



Introduction

Pravas is a field action project started by the College of Social Work Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai to help the senior citizens living in the Urban Marginalized Communities. The project was initiated to form self-supporting groups of senior citizens. The College of Social Work had organized a National Conference on Healthy Ageing in Dec 2018 at the College Extension Centre in Goregaon East, Mumbai in which many papers on elderly issues were presented by the professionals and the plan of action was decided in the conference. The concept arose from the proceedings of this National Conference and Pravas was started by the College. It aims to create awareness among the elderly population about healthy ageing and to provide Health Service Facilities and Senior Citizen Cards so that they can avail government facilities that are specially designed for them. Final goal of the project is to work towards promoting 'Healthy Ageing' for underprivileged elderly and hence it works dedicatedly to understand their care and protection in a community setting. This project is focusing more on creating a safe space and blissful environment for the senior citizens along with strong support systems.

Socio Demographic Profile

The beneficiaries of the Pravas project are Elderly Domestic Workers whose age group is 55 and above and who are engaged in informal labour and because of their age and occupation they come under the most vulnerable sections of the society. They are mostly retired, jobless due to the pandemic and undergoing health issues.

The project began in Bhagat Singh Nagar 1, 2, and 3, Chhatrapati Vasahat and Indira Nagar, at Goregaon West. As the name rightly explains, Pravas means Travel/ Walk and hence it works with the elderly in these communities to make their travel of life easier and more comfortable.

Pravas believes that by strengthening democratic processes, nurturing a spirit of comradeship, adopting scientific approaches to social welfare and by mobilising the assets brought forth by every individual, it can provide comprehensive solutions to social problems. These communities live in a large slum colony generally known as Bhagat Singh Nagar. This group of senior citizens are generally unlike the ones belonging to the upper-class sections of society as they are generally composed of migrants whose livelihoods depend on the informal sector.

The various activities and programmes conducted by Pravas for the senior citizens during the academic year, 2022-23 were as below:

A. Livelihood Generation & Skill Development Programme Initiatives

1. Candle Making Training Programme

Keeping in mind the vision and mission of Parvas Project, that is to reach out to the elderly and make them independent and productive, the Extension Centre organised a livelihood programme to help the

senior citizens to be independent and stand on their own feet. The Pravas organised 3 days 'Candle Making' training in collaboration with C. B. Kora Kendra, Government Institute of Village Industries for 13 urban marginalised senior citizens of Bhagat Singh Nagar Community, Goregaon East. The training was held from 26th to 28th November 2022 between 2 pm and 5 pm. Mr. Dinesh Mistri and Mr. Sachin Patil, trainers, C. B. Kora Institute were the resource persons. Total 13 senior citizens attended the training programme.

This training taught the skills of making different types of candles which are used for different purposes like festivals, celebrations, regular use and also to give as a gift. The raw material used was paraffin wax, jelly wax, scent, colours, coconut oil, wick made of thread and standard wicks, manual mould of cast iron, silicon and electric heater. On the last day of the training, the senior citizens were satisfied, feeling proud and enthusiastic to make candles by themselves. This training gave them the confidence to be independent, self-sufficient. And it has changed their attitude and perspective towards life.

The Pravas Project has aimed to make many more such marginalised senior citizens self-sufficient by conducting various skill development programmes.

2. Agarbatti Making Training programme

Pravas also organised 4 days 'Agarbatti Making' training in collaboration with the same C. B. Kora Kendra for 13 urban marginalised senior citizens of Bhagat Singh Nagar Community. The training was held from 4th to 7th January 2023 for 2 hours. Mr. Dinesh Mistri and Mr. Sachin Patil, trainers from C. B. Kora Institute gave this training. Total 13 senior citizens attended the training.

This training programme taught the skills of making different types of Agarbatti like Fragrance Agarbatti, Masala Agarbatti and Plain Agarbatti. Trainers also gave the following information:

- a. The materials required for making these different types of Agarbattis.
- b. How to do packing &
- c. Types of packing materials

The elderly participants enthusiastically learnt and completed the training programme. They got a new hope to live life.

