



This May, get moving for a great cause! Wherever you are, you can run, walk, hike, roll, bike, swim, row, climb, or do any other physical activity of your choice, for any distance you choose, such as a 5K, 10K, half-marathon, or full marathon. Create a team with your family, friends, coworkers, or church, and join a local race or create your own event. You can complete your miles all at once or spread them out throughout the month of May.

However you choose to get moving in this fully customizable event, it will all be for a great cause: to raise awareness and funds to provide new wheelchairs to people living with disabilities in developing countries.

When you register (for free), you'll receive a Move for Mobility athletic T-shirt, wristband, access to a fundraising toolkit, an invitation to a private Facebook training group, and a medal for completing your goal and submitting a finish-line photo with your race time.



For more information or to register, visit [MoveForMobility.org](http://MoveForMobility.org).

### Give Today to Transform Lives



[FreeWheelchairMission.org/donate](http://FreeWheelchairMission.org/donate)  
Go online 24 hours a day for easy one-time or monthly giving.



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Free Wheelchair Mission  
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We Want to Hear From You! Connect With Us Online and Hear More Stories From the Field.



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Transforming lives through the gift of mobility®



### GROWING COUNTRY, GROWING NEEDS

India holds a special place in the heart and history of Free Wheelchair Mission.

India is where we distributed our first four wheelchairs, ever, in 2001. Ten years later, India was where we gave away our 500,000th wheelchair. And, as of this writing, India is one of the top three countries that we have served over the past two decades. To date, 101,968 wheelchairs have been distributed throughout the country.

With a population of 1.3 billion, India is projected to overtake China as the world's most populous country by 2027<sup>1</sup>. Official numbers from a 2011 census hold that nearly 30 million people in India live with a disability, but unofficial estimates place the number higher, from 40 to 80 million<sup>2</sup>. Of these numbers, one out of five—that's anywhere from six to 16 million people—need some sort of mobility aid.

Without mobility, children with disabilities in India are five times less likely to go to school and get a formal education, leaving them with fewer opportunities to earn a living later in life. This, along with the stigma, leaves people with disabilities among the most excluded in India's stratified society.

<sup>1</sup>UN World Population Prospects 2019.  
<sup>2</sup>India Christian Ministries.

**DONATE NOW**  
Provide the life-transforming gift of mobility and give someone renewed hope, freedom, and independence.  
[FreeWheelchairMission.org/donate](http://FreeWheelchairMission.org/donate)



## OUR NETWORK IN INDIA

In 2001, Free Wheelchair Mission gave away our first four wheelchairs in Chennai, the capital city of the state of Tamil Nadu, in cooperation with the Christian Mission Charitable Trust (CMCT)—a partnership that endures to this day. “The lives of the individual families who received wheelchairs are very happy,” relayed a representative from CMCT, “because before that, the person used to crawl or be carried, lifted, or assisted by a caretaker. But after receiving [a wheelchair] from Free Wheelchair Mission, they are able to move on their own.”

India Christian Ministries (ICM) joined our network of distribution partners in 2017. The organization is based in Andhra Pradesh, which is one of the top five states with the highest disability rates in the country. According to the 2011 census, Andhra Pradesh is home to approximately one out of every twelve people with disabilities in India. The literacy rate for people with disabilities here is 48.33%, ranking it 26th out of 35 states.

“We were already doing different community programs like medical camps, well-drilling,

### “A HAPPY, POSITIVE LIFE”

Azam (14) is no longer depressed now that he can go out and play with his friends.



and rice distribution,” said Mohan Krishna, the wheelchair program coordinator of ICM, “but we always wanted to give mobility for so many disabled people all over India. This was one thing we were lacking.”

Mohan continued, “But then came a moment when we got the opportunity to coordinate and collaborate with Free Wheelchair Mission and be able to reach remote areas and villages all over India, to those who are especially poor and not able to purchase wheelchairs. This has only been possible with Free Wheelchair Mission, and we are very happy and thankful.”

One of those who was reached by our partnership with ICM is Azam, a 14-year-old boy who lives with his parents and two younger siblings.

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

When Azam was little, his parents noticed that he would frequently fall, have difficulty getting up, and describe muscle pain and stiffness. Then, at the age of 10, Azam was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, an incurable condition that causes progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass. “We as a family were depressed many times about what would happen with my son,” stated his mother, Farida. “Those were the days when we cried and thought he could never go out.”

The family could not afford to get any mobility aids for Azam, so he would either crawl short distances or be carried. “While he was growing up, our health was not that good,” continued Farida, “so it became difficult for us to carry him.” It became even more difficult as Azam grew, to the point where they could no longer take him to school or to the hospital. He would need help doing his daily routine, growing increasingly depressed over his sense of dependence on others for even the most basic of activities.

When Azam’s parents learned that ICM would be distributing free wheelchairs in their area, they applied for one and were overjoyed when their application was approved. At a wheelchair outreach event, members of the ICM team fitted Azam with a new GEN\_2 wheelchair, and when they lifted him into the seat for the first time, his once-melancholy countenance burst into a brilliant smile. “I look forward to a bright future that makes



### OFF TO SCHOOL

Our GEN\_3 model wheelchair folds for easy transport aboard vehicles of all sizes.

me happy in the coming days,” he grinned.

His parents chimed in, expressing their renewed hope for Azam’s future, for his health to improve, and for “a life in which he can overcome his depression and disabilities.”

We recently reached out to Azam’s family through ICM to check in and see how he has been doing. “After receiving the wheelchair, Azam is very happy and starts to do his work independently,” reported his mother. “It helps to improve a better life for my son. He is quite capable of managing things on his own, and as he grows up, he leads a happy, positive life by using the mobility aid.” She added, “The free wheelchair makes a big difference now because he goes outside to play and accompanies his friends.”

Azam’s father offered deep gratitude. “We sincerely give thanks to those who transformed my son’s situation, and we also pray that they may do more charity to the needy.”

With our wheelchair program, our partners in India are being noticed for the impact they make in their communities. “The local government has recognized us and appreciated us for the good work being done,” said ICM’s Mohan. “Wheelchair recipients are happy, and now, they have become more independent.”

## LOOKING AHEAD

In January 2022, Free Wheelchair Mission took another step to help meet the growing need for

wheelchairs in India: we signed an agreement with Kolkata-based Krypton Industries Limited to become our second wheelchair manufacturer.

We are currently working with Krypton to establish production lines for our GEN\_2 and GEN\_3 wheelchairs. Once production begins, Krypton will send us samples of the wheelchairs for testing at our lab in Irvine, California, before our first containers are ready for distribution.

Krypton will not only supply wheelchairs to our partners in India but will also ship wheelchairs to some of our partners in other countries, helping to alleviate some of the supply-chain issues we have been facing.

Now, India holds a special place not just in our history, but in our future, too.

Thank you for partnering with us in this journey. Together, we will continue to forge ahead in this mission to provide the life-transforming gift of mobility to those most in need.



Blessings,

*Don Schoendorfer*

Don Schoendorfer, Ph.D.  
Founder and President  
Free Wheelchair Mission