Impact Stories from Deafblind Project in East India

Story of Change

A life full of Dreams and desire…..

Sukanya is an 18-year-old girl with deafblindness (total hearing loss and low vision) who was born in a poor family where her father, Mr. Gauri, is a daily-wage labor and her mother, Mrs. Poonam, is a housewife. Sukanya is a very active girl and a fast learner.

Before joining the programme:

She got admitted to a government mainstream school in her childhood and she loved going to school and enjoyed the hostel as well. The teachers in the school supported her and a special educator taught her basic sign language as well to improve her socialization. But due to her disability, she was not able to grasp much out of the classes. The initial school had only the classes till 8th standard and then she had to drop out because her family couldn't afford her traveling from her village to another school every day.

Our Intervention:

She was enrolled in the project in Gorakhpur in 2021 and she started getting home based and center based services from her special educator. The initial impression of the special educator was that she needed to concentrate on her studies as she continued her studies. The educator also found her interest in cooking and she was keen to support her family financially.

The special educator and the whole project team started providing her services based on their assessment. The services provided were:

- Vocational training- She was receiving training on how to make Pani-Puri (An Indian Snack) with the support of her mother. Sukanya has also received training on money concepts.
- Educational services- Her level of reading and comprehending English and Mathematics was not up to the expectation. This made the team work with her to train her further and prepare her to get admitted to 9th Std. in the next session.
- Sign Language- She is being taught sign language as well so that communication could be easier for her.

Progress of intervention:

After the intervention, she started making good progress. At present;

- She is able to make Pani- Puri and is aware of basic money concept
- She is able to read and does addition, division, multiplication without any support
- She can copy English sentences as well
- She is able to communicate through sign language

Sukanya prepares the Pani-Puri

She recently received seed money for Income Generation Activity (Pani-puri selling) supported through this project and will be starting the business soon.

Mrs. Poonam says "*Before PGSS (NGO partner), no one ever paid so much attention to Sukanya and that's why she couldn't learn more. But now she is learning from her special educator and he is helping her with education as well as training her for IGA*"

The project team intends to continue working on her education as she wants to study more and to have financial resources for her own education. They intend to enroll her in a government special school for her higher studies. The project team is also supporting her for establishing a successful business.