3. Awareness Session on Schemes and Facilities for the Senior Citizens

Pravas had conducted the session on 7th August 2022 to deliver the information on the above topic. Total 21 members attended the session. The Student Social Workers and Pravas staff, Mr. Shankar Suryavanshi was present for the session. The students shared the information on the schemes like Pension Schemes for Senior Citizens at a Glance, Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana – VPBY, Employees Provident Fund – EPF, Senior Citizens Savings Scheme – SCSS, Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana – PMVVY, National Pension System –NPS and Atal Pension Yojana – APY.

4. Provision of Senior Citizens' Cards

The Pravas is continuously working on the Senior Citizens' Cards through the District Collector's Office. Till date, the staff have got these cards for 11 senior citizens. And have applied for 10 more Senior Citizens' Cards and it is expected to get in the next 3 - 6 months. The staff tried to get these cards for the Pravas members as there are several benefits of the Senior Citizens Card like; Maharashtra State transportation concession - 50%, Air travel concession - 50% on basic fare, some private hospitals give 30% discount, free of cost treatment in the Government hospitals, senior citizens can pay fewer

taxes than the rest of the country, Banks offer an extra 0.5% interest rate on fixed deposits, citizens above the age of 65 also get an 100% exemption from the State professional taxes.

At present Pravas community senior citizens are taking the benefits of Bus concession, Train concession and free treatment in Government hospitals.

B. Promoting Health and Wellbeing through preventive, promotive, and curative models of intervention

Pravas conducted the various activities like sessions, workshops, Yoga sessions, Medical Screenings and Medical Camps. The details of the activities are as under:

1. Creative Sessions with Elderly for Promotion of Psychological Well-being

Pravas organised several creative sessions/ workshops like Stress Relief, Identifying Feelings, presenting happiness through Art Therapy, Clay Therapy and Dance Movement Therapy throughout the year with elderly for promotion of psychological well-being. The outcome of these sessions / workshops was as below:

1. Sixty senior citizens benefited,
2. Encouraged senior citizens to actively participate and share,
3. Promoted them to have healthy ageing,
4. They learnt to reduce the stress and have meaningful, peaceful life,
5. Brought happiness in their lives,
6. Helped to recall childhood memories.

2. Medical Health Camps

Pravas had organised two free Health Check-up Camps. One was in collaboration with 'Sanskar Seva Sanstha' on eye check-up on 17th September 2022. The second camp was in collaboration with 'Apollo Hospital' for a complete body check-up camp on 2nd December 2022. Both these camps were organised at Bhagat Singh Nagar community. Total 73 senior citizens benefited from these camps. These camps helped them to identify their health issues and to get them treated free of cost and in some cases at minimum cost. The elderly having no financial support could get benefits of these camps. Some of the senior citizens were able to know their health conditions. Secondly, the camps helped to promote the PRAVAS program in the community.

3. Yoga Sessions

Pravas conducted 72 community-based yoga sessions in 6 months to promote healthy aging. This yoga programme was initiated to improve the physical and mental health of the senior citizens. To achieve this objective, Pravass team hired Certified Yoga Trainer, Ms. Sakshi Oza to conduct the yoga sessions thrice in a week. Initially only a few members started attending the sessions but eventually with the team efforts and participants' sharing with other team members, the number increased. Presently, 20 elderly people are taking the benefit of this training programme. The outcome has been seen through below sharing of the participants:

- a. Got rid of sleeping disorder problem,
- b. Body flexibility has been improved in elderly,
- c. Overweight elderly could lose their weight and keep good health,
- d. Got relief from knee pain, back pain and other physical ailments.

4. Medical Screening

The Alzheimer and Dementia Medical Screening test was conducted on 14th February 2022 for cognitive and psychological well-being in collaboration with Holy Spirit Hospital. The medical screening was arranged at Kalaganesh Mandir in Bhagatsingh Nagar 1, Goregaon West and 25 senior citizens' medical screening was done. Dr. Sheryl John was assisted by hospital staff, Pravas staff and student social worker to complete the screening. After the screening, Dr. Sheryl suggested a repeat medical screening for a few senior citizens and also suggested to have memory booster tonic and blood pressure medicines.

