Bridging the Divide (Backup Support Coaching Centre)

SATHI FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT

Present Status

Implemented by
Hijli INSPIRATION

Supported by
Asha for Education

Fact Sheet

Name of our Programme : SATHI for Education Support
A Joint Programme of : Hijli INSPIRATION & Asha for Education
Project Area : Kamarhati Municipality, Barrackpore Sub-division, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India
No. of Children : 120 (One hundred twenty)
No. of Centre : 4 (four)
Medium of instruction : Bengali (3) & Urdu (1)
Period : July 2013 to December 2013
Introduction

*SATHI for Education Support* project for back up support aimed at retention of children in the formal school system is operational since the last three years at two locations under Kamarhati Municipality. INSPIRATION being the implementing agency of the project intends to achieve the best through its limited scope. It is indeed true that mainstreaming in formal school at present is relatively straightforward especially after the enactment of RTE Act throughout the country. But the major challenge is retention of the children within the environment of education, particularly from backward section who are faced with different socio-economic constraints.

This programme has been able to make children more or less regular in schools by inculcating the school going habit among them as well as through academic preparedness. For this, the organization has undertaken an intensive backup support programme in line with the school curriculum. Back up support helps the children to cope with classroom teaching.

Along with back up coaching support the other add-ons to the programme include counseling of children, a provision for token tiffin including a combination of bread/sweet/cake/egg/seasonal fruits, Horlicks etc. Further few needy children among the lot are linked to organizations which provide them with text books free of cost and some truly deserving children are supported with examination fees.

Centre running

4 centres are operational catering to around 120 children. The centre specific class wise number of children has been provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Israil Colony</th>
<th>Cryag Row</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aasia Khatun</td>
<td>Namita Majumder</td>
<td>Rita Banerjee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
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<td>VII</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
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Attendance and performance of Children

Interactions with schools have indicated that a large majority of the children are regular in schools and in general are performing well. They are equally regular in the centres which are indicative of their retention within the education system.

Bengali and Urdu School teachers are very satisfied with the performance of the student enrolled under the SATHI Centres. This year three children from the Urdu centre and one children from the Bengali centre got Scholarship from Madrasa Board for their worthy performance in school.
They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Kaynath Parveen</th>
<th>Tamanna Parveen (1)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>VIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result with remarks</td>
<td>72% with 4th position</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>12yrs+</td>
<td>13yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Name</td>
<td>Kamarhati High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Urdu Centre, Group of Friends’ Club, Cryag Row, Kamarhati</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Noor Hasa</th>
<th>Asif Sekh</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>VIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result with remarks</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>13yrs</td>
<td>13yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Name</td>
<td>Sagar Dutta Free High School</td>
<td>Sagar Dutta Free High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Israil Colony, Kamarhati</td>
<td>Israil Colony, Kamarhati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Rita Banerjee</td>
<td>Tamali Das,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This year (2013) Marjena Khatoon, Salehar Khatou & Rehena Khatou got honour from their school (Uday Villa Junior Basic School) for their Behavioral activities like cleanliness, daily attendance etc. also good performance in study.

Others Activities

Along with the regular educational back up activities children are made to participate in different programmes for an exposure as well as for their cultural and cognitive development.

Independence Day Celebration

Children of our SATHI centers organized a Flag Hosting programme on 15th August 2013. After Flag Hosting, Volunteers educated the Children on the significance of the Day. They sang patriotic songs and recited poems. This was followed by serving of some refreshment to children. It was an educational entertainment for children and they were happy to be a part of it.

Teacher’s Day Celebration

To celebrate Teacher’s Day on the 5th of September, children of our SATHI centers organized a programme on 7th September 2013. Volunteers educated the Children on the significance of the Day. They sang, danced and recited poems. This was followed by serving of some refreshment to children. Children were entertained while being educated.

Dress Distribution Programme

This year INSIRATION gave the new dresses to Children of our SATHI centers on the occasion of Durga Puja. All the children and their parents were extremely happy and it added a new fervor to the festivity. The clothes were primarily supported by a donation from the father of an Intern, Arpan Giri.

Children’s Day Celebration

Children of our SATHI centers organized a Children’s Day programme on 14th November 2013. Volunteers educated the Children on the significance of the Day. They are sang, dance and recited poems. This was followed by serving of some refreshment to children. It was an pure entertainment for children and they were happy to be a part of it.
Nicco Park Visit

40 (Forty) Children and 4 (Four) volunteers of our SATHI centers visited the Nicco Park, Salt Lake, Kolkata. It was an Annual Children’s Treat Programme organized by the Rotary Club of Calcutta on the 24th November 2013. It was a day of fun and frolic – with food and different kinds of programmes and joyrides. Every year Rotary Club of Calcutta organizes this programme.

