

Community Development Project

On

Enhancing Lives: Volunteering with Spinal Cord Injury and Wheelchair Users



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Institution : Lovely Professional University (LPU), Phagwara, Punjab

Department : B.tech (CSE)

CDP : Volunteering with Spinal Cord Injury and Wheelchair Users

NGO : Center for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP)

Location : Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Website : <https://www.crp-bangladesh.org>



পক্ষাঘাতগ্রস্তদের পুনর্বাসন কেন্দ্র (সিআরপি)
Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP)
a project of the Trust for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed
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Date: 28 December 2023

This is to certify that Kanad Kapil, 8 North Goran, Khilgaon, Dhaka-1219 has worked as a Volunteer from 26th December 2023 to 27th December 2023 at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) in Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He worked at Sports & Recreation department of Rehabilitation Wings.

He was very punctual and attentive to his work. Everybody at CRP was appreciative of his involvement.

We wish him every success in life.

Md. Mizanur Rahman
Volunteer Coordinator

Introduction:

I'm Kanad Kapil. I'm a student at Lovely Professional University in Punjab, India. I'm in the 2nd year of my CSE, B.Tech. I had a course at my university. Which is a community development project. I did it. I spent 2 days over there last December (from 26th to 27th). I have done work, I worked with people who are in wheelchairs or having spinal cord injuries. I played with them and taught them to play, and they helped them. I played badminton, table tennis, carom, and volleyball with them. Most of the time I played badminton.

I did this CDP in Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, which is my hometown. It is a hospital and a social working place. The name of the organization is CRP, which is well-known for its social work for disabled people. The headquarters of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) is situated in Champaign, Savar, and occupies approximately 11 acres of land. In 1990, CRP relocated to CRP-Savar from rented premises in Farmgate. To make the services affordable and easy, now We have 13 CRP centers across Bangladesh. More Than 911+ students graduated & and 1000+ students are studying.

Bangladesh is a place where disabled people are not respected that much. And CRP is doing a good job in case of that. They made a foot road passing for wheelchairs, and they are always entertained by the volunteers. Because most of the time they might get depressed because of their disabilities. To keep them from being suicidal and mentally ok, the volunteers work for 8 hours a day. They are very friendly and make the patient feel like the hospital is home. The total number of patients is around 72,000.

They are training disabled people in a sophisticated way. They participate in various Asian and international tournaments. They did well in past years in basketball and table tennis.

Now I need to write a report to write for my college. As I said, I worked and played with wheelchair people for 2 days, and helped them. I worked as a volunteer and also have a certificate of that.

The Center for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) is a renowned organization in Bangladesh that focuses on providing comprehensive rehabilitation and support services to individuals with disabilities.

Having spinal cord injury is also a serious thing. The spine is the unit of neurons. Getting hurt on the spine affects the whole body, which leads to paralysis. Sometimes it's curable, but most of the time there is less hope.

About CRP:

1. **Mission and Objectives:** CRP's mission is to provide treatment, rehabilitation, and support services with a holistic approach, addressing physical, emotional, social, psychological, and economic aspects of individuals with disabilities. The organization aims to empower and enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities.

2. **Treatment and Rehabilitation Services:** CRP offers a range of services, including medical treatment, physical rehabilitation, and support for individuals with various types of disabilities. This may include those with spinal cord injuries, orthopedic conditions, and neurological disorders.

3. **Prevention Programs:** CRP is involved in organizing and promoting programs for the prevention of disabilities. This proactive approach aims to reduce the incidence of disabilities through education and awareness initiatives.

4. **Empowerment Initiatives:** CRP focuses on the empowerment of individuals with disabilities, with a specific emphasis on empowering girls and women. Community-based services are designed to enhance the independence and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

5. **Awareness and Research:** CRP is dedicated to raising awareness about disability issues at the national, regional, and international levels. Additionally, the organization conducts research consistent with its vision and mission to contribute to the field of rehabilitation.

6. Sport and Recreational Opportunities: CRP promotes sport and recreational opportunities for persons with disabilities, recognizing the importance of inclusive activities for physical and mental well-being.

