

A black and white photograph of two children drawing on a wall with chalk. The child on the right is a girl with dark hair, wearing a patterned dress, and is holding a piece of chalk. The child on the left is a boy with dark hair, wearing a white shirt, and is also holding a piece of chalk. They are both looking at the wall and drawing. The wall has several chalk drawings, including a large grid and some abstract shapes. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with the letters 'FCL' inside.

Foundation for Communities of Learning

Formerly DURGA DEVI CHARITABLE TRUST

Nurturing Care & Meaning Making Education for All Children

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

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Creating nurturing spaces in communities where learning can flourish in an atmosphere of safety, affection, enquiry and mutual support.

We do this through fostering the necessary leadership capacities among leaders of public learning systems that must cater to the underserved, communities where children spend the bulk of their time and civil society organisations who act as thought leaders.

Our work is informed by respect for differences, invitation to dialogue, and exploration of the unknown.

We spend the bulk of our effort in early childhood systems, since these offer the best opportunities to shape the course of a human being's life. We also recognise the significance of adolescence as the second critical window for development of emotional resilience, technical competence and social coherence.

We pay particular attention to systemic linkages and the centrality of the community as the crucible in which all these processes unfold.

Our Reach



12,50,000
Children



3
States

1
Union Territory



30,000
Anganwadi Centres



17
District Level
Officials

110
Block Level
Officials

870
Sub-Block, Sector,
Cluster Level
Officials



50,000
Anganwadi
Workers & Helpers

Director's Message

2022-23 was quite the banner year for us.

We changed our name. Originally founded by Sajjan Agarwal in the memory of his grandmother and named Durga Devi Charitable Trust after her, Sajjan felt that it was time for the name of the Trust to more closely reflect the work that it had dedicated itself to doing. A lot of thought went into what we stood for and, eventually, there was unanimity that “Foundation for Communities of Learning” would represent it well. Today, we send our heart-felt gratitude to the long-departed soul whose memory made it possible for us to do the work we do today.

We built a formidable team. We added about 30 new people with backgrounds in a variety of educational and professional backgrounds, including social work, leadership and management, early childhood development and primary education, community mobilization, accounting and research. They have expertise in strategic thinking, curriculum and pedagogy, program design, communication and content development, program implementation, and capacity building of large-scale systems along with experience of working with government systems. More importantly, they all came after already having worked together for a number of years, which meant that we did not have to manage any difficult cultural adjustment issues.

We designed, and began the implementation of, a whole new program. We have called it “Leadership for Nurturing Care – LNC”, a name that reflects our belief that nurture of the youngest children is the foundational moral responsibility of any society and that the capacities that must be created in the society for doing so are complex but capable of being learnt. We had been delighted when World Health Organisation, UNICEF and the World Bank Group adopted the Nurturing Care Framework in May 2018. It was interesting to note that the India's Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) mandate had foreshadowed this very framework almost 50 years ago. However, its implementation over these 5 decades left a lot of gaps which the ECCE Policy of 2013 and National Education Policy of 2020 have sought to fill in, though with relatively limited success so far.

That lack of translation of the intent of the policy into tangible outcomes on the ground must be attributed primarily to a lack of effective leadership on part of the implementing structures. What is worth learning for the children and how they learn it most effectively is only one aspect of implementation. Attention must also focus on how the implementing structures, including the entire bureaucracy, find meaning and purpose in what they are being called upon to do, develop the confidence that they have the necessary capacities for it, and feel empowered enough to explore, at all levels, how the mission can become viable. These are the domains of good leadership.

LNC seeks to help build these integrated leadership capacities. We are delighted that we began this in Sept 2022 with ICDS in 20 districts of Chhattisgarh, with a total anganwadi count of nearly 30,000, and the program has already shown gratifying changes on the ground. Then, in March 2023, we were invited by the UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (DNDD) to implement a similar program for the UT-wide rollout of a preschool program in all their schools. This is an extremely interesting instance of a department of education investing in the necessary capacity-building processes in preparation for implementing a territory-wide Foundational stage program. As departments of education in various states explore expanding into the Foundational stage after the adoption of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP), the DNDD example could be a guiding light in how to do it successfully.

