# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About Us</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Objective</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we are solving</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical Reach</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Reach</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Program</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Camp Program</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Program</td>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Camp Program</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change stories</td>
<td>12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>16-17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT US

Community 1st Foundation was founded in the year 2020.

We build 21st-century skills through the medium of visual & performing arts in children from marginalized communities.

We address social issues through our curriculum and collaborate with low-income schools to provide 21st-century skills learning opportunities.

OUR VISION

To create sustainable ecosystems that contribute to the development of the marginalised communities.

OUR MISSION

We develop and partner with members of the marginalised communities to build Leadership and Advocacy.
To provide opportunities for children to develop 5 Competencies through visual and performing art activities.

- Consciousness,
- Critical Thinking
- Courage
- Collaboration
- Creativity

At Community 1st, we believe that building these 5 competencies help in developing individuals with compassion, empathy, and problem-solving capabilities.
Low-quality education—including poorly implemented provisions under the RTE Act (e.g., no detention policy and 25% reservations quota), focus on mainstream academic subjects, poor student–teacher ratio, and the lack of technology in classrooms—has resulted in severe gaps in our education system and put children from low-income communities at an unfair disadvantage.

The lack of investment in developing slum areas with high population density has deprived children of low-income communities of a safe and positive learning space where they can freely and creatively express themselves, making them increasingly susceptible to delinquent behaviors such as sexual and substance abuse.

Insufficient interactions with and exposure to positive role models, neglect by parents who are compelled to work multiple jobs to sustain their households, and less productive use of social media and the Internet have weakened children’s sense of social responsibility, self-confidence, and advocacy, resulting in a dearth of leaders who can effectively lead themselves & community toward positive change.

- Source: GHE = UNICEF report (S. Asia), Nov 2019; DSS = AllLSG Report to Minorities Commission, Mar 2013; DLL= International Growth Center, Feb 2018
Malwani is a migrant community situated in Malad West region of Mumbai with a population of 250,000 individuals and with a literacy rate of 69.6%.

Out of 42 schools, 49% of students go to private schools and 30% spend more than INR 500 per month on education.
We were able to reach 1700+ children in Malwani via our programs through partnerships with 7 low-income schools.

We build life skills in children from Grades 3rd to 8th using visual & performing arts to build awareness around the most pressing social issues; *Violence & Drug Abuse*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of children reached through school programs</td>
<td>1675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children reached through community center programs</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children reached through mental health program</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children reached through summer camp program</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In the last academic year 2022-23, we implemented two of our flagship programs through our partner schools and our community center.

**STUDENT PROGRAM**

The program was conducted by our on-ground instructors, trained to help students develop essential life skills. The instructors administered 30 sessions over the year, including a 4-week project undertaken by the students and an end-of-the-year exhibition, assisting children to showcase their knowledge and skills.

**APPROACH**

The program is conducted by four on-ground instructors, with the assistance of a program manager who is responsible for supervising and monitoring the program outcomes.

The instructors in total conducted approx. **55** sessions per week during school hours. Each session consisted of approx. **40** school children and each session lasted 1 hour.

| Intervention | 6 Partner Schools & 1 Community Center  
Grades 3rd to 8th  
30 sessions in each classroom |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| Team         | 4 On-ground Instructors  
1 Program Manager |
| Sessions     | 55 Sessions per week  
1 hour session |
| Medium       | Art and Craft- 3rd to 5th grades  
Dance - 6th to 8th grades |
The program was conducted during the Annual Summer Break which included 2 weeks of preparation followed by the 15 days of summer camp and an exhibition at the end.

We also recruited 3 youth volunteers to co-facilitate the sessions along with our instructors. In total, 30 sessions were administered during the summer camp to help build life-skills life Courage, Creativity, and Collaboration and awareness around the theme of "Diversity".

**APPROACH**

The program consisted of 10 days of exposure in Art & Craft, Puppetry and Dance. A total of 61 students participated in the camp and each student was introduced to these skills over a 2.5 hours session led by the instructor and the co-facilitator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>1 Community Center</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 4th to 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>3 On-ground Instructors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Program Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sessions</td>
<td>10 Exposure days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Preparation &amp; 1 Cooking day</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Exhibition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61 Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Art and Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Puppetry &amp; Storytelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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We continuously monitored and evaluated the impact of our programs throughout the year using the 3 assessment tools mentioned below:

- Weekly Independent Practice Questions (IP forms) used in the school program
- Life Skill Assessment Tool used in both school and summer camp programs
- Dream a Dream Life Skill Assessment Tool used in the school program

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE FORMS

Sample size: 1675 students
After each session, students are assessed through a form-based questionnaire based on knowledge, skills or application and SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) aspects to monitor and evaluate if students are able to understand the concepts of each objective.

