



**RAMAIAH**

International Centre for  
Public Health Innovations

# Yearly Report

April 2022 to March 2023



A constituent unit of Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bengaluru



**Glimpses of RICPHI 3rd anniversary- June 2022**

*Far Left: Mr. M.R. Sreenivasa Murthy, Chief Executive, GEF (M), addressing the audience.  
Middle: Dr. Shalini C. Nooyi, Principal and Dean, RMC, felicitating a community champion.  
Far right: Community Health Workers from ACE-ME villages talking about their experiences.*

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**Dr. Ananth Ram facilitating a 'Chaupal' (village meeting place) setting with community health workers, peer leaders, and patients of the ACE-ME project**

# From the Director's Desk

India is a diverse and complex country, where great achievements and persistent challenges coexist. In 2022, India celebrated 75 years of independence and became the world's fifth largest economy. However, it also faced a serious problem of hunger and malnutrition, ranking low in the Global Hunger Index. The COVID-19 pandemic has also revealed the weaknesses of India's health system, which had the second highest number of deaths in the world. The pandemic has also shown the need for better data and co-ordination to plan and implement effective health policies and programmes.

Several aspects of health and development have improved significantly in India, such as life expectancy, maternal mortality, infant mortality, climate action, clean water and sanitation, and clean energy. However, the country still faces many difficulties in other areas, such as hunger, health-care quality, and accessibility and affordability of healthcare services.

We, at RICPHI, are proud to be a part of India's journey towards better health and well-being for all. We have partnered with various stakeholders to support public health initiatives in different parts of the country. Since early 2022, we have been engaging with communities in five districts of Karnataka to improve health care through community empowerment and collaboration with local health authorities via the ACE-ME project. The community-based nutritional intervention trial with the Almond Board of California to study the effects of almond consumption on metabolic health and gut microbiota was also commissioned in 2022 and is running in full swing. Our school health programme called AHANI India, in partnership with an NGO in Gujarat was successfully executed in two schools last year, which we plan to expand to more schools in 2023.

In January 2023, in partnership with the Ramaiah Medical College, RICPHI signed a collaborative agreement with the Government of Meghalaya to build the capacity of public sector doctors, nurses and program managers in techno-managerial skills and leadership development for three years, with the support of the World Bank.

Thus, we have had a very productive year in the FY 2022-23. We are grateful to our patrons and partners at Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, and beyond for their constant support and guidance. We strive to be better at what we do every day and constantly aspire to contribute to India's public health goals.

**-Dr. Nayanjeet Chaudhury**  
**Director, RICPHI**

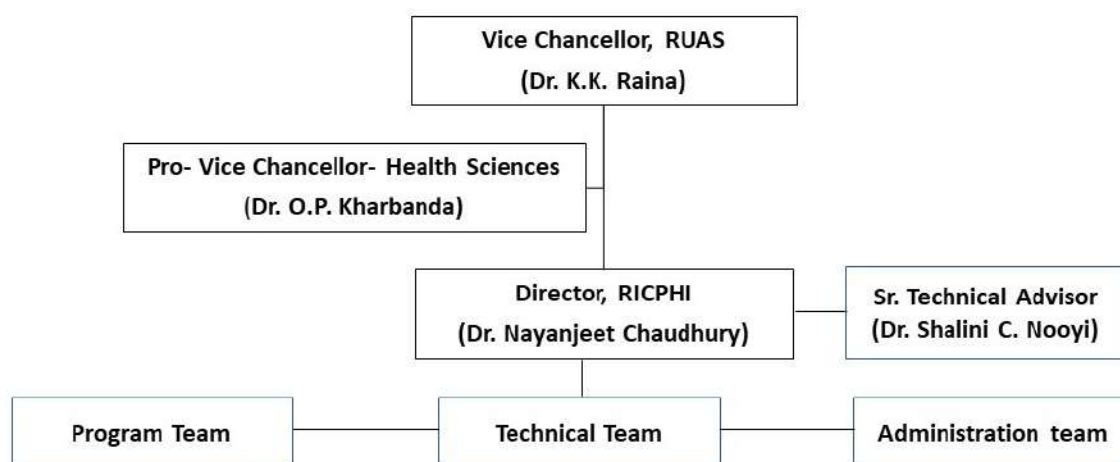


# Who we are

The Ramaiah International Centre for Public Health Innovations (RICPHI) started in the year 2019 as a public health entity of the Gokula Education Foundation (Medical), the parent body of various Ramaiah institutions. Since August 2022, RICPHI has become a constituent unit of the Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (RUAS).