We continued our Teacher Capacity-building program in collaboration with Gram Mangal in 5 schools of Pune district. It has led to a noticeable change in teacher attitudes and children's learning, emphasising the construction of knowledge by children and teachers both and the reimagining of the classroom as a place for exploration and inquiry.

We look forward to the years ahead with delight in our mission and a commitment to learning more. And we invite all of you to join us in this blessed journey.

Chittaranjan Kaul

About FCL

PROGRAMS

Nurturing Care

Learning with Meaning

Science Centres

Scholarships Program

Schools Support Program

What We Do

Foundation for Communities of Learning (FCL) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the quality of Care and Education that children from under-resourced backgrounds in India receive. FCL adopts a systemic capacity building approach to do so. It builds pedagogical and organisational leadership capacities at multiple levels across large government systems of child development and education. This helps the officers and frontline workers/teachers, in their respective roles, to facilitate the delivery of nurturing care and learning with meaning to the children in their care. Not only does this provide a richer learning and development environment to the children currently in these Anganwadis and schools, the presence of motivated and skilled facilitators within the system ensures that future generations of children that pass through these systems will continue to receive the care and education that can help them thrive.

Philosophy & Approach

Key features of the FCL philosophy and approach include:

- **Development of products and strategies for sustainability and adaptability at medium or large scale.**
- **Working through collaborative and co-creative partnerships to ensure active and constructive role of all participants, especially relevant in case of government departments.**
- **Model and judicious use of low-cost technology to suit the needs of a resource-constrained country like ours.**
- **Embedding of research in ongoing programs to ensure that new learning is incorporated in to our programs and the knowledge built during the course of our implementation is disseminated widely.**
- **Structuring of skill and capacity-building programs in an iterative, feedback-sensitive, implementation-focussed approach rather than a one-time training approach**

Legal

FCL is registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950, and under the Income Tax Act 1961 Section 12 A and Section 80 G. We have also been granted CSR-1 certification under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and are registered on NGO Darpan, the unified database of non-profits maintained by the Government of India.

Team

FOUNDER

Sajjan Kumar Agarwal

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sajjan Kumar Agarwal

TRUSTEE

Ashok Mittal

TRUSTEE

Venkatesan K G

TRUSTEE

Richa Mittal

TRUSTEE

Chittaranjan Kaul

TRUSTEE & DIRECTOR

SENIOR TEAM

Harini Raval

HEAD PROGRAMS

Vaibhav Yadav

PROGRAM MANAGER

Shikha Kundra

PROGRAM MANAGER

Rekha Menon

ECCE SPECIALIST

Manasi Chandavarkar

PROGRAM MANAGER - RESEARCH

Anjali Frank Agarwal

MEDIA SPECIALIST

Deepali Choudhari

DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER - PUNE

Yogesh Chandrakar

DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER -

CHHATTISGARH

Halim Qureshi

DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER -

CHHATTISGARH

Nitish Jha

DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER - DNH& DD

PROGRAM

Nurturing Care

Deepening a sense of commitment to nurturing care environments as well as the necessary skills to ensure that government functionaries, caregivers and educators are in a position to provide them.

During the foundational years, children need nurturing care — physical and emotional safety, responsive caregiving and ample opportunities for exploration and learning.

NURTURING CARE

CHHATTISGARH

Leadership for Nurturing Care

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

PROGRAM REACH

1300000 Children

32000 Anganwadi

PARTICIPANTS

17 DPOs

100 CDPOs

850 Supervisors

30000 AWWs

2022 - 23

Cycle 1 inputs

We seek to develop leadership capacities among ICDS staff at District, Project, Sector and Anganwadi levels across 17 districts in Chhattisgarh so that Anganwadis in the state become thriving spaces where young children receive nurturing care.