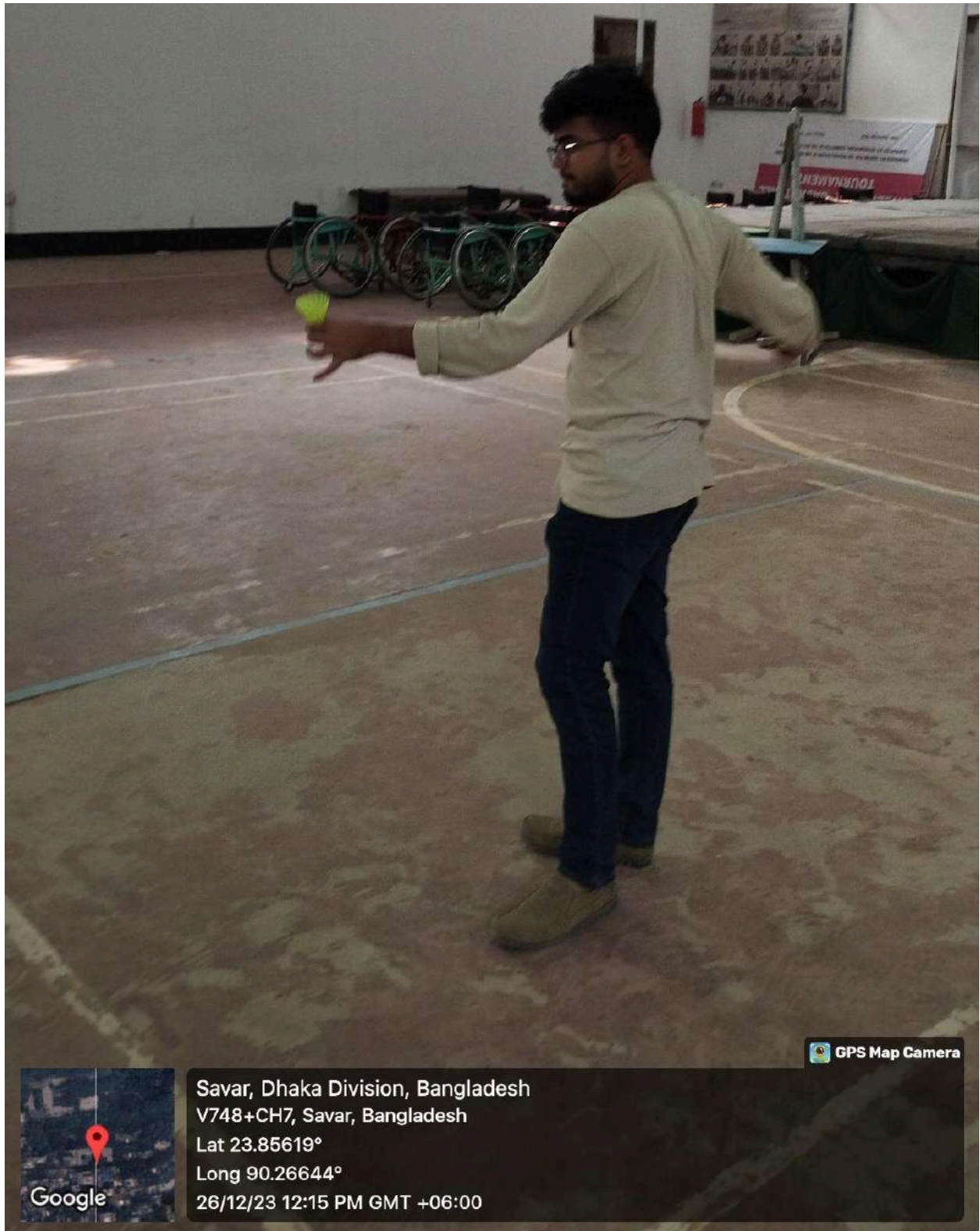
CRP plays a crucial role in addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities in Bangladesh and beyond. Through its multifaceted approach, CRP contributes to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for people with disabilities to lead fulfilling lives.

My Contribution:

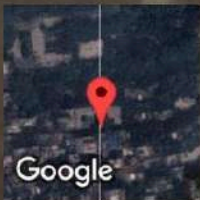
I woke up at 7 in the morning. At 7:30 a.m. I left my house to take the bus from Khilgaon to Savar. It was early in the morning so the road was clear and I didn't face any traffic while I was traveling. I reached the headquarters of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) around 9 o'clock.

Badminton: I also played badminton with them, as it is another sport that can be played easily by the patients. But the fact is, they can't move frequently so the cork should be placed in front of them. There were some good and experienced players as well, whom I enjoyed playing with. They know the rules, and made a head to head competition with me. I really liked the attitude they are having. And the environment was also jolly and sophisticated. They were playing badminton with the volunteers. But the volunteers weren't playing softly with the patients. As the patients have damaged spinal cords they use wheelchairs to move around. They were having difficulties playing with the volunteers. The volunteers weren't well trained and they were playing normally. I taught the volunteers how to play with them. I told them to throw the shuttlecock in their direction, within their range so that they could also throw back the shuttlecock easily. I asked the

volunteers to put no pressure on the patients and asked them to play as softly as they could. I also played with the patients there and helped them to play badminton.