Awareness Programme for Adolescent Child

The workshop on the causes, symptoms and effects of drug addiction was organized for the adolescent children in the age group of 10 to 16 at the Sathi Centre for free tuition in Kamarhati on 11th December 2013. Mrs. Kanika Banerjee was the one who carried out the workshop by communicating with the forty four students at the centre about the various issues related to addiction of drugs. She asked for responses from the children about what they thought when they heard they heard the word ‘addiction’. Popular responses included the words cigarette and ‘Sikhar’ which are basically what they see people around them taking every day. Mrs. Banerjee also discussed the reasons that lead to addiction, the physical and psychological effects that arise due to these and how to stop addiction and prevent it.

First of all she spun a wonderful yarn to the kids about how a fictitious character called Raju who was a normal kid got into addiction. She made a story that they could relate to saying he went on a picnic where his friends made him try a cigarette which introduced him into the world of addiction. She gave them an example of how it affected his life saying he became worse in his studies, behaved rudely with his family and friends and eventually went into more depression which led him into addiction of drugs. When he was denied money he found no other means to buy drugs and resorted to theft. She ended saying he went to the boys in the locality club to confess and they gradually rehabilitated him back to normal life.

After this the kids got interested also and shared their experiences of how everyone in their house is drunk and how their parents quarrel once someone among them is drunk. They shared experiences where the males in the house get drunk and beat everyone. All of them said that they were familiar with such situations.

Mrs. Kanika Banerjee then described how the drugs are taken in by the addicts by various methods like oral inhalation, intravenous injection and nasal inhalation. She also described reasons that trigger the people to get addicted. One of the potential reasons is to act like one’s role model in life thus leading to imitation trough addiction. Other reasons include seeing television commercials and advertisements. Other reasons are when kids bring addictive substances for elders daily them might try it someday and eventually become addicts. There are people who supply drugs for income and thus stimulate people into addiction.

She then discussed the physical and psychological effects of addiction. Physical effects included the various physical spasms and the weakness when not taking it. People suffer from breathing problem, many eventually die of it. Passive smoking is also a serious problem which is caused by addiction of surrounding people. Psychological effects lead to depression, restless behaviour, aggressiveness towards people and other symptoms. It results in poverty eventually and upsets the ambience in the household.

She shared the experience of the kids in Sunderban who were from tribal family were not allowed in school although the schools were especially for the tribal community. They found that the main reason was that they brought addictive substances instead of water and tiffin. Their parents were called and asked the reason. It was found out that these tribes had only one source of income.
They used to go into waist deep water to collect the larvae of prawns called ‘meen’. Since they stayed in water for so long it affected their health and they felt severe pain during the evening. If they did not use these substances they would not be able to continue with their livelihood. The long term remedy was through alternative livelihood popularisation among them.

She then asked if there was anyone among the kids who was addicted. Two kids were found, Nur Jamal Mollah and Sahadat Hussain who were addicts. She convinced them not to take those substances further as they would cause only bad effects and thus concluded that all of them should stay away from addiction and convince their near and dear ones to leave it.

Finally the volunteers of Sathi Centres were asked to monitor the children who are into some addiction.

Special Food for our Children

A Special Food Programme was organized by the Volunteers for the Children of our Sathi centers on 26th December 2013 on the occasion of Christmas. The menu included Cake, Sweet, Puri and Chicken. Volunteers themselves cooked the Puri and Chicken. Above the 120 children for the day joined the programme and had a feast.

Handicrafts workshop – an initiative beyond formal learning

A handicrafts workshop was organized in December 2013, at Sathi Centre, Kamarhati as a part of the learning process. The motive behind conducting the workshop was to introduce them to the world of learning beyond curricular learning and also to unearth their potential. The workshop took them through a process where finally they generated hand crafted items.

The materials used for making the art objects were small items of little or of no use in real life. Most of the items are available for free and this ensured complete participation on behalf of the children. A striking feature of the workshop was cent percent attendance.

The enthusiasm of the little children cannot be described in words. Their works were the greatest proof of their enthusiasm. The workshop was like teamwork. The children had grouped themselves in small numbers and their collective efforts had created wonders.

The children received guidance from their teachers. Every initiative was taken to make sure that the children never lost interest. The ideas used in the workshop were quite innovative also. A small bar of soap was taken and small nails were pushed inside the bar. Small pieces of red cloth were put on the base of the nails and a small handle, made from wire was connected across both ends of the soap. What resulted out of everything was that the soap resembled exactly like a flower basket.

