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Blind Lead Trust

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INDIA

Update Report of Blind Lead Trust 2019-2021 Executive summary

In the last two years the two co-founders of the organization were Shri Jitendra Dkhar (Co-founder and Managing Director) and (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem (Secretary and co-founder) had lots of experiences based on their leadership skills. The people started to recognize what the organization had done in many activities and moving forward, it has started to contribute to the visually impaired community. If we compare with those previous years the organization had improved and started to develop in different perceptions. Through our team work it has brought changes. It aims to make it wider and work together in different activities to bring the welfare of the Visually Impaired.

Since, most of the Persons With differently able (PWD) especially the visually impaired do not get the good chance related to education, experiences. For example, specific training courses which are good and accessible and other facilities. According to the experiences we found that the families are neglecting them and didn't want the people to recognise them, we also notice that the Bank Accounts are not being allowed to be opened by the bank branches. Most banks do not allow the visually impaired customers to have their own personal bank account and ATM Card, they always prefer them to have a joint account. So, the right to equality has been taken away from them. Therefore on behalf of the organization we really have a vision to promote the Visually impaired in many ways especially to be confident and to be independent. We, the organization who are leading by ourselves for ourselves, want to assist the other differently able Person to stand on their own feet.

We found that the differently abled people are not allowed by most of the families to participate in any platforms, most people don't understand the aims and desires of the differently abled, they don't have full trust in them for what they are able to do. So, BLT do not want them to suffer and want them to move forward. Most tribal people in our state have a difficult feeling to help the differently abled especially in rural areas, they are being considered to be childish.

The Organization had also brought changes in itself by Self-governing for administrative work after the death of Dr. Theodore Moallem as he'd taught us before. During these years the BLT had followed the protocols of COVID-19, the Organization gave advice to the government through a memorandum to help the visual impairment during the pandemic. The organization was also trying to search for online fundings through online platforms and we tried to collect a bit of donations from the office, market and hotels. It was the first time that the organization had practiced these.

A device called Braille Labeler has been upgraded by us that has changed its name into Braille-X labeller which can help the Visually impaired to organize their own needs with their own tactile to be independent. BLT got the opportunity to distribute the Android Phone to the underprivileged Visually Impaired in Meghalaya through the help of Saksham Trust from Delhi under the leadership of Shri. Dependra Manocha (Founder).

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The BLT made a decision to meet the DC of Ri Bhoi District Smti. R.M.Kurbah in order to protect the right of the Differently abled.

BLT introduced the trustees and fellows of the organization on how the 3D printer works.

Before there were only 3 Staffs in our organization, 1 was visually Impaired and the others were sighted. After a year we upgraded two more staff that are Assistant membership who is visually Impaired and Office Assistant who is a sighted person. The organization aims to provide job opportunities for the visual impairment but due to lack of financial support we could not do anything.

In these years our organization received a donation from Rev. P.Dkhar, King Furniture Shop, Shopkeeper from Iewduh and the list of donors from campaigns on impact Guru crowdfunding. These years we were trying to find different ideas in order to support the income of the organization by starting the Broom Project and also to encourage the trustees and fellows to start their own business without depending on others. This Project was supported by Andrew Moallem and Sarina Moallem Robertson.

Blind Lead Trust Organization took a first step to celebrate the World White Cane Safety Day that is on 15th October 2021 to raise an awareness to other people to understand about the importance of the white Cane for the Visually Impaired and also to Respect the White Cane. Last year the Commissioner Of Commissioner Person With Disability invited the BLT to participate on the International Day for Person With Disability Day on 3rd December. The BLT got the opportunity to participate in the pre-Christmas celebration at Martin Luther Christian University Shillong.

I give thanks to you all the staff of the organization by working together with you all to make our work successful and especially to the generosity donors and sponsorship extremely giving thanks to them through their sponsorship we are able to run our project and look for the welfare of the visually impaired in Meghalaya across the country in general through their valuable sponsorship to our organization it make us to be able to continue our work. So I look forward to the donors and sponsorship to continue joining hands with us for bringing better living for the visually impaired.

Introduction

Name of the Organization:

Blind Lead Trust.