The Govt. of Chhattisgarh and FCL signed a 5-year MoU in September 2022, partnering to build the capacity of the ICDS system. The Leadership for Nurturing Care program operates in 17 districts of Chhattisgarh, (Gariyaband, Mahasamunda, Durg, Rajnandgoan, Kawardha, Mungeli, Korba, Bilaspur, Pendra-Marwahi, Surguja, Balrampur, Surajpur, Koriya, Jashpur, Balod, Kanker and Narayanpur), covering a total of about 32,000 anganwadis, with an enrolment of nearly 13 lakh children. About 17 district officers, around 100 CDPO's, 850 LS's and 30,000 Anganwadi workers participate in the program.

The program began with a needs and context analysis and baseline assessment, including quality of care and learning at the AWC, as well as child development. The first cycle began on January 14, 2023, with a 5-day workshop of DPOs conducted by FCL. The content of the cycle included five aspects of nurturing care, the Role of Margdarshak, the Creation of a Nurturing Space, Free Play and





Mealtime. The program adopts a capacity building for building capacity model. Monitoring data reveals that between January 2023 and September 2023, i.e. Cycle 1 of the program, within a span of eight months 16 DPOs, 92 CDPOs, 810 Supervisors and 22700 AWWs have been trained and have trained their direct reports and implemented aspects of Nurturing Care in their AWCs.

NURTURING CARE

DADRA NAGAR HAVELI & DAMAN AND DIU

Leadership for Nurturing Care

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE (ICDS)**

PROGRAM REACH

400 Anganwadis
20000 Children

PARTICIPANTS

2 CDPOs
16 Supervisors
400 AWWs

2022 - 23

Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 inputs

We seek to develop leadership capacities among the ICDS staff at project, cluster and frontline levels across the Union Territory of DNH& DD so that anganwadis in the UT are thriving spaces that deliver nurturing care to all young children.

This program is implemented across the entire UT, covering three districts (Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu) and about 400 anganwadis, with an enrolment of about 20,000 children. 2 CDPO's, 16 Supervisors and 400 anganwadi workers participate in the program.

The program began with a baseline assessment of quality of care and learning at the AWC, as well as child development. This program adopts a capacity building for building capacity approach, wherein FCL trains and supports Supervisors and CDPOs to further train-monitor-mentor Anganwadi workers and helpers.

In August 2022, an orientation workshop was conducted by FCL for all the CDPOs and Supervisors of the ICDS. This was designed and delivered with an aim to introduce the importance of early years in children. The participants also learnt how to make age-appropriate learning materials for children. As LNC is





a cyclical program, the content was arranged in small capsules and bite-sized modules for ease and effective implementation. A 4-day cycle-1 workshop for 16 Supervisors, 4 State Consultants and 2 CDPOs in September 2022. The Cycle 1 content included five aspects of nurturing care, the Role of Margadarshak, the Creation of Nurturing Space, Free Play and Mealtime. As per the implementation cascade, Supervisors took forward the implementation by following learning-by-doing principles. They practised workshop learnings in their practice centres and then transferred the training to the next level. FCL project officers provided them with handholding and coaching support. The Cycle 2 workshop was conducted from in January 2023. The workshop focussed on designing a 4-hr nurturing routine for children at the AWC. Participants were also trained on introducing concepts of language, sight word reading and facilitating free conversation. The implementation cascade then proceeded with support from FCL Project officers.

BIHAR

Nurturing Care for Early Childhood

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

PROGRAM REACH

210 Children

200 Families

PARTICIPANTS

7 AWWs

7 Helpers

6 Supervisors

2022 - 23

Development of 7 demonstration sites

We seek to advocate for systemic capacity building in Bihar by helping develop select Anganwadi centres as demonstration centres for Nurturing ECCE practices and community engagement. We deepen the capacities of Anganwadi workers and supervisors for this purpose, with the intention that this serves as inspiration for a large-scale effort in the state.

FCL Project officers work closely with local Anganwadis to prompt the Anganwadi workers to create a welcoming and nurturing environment in the Anganwadi. In 2022-2023 they developed seven demonstration Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) through ongoing classroom practice visits and coaching of Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWH). They began by creating learning spaces using locally available materials and preparing low-cost teaching and learning materials (TLM). Play was emphasized as a crucial activity, aimed at providing children with a space to explore their ideas and creativity.