LIFE SKILL ASSESSMENT TOOL

Sample size: School program: 63 students & Summer camp: 20 students
This tool is designed to measure the life-skills (5Cs) growth in a child. This tool has two techniques of sample recording, through questionnaire and through activity observation. This tool is used twice a year, i.e. baseline and endline.

DREAM A DREAM LIFE SKILL ASSESSMENT SCALE

Sample size: 63 students
It helps us in finding out how effective interventions are at increasing life skills among young people in India (6 to 14 years). This tool is used twice a year, i.e. baseline and endline.
It was observed that more than 80% of the children have been able to develop their awareness, think critically, and develop mindfulness to take compassionate actions in different circumstances.

*SEL: Social Emotional Learning*

We observed 57% of the students have developed an understanding and/or employ critical thinking in real-world scenarios.

It was also observed that 23% of students maintained their earlier understanding of social issues while 19% of students showed a decline.
We observed 86% of the students adopting a more collaborative approach, creative solutions and courage to speak under different circumstances.

Also, the number of students who have shown more than 3 points jump accounts for approx 62% of students.

We observed that 100% of the students started interacting with others more often, taking more initiative toward solving problems.

100% of the students adopted a more positive approach toward overcoming difficulties, solving problems, and managing conflicts.
It was observed that 80% of the students have started adopting a more collaborative approach, creative solutions, and courage to speak under different circumstances. The highest percentage was 35% of students who showed more than 3 levels jump.

The data also show that 15% i.e. 3 students maintained their earlier understanding of social issues and 5% i.e. 1 student showed a decline in his/her understanding.
Shireen Ansari, a 5th-grade student, from Holy Star School. Shireen was not fond of drawing. She was never interested in doing any activities in the class. She would always give an excuse for leaving the class.

As I started noticing her behavior a few times, I once confronted her and she replied saying she doesn't like to sit for art class as she doesn't enjoy it.

I went home and started to think about it and find a solution. I discovered if I try to make a connection with her not as a teacher but as a friend maybe she would show some interest. As I realized, I as a teacher could find a way in which the learning gets fun and not just theoretical.

I tried to build a good connection with Shireen. Whatever topic or art activity was there I tried to make it easy for her like showing her how to draw a house easily in the background, I would then ask her to draw the same using the technique I showed to her. This way it was easy for her to draw and it also showed positive results later.

She started taking an interest in the topics and completed all of her artwork. Now, she wants to continue her art class so she can learn more. Shireen is very outspoken and smart & always takes ownership of the tasks given.

Ashwini Vange
Art Instructor
While facilitating the dance studio in the summer camp, I observed boys and girls were hesitant to be on the same team, it seemed they wanted to be in separate boys' team and girls' team.

To make them comfortable with each other, I talked with them about gender equality and how we need to create spaces where every gender is equal.

I talked with them about how when they will grow up and start doing work they need to work with other genders including either male or female, so I asked them to take small steps and learn to see everyone as equal and with respect as this will help them in the future as a person.

Initially, only some of them agreed to the points we discussed and started pairing up with each other and making mix-gender groups. However, in a few days, the rest also joined after seeing some of them enjoying themselves with everyone, and making new friends.

Also, during the final exhibition day performance, they all performed together, and a few boys who were hesitant to dance at the start performed with girls.

I felt happy to be part of this journey of change.

Radha Saroj
Dance Instructor
Over the year, we also collaborated with several youth volunteers whose to support & strengthen our work. The volunteers were onboarded after due-diligence wrt their values, skills etc. They in turn learned and gained knowledge of the different organisation's verticals, working in the development sector and the community we work with.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**
1 social media expert and 1 social media intern who support us in strategizing social media reach, and in creating content and posts across different platforms.

**CURRICULUM**
3 volunteers assisted our visual and performing art curriculum leads in researching content and activities for creating lesson plans aligned with our theme and contextualized for the students of our community.

**TEACHER TRAINING**
1 volunteer created teacher training sessions that helped our instructors to upskill their knowledge and expertise and utilised those learnings in everyday classroom teachings.

**CO-FACILITATION**
3 volunteers that helped our instructors in co-facilitating sessions during the annual summer camp.
COLLABORATIONS

MPOWER

We have been collaborating with Mpower for mental health counseling for the last 2.5 years now. Their counselors take weekly sessions with children identified by parents with the help of our partner school teachers who need intervention.

POKHRAMA FOUNDATION

Pokhrama work to provide education to children in the remote rural areas of the Lakhisarai district in Bihar. We have partnered with them since January 2022 and they implement CFF’s art program for their students in school.

TEACH FOR PAKISTAN

We collaborated with fellows from Teach for Pakistan in April & May 2023 where our SEL theme-based art program was executed for the students studying at the Islamabad Model School for Girls in Sihala who come from informal settlements and low-income households.
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