Background of the organization :

Blind Lead Trust is an organization that has been registered on 26 June 2018 as a Public Trust, Its aim is to bring up equal opportunities in education and learning for the visually impaired by providing them free training course, free hostel and to bring up the welfare of the society of blind community by planning the project which is required for the blind people in order to get them a job, to proceed and to bring a free training courses in an accessible way to the citizens of Visually Impaired in the state of Meghalaya and across the country. In the state of Meghalaya there are no institutions or organizations which provide free educational training courses for blind people, it is only the Blind Lead Trust who aims to be the first to do that. Blind lead trust has trustees, staff and fellowships who are being trained, learn, and support each other. At present The organization has an office address in Nongthymmai Lawjynriew, website, facebook page in the name of Blind lead trust as well as trust deed. BLT, India is a non-profit organization, based in Shillong, Meghalaya with the mission to protect the rights of the blind and visually-impaired and to also make improvements for the future of the young blind people, to help them to fill their dreams, to participate in society and be more independent and self-sufficient.

Aims and Objectives of the Organization

1. To undertake programmes/projects for the personal development and for the benefit of blind and low-vision, including education, awareness, independence and productivity.
2. To undertake programmes/projects for the socioeconomic development and social integration among blind and low-vision people.
3. To promote and propagate awareness of blind persons rights and abilities among young blind people themselves and all the members of their communities.
4. To undertake any other objects of public utility.

Methodology:

1. Area of implementation: State of Meghalaya in particular and across the country in general.
2. Sampling plan: Simple random sampling as every visually impaired has the right to learn, practice and study.
3. Target group: Underprivileged visually impaired (Adult and other blind people)
4. Proposed plan : Group discussion, training and support.

Objective Plan

1. To Arrange and organize the self learning of basic Android and computer.
2. To Examine the process of 3D printers.
3. To practice the design of a smart cane.
4. To acquire training on how to make the broom.
5. To train the Underprivileged Visually Impaired in their own special way for writing and calculating.
6. To Conduct a research on the challenges that the Person With Disability face during pandemic crisis.
7. To begin to practice to find out on accessibility transportation for Visually Impaired.

Activities

Blind Lead Trust organization in the year 2019-2021, as we all know that at the beginning of the year 2020 the other countries were suffering from covid-19 that affects the whole world except the state of Meghalaya has not yet been affected at those period but in our organization we already knew beforehand on how to prevent from the Virus since our joint secretary (Late) Theodore Moallem, had taught us on how to maintain social distancing , wearing masks, using regular hand sanitizer, avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth and especially while we are going outside the campus. In our organization we are not only practicing protocols but we also know how to prepare the food staff even during lockdown we do not need to go outside. During the lockdown BLT has not wasted their time but it continued the various activities like searching the online funding and also tries to advised the government by writing a letter and submit through Shri.Kyrmen Shylla (Minister of Social Welfare), CPWD(Commissioner of Person With Disability), SRC(State Resource Center) in civil hospital Shillong, to help the visually impaired during the pandemic cause most of the time the government looks only after the welfare of the poor family and the other things which are needed but they pretend to neglect the Differently abled. The organization had also conducted a research on the Challenges faced by the Person With Disability during Covid-19 ,through this research we found that most PWD had faced the issues, there are some PWD who didn't have enough food during the pandemic, they have not receive any help due to the irresponsible of the government for persons with disability. For Example, During the Covid-19 the government provided a scheme for the daily labor but they did not border for persons With Disability. BLT has conducted one online campaign, this campaign is to seek help related to Covid-19 through this Campaign it helps the organization to buy food, staff and other needs. This Campaign was collaborated with Impact Guru, but through this Campaign the amount of donation was very less, either the collection from the Market is better.The BLT had plans to establish the Training course for the visually impaired through the guidance of (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem, but self confident training needs to be done in order to be professional before we train others. Hence this plan is not being able to move forward by us due to the death of DR. Theodore Moallem.

This years the BLT had trained 5 fellows including Trustees based on how to communicate, use and operate to get a basic knowledge of all these tasks like English, Braille Alphabet, mobility, Skill development and technology related to android phones and computers, through this training the fellows got to improve themselves more than before.

To give an opportunity to the visually impaired in order to get knowledge and to be independent, the BLT has not only given training to the fellows but also has compassion to one of the students named Gloria Lyngdoh who studied in St. Edmund College by giving her a place to stay without any payment and even for the food in order to complete her studies, because her family could not make an effort for her studies and the health condition too is not good. Gloria Lyngdoh depends on her own scholarship for paying the college fees, so the BLT didn't want her to lose her aim. This student who stays along with the BLT is known as a Border.

