

Saaya Independent Living Center  
A Project of Saaya Association



## Saaya Association

### ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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**Executive Summary:**

Saaya Association is an organization of People with disabilities (registered as VSWA/ICT/562). One of the key aims is provision of support to Persons with Disability (PwDs), enabling them to realize their full potential through novel opportunities, personal choices, and community involvement. The diverse activities undertaken by the association contribute to the holistic understanding of issues of Persons with disabilities along with improvement of their status in the society. Prominent projects at Saaya include components on independent Living, inclusive education, supportive society/community and access to Justice. Strong emphasis is placed on the wellbeing of women and girls with disabilities, as they are subjected to multiple layers of discrimination.

**Main Objective**

The major focus of Saaya Association is to facilitate acceptance of Persons with Disability as significant human resource in society, leading to a secure and progressive environment for them. Playing a constructive role in the society becomes a hindrance for Persons with Disability as they usually lack acceptance of their own disability. The mission of Saaya is to contribute to improving the social-economic and cultural condition of Persons with Disability by raising awareness and advocacy through mass media.

**Acknowledgement:**

Saaya Association has been contributing towards providing individuals with disabilities with the means to live a moderately independent life for the last many years.

Many organizations have been influential in their contributions towards helping Saaya achieve their goal, including HANDS Pakistan, Sightsaver Pakistan and AAA Associates. HANDS has been supporting Saaya to assist Persons with Disability in achieving greater independence by providing relevant and prompt services and activities. Along with inculcating essential life skills in Persons with Disabilities, these activities have helped sensitize the general public regarding issues related to disability. With difficulty in accepting their own disability, the Persons with Disability seldom find platforms from where one can learn about independent living and become a resourceful member of the society. Saaya intends on bringing Persons with Disability out of their solace and misery and into mainstream life so that they can play a role in the progress of society. Saaya aims to build the confidence of Persons with Disability and their families.

The Saaya team wants to express special gratitude for the personal involvement and interest of HANDS Pakistan and AAA Associates to include Persons with Disability as active members in society. In addition, with the moral and financial support by HANDS Pakistan and AAA Associates, the financial burden has decreased and as the financial stress has been relieved, the team of Saaya has experienced a friendly and progressive environment.

Saaya Association has been thankful to Allah Almighty for providing an opportunity to help people in need.

**Regards, Saaya Team**

## Introduction: Saaya Association

According to World Disability Report issued by WHO and World Bank, one billion people or 15% of the world's population, experience some form of disability. Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than the ones without disabilities. These outcomes can come in the form of reduced number of years of formal education, inaccessibility to adequate healthcare, fewer employment opportunities that also contributes to the higher poverty rate among the Persons with Disability. Another important factor to note here is that poverty may increase the risk of disability through malnutrition, lack of access to healthcare, unsafe working conditions, polluted environment, and lack of access to safe water and sanitation. This means that with the increase in poverty, the risk of disability may increase.

Almost 15% of the total population of Pakistan comprises of people, with physical and social limitations, that act as a barrier to their healthy living. Such children & adults face a life that is segregated and debased. Saaya Association aims to support Persons with Disability (PWDs) enabling them to realize their full potential through novel opportunities, personal choice, and community involvement. The association is working towards improving the ultimate status and dignity of Persons with Disability.

Saaya is focused on independent Living, inclusive education, supportive society or community and access to Justice. It pays special attention to the wellbeing of women and girls with Disabilities, as they are subjected to multiple layers of discrimination. For families and caregivers, it is a transformative process, therefore, Saaya has the provision of coaching centers for their psychosocial counselling, for which the results have been promising. A needs based course has been designed to address the psycho-social issues faced by the Persons with disabilities and their families, the monitoring for which is being conducted.



### Saaya Centre for Independent Living

(Summary: Saaya Association provides necessary technical skills along with training for an independent living to help PWDs lead an independent lifestyle. Saaya Association also arranges lectures for symposiums, internship programs which includes accepting and educating trainees) Independent living for Persons with Disability provides Persons with Disability with the same rights and opportunities as the rest of the population. It also focuses on the Persons with Disability having a sense of control over their own life by being able to choose for themselves.