GPS Map Camera



Savar, Dhaka Division, Bangladesh
V748+CH7, Savar, Bangladesh
Lat 23.85619°
Long 90.26644°
26/12/23 12:15 PM GMT +06:00



Carrom: I played carrom with the patients and helped them to learn carom. I played gently with them. I also taught some of them how to play carom. While playing carrom I gave them confidence so that they could play without feeling uneasy. I played carom with 4 players. A carrom set contains 19 pieces (striker not included) in three distinct colors: one for each player, and another for the queen. The usual colors are white (or unstained) and black for the players and red for the queen. The player must pocket the queen and subsequently pocket a carom man of the player's own color. They enjoyed playing with me because of my interaction with

them. And when I failed to pocket the disc they used to make fun out of me. Making them smile also gave me pleasure.



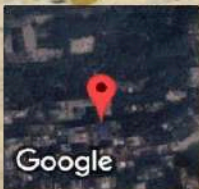
Table Tennis: I also played table tennis with the patients there. The must be shown the ball in an open palm before serving, must hit the ball down onto their side of the table when serving, don't drop the ball, and then hit it over. The ball must bounce on both sides of the table when serving.

There were other permanent volunteers, who are having jobs over there. But having a different person makes the patient more confident and warm. Many students from different institutes come there for social service.



Others: I also helped in their transport, as most of the patients are living around the organization for their treatment, and some of them are living in the hospital campus. Employees are living in hospital quarters, as I made friends with them, we talked and I helped them to go to their houses. I heard about their stories and communicated with them. I asked about their

sorrows and their future plans.



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Bangladesh's view on disabled people:

In Bangladesh, views on disabled people have evolved over time, but challenges and stigmas still persist. Here are some aspects of how disability is perceived in Bangladesh:

1. **Traditional Beliefs and Stigmas:** Like in many cultures, there may be traditional beliefs and stigmas associated with disability in Bangladesh. Some may view disabilities as a result of past misdeeds or as a burden on the family.
2. **Inclusive Policies:** The government of Bangladesh has taken steps to address the needs of disabled individuals. In 2013, the country ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, signaling a commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of disabled people.
3. **Educational Inclusion:** Efforts have been made to improve educational inclusion for disabled individuals. Special education programs and inclusive schooling practices have been implemented to ensure that children with disabilities have access to education.
4. **Employment Opportunities:** Despite progress, individuals with disabilities in Bangladesh may face challenges in accessing employment opportunities. There is an ongoing need for creating inclusive workplaces and ensuring that disabled individuals have equal opportunities for employment.
5. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Various organizations and advocates in Bangladesh are working to raise awareness about the rights and capabilities of disabled individuals. They play a crucial role in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusivity.

6. **Assistive Technologies:** The use of assistive technologies has been growing to empower people with disabilities in Bangladesh. These technologies help enhance the independence and capabilities of individuals with various disabilities.

7. **Social Support Networks:** Family and community support networks play a significant role in the lives of disabled individuals. The level of acceptance and support can vary, but many families and communities are becoming more aware of the needs and rights of disabled members.

8. **Accessibility:** Efforts are being made to improve accessibility in public spaces, transportation, and infrastructure to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities. However, there is still work to be done to make all areas fully accessible.

My Volunteer Experience with Spinal Cord Injury and Wheelchair Users: A Call for Compassionate Action

Seeing the World Through New Eyes

My recent two-day experience volunteering at a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) opened my eyes to the unique challenges faced by individuals with spinal cord injuries, wheelchair users, and those facing paralysis. Witnessing their limited mobility and dependence on others for daily tasks, I couldn't help but empathize with their feelings of frustration and, at times, insecurity. The yearning

for independence and the desire to live life on their own terms resonated deeply within me.

Bangladesh Strides Towards Inclusivity

While Bangladesh, like many developing countries, has room for improvement in fully embracing and empowering individuals with disabilities, I observed encouraging progress in shifting mindsets and fostering a more inclusive society. It is crucial to recognize and celebrate these advancements as catalysts for positive change.

Building a More Inclusive Future Through Volunteering

The profound impact of volunteering on both myself and the individuals I met at the CRP solidified my belief in the power of community service. I urge educational institutions, like schools and colleges, to incorporate mandatory monthly volunteering programs, allowing students to interact with and learn from individuals with disabilities. This not only fosters empathy and understanding but also cultivates a sense of responsibility and builds a more inclusive and compassionate society.

Shifting the Narrative: From Burden to Joy

Helping those in need should never feel like a burden. Instead, we should strive to cultivate a culture where offering unconditional support is a source of joy, pride, and personal fulfillment. It should be a natural expression of our shared humanity.