## Vision

To serve as a global resource center for education, research, and service in public health, in the areas of chronic health conditions of underserved communities in India and beyond.



Administration	Technical
<b>Mr. Kothandan Kumar</b> Lead- Community Outreach	<b>Dr. Ruchi Vaidya</b> Asst. Professor- Nutrition
<b>Ms. Nisha Raghavan</b> Manager- Administration and Logistics	<b>Dr. Ananth Ram</b> Program Specialist- Health Systems
<b>Ms. Shailee Shah</b> Manager- Learning & People Management	<b>Dr. Santhosh Kaza</b> Manager- Data and Analytics
<b>Ms. Bansara Marbaniang</b> Project Co-ordinator, MHSSP	<b>Dr. Pallavi Gupta</b> Asst. Professor- Public Health Research
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<b>Mr. Ravi Kumar</b> Health Resource Officer-ACE-ME	<b>Ms. Jayanthi H.N.</b> Research Fellow- ABC

# Projects: ACE-ME

In the 1960s, Prof. Albert Bandura introduced the concept of Social Learning Theory which later evolved into Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in 1986. The SCT proposes that we learn social behavior by observing and imitating others. More specifically, it suggests that learning in a social context occurs via a dynamic and reciprocal interaction between the person, one's environment and one's behavior. ACE-ME, which stands for 'Accessing Care through Empathy, Motivation and Edutainment, is an innovative effort to empower, educate and motivate patients, their care givers and health workers in solving community health problems using available resources.

Inspired by the SCT, the ACE-ME program was born at RICPHI and implemented in 5 districts of Karnataka including Tumkur, Chikaballapura, Ramanagara, Kolar and Bangalore Rural. This is the basis of the Swasthya Samithis (SS)/Peer Wellness Clubs and the Swasthya Bandhus (SBs)/Peer Volunteers who are agents of change in their communities.

**A total of 791 outpatients and 655 in-patients from the ACE-ME geographies received treatment in the Ramaiah hospitals in 2022-23**



Lamp lighting ceremony underway at Tiptur function

The program has been very well received in all ACE-ME geographies, the most noteworthy being its achievement in Tiptur taluk where RICPHI in association with the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of Karnataka organized a workshop on Community Empowerment and Health Systems Strengthening for the health workforce of Tiptur. Shri B.C. Nagesh, Minister of School Education and Literacy & Sakala, Govt of Karnataka, Dr. M.R. Jayaram, Chairman of Gokula Education Foundation and Dr. Bellur S Prabhakar, University of Illinois at Chicago graced the event.

**RICPHI facilitated a Continuing Medical Education program for over 60 multi-specialty doctors from Indian Medical Association, Tiptur branch.**

**7** Villages covered

**332** screened

**157** enrolled

**7** Swasthya Samithis (SS)

**15** SS meetings  
(facilitated by HROs)

**13** Peer leaders  
(Swasthya Bandhus)

# ABC-Prediabetes Trial

As a commitment to its mission statement, RICPHI's scientists continuously engage in cutting edge community-based research in the field of nutrition and metabolic health. In 2022, RICPHI bagged a competitive Randomized Controlled Trial project from the Almond Board of California to study the "Effect of almond supplementation on gut health and glycemic control in adults with prediabetes in rural settings of Karnataka". The study also aims to determine the effect of almond consumption on the colonization of beneficial gut microbiota and fecal short chain fatty acid levels among rural Indian adults with prediabetes. Studies suggest that the intestinal microbiota can influence the metabolic health of its human host. When imbalanced, it can contribute to the development of various common metabolic disorders such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, non-alcoholic liver disease, cardio-metabolic diseases, and malnutrition. The gut microbiome plays crucial roles in training our immune system, digesting food, regulating gut endocrine function and neurological signalling, modifying drug action and metabolism, eliminating toxins, and producing numerous compounds that affect our health.