Independent living for Persons with Disability does not mean that an individual does everything; whether disabled or not. Every human being is interdependent and it would be difficult for any individual to function all on his or her own. We all interact with others and depend on them in everyday life. Hence, if one set of people were denied basic rights such as education, housing, support, then it would put them at a disadvantage. They will not be able to reach their full potential and will have less chance of making independent choices or exercise their basic human rights.

Saaya CIL intends to bring Persons with Disability out of their houses and into the active life as a member of the society. It also intends to create an environment in Pakistan in general but with special emphasis on Independent Living Centre where Persons with Disability (PWDs) can visit the marketplace and other places of public interest without being sneered at or without feeling ashamed of being in a wheelchair or any other assistive gadget.

Saaya CIL is an exemplary and highly appreciated implementation of the emerging concept of Independent Living in real terms for persons with diverse and severe disabilities. It has been serving the desperate individuals with diverse and severe disabilities for more than five years with the support of HANDS Pakistan. Saaya Centre for Independent Living is a new ray of hope in the lives of persons with disabilities. Independent Living demands equal rights for individuals with any form of disability. It stresses that persons with disabilities are equally eligible to enjoy all the fruits of life and living. Regretfully, the persons with disabilities remain confined to their homes. They should not be punished for their disabilities. They are equally humans and they deserve to play their active role in the mainstream.



### **Services by Saaya Center for Independent Living**

One of the many purposes of the Saaya Association is to ensure that Persons with Disability are provided with proper training and equipment to lead an independent lifestyle. Here is a list of various services provided by the Saaya Association for Persons with Disability including;

#### **Trained Staff:**

At Saaya, we recruit and train staff to assist Persons with Disability at the Independent Living center.

#### **Personal Care Attendant:**

We train Attendants to provide Service for Persons with severe Disabilities who are unable to perform certain tasks due to their physical limitations.

#### **Awareness Raising:**

At Saaya Independent Living Center, awareness regarding various disability issues is raised using creative means. Saaya Association also publishes newsletters for information exchange regarding Persons with Disability.

#### **Natural Disaster Management Training:**

Physical disabilities can be caused by multiple factors that is why we also focus on natural disaster management training for the people who have become physically impaired in any incident.

#### **Counseling for Persons with Disability:**

Due to a lack of awareness and training programs, many Persons with Disability depend on the people around them for assistance with everyday tasks. Realizing the need, at Saaya, we provide counselling and take possible measures to help Persons with Disability become an active member of the society by accepting their disability.

#### **Provision of Assistive Devices:**

There can be various reasons for physical impairment, which means that there are various requirements when it comes to assisting the Persons with Disability. At Saaya Association, we provide Persons with Disability with the necessary assistive devices that will allow them to lead a successful life.

#### **Computer Training Courses:**

With the advancement in technology, computer skills have become a necessary part of life. The trained staff at Saaya Association allows Persons with Disability to take Computer training courses, including hands-on training of Microsoft Office and graphic designing.

#### **Psychosocial Support Training**

Like any individual, Persons with Disability also require psychosocial support. Psychology and the surrounding environment of the individual greatly affect the mental health and productivity. Which is why Saaya Association providing psychosocial support training for the family members of Persons with Disability.

### **Workshop for Manual & Electric Wheelchairs Maintenance**

Manual and electric wheelchairs have spare parts, which can require maintenance, repairs, or replacement. Saaya Association has an expert team with an Engineer in lead, which deals with replacement battery chargers for electric wheelchairs, handle grips, wheel locks, hand rims, and much more. Our capabilities also include programming manual & electric wheelchairs to adjust speed, sensitivity, reaction time, and other parameters, ensuring ideal performance according to disability of the individual.

### **Alternative Hand Control Systems for Vehicles**

An automobile adapted for ease of use by Persons with Disability. Today automobiles can be adapted for a range of physical disabilities. Such as, the foot pedals can be raised, or replaced with hand-controlled devices. Automotive adaptive hand controls also make it possible to adjust acceleration as well braking. We at Saaya offer all these services, which continue to broaden opportunities for Persons with Disability to drive vehicles with hand controls and adaptive automotive products and devices.

