

‘JAGARAN’

A

Proposal for
Empowerment
of
Girls

Organizational Information

Name of Project	“Jagaran”
Project period	April 2016 to March 2017.
Area of Implementation	Villages of South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal, India
Name of the organisation	NISHTHA.
Organisation address	Vill – Subuddhipur, De para, PO – Baruipur, Dist . – South 24 Parganas, Kolkata – 700144, West Bengal, India.
Contact	Name: Mina Das Phone - 03324339865, 03324331925, Email – nishtha1975@gmail.com
Organisation type	Registered under West Bengal Societies registration Act of 1961 in 1983. FCRA no. 147110101 of 23 rd June 1985.

ABOUT ORGANIZATION

‘NISHTHA’, a community based women’s organization was born in the mid-seventies. From the very inception, its aim was to empower the women/children through awareness building on their rights and demand such rights on necessity.

To address these issues several women’s community groups has been formed by Nishtha which create influential social networks in the rural areas called Kishori Vahini (Adolescent Girls’ Group) & Mahila Mandal (Women’s Group), have empowered women to mobilize their communities to take action to improve their environment, speak up against violence, and advocate for their rights.

Nishtha presently works in more than 250 villages in four blocks in the South 24 Parganas district. Its campaigns against child marriage, trafficking, domestic violence and gender discrimination has endeared the organization in government and non-government circles by its inherent qualities.

RATIONALE

One of the strongest weapons used by power holder to dominate is controlling the knowledge and deviating others from accessing the same. Education is one of the prime sources of gaining knowledge. That is the reason why, one of the strongest forms of discrimination to a child is not giving the opportunity to get educated.

An uneducated person lacks the basic knowledge and skills required for leading a dignified life. S/he is devoid of information and has negligible access to outer world which hugely affect their decision making process. An uneducated person have quite less income opportunities, thus lack of education results in lack of access & control over resources and hence making women second citizen of our society. On the other hand, if education is ensured, s/he is not just gaining the access and control over resources but is protected from many social evil.

Education is not just open the scope of knowledge and development for children but it's a strategy to protect the children from various social evils. These evils are often gender defined, like for boys a drop out boy is involved as child labour or in anti-social activities, while a drop out girl is marriage at a tender age, exposing her to teenage pregnancy, and many other socio-economic discrimination & violence.

It's not a shock that, as per NFHS – III (National Family Health Survey III), out of the girls in the age group 15-19 years who were found to have begun child bearing, 44.1% were those with no education; 29.3% were those with education below 5 years; 23.4% for those with education between 5 to 9 years and only 6.1% for those having at least 10 years of schooling.

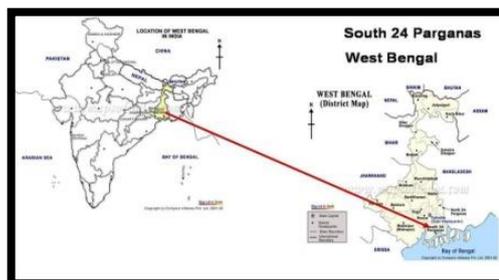
AREA PROFILE

South 24 Parganas is a district adjacent to cosmopolitan city Kolkata & is infamous as source area for trafficking. Being close to Kolkata, there area has huge migration. The poor families tend to involve their girls who are out of school & are considered as sitting idle at home, into domestic help in Kolkata & cities like New Delhi or forces the girl to marry early. This tendency is highly exploited by the traffickers who allure the family members and the girl is being trafficked.

The project area i.e. Different villages of Bishnupur – I, Baruipur and Magrahat-11 Block of South 24 Parganas, is a mono-crop area where farmers get only one yield a year and the yield is not at all sufficient to run the family for the whole year, even many of the cultivable lands remain submerged during the rainy season affecting the farming and jeopardising the future of crops. The people here look for employment as daily labourers/ agriculture labourers. But, whatever job they get, they earned very little out of this and even all of them do not get the job. Poverty is rampant here. People do not have much of educational background. Poor health, malnutrition, gender discrimination, lack health service etc. are their regular companion. It's a common practice amongst the men of these villages to heavily consume alcohol. However over the period of time a strong force of women's group has demolishing many local alcohol shops.