The study has already completed its first round of data collection from select intervention and control groups and is now entering the second phase. RICPHI has partnered with Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre for Applied Research & Testing (SICART) of Vallabh Vidyanagar, Medgenome laboratory of Bengaluru and GSFC University of Vadodara besides the Ramaiah Medical College & Hospital for studying various human metabolites and potential gut microbiota altered by intake of almonds, if any.



*ABC houselisting in progress*

## AHANI India

Sustainable development goals or SDGs are part of the United Nations' call to aim for an equitable, peaceful, resilient, and prosperous world by 2030, integrating social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Achieving these goals requires all stakeholders to play their parts— governments, civil society, business, academia, schools, and youth – and collaborate extensively.



Our school health awareness program aims to facilitate schools to adapt SDGs as part of school-based activities while seeking their support in improving awareness about health and nutrition among adolescents thus forming the base for the Adolescent Health and Nutrition Initiative or AHANI, India.

AHANI India is an innovative program with a mission to provide a platform for adolescents to gain knowledge and skills around healthy living via a peer support culture and leadership development. The campaign is actively trying to raise awareness about UN Sustainable Development Goals among adolescents and young adults since 2018. Till date, 3 schools have adopted AHANI curriculum as part of their CBSE course syllabus. Of the 180 students screened in three schools, around 80 students participated in AHANI's 'Gamechanger Challenge' launched in two schools in Anand and Dharmaj, Gujarat. Additionally, two more schools have expressed interest to replicate the program for their students.



*Student champions of AHANI*



*Meeting the teacher advocates in schools*

## **Meghalaya Health Systems Strengthening Project**

In 2021, the state of Meghalaya launched the State Health Policy named MOTHER Policy, as a holistic approach to target the health workforce, infrastructure, and social determinants of health. It recommends the development of leadership skills and strengthening of human resource governance in the public health system. The Meghalaya Health Systems Strengthening Project with support from World Bank, has taken a lead to seed projects of different dimensions focused on human resources of health to address the complex and context specific challenges in training and availability of healthcare providers. RICPHI, jointly with Ramaiah Medical College, has been entrusted by the Govt. of Meghalaya to support MHSSP in capacity building of its healthcare providers especially around techno managerial skills and leadership skills.