### **Referral Program between Centers for Persons with Disability across the Country.**

Saaya Association has strong linkages with other OPDs (Organization of People with Disabilities) and SDGs across the country. We counsel and facilitate people to contact the nearby organizations and in case of need of any services, Saaya makes the appointment with relevant department to ensure most credible services and information.

### **Network of Women with Disabilities**

Saaya Association always gives prime importance to the empowerment of women. Women with disabilities are amongst the most marginalized and disadvantaged people in the world. The intersection of gender inequality and disability presents a situation of multiple levels of discrimination. They are less likely to be educated, employed and well housed than any other population group. Our Mission is to lead the way for women with disabilities at grass root level and improve their choices by being a voice, building partnerships, providing information and educating the community

### **Staff at Saaya Association:**

The team of Saaya is motivated and driven towards helping and facilitating Persons with Disability. Almost all of the Saaya team consists of people with some form of physical disability and they are focused on making other Persons with Disability confident by becoming an active and independent member of society.

### **MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

#### **Accessibility audit of Islamabad**

Saaya Association has conducted accessibility audits in 2022-2023 to account for accessible infrastructure like public places, government buildings and restaurants. The main purpose is to generate awareness among the general public about the barriers for Persons with disabilities and regarding significance of accessible environment

#### **Out Doors Activities 2022 - 2023**

Saaya Association has organized different outdoor activities during the year 2022-2023. The purpose of these activities is to highlight the importance of outdoor activities for individuals with disabilities and provide an overview of various inclusive outdoor activities available to cater their unique needs. Engaging in outdoor activities not only promotes physical fitness but also enhances a sense of empowerment among persons with disabilities. The development of accessible infrastructure includes the installation of ramps, elevators, and designated parking spaces for individuals with disabilities



### Observance of International Women's Day on 8th March 2023

Saaya Association organized an event for Women with & without disabilities along with the general public in collaboration with McDonald's, HANDS to Celebrate International Women Day 2023 with the Theme "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". This activity was specifically designed to provide an opportunity to our Women Especially Women with Disabilities to show their strength and unity & express their feelings by experience sharing. It was a rich session with inspiring stories of women who talked about their earlier lives of limitations and the new found opportunities that helped them become part of the public sphere. The outdoor event provided a platform to women to exhibit their public speaking skills, altering the traditional way of indoor seminars and trainings. We would really like to appreciate all the support of McDonald's in successfully undertaking this unique activity facilitating our Women with Disabilities to face the real society with courage and bravery.

### Seminars Organized by Saaya Association on "Sensitivity and Inclusivity of Persons with Disabilities in Rights-based Development Process" in 2022-2023

Youth is 60% of our population. Consultative meetings, workshops and seminars are very useful tools to make youth aware about their roles and responsibilities towards persons with disabilities. Saaya Association regularly conduct seminars/workshops in educational institutions to sensitize them about understanding different dimensions of disability. Saaya Association has organized various seminars on "Sensitivity and Inclusivity of Persons with Disabilities in Rights-based Development Process" in 2022-2023 in collaboration with different universities of twin cities.



## Wheelchairs Distribution 2022-2023

Since the foundation of Saaya Association Islamabad in 2008, a tradition of help has been followed by distribution of wheelchairs especially in the Holy month of Ramadan every year. We are thankful to Allah Almighty for providing us the opportunity to help those in need, as much as we can do within our capacity. The Saaya association Islamabad has been able to distribute hundreds of wheelchairs and Eid suits to people from different parts of the country every year. We are much grateful to all the individuals and community members who have been a source of support throughout the process. Saaya Centre for dependent Living and HANDS has distributed more than 100 Wheelchairs and suits gift among people with disabilities in Collaboration with Sightsaver International under the umbrella of CBID Network. The Annual Wheelchairs Distribution Ceremony, 2023, was held on June 01 2023, at Margala Islamabad.



### Five Days Internship Programs for Disabled Students:

Saaya Association has organized twelve (12) five days' internship sessions for students with disabilities with the support of HANDS Pakistan at Saaya Centre for Independent Living Islamabad. Thirty-six (36) students with disabilities attended five days' internship session during the year 2022-2023.