The Organization had seen from the press media that one of the enrollment centers which belongs to the village of Tyrso pdeng Ri Bhoi District that they had been blamed for they'd charged the differently abled people during the enrollment of the Aadhar Card. In order to protect the right of the differently abled the organization made a decision to meet the deputy commissioner of Ri Bhoi district Mrs. Rositamary Kurbah, during their meeting even the BDO of Umling Block was also present. The

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authority of the organization handed over the letter to the DC to clarify based on this issue but on their side they ensured that nothing happened related to this. The BLT has not only clarified the issues but also given an assurance to the DC and BDO to make sure that this issue shall not happen and they should be careful in looking after the Differently abled.

The BLT knew a bit about the Raspberry Pi (a pocket computer), on how it functions with the help of Micro SD card we also knew that the Raspberry Pi can be able to connect through a mouse, keyboard, speaker and Monitor etc we can also install the Screen Reader Softwares like Non Visual Desktop access (NVDA) and others. This Raspberry Pi makes it easier to carry wherever we go. The Organization had introduced the 3D printer to all the trustees and fellows by organizing different meetings and having demonstrations about the 3D printer, this teaching was led by (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem. At this moment he taught us how the 3D printer functions, through this we can understand that the 3D printer is able to draw and melt the plastic and from that plastic it can turn into a different shape whatever we draw with the control of the computer. After drawing a different shape it can make it dry and print it one layer into another layer. Through this we get to know about the materials that can be used for the 3D printer like spa, plastic filaments, stepper motor driver, buffer controller, print table bed. This 3D printer is to help the trustees and fellows to get benefit from it. We learn that we should not touch it during the processing of the 3D printer. (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem has shown the material which had been made from the 3D printer. After (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem had shown and taught us about the 3D printer but this electronic device is not accessible for the Visually impaired so we cannot move forward with our work and needed to plan another way to explore the accessibility of the blind. These years have been a success. We are able to introduce the society by performing the various programmes and also we get to collaborate with the other organizations who look after the Visually Impaired by encouraging us to be confident, to participate in the various platforms. The BLT even though had succeed in some projects but there are three projects that the organization had failed the training course that is the Online computer course, the duration has to be 4 months in which the Chakshumathi from Kerala wants to plan to give this computer' training courses but this plan was not success because the organization from Chakshumathi had dropout by themselves without giving any information to us, they broke the agreement.

The BLT had a goal to promote the project of the Waxpen but this project was not successful, at the same time we had to focus on the other projects and the joint secretary too had passed away. In the year 2020 we got to learn about the Smart Cane under the teaching of (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem, he had explained to us in which way to design the Smart Cane, the materials that we can design under the Smart Cane are, for example, Arduino sensor, wire pin etc. He also showed us how these materials are working under the Smart Cane. Through this we can understand a little bit how the smart cane helps the Visually impaired. The reason that (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem had explained this is due to the trustees and fellows of the BLT that they had shared the Ideas on how to produce the smart cane -in another way since there are many companies that produce these devices cannot produce the smart Cane which is accessible for the visually impaired. It wants to produce the smart cane which can make a different sounds that are able to help us while walking on the footpath, staircase and to understand where is a drainage, so that they will know while going in wrong way. But the BLT did not succeed with this plan due to financial problems, lack of support.

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BLT last year had provide a one week android phone training to one of the visually impaired lady name Balarihun Diengdoh from Nongpoh Ri Bhoi District, this training was held at Umsning Patarim Ri Bhoi District based on how to operate the android phone and make valuable for using. The BLT in collaboration with Saksham Trust from Delhi had got the opportunity to distribute 12 Android Phones to the students of the Underprivileged Visually impaired and along with the Guidelines to the family members of the visually impaired, where no granted should be taken in using the android phone.