Another innovative idea was representing the constellation of stars on a black paper using small shining objects made of plastic. A group of 3 students had done a magnificent job by making a big house of about 45-50 centimeters in height.

The structure was made of thermocol and marble papers were used to cover the outer portion of the house. Nothing else was used as cost constraints were there, but the enthusiasm of the entire group made the entire thing even more beautiful.

The children at Sathi Centre usually come from poor families. Most of the families do not have a constant source of income. Hence for the children, toys like dolls are objects of luxury. However the children utilized the workshop and learnt the art of making dolls out of objects like cotton, small beads and ice cream sticks.
Sathi Centre is located in an area where embroidery is not an art but a source of income. In fact, small girls in that area are experts in embroidery. Hence embroidery was also an important part of the workshop. The designs were extremely delicate and had touch of professionalism. The workshop also welcomed new ideas like decorating an egg-crate, making ‘chandmalas’ (an object used for decorating idols of goddesses in pujas) and making small objects using clay from the banks of river Ganga.

The handicrafts workshop had several advantages. First of all, collaboration was an important feature of the workshop. The children coordinated among themselves and mixed their individual ideas. Hence, the essence of teamwork was an important learning for the children from the workshop.

Secondly, usage of waste materials ensured that the children learnt about reusing and recycling. Trivial objects like broken sharpeners and bottle caps were used to highlight the motif behind the workshop and enhance the creative ability of the children.

The handicrafts workshop was a success. Even the parents of the children were happy with the workshop. They supported their children in every possible way to make them learn something new. The entire credit for conducting the workshop goes to the volunteer teachers of the Sathi centres.
Few Snapshots of 2012-2013

Dress Distribution Programme on Durga Puja 2013

Workshop with Adolescent

Special Food Programme

Handicraft Workshop
Future Planning

- Replicating the same approach to other Wards of Kamarhati to control perpetual absenteeism
- Focus on Adolescents

Academic Activities

- Running backup support centres as per programme design throughout the year
- Taking up accelerated reading approach by developing the Corner Library
- Organising exchange programme for volunteers of the SATHI and other Education Programmes for a mutual learning.

Extra Academic

- Undertaking programme related to Adolescent Life Skill Education
- Organising Health Check up Camps
- Initiating Computer Literacy

Proposed Budget for April 2014 to March 2015

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<td>Nutrition support for children @ Rs.6.00 per day per child (120 children), 3 days in a week</td>
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<td>190080.00</td>
<td>15840.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td>371280.00</td>
<td>30940.00</td>
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Internship Programme

Arpan Giri

Student, currently studying in Grade 12 of IB Diploma Program at Dubai American Academy, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Type of position: International Volunteer Program
Report Period: 5th August to 8th August 2013

Report on Sathi Programme

From the 5th of August to the 8th of August, 2013, I volunteered for the ASHA for Education Program under the banner of the nonprofit/voluntary organization Hijli INSPIRATION (Institute for Planning, Innovative Research, Appropriate Training and Extension).

I had approached INSPIRATION as I am required to complete a certain number of Community service hours according to my school Board (IB) and that the work I would be doing for INSPIRATION seemed the most interesting (to my parents) out of the other offers that I had. When I had arrived here and was told of what exactly that it was that I would be doing I was a bit taken aback. Because I was afraid that what I would teach would go over the children’s heads as they were not exposed to the level of schooling that I was at their age and that there may be a communication problem. But when I reached the centers and began on my first day the volunteers there helped me quite a lot and since they were children I had come prepared with more hands on learning than lecturing. I had a few puzzles to make sure that the children wouldn’t get bored and that they would also be learning at the same time. On the first day the puzzles were a great success and the 2nd as they were very enthusiastic and enjoyed doing them regardless of whether they could solve the puzzles or not.

I tried to teach them in these four days 2-D shapes, Angles, Fractions, Series. I taught all four of those topics to the one of the centers as the children there were a little older and could grasp the topics better and I feel that they did a good job at that. I taught only shapes and Series to the other. The puzzles though were what the children were waiting for and after running out of the ones I had to start inventing new ones. And that is why I chose series as a topic as making puzzles and quite interesting ones in this topic is simple.
I feel that the children did enjoy these four days and they learnt a lot. My aim was initially to try and reach 3-D shapes but then I realized that if I could just make them think hard and make them try to struggle with a question till they found an answer would be more helpful and these puzzles would also improve their critical thinking skills. Skills that would be more helpful than knowledge they could attain anywhere else easily. There were a few intelligent students who I feel could go a long way if they were given the opportunity. But it was a great experience and I hope I will be able to teach these children or another set such as the ones I was able to this time some time again.