The main purpose of these sessions was to improve the participation of students with disabilities in society by providing them with internship opportunities. In addition, it encouraged positive changes in the perception and attitudes toward disabilities within the private sector.

The contents of this Internship program are as follows:

- Understanding of Disability and Inclusive development.
- Independent Living
- Self-Acceptance, Self Confidence
- Confidence building and decision making through group discussion
- Kinds of Disabilities Physical, Visually Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual
- Diversity, how to make Friends Working in Office Environment
- Team Building
- Improving skills in research, communication in groups, interpersonal communication and observation
- Disability Models
- Frequently challenging and changing Attitudes and beliefs
- Adaptability to change
- Community Work
- Effective Communication,
- Value based social responsibilities,
- Personal characteristics
- Individual issues of the disabled persons, Barriers
- Critical/Negative thinking and Problem-Solving skills
- How to think Positive
- Importance of Out Reach Activities
- Experience Sharing as role Model
- Society Responses towards Disabled Persons
- Growth and care model, Self-Recognition, discipline (self-discipline, Office discipline/business discipline)
- Networking and Mentoring



### Monthly Awareness Sessions 2022-2023:

Saaya Center for Independent living conducts Monthly Awareness Sessions on understanding of Disability & concept of Independent Living at Saaya Office Islamabad with the support of HANDS. The main purpose of these sessions is to create awareness regarding disability among new persons with disabilities and to bring these people out of isolation so that they can become an active member of the society. Parents of children with disabilities and community members were also present in the session. Ninety-eight (98) people with disability, including family members attended Monthly awareness sessions in 2022-2023.

### Activities and Trainings organized by Saaya Team for Persons with Disability

Saaya CIL intends to bring Persons with Disability out of their houses and into the active life as a member of the society. It also intends to create an environment in Pakistan in general but with special emphasis on Independent Living Centre where Persons with Disability (PWDs) can visit the marketplace and other places of public interest without being sneered at or without feeling ashamed of being in a wheelchair or any other assistive gadget.





### Events, Activities and Trainings organized by Saaya ILC for the year of 2022-2023

Sr.#	Activities	Venue	No of Beneficiaries	Participants Attended	Date/ Month
1.	Planning Meeting regarding Inclusion and Networking of women with Disabilities.	Saaya Office		10	July 20-2022
2.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	25	July 21-2022
3.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	July 25-29 2022
4.	Session on Contemporary issues of Persons with Disabilities in Pakistan	Rozan Islamabad.		30	July 30-2022
5.	Internship program for students from different Universities	Saaya Office		16	August 3-2022
6.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities.	Saaya Office	3	3	August 15-19 2022
7.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	20	August 19-2022
8.	Empowering Persons with disabilities Skills Training and Workshop place Inclusiveness.	Fatima Jinnah University		30	August 22- 26 2022
9.	Inaugural Ceremony of Workshop on Empowering of persons with disabilities through social skills	Fatima Jinnah University		25	August 29-31 2022
10.	Certificate Distribution Ceremony for Students Internship program from different Universities.	Saaya Office		25	September 1 -2022
11.	Experience Sharing by Women Disabilities during Internship Program for Students.	Saaya Office		20	September 6 2022
12.	Flood Relief Camp	F-8 Islamabad		15	September 7-22-2022
13.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	23	September 13-2022
14.	Session on Sensitivity & Inclusivity of Persons with Disabilities in Right Based Development Project	Hill View Hotel Islamabad		35	September 21-23-2022
15.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities.	Saaya Office	3	3	September 26- 30 2022
16.	Wheelchairs Distribution Ceremony in Multan.	HANDS Main Stream ILC Multan	36	80	October 4-2022
17.	Mehfil-e-Milad	Saaya Office		35	October 12-2022
18.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	October 17- 21- 2022