To improve the easy method of writing for the visually impaired with their own tactile in an accessible way to use and carry, The organization had upgraded one device called Braille Labeller where all the trustees, Staffs and fellows had reviewed the dots on how to make the Visually Impaired easier to identify. Before this device was made of aluminum, after upgrading the device which had been made of plastics, we had conducted a test to the trustees, staff and fellows who can identify the Braille dots. It is better compared to before. The main focus is on two people who are visually impaired one is Captain of fellows (Bandwina Khyndeit) and the other is Border (Gloria Lyngdoh), who are an expert at identifying the dots. After the test and feedback had been done from the organization (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem had shared all these to the Director in order to get clues and move forward to implement the product. All the ideas of the Braille Labeller were given by the two co-founders, trustees and fellows of BLT on how to shape the device under the leadership of (Late) Dr. Theodore Moallem. After the joint Secretary (Late) Theodore Moallem had died on 7th April 2021 The organization had elected the Acting Secretary namely Wompherheimonki Lamare his role was to maintain a record for the expenses and documents of the organization and also to perform the other duties which had been appointed by the Director.

To make the organization broad and to get new employees to take the responsibility for the work of the organization in order to move forward, it has upgraded 2 more staff, that is office Assistant and assistant membership, the staff had to participate in the administrative work in the office and also perform the duties related to the responsibility of the office work. The assistant membership that was upgraded, she is Visually Impaired, Before she was only a fellow she performed different activities that had been kept by the organization, after a few months the administrative of the organization had upgraded her to the captain of fellows and after the organization had reviewed again the performance we upgraded her to the assistant membership position, at that time we elected the office assistant as a sighted person who had qualified according to the position. The BLT had included for the trustees in the administrative work that is the trustees have the power to bring a betterment of the organization . The Bible society had donated to us 12 chairs and 1 box of braille Bibles both khasi and english along with the refreshment which had been contributed by Rev. P.Dkhar (Secretary of the Bible Society of Meghalaya, India). It would help the Visually Impaired to read the bible and to know the word of God as others knew. Another donation was also received by us, that is the Computer Table from the King Furniture which is situated in Dhankheti Shillong. This donation really helps the organization to use the equipment for our office purpose.

BLT had tried to approach the different departments, for example the District of Social Welfare Department in order to get funds but we didn't receive the help. The Director had tried to approach different politicians in order to get help for the organization but no support has been given to us by them.

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The 15th of October is a day where all the visually impaired people over the world celebrate World White Cane day to make the people aware about the White Cane. Therefore, our organization took a step to arrange the programme in Meghalaya too. In order to get a fund before organizing this programme BLT had collected the donation from the market, hotels, Offices etc. while we were collecting the donation we got lots of experiences that Most of the officers and managers of the hotels, Companies reacted like they didn't want to help and donate to our team by giving many excuses like the manager was not there during our visit. Some of them had given a promise to help us but the promise has been broken by them. Through this the team had learned the communication skills with others and helped them for the confidence level. There were some people who made us feel hopeless for what we'd tried. In the market when people saw us with the White Cane, all people without any doubt or delay were ready to help whatever they could. Some people as soon as we explained they understood whatever we needed. The director had worked very hard to write and submit the proposal of the World White Cane Safety Day to the politician but we didn't receive any help or support. The BLT had invited all the press media in Shillong in order to raise awareness about the visually impaired, that any visually impaired walking with a white Cane the society should respect them so that it will bring peace and harmony in the society and there will be no exploitation for the visually impaired through this it can help us to rise up and show the world whom we are.

The BLT had provided the Identity Card to the Trustees, Staffs and Fellows to identify that we are a part of the Organization. Through the ID cards it helps the members to identify them while they are going to different departments or offices. For example the members during collecting donations can identify themselves through this ID card.

The BLT had taken a step to make the people aware about the White Cane for Visually Impaired by celebrating the world White Cane Day on 15th October 2021 at Malki Ground All Saint Hall Shillong in collaboration with Meghalaya Liberation Association of Visually Impaired (M.LAVI). This was the first time that the organization celebrated this special day in order to make the Visually impaired aware of how to use the White Cane and to influence them that the White Cane is the only I for Visually Impaired either in the light or darkness. On this day the chief guest was Rev. Phidolis Dkhar, he was one of the members from Bible Society of India. In this program he donated 40 White Canes to the organization through this the organization can donate to the underprivileged visually impaired who cannot afford to buy the White Cane. On this day there was a rally to raise an awareness that the White Cane is our only innocent friend who never betrays us and to make the people aware that the White Cane is very useful for us. The BLT in terms of making the people clearly understand about the White Cane they appeal to the pupil through the press media platforms.