**“If my training does not help the people I serve, it serves no purpose”**

**- A District Medical Health Officer, Meghalaya**

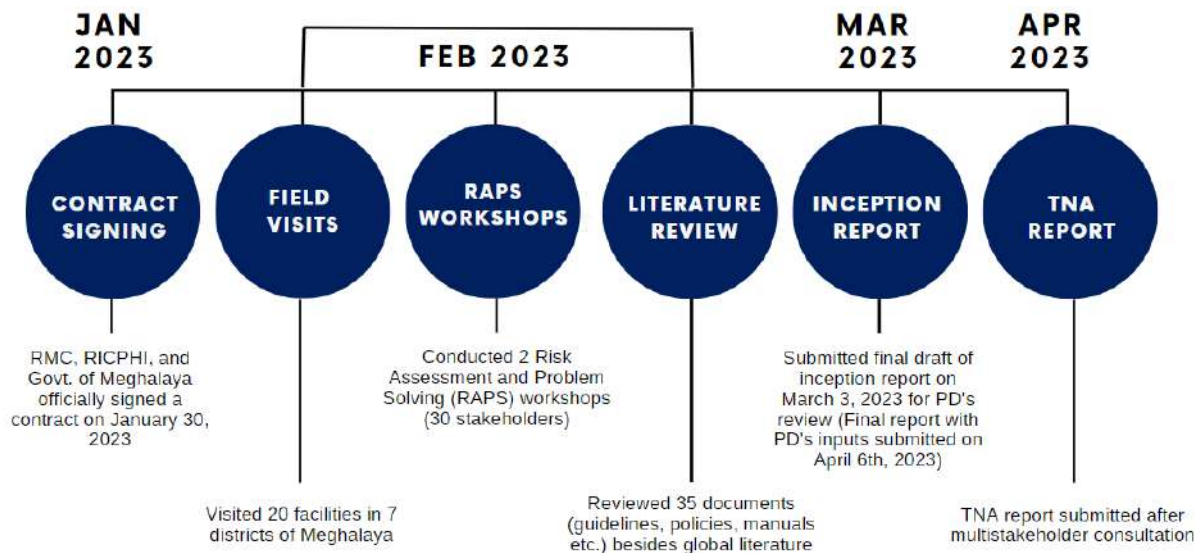


The project involves assessing the training needs, developing and delivering a hybrid curriculum, and monitoring and evaluating the outcomes.

RICPHI has completed a comprehensive training needs assessment following which, the Government has requested it to support strengthening of the Regional Health & Family Welfare Training Centre (RHFWTC) while designing and delivering training for the diverse healthcare providers of the state. The first batch of training is expected to start in August 2023.



Participants during a RAPS workshop in progress



MHSSP timeline till April 2023

## Internships

RICPHI initiated its internship program in June 2020 to promote innovation and develop public health skills among young graduates.

In the past year, 10 students completed their internship with us successfully. They came from University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC), Indian Institute of Public Health-Gandhinagar (IIPH-G) and Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (RUAS). Many of them worked on-site at our Bangalore office while others worked remotely.



Students who completed their internship with us in the year 2022-23 are:

- Dr. Lily Zheng, UIC
- Dr. Ashwini Deshpande, UIC
- Gautami Panigrahi, IIPH-G
- Parvatham Anu Deepthi, RUAS
- Sukhbir Kaur, RUAS
- Gundu Lakshmi Padma Priya, RUAS
- Dr. Keerthi K., RUAS
- Dr. Suman V., RUAS
- Dr. Sanjay S.S., RUAS
- Dr. Aravind S.V., RUAS



*A light moment being shared between children and interns from UIC, USA*

## Other activities

**RAPS for management professionals:** RICPHI has been actively conducting multiple Risk Assessment and Problem Solving (RAPS) workshops throughout the entire year. The most noteworthy of them have been with different cadres at Ramaiah including innovators and researchers and the HR professionals on campus.

**Screening camps:** RICPHI, in collaboration with the Ramaiah Medical College, has conducted multiple cervical and breast cancer screening camps in association with the District Surveillance Units of ACE-ME outreach geographies

**Public Health Surveillance Symposium:** RICPHI is an active part of a global consortium of academic

organizations from multiple countries, working towards co-creating a public health surveillance. (PHS) course which will be useful for aspiring professionals. As part of this initiative, RICPHI was an active participant of the PHS Symposium which catered to around 80 national and international participants, both from medical and non-medical backgrounds.

**Celebration of days and programs:** RICPHI facilitated the Emergency Medicine Department, Ramaiah Medical College to conduct an 'Active Bleeding program' for 42 doctors and nurses representing various Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and the General Hospital in Tiptur.

RICPHI also actively celebrates various health days such as World Heart Day organized in association with RUAS which included interactive and informative sessions on healthy nutrition and lifestyle, physical activity and stress management for better heart health. RICPHI also launched a novel e-learning course on "Basics of Preventive Cardiology" for community members, frontline workers, and university students. A blended learning course on Basic Medications for primary care workers has also been launched in Chikaballapura, Tumkuru, Kolar and Bangalore Rural.

**Lectures:** Members from the RICPHI team conducted various lectures on campus including interactions on "Nutrition: Beyond Proximates" and "Introduction to Public Health" for 1st year students from different disciplines. Dr. Nayanjeet Chaudhury, Director, RICPHI was invited to deliver a talk on 'Non-Communicable Diseases from a global health perspective' at the Faculty of Life and Allied Health Sciences, RUAS. Also, he offered a series of lectures on 'Research to Practice' as part of Faculty Development Program at RUAS.