19.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	25	October 19- 2022
20.	Saaya Team visited Khyber tv for World Polio Day	Khyber TV Islamabad		5	October 27- 2022
21.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	November 7 -11- 2022
22.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	22	November 17- 2022
23.	Celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities organized by CHEF International.	Islamabad Club		30	December 1-2022
24.	Development Opportunities for youth with disabilities under the Project of future maker by Standard Chartered Bank.	At Fatima Jinnah Women University		45	December 2-2022
25.	Seminar on International Day of persons with Disabilities on "Transformative solutions for inclusive development.	COMSATS University Islamabad.		250	December 3-2022
26.	Seminar on International Day Of Persons with Disabilities on "Transformative solutions for inclusive development.	Capital University of Sciences & Technology Islamabad.		36	December 9-2022
27.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	December 12-16- 2022
28.	Project Anniversary of NUMS CIVIC SOCIETY "Daring not Deprived" and disabilities awareness session.	NUMS University Islamabad.		33	December 21-2022
29.	Seminar on International Day Of Person with Disabilities "Transformative solutions for inclusive development.	NUMS University Islamabad.		100	December 27-2022
30.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	25	December 30-2022
31.	The team of Rural Education and Economic Development Society visited Saaya Independent Living Center.	Saaya Office		13	January 3-2023
32.	The Training conducted by Saaya Team organized by AAR Japan and Saaya ILC on "Sensitivity and Inclusivity of persons with disabilities.	Saaya Office		28	January 11 – 2023
33.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	36	January 11 – 2023
34.	The Outreach activity Organized by Saaya Team and AAR Japan in the different locations Islamabad for the parents and children's with Disabilities under the project of	Different Places of Islamabad.		25	January 12 – 2023

	Inclusive Education by AAR Japan.				
35.	Saaya Team participated in CBID National Conference 2023.	Roomy Signature Hotel Islamabad.		600	January 17-18 2023
36.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	January 23- 27 2023
37.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	25	February 14 – 2023
38.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	February 20- 24- 2023
39.	Celebration of International WOMEN'S Day	MC Donald's Islamabad	26	200	March 8 -2023
40.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	March 13 -17-2023
41.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	24	March 20 – 2023
42.	Training on Understanding of Disabilities, Self-Management and personal hygiene for women with disabilities & their parents organized by AAR Japan and conducted by SAAYA team.	Haripur		30	March 21 – 2023
43.	Iftar Party	Saaya Office		29	April 10 – 2023
44.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	April 10 -14-2023
45.	Food Distribution Ceremony	Saaya Office	30	35	April 17-2023
46.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	25	April 18 – 2023
47.	Meeting with Representatives of different Organizations	Saaya Office		23	April 27-2023
48.	Seminar on inclusive education by Federal government education In collaboration with Sight Savers	Zoha Institute Rawalpindi		100	May 3-2023
49.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	May 8-12- 2023
50.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	30	May 18 – 2023
51.	Annual Wheelchairs Distribution Ceremony	Margala Hotel	75	170	June 1-2023
52.	Awareness Session on Disability & Independent Living	Saaya Office	8	30	June 13-2023

53.	5 Days Internship Program on Coherent Capacity Development for students with disabilities	Saaya Office	3	3	June 19- 23-2023
54.	Visit of group of community mobilizing staff from CBR/CBID ALP project Daultala	Saaya Office		17	June 19-2023
55.	Seminar on Sensitivity and inclusivity of person with Disabilities in Right-based Development process.	Fatima Jinnah University		70	June 20-2023
56.	Three Days Training on Institution Capacity Building of Organization of person with Disabilities (OPDS) Organized by Sightsaver Pakistan	Roomy Signature Hotel Islamabad.		45	June 22- 24-2023

### Conclusion:

Saaya Association plays a fundamental role in facilitating understanding and improvement in the lives of Persons with Disabilities and providing them with novel platforms to realize their creative potential. It has clear vision to improve the ultimate status and dignity of Persons with disabilities with its focus being Independent Living, Inclusive Education, and development of a Barrier-free & Right-based society.

Through its leadership, Saaya Association has broadened horizons for new Persons with disabilities. The organization plays a vibrant role in changing the lives of many people with disabilities through different counselling sessions, sessions regarding understanding of disability, group discussions, independent trainings and Capacity Building.

Saaya Association has also built good relationship with the development partners, donors, INGOs, NGOs and others OPDs, Public Sector Partners, private sector partners, Journalists, electronic media, news reporters, academic institutions etc. All these steps have been taken to ensure the development for the person with/without disabilities in Pakistan and to promote Saaya work and visibility.

**THANK YOU!!**