The BLT had promoted its work through a new project called Broom Project which benefits the organization and its trainees. As we have a vision to look after the welfare of the Visually Impaired we aim to develop our trust but due to the financial issues we have to take the decision with our own idea in order to support the income through our own practice so that we can acquire benefits for the trust. This project was launched on 25th October 2021, on the same day we had also gathered to start working towards this project. In this project the training was provided to all the trainees of BLT at first on how to divide and arrange the brooms according to the size. Mr Kelvin Suting, a visually Impaired person, is a professional trainer on how to make brooms. He is the one who'd provided training to the trainees. This training ended on 1st of November 2021. After this training the trainees had concentrated

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on this project, even being able to sell the brooms in the market since this project had just started to begin so the demand was not high from us. This project benefited all the trainees of BLT even if they go back home they can start their own small business.

This year the Commissioner Of Person With Disability(CPWD) had invited the BLT to participate on the International Day of Persons with Disability Day on the 3rd December 2021, the members from our organization too had received the Smart Cane from All India Council for Technical Education(AICTE), Delhi. On 14th December 2021 the Martin Luther Christian University Shillong had celebrated the Pre- Christmas celebration, in that program the Martin Luther Christian University had invited the BLT as a guest of honor Shri. Jitendra Dkhar (Director).On behalf of the BLT they've performed two items, a group song and solo dance. On this day the University had not only invited us to come to the program but they donated some Warm clothes along with refreshments to the BLT members. We had also given a thanking letter to the Martin Luther Christian University Shillong for donating and inviting us to be a part of this program.

BLT has its own official website where it can publish any projects, activities or programmes of the organization. In the last two years the organization had posted all the activities and programmes which were done through this Website. The organization wants to raise its voice to the society through media in order to recognize the visually impaired because we are independent. We are capable of what the sighted people are doing. Through these posts of different kinds of activities and programs in our organization, we can reach out to the people easily about our organization based on what we have done including location and office purpose.

The organization in collaboration with Mr. Ferdinand Lyngdoh who pursued a PhD at North Eastern Hills University(NEHU) Shillong his research was linked with the NCPEDP(National Center for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People) he conducted a research on the Accessibility transportation for the differently abled. The videos, pictures for the roads, footpaths which are not accessible for the visually impaired are taken by our organization, the form which has been provided by Mr. Ferdinand Lyngdoh, in order to submit to the NCPEDP(National Centre Of Promotion Employment for Disable People) had been filled by the BLT.The organization planned to write a memorandum and submit it to the government related to the Accessibility of Transportation for the Differently abled.