**Publication:** Effect of COVID-19 lockdown on lifestyle habits and self-care practices of diabetic and hypertensive patients in rural Shimla and Udaipur - Findings from the HealthRise India program. Authors: Kaza SK, Gupta P, Vaidya R, Nooyi SC, Chaudhury N. Indian J Public Health. (2022; 66:4: 466-472). DOI: 10.4103/ijph.ijph\_1908\_21



*Ongoing training on medication adherence- ACE-ME geography*



*World No Tobacco Day celebration in ACE-ME village*



*Dr. Nayanjeet addressing medical and physiotherapy students in the CBTP program*



*RAPS workshop for HR professionals*

# Acknowledgement

The work that RICPHI has done over the past three years would not have been possible without the continuing support of our patrons, sponsors, well-wishers and collaborators.



THE WORLD BANK



Peoples' Training & Research Centre



Diabetes Fighters' Trust

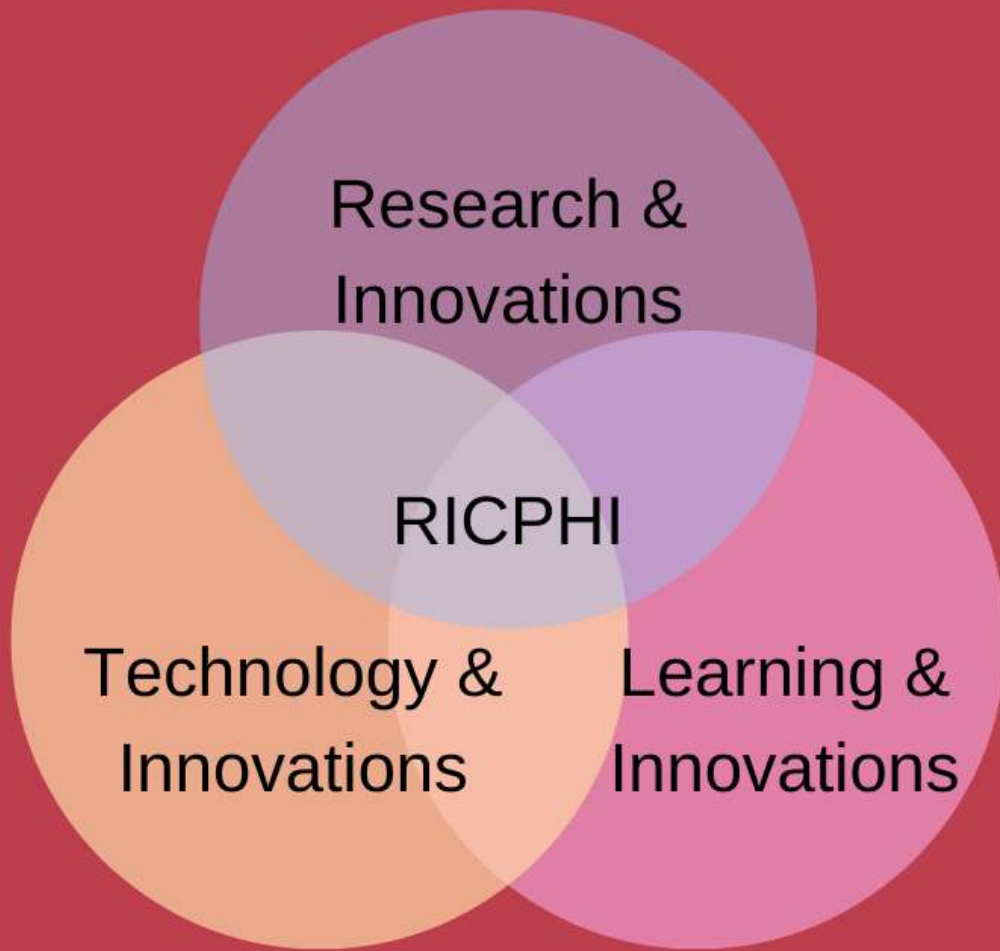
Indian Centre For



Social Transformation  
A Public Charitable Trust (Regd.)

*We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to improve the health of the populations we serve*





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