5. Session on Home Remedies and Nutrition

The session on Home Remedies and Nutrition was organised on 8th February 2022 at Kalaganesh Mandir, Bhagatsingh Nagar 1 community in collaboration with 'Health Promoting Trust'. Eighteen senior citizens took advantage of it. Ms. Sheron Rodrigues and Ms. Kalpana Tambe from Health Promoting Trust were the resource persons for this session. This session helped the participants to understand the importance of home remedies & nutrition and how proper nutrition can be helpful to lead a healthy lifestyle. The resource persons also demonstrated how to prepare Heart Tonic and Cough Syrup and also explained the benefits of it and how to consume it. At the end of the session, the same newly prepared heart tonic and cough syrup was distributed to all the participants free of cost.

6. Session on Naturopathy

On 4th February 2022, the session on Naturopathy was organised at Kalaganesh Mandir for which the resource person was Mr. Bharat Bhatt, the member of Senior Citizens' Alumni Association of College of Social Work. Total 20 senior citizens were present for the session. He explained the concept of naturopathy that cures ailments using natural products. Further, he shared the importance and use of different products like Sloth oil, Aloe vera, water etc.

C. Strengthening the Groups

Pravas staff had organized various activities for the strengthening of senior citizens' groups in which overall 80 senior citizens got involved. It helped in increasing the bonding of team members, rapport building with each team member and with their family members. It also brought a smile to their faces and helped the organization to build more trust in the staff/ organization.

1. Weekly Educational & Group Work Sessions

Pravas staff and student social workers organised the weekly educational and group work sessions namely: Group Bonding, Stress Relief, Preventive Healthy Ageing, Awareness on Hygiene and Sanitation. They had one to one interaction with the senior citizens on their health and issues about their family. The 'World Senior Citizens' Day and 75th Independence Day were celebrated with them. The staff conducted some activities with senior citizens' grandkids and had puppet making sessions for them. Total 9 sessions were organised by Pravas' team with the help of student social workers. Total 60 senior citizens actively participated in these activities through group discussion, games, sharing, one to one interaction, drawing etc. All these activities helped to motivate the senior citizens to discuss, share and motivate each other. It also helped to keep them engaged in different activities which led to mental peace. They have become more active and vibrant.

2. Inter-religious Festival Celebration

The get together of urban marginalised senior citizens was organised twice by Pravas on 22nd October and 22nd December 2022 respectively. The main objective of these events was to celebrate and discuss the importance of interreligious festivals. And while celebrating such events, Pravas' staff tried to bring them back into the fold and give them a ray of hope, support and joy after the Corona pandemic. Total 50 senior citizens participated in these celebrations.

First get-together was organized at the Community Mandir in Bhagatsingh Nagar and the second one was at the Extension Centre. Dr. Lidwin Dias, Principal and Dr. Sonia Rodrigues, Faculty In-charge attended the celebrations along with Pravas staff, Ms. Swati and Mr. Shankar. The senior citizens enjoyed the celebrations and showed the excitement to participate in all future activities and developmental programs of Pravas. The events have brought 'Roshni (light)' into their lives and have promoted group bonding.

3. Educational/ Awareness Visits to Assisi Bhavan & National Park

On 10th February 2023, the educational/ awareness visit was organised in morning hours to Assisi Bhavan, an old age home at Goregaon East and National Park, Borivali. Total 36 senior citizens participated in this visit. This visit was an eye opener for the participants to understand the reality of old age and also to look at their own lives positively that they are with their families and not in old age homes. Dr. Lidwin, Dr. Sonia, Ms. Swati and Mr. Shankar were the part of the visit.

In the afternoon, the senior citizens were taken to the National Park wherein they enjoyed nature, played some games, shared with each other and after lunch, returned back to their homes. This visit helped them to get mental peace and brought a smile to their face. And the whole day's outing freshened up their moods.

4. Participatory Rural Appraisal with the help of Youth

Participatory Rural Appraisal was conducted outside the Ganesh Temple of Bhagat Singh Nagar Community. The community map was prepared with the help of 23 senior citizens and community youth. This activity helped the senior citizens to share the community needs and the facilities available in the community. It also helped to initiate the interaction/ discussion between community senior citizens and youth on the community needs. This activity helped the Pravas staff to identify the new intervention areas and the resources/ facilities available in the community.

5. Home Visits

During this year, the Pravas staff and the student social workers conducted the regular home visits of each Pravas member living in urban marginalised communities of Goregaon West. Each member was visited by the team once in 15 days. These visits gave an opportunity to the Pravas staff to interact with the senior citizens and their family members as well. It also helped to understand the exact needs and situation of each family and to prepare a need-based action plan. The Pravas staff used home visits as an important tool for effective intervention.