Administration of the organization in the year 2019-2021

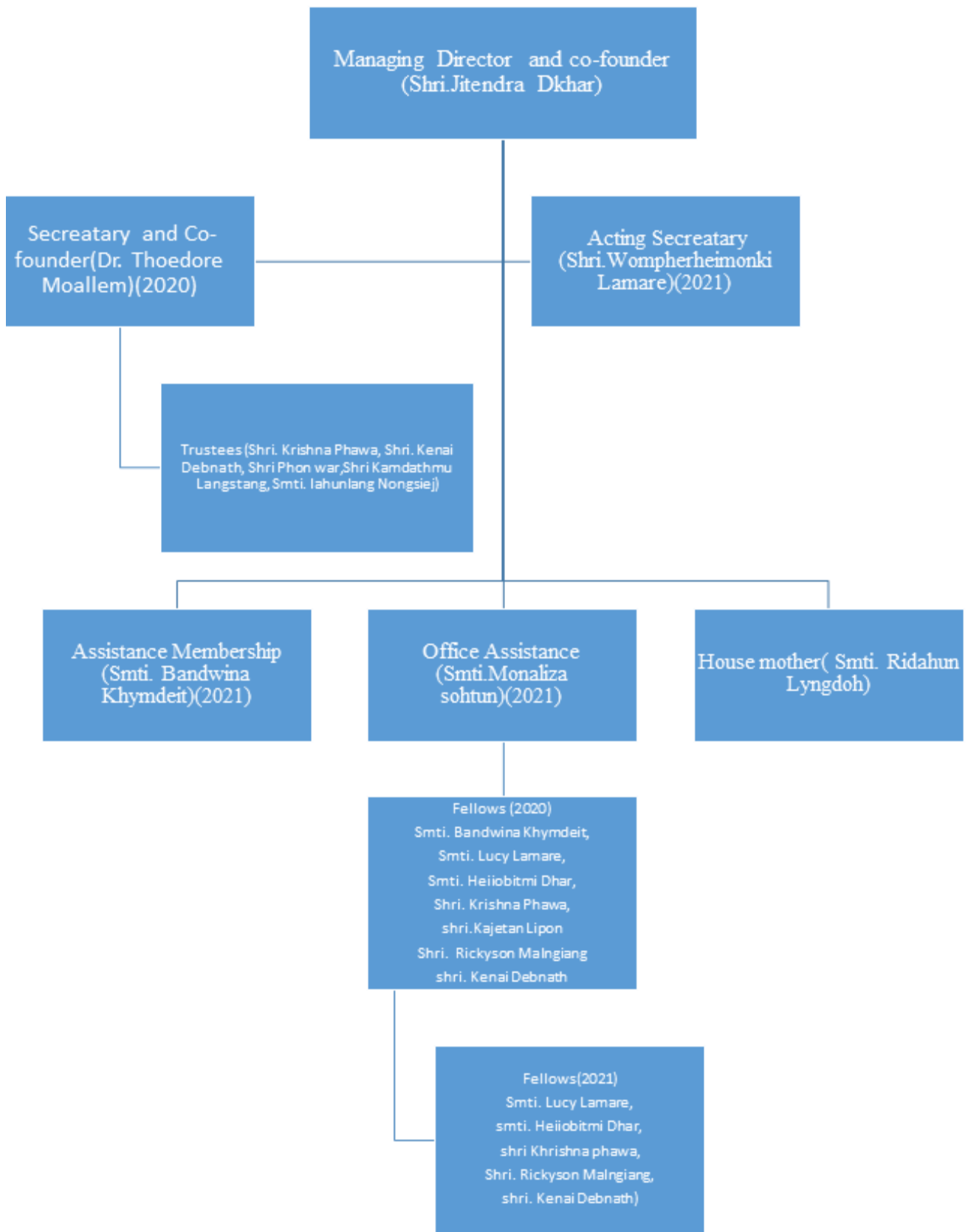
1. Director and co-founder: Organogram of the organization, monitoring and evaluation and teaching.
2. Secretary and co-founder: Organogram of the organization monitoring and evaluation and teaching.
3. Staff: Evaluation and multitasking.
4. Assistant Membership: evaluation and to assist the administration.
5. Office Assistant: administrative and routine clarification tasks, organizing and managing files, receptional schedule and appointment.

Budget: The budget of the Blind Lead Trust organization in the year 2019-2020 is 8,77,000.00 and in the year 2020-2021 is 10,34,500.00

Conclusion:

To conclude that the Blind Lead Trust in the year 2019-2021 by having 5 fellows and 7 trustees had brought the changes in the organization by upgrading the work and projects. Even in these years we faced lots of challenges due to the covid-19 but the organization tried to come up with a solution. In these years some of the projects are being succeeded and there are some projects that we've lost but the BLT hopes that all these projects will be successful for one day. We also will be able to learn and promote so that we can bring changes in the society, especially for the welfare of the visually impaired. On behalf of the organization we give thanks to all the people who have supported and donated to us. These years we are able to succeed with our projects and we hope your support and sponsorship can bring changes in our society of the blind people by joining hands together. We also want you to share about our organization to the others so that the people can be aware of it. By cooperating together with all the trustees, Staff and fellows these years we are able to succeed in all the works.

Structure of the Organization



Blind Lead Trust Channel:

<https://youtube.com/channel/UCuqkJqgSsUb5Fll6P3pkiag>

U Nongsain Hima Channel:

<https://youtu.be/GNrABUYBdLc>

Media Plus Channel:

<https://youtu.be/IV7NSjey2iM>

Shillong Mail U Kyrwoh Ka Atiar Channel:

<https://youtu.be/8MbaKfaOyf0>

The Meghalayan Channel:

<https://youtu.be/0rLqgiS2wbo>

T7 News Channel:

<https://youtu.be/5jLZ9DKCMNA>

EastMojo Channel:

<https://youtu.be/0NTfb6eeZ28>