Through this program, we also seek to sensitise parents and communities about the nurturing care needs of young children. The primary audience is parents, accessed through home visits and group village meetings. Additionally, an





important aim is to develop a nurturing care-oriented consciousness in the communities so that the learnings among one group of parents are preserved in the community for succeeding young parents, and that the communities invest time, money and effort in creating favourable conditions for nurturing care of children. Our officers, trained in nurturing care, engaged with the village communities. Regular individual and group meetings were held with parents to engage them in a dialogue on what children need to thrive. In addition, the village elders and elected representatives were called upon to participate in the dialogues as and when available.

This intensive, ongoing engagement at the ground level has seen significant changes in the attitudes of parents and communities towards the upbringing of young children. The ICDS officers overseeing the project started noticing positive changes in the demonstration AWCs, indirectly initiating their orientation. This program operates in selected villages across four districts—Patna, Rohtas, Purnea, and Muzaffarpur—covering a total of seven villages, approximately 200 families, and 210 children.

Learning with Meaning

Developing teacher skills so that they can create learning environments that help children progress from rote learning to developing an understanding of the materials and concepts they study; develop critical thinking, inquiry and meaning-making skills.

Learning environments where children acquire social and emotional learning that enables them to face complex challenges with equanimity.

PUNE

Teacher's Capacity Building Program

The Teacher's Capacity Building Program (TCB) seeks to empower educators with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to create a safe, dynamic, and interactive learning environment in which middle school children can learn meaningfully. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India marks a significant shift towards holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary education, aligning well with the principles of constructivism. TCB aims to foster a deep understanding of constructivist principles and their practical application in the classrooms. It facilitates teachers to move away from rote learning to experience-based learning.

The TCB is designed as a three-year program. An MOU was signed between Durgadevi Charitable Trust and the five schools to implement the program. Currently it is implemented in two districts of Maharashtra and is a transformative initiative to enhance the quality of education for 8th Grade (middle school students). The teachers are trained by experts once a month, followed by classroom observation sessions to assess and help teachers take corrective actions, thus facilitating real-time and hands-on capacity building for





the teachers. This program is currently deployed in schools in Pune district and 1 school in Satara district

So far, 26 teachers have benefited from the training which has positively impacted 672 students and continues to help the incoming students of the school, until the teachers are associated with the school. In 2022-23 we completed 7 trainings for the TCB teachers.

The TCB implementation has resulted in noticeable and significant changes in the attitude and understanding of content and constructivism principles in teachers and visible classroom engagement has been seen in students.

The trustees and the Head Masters of the school have appreciated the importance of TCB and have recognized and appreciated the benefits.

PROGRAM

Science Centres

Development of Scientific Temper

To support the development of a scientific temper among students, the Trust has supported the setting up (equipment costs) and running (consumables costs and salaries of science teachers) of two science centre laboratories in Pune and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra. The labs also function as a



hub for other schools. Students from schools can come and visit the centre for experimentation, and the science teachers travel to network schools to demonstrate science experiments.

PROGRAM

Scholarships Program

Girl Child Education

The Trust sponsored 5 girl children from under-privileged backgrounds to pursue their dream sports and school education in a school specialising in this area. The money was spent on the tuition fees, lodging and boarding expenses of the girl children.

PROGRAM

Schools Support Program

Financial Support to Teachers

The Trust supported two un-aided private schools in rural Pune district which cater to very poor communities and are unable to raise adequate resources from the communities to run the schools. The Trust reimburses 50% of the teachers' salaries to ensure that the schools remain open and the local community is not deprived of an avenue of education.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge our partners:

- Department of Women & Child Development, Chhattisgarh
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- Integrated Child Development Services, Bihar
- Subhas Anna Kul Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Boribhadak - Uralikanchan, District - Pune
- Abhinav Vidyalaya, Mandave - Taluka, District - Satara
- Mahadevi Madhyamik Vidyalay Inglun, District - Pune
- Kai Baburao Genuji Pingale Patil Vidyalaya, Gulani, District - Pune
- Indiraji Madhyamik Vidyalay, Moi, District - Pune
- Anadur Science Centre, Taluka - Solapur, District - Osmanabad
- Salumbre Science Centre, Talegaon, Taluka - Maval, District - Pune

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