D. Outcome

1. Increase in the knowledge of the Income Generation skill Programmes.
2. Increase in the knowledge about the Government Schemes for senior citizens.
3. Income generation activities helped them for their cognitive functions and to improve their limb movement and coordination.
4. Helped in increasing the bonding of team members.
5. Rapport building with each team member and their family members.
6. Helped to improve the physical and mental health of group members.
7. Learned and understood the techniques of stress management.
8. Helped to bring joy and a smile to the faces of senior citizens.
9. Visits helped them to build more trust in Pravas staff.

E. Challenges

- Time limit in conducting the sessions.
- Non-availability of own place to conduct the activities.
- The temple is not allowed to use its premises for livelihood generation activities.
- The population is a migrating population. The number of members is high but the active members are few.



College of Social Work (Autonomous) Nirmala Niketan

Pravas

(A Field Action Project of College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan)



Activities details for the period 2022-2023

Sr. No.	Date	Activity name	Resource Persons	Place	Number of Beneficiaries
1	22-7-2022	Community visit	Mr. Shankar Suryawanshi (Para Social Worker)	Bhagtasingh nagar 1	20 house visits
2	23-07-2022	Awareness about Hygiene and Sanitation	Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	25
3	31-07-2022	Community on Preventive Healthy Aging AND PRA	Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	23
4	07-08-2022	Awareness on senior citizens Schemes and Facilities	Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	21/18c
5	13-08-2022	75 th Independence day Celebration	Mr. Shankar, Ms. Swati Rane - Program Officer, Student Social Workers	Ramabai Buddha vihar, Bhagtasingh nagar 1	29/23c
6	27-08-2022	Stress Relieve	Student Social Workers	Ramabai Buddha vihar, Bhagtasingh nagar 1	19/10c
7	10-9-2022	Presenting Happiness through art therapy	Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	20
8	17-09-2022	Health Camp	Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers.	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	42
9	19-09-2022	Dance Moment therapy	Mr. Shankar, Mr. Sandesh Lalde- Program Officer, Anubhav Youth Development Centre & Ms. Swati Rane	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	25
10	08-10-2022	World senior citizens day	Mr. Shankar, Mr. Sandesh Lalde & Ms. Swati Rane	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	20
11	22-10-2022	Diwali Celebrations	Mr. Shankar, Mr. Sandesh Lalde & Ms. Swati Rane	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	39

12	15-11-2022	Begin the yoga session (Thrice Every Week) on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday	Ms. Sakshi Oza, Yoga Trainer, Mr.Sandesh, Ms.Swati, Mr.Shankar	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	20
13	23-11-2023	Dance Movement Therapy	Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers	Extension centre	30
14	24-11-2023	Stress Relieving Module	Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	20
15	26-11-2022 to 29-11-2022	Candle Making Training Program	Mr. Dinesh & Mr. Sachin – Trainer C.B.Kora kendra, Ms.Swati, Mr. Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	13
16	02-12-2022	Health Camp	Apollo Hospital Doctors, Mr.Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	43
17	22-12-2022	Christmas Celebration	Ms. Swati, Mr. Sandesh, Mr.Shankar,	Extension centre	30
18	04-01-2023 to 07-01-2023	Agarbatti Training Program	C.B.Kora Kendra Trainers, Ms.Swati, Mr.Shankar, Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	13
19	14-01-2023	Clay Therapy	Ms.Swati & Mr.Sandesh ,	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	22
20	28-01-2023	Paper Bog	Student Social Workers	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	18
21	04-02-2023	Natural Remedies / puppet show	Mr. Bharat – Alumni Association Member, Ms. Swati	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	26/15cs
22	08-02-2023	Home Remedies	Ms.Sharon Rodrigues & Ms. Kalpana tambe – HPT Trainers, Student Social Worker	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	18
23	10-02-2023	Exposure Visit	Ms.Swati, Mr.Shankar, Student Social Workers	Gokuldharm Old Age Home & National Park	26
24	14-02-2023	Alzheimer and Dementia Medical Screening test.	Dr. Sheryl – Holi Spirit Hosptial	Kalaganesh mandir , Bhagtasingh nagar 1	25