CASE STUDY OF SHARDA

Sharda's family has lived in a small room in the Mori Gate area of Ram Bazar, East Delhi, for the last 10 years. It is an area of Delhi that has a population of 22,46,749. The surrounding areas around it such as Kashmiri Gate, Tis Hazari court, Malka Ganj, Ram Bazaar Chandni Chowk, and Old Delhi Railway Station are congested areas.

Sharda has two elder brothers in her family, besides her parents.

Her father works in the Sadar Bazaar as a goods carrier, and her elder brother also used to work as a salesman in a shop, but lockdowns during the first and second waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in Delhi have severely hindered economic activities of the small-time wage earners. So Sharda's family have no work. They are all sitting at home.

Sharada dropped out of school in the fourth standard. She is now 16 years old. At school Sharada's teachers discouraged her by repeatedly pointing out her slow pace of learning. The behavior of school children towards Sharada was also not supportive. She was subjected to bullying which made her drop out of school and discontinue her education.

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In 2020, BUDS enrolled Sharda in the current PACE batch. As a result, her approach to studies has changed. It is true that Sharada has different needs and a slower pace of learning. BUDS staff explained her educational needs to Sharada's parents, who agreed to visit the BUDS health camp. The doctor present at the health camp, referred Sharada to the Institute of Human Behavior and Allied Sciences (IHBAS)

hospital, in Shahdara (East Delhi). Her parents took her there and the doctor diagnosed her and confirmed that Sharda's IQ level is a little lower than that of the general population. Now, the BUDS staff is helping Sharda to get an IQ certificate so that she can avail of the pension provided by the Delhi government to mentally handicapped persons under the social welfare scheme.

Like many migrant workers, Sharda's family was also considering emigration to their native village because of the economic hardship they were facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When they found out that the family was facing a food shortage, BUDS staff provided monthly rations to Sharada's family as part of the organizations' outreach activities. In this way, BUDS not only supported Sharada and her family as well.