

Basic Information

Site Visitors' Information:

Name:

1. Arghya Das
2. Ashutosh Kumar Singh
3. Subhasish Chakrabarty

Address:

1. S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata-700098
2. -do-
3. -do-

Phone Numbers:

1. +91-8902688899
2. +91-9038732901
3. +91-7278950629

Email:

1. arghya2009das@gmail.com
2. ashuvishen@gmail.com
3. Subhasish.chy@gmail.com

Visit Information:

Date: 4th October, 2012

Name of Project: SWIRD – Pre-Primary Educational Centers

Name of NGO Running the Project: Society for Women in Rural Development (SWIRD)

The visit was planned and known to the project.

SITE REPORT

I and two of my friends reached Bhogpur at 6.15 am, dated 4/10/2012. It is autumn session yet and the Balwadi schools start earlier in the morning, at 6.30 am. We have the site visit report of the earlier visit. This time we have visited five centers, of which, four are altogether new and one is common to the earlier visited centers. The name of the centers and corresponding villages, we visited, respectively are:

<u>Center (Site) Name</u>	<u>Village</u>
1. Kishorchawk Kalpana Chaola Balwadi Center	Kishorchawk
2. Kotalia Gandhi Buri Balwadi Center	Kotalia
3. Kotalia Mother Teresa Balwadi Center	Deulbandh
4. Tahala Matangini Balwadi Center	Tahala
5. Sarada Basan Gargi Balwadi Center	Baradabar

Out of the 5 centers, the first one is common with the previously visited sites. The five sites we visited are quite distant from each other. We learnt that, they are running ten such Balwadi centers, and a total of 404 students of age group 3-6 years (few of them bit older, as we saw) are getting basic education from them. Following is the report of our visit.

Name of the center: Kishorchawk Kalpana Chaola Balwadi Center

This center is located in a place called Kishorchawk. The village as a whole is quite large one, with a population of about 5000. The area surrounding the school, though at 5-7 minutes bike-riding distance from the Bhogpur railway-station, is distinctly poverty stricken. The area looks quite clean and habitable though. The people in general are quite easily interactive.



Outside of Kishorchawk Kalpana Chaola Balwadi Center

Surrounding Community:-

There are children of age group 3-6 years from about 25 families who come to the school. As we heard from the teachers as well as parents there, most of the families having children of that age group in the immediate vicinity (about 20 minutes walking distance), had their children enrolled to the Balwadi school. We expect about 100 families living in the radius. The economic condition as stated earlier, is very difficult. Most of the families earn their living on bidi (a local form of cigarette)-binding. Some also do harvesting. Most people there are Muslims by religion. And the children are mostly, irrespective of the religion, just first generation learners.

The project is running for 13 years, from 1999, and there is a general awareness. Regular parent-teacher/project supervisor meeting is conducted and the feedback is good. We have also confirmed this from locals present there. However, the people, in general, are not directly involved in helping carry out the deeds of this project yet. The place, that is used to run the school, was primarily taken free of cost. After 'Asha' started funding, Rs. 500/- was given as rent. However, after last May when Asha stopped funding, SWIRD could not borrow the rent. Still the school is going on. It is fairly obvious that the owner of this place and the community, in general, support the project well.

Project:-

The children come on foot. They live quite close by the school. However, though it is near the railway station Bhogpur, the nearest village, the nearest town Mecheda is quite far. But communication to this town is not very difficult owing to the railway station.

The school building is a temporary construction, though it stands quite upright and uptight. It is an interesting construction as can be seen from the photograph, made of 'Bansher Bera' (Bamboo fencing). In time of rain, it is covered with tarpaulin. The school building is of a solitary room, big enough to hold about 40 students. It has a blackboard, a table and related items like chