

## On Path of Progress

4 years old Lucy (name changed) comes across as a cheerful and adorable girl. Lucy's lives with her family in a small village of South West Khasi Hills, Meghalaya. Her family includes her parents, three sisters and one brother. Her parents work as daily wage labourers to earn living and meet their family's needs. Unlike her other siblings, Lucy is unable to run around, play and go to school. Born at home her parents noticed that she is not able to crawl and missed several developmental milestones. At the age of two Lucy was diagnosed with deafblindness along with cerebral palsy. She also has epilepsy. Her diagnosis as a child with multiple disabilities was a huge emotional setback for the parents. They wished that their daughter could walk, play and live life like her other siblings. Coming from a small village, financial constraints and unawareness made it a struggle for them to access necessary help for their daughter.



*Lucy with her Mother*

In Oct. 2019, Lucy was identified by Sense International India project team members during fieldwork. Before enrolling at the centre, Lucy was very weak and would fall even while seating. She used to have frequent epilepsy episodes because of which her mother was scared to engage her in any activities. Where on one side cerebral palsy affected Lucy's muscles tone, on the other side deafblindness resulted in severe communication gap in her life and frequent epilepsy episodes drained her of energy.

Our team is working to improve Lucy's health so that she can be more actively engaged in other activities. There is a noticeable improvement in her health as she is receiving nutritional support in the form of oats, cerelac, health drinks and other nutritional support from the project. Lucy has gained both strength and weight as compared to earlier. Her parents have received support for medicines too which ensured regular medication and reduced epilepsy episodes. Through the regular home visit of community-based rehabilitation worker as per the schedule fixed, Lucy's mother is learning to involve her in activities such as identifying common vegetables, fruits as well give attention to her hygiene. Parents have received training from rehabilitation professionals incorrect positioning of Lucy while sitting as well as basic exercises to develop the habit of sitting and improve their daughter balance. Her parents have been guided to apply for disability certificate as soon she turns five this year.

Lucy's mother says, "We give our hearty thanks and gratitude to Sense India and we are filled with joy and happiness for their kind helping hands in distribution of medicines and supplement foods for our daughter. We cannot repay back for the good things that they have done to our child including the whole family, *Thank you.*"