engaged in life skills development sessions with the help of a tool called Rhythm Of Life (ROL). This tool helps in speaking about life with symbols. The above symbols represent the eight areas of life which is explored on the road to change and restoration. It is a long process aimed at transforming individuals to be people of love and agents of change.

The pandemic has hit the low income groups the hardest. Even in the midst of their struggles, many change agents have impacted and supported their communities in the small ways that they can. Here are some of their inspiring stories!



*Sameer  
Change Agent  
Mumbai*

According to the International Labour Organisation, there are around 12.9 million



Indian children engaged in work between the ages of 7 to 17. When children are employed or doing unpaid work, they are less likely to attend school, trapping them in the cycle of poverty. Like millions of those children, Sameer always dreamed of going to school, instead he was forced into child labour by his uncle. At just 10, he started working alongside his uncle to support his family and started taking care of his siblings. He was exposed to tobacco and became addicted to it.

One day, Sameer was rescued by an organisation and moved into our night shelter in Kamathipura when he turned 17. He is also part of the after-school programme and the football team. **During the lockdown in India, when all our programmes were shut down, our staff were unable to reach out to the community people. Change agents like Sameer were of great help. He helped the Kamathipura staff distribute ration kits to the children and the mothers in the red-light area.**



*Shakeel Ansari  
Change Agent  
Mumbai*

Shakeel Ansari has stayed with his family in Mumbai since leaving his home town for work. He sells flutes and his family lives in a thatched home, in a very unhygienic environment.

Our team met him during one of the awareness sessions on education, addiction, and health at the slum where Shakeel stays. He showed a lot of interest in changing his habits and his family's situation for the better. He wanted to get involved with our programmes and also encouraged the people in the community to take part in our programmes. We invited him to be a part of our change agents group in Nalasopara and this was just the beginning of his work in the community.

Shakeel was regular to the meetings and was very proactive **He arranged for meetings, awareness programmes and helped greatly with the relief work. Shakeel did everything wholeheartedly. During the lockdown, he helped in identifying and putting together the names of the people in need of relief support and arranged for them to follow the social distancing rules and the safety measures on the day of relief work. He is a true hero of change.**



## Gowri Change Agent Chennai

Gowri was one of our first vocational tailoring programme students at Kannagi Nagar, Chennai. She has been very committed to the programme and inspires others to bring a positive change in the community. With her mother being the only bread winner of the family, Gowri had to drop out of school due to financial constraints and start working. Even though she could not continue her education, Gowri wanted her sister to study. So she is helping her sister with her school fees. Whenever we have discussions with the women in the tailoring programme on the issues in the community, Gowri is always the first person to voice out her opinions and discuss the different ways these issues can be addressed.

She was actively involved in our COVID-19 awareness initiative. During our door to door campaign before the lockdown, Gowri helped in educating the community members on the symptoms of COVID and on how to protect themselves from the virus. She also helped us in putting up awareness posters in the community. **During the lockdown, when our staffs were unable to go to the hub, Gowri volunteered to help in collecting the database for providing relief support in Kannagi Nagar. She also volunteered to distribute relief kits to over 380 families. It has not been easy for families like Gowri's to survive in this lockdown, but Gowri was able to look past her struggles and help her fellow community members.**



Lilly  
Change Agent  
Chennai

Lilly has been an enthusiastic trainee in our tailoring programme at Kannagi Nagar, Chennai. She used to be a domestic worker but quit her job to learn tailoring. Lilly is considered to be the most skilled trainee in her batch and has been proactively learning the techniques through online training videos. During the lock down, Lilly and her colleagues stitched masks with the materials they had and distributed it to the members of the community for free of cost. Many in the community, cannot afford to buy masks right now, as they struggle to get by each day. This initiative has helped many to stay safe and protected. Lilly is very confident in her skill and wants to empower the women in the community by teaching tailoring someday.



Chaitra  
Change Agent  
Bangalore

I am Chaitra. I completed the 6-month tailoring course at Oasis India and joined a fashion designing course at an institute. I regularly get orders from my neighbours and relatives and the money that I earn from that, helps me in buying provisions for the family every month.

During the lockdown, I stitched over 100 masks and I am now making a few more masks to distribute during the relief work in the community. Many need these masks right now and I am happy that I can provide this for my people.

## Change Agents of Bangalore

*Philip Devaraj, our Programme Leader – Bangalore and Punganur, writes about the change agents who rose up to the occasion in our Bangalore communities.*

Covid-19 has affected people from different strata of the society who have suffered loss in many ways. Bangalore, known as the IT capital of India was hit hard. Initially, the government bodies and the medical systems were able to keep the numbers down by taking swift and stringent measures. But with time, the pandemic took a grip of the city and there was a gradual but steady spike in the number of cases. The community where we have been working in Hallegudadhahalli, saw an increased number of cases. During this time, we were very actively involved in providing assistance to the people with the help of our partner organisations and individuals. Many of our students from the various programmes in our hubs took on challenging roles to assist in monitoring cases etc.

**Shakib**, a former student of Oasis Computer Training programme volunteered at the war room at Bangalore's International Airport. He assisted the government staff in screening passengers, attending distress calls and follow ups. It was a 40 kilometer commute every day but he offered his services during the entire lockdown period and made us proud! Later he was assigned as an invigilator at an area near our hub. He had the task of monitoring and following up with people who were quarantined at home and to ensure that they did not violate protocols. Each day he had to monitor and report a minimum of 40 such families. He did his work diligently and set a great example for us all.

**Syed and Tausif** of our Computer training programme volunteered their services at the International Airport war room. **Syeda and Sumaiya** helped our staff during the relief distribution to the beneficiaries in the community by way of data collection, temperature screening and packing of relief materials. The fact that students showed enough courage and willingness to support others during this time of crisis augurs well for the purpose and objective of Oasis and our partner organisations. It will be apt to say that our students have become true agents of change.

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*You are the*  
CHANGE

Give today to make a difference.

**Give Today**

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