NISHTHA'S STRATEGY FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION PROJECTS

Nishtha addresses different worst areas of sufferings of the women and girl children and provides support to other areas of development. The major spheres of activities are mainly centred around education for girls, intervention to stop child trafficking, health and nutritional support, drinking water and sanitation programme under women's leadership, programme on youth and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Health Rights of women, Day Boarding for vulnerable girl child labourers, Night Shelter for children of sex workers, Campaign and advocacy against domestic violence, to promote and protect human rights of girl children etc., sustainable agriculture and promote rights of women as farmers, etc. Nishtha also conducts trainings of different types including leadership and life skill development, vocational training on different trades, Communication, Group Formation and Management, Volunteer Mobilization, etc.



Nishtha has been working with success to achieve these objectives through a four tiered cross generational organizational pyramid consisting of *Bahinis*' or armies:

- * Girls' and boys' groups – Balika and Balak Bahinis
- * Adolescent girls' and boys' groups – Kishori and Kishor Bahinis.
- * Adult women's groups – Mahila Mandals, and
- * Groups of senior women.

These groups have developed a strong social network among themselves which is relentlessly fighting against social evils likes alcoholism, wife beating, desertion, etc., and deeply plunged to change the attitude and behaviour of the strong and conservative gender biased society. They have already meeting with face of success and are energizing themselves for further struggle.

Since inception in mid nineteen seventies, Nishtha had laid the most important emphasis upon Group formation and girls' education to empower our future women generation. Thus Education for girls is always a very special programme for Nishtha.

Goal:

The goal of the project is to ensure retention of 253 mainstreamed at risk students of the villages of Bishnupur – I, Baruipur and Magrahat-11 Block of South 24 Parganas district, West Bengal and empower them with formal education and adequate knowledge, information and training.

Project Area:

The project would be implemented in the villages of Bishnupur I and Magrahat 11 and Baruipur Block of South 24 Parganas district, West Bengal, India.

Objectives:

- Ensure education to the vulnerable girls till they complete college education.
- Reduction of Drop out level to 20% of the admitted children.
- Build a positive consensus among the parents, stakeholder and community as a whole regarding the education of the child and ensuring education friendly environment in family and community.
- To provide vocational and other trainings to those girls who would discontinue studies after Madhyamik.

Strategies:

- To ensure retention in mainstream school of already admitted 253 girls of Jagaran project.
- Change the knowledge, aptitude and practices of the community to stop early marriage, gender discrimination, etc., to ensure girls in the formal school.
- Reduce the factors which make the children become victims of dropouts, neglect, torture, forced labour and child marriage.
- Forming group of children who will be well aware on their rights, act as peer educators and raise their voices against the problems faced by them.
- Provide educational backup support including clothing to the girls.

Activities:

- Facilitating the admission of 253 girls, out of which 148 girls will be up to Secondary Education (Class X or below), while 105 girls will be in Higher Secondary Classes (Class XI & XII) or College.
- Supporting tuition fees of all girls for 11 months in a year. The girls up to Secondary level will be supported with Rs. 100 per month, Higher Secondary level will be supported with Rs. 300 per month, while Rs. 400 per month for College.

- Provide educational materials etc. to these supported girls up to Secondary level.
- Tracking the progress of implementation and access the improvement of the project through MIS.
- Conducting regular home visits and meetings with parents of these children to sensitize them to create an education and child friendly discrimination free environment in the family.
- Organize meetings with the mothers so that the parents especially mothers take an active role in ensuring the education of their daughters.
- Providing vocational training to 20 selected girls so that they can move a step closer to become 'Job Ready' and move towards economic improvement.
- Organize meetings with communities to sensitise and motivate them to act as a group of pressure builder to ensure education of children stop early marriage, gender discrimination, child labour and gender based violence, etc., which are the main cause of dropout.
- Organize training programmes for the girls and mothers so that they become well equipped with information and make them up to date with which they can raise their voices against deprivation, discrimination and violence against children.

BUDGET

The budget for the project for the period April'16 to March '17 is INR 8,50,400/- (Rupees Eight lakhs, Fifty thousand, Four Hundred only) for one year. Nishtha has received the amount of Rs. 5, 97,000.00 (Rupees Five lakhs Ninety Seven thousand only) has been provided to Nishtha, so the grant requested is INR 2, 53, 400.00 (Rupees Two Lakhs, Fifty Three Thousand, Four Hundred only). The detailed budget is attached as annexure.