Harnessing Technology for Positive Change

My privilege of volunteering and studying computer science at LPU (Lovely Professional University) has ignited a passion within me. I believe that technology holds immense potential to empower individuals with disabilities. In the future, I hope to leverage my skills and knowledge to develop innovative applications and solutions that improve their lives and enhance their independence.

By promoting inclusivity, fostering empathy, and embracing innovation, we can work towards a world where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and live a fulfilling life.

Objective to be achieved:

It appears to be a comprehensive and commendable set of objectives for an organization, possibly a rehabilitation or healthcare center focused on enhancing the lives of persons with disabilities. Each goal addresses different facets of the well-being of individuals with disabilities, from physical and emotional aspects to social, psychological, and economic dimensions. The objective to be achieved for the physically disabled:

1. **Treatment, Rehabilitation & Support Services:** Addressing a holistic approach to the well-being of individuals by providing a range of services.

2. **Skilled Personnel Development:** Focusing on building expertise in healthcare and rehabilitation within the country and SAARC region.
3. **Center Expansion:** Establishing centers across different regions for wider accessibility in collaboration with other organizations.
4. **Programs for Prevention:** Emphasizing proactive measures to prevent disabilities through organized programs. Empowering persons with disabilities through community-based services, emphasizing integration.
5. **Early Identification and Education:** Developing initiatives for early detection, therapeutic interventions, and educational programs.
6. **Empowerment of Girls and Women with Disabilities:** Specific focus on empowering and supporting females with disabilities.
7. **Sport & Recreational Opportunities:** Promoting inclusivity through sports and recreational activities for individuals with disabilities.

It's evident that the organization has a comprehensive approach to supporting individuals with disabilities, aiming not only for their immediate well-being but also for long-term empowerment and societal integration.



Effectiveness of the Center for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP):

The Center for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) involves considering various factors, including the impact of its programs, the satisfaction of beneficiaries, and the organization's overall contributions to the rehabilitation field. Here are some aspects to consider:

1. **Rehabilitation Success Stories:** Examining individual success stories and case studies of people who have undergone rehabilitation at CRP can provide insights into the effectiveness of the center's programs. Positive outcomes, such as improved mobility, increased independence, and enhanced quality of life, are indicative of effective rehabilitation efforts.

2. **Community Impact:** Assessing the impact of CRP's community-based services and prevention programs is crucial. If the organization's initiatives have contributed to a reduction in the prevalence of disabilities or an increased awareness of preventive measures, it indicates a positive impact on the community.

indicator of its effectiveness. Collaborative efforts often enhance the scope and reach of rehabilitation services.

3. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Evaluating the success of CRP's advocacy efforts and awareness campaigns is important. If the organization has been successful in raising awareness about disability issues and influencing policies to promote inclusivity, it reflects a positive impact on the broader community.

4. Long-Term Follow-Up: Assessing the long-term outcomes of individuals who have received rehabilitation services from CRP can provide insights into the sustained effectiveness of the programs. Monitoring the ongoing well-being of beneficiaries over time is crucial for understanding the lasting impact of rehabilitation efforts.

My thoughts:

Empowering Individuals with Spinal Cord Injuries: My Call to Action
My volunteer experience at a rehabilitation center left a lasting impression. Witnessing the challenges and potential of individuals with spinal cord injuries ignited a passion in me to advocate for their well-being.

Funding for rehabilitation centers is essential. These centers provide critical support, empowering individuals to regain independence and reach their full potential.

Beyond physical limitations lies immense potential. Individuals with paralysis possess valuable intellectual capacity and unique perspectives that can significantly benefit society. Denying them access to proper rehabilitation hinders their ability to contribute meaningfully.

Crucially, we must bridge the gap in understanding. Doctors and the public often lack a deep understanding of their specific needs. This is where individuals with paralysis themselves become key players.

By actively involving them in discussions about their needs and challenges, we can co-create truly innovative solutions that address them effectively. This collaboration is essential to unlocking their full potential and fostering their contributions to modern technologies.

Technological advancements hold immense promise. Supporting the development of assistive technologies and fostering a culture of innovation can create a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Let's work together to advocate, collaborate, and innovate for a more inclusive and equitable future where everyone can reach their full potential.

Conclusion:

The volunteers helping at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) are young and they want to play these games with their peers and take them as competitions which causes low self-esteem in the patients. I worked with the patients to feel confident while playing games. I asked the volunteers to take these games easily as these are not competitions. And I asked them to play for enjoyment.

The patients in the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) play these sports for enjoyment, to release stress, and to get rid of their boredom. These people face various difficulties in their daily life. I consulted them and asked them about their difficulties. I helped them while I worked as a volunteer for 3 days (December 26 to December 28). They can't do day-to-day work easily. To make their life easier the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) is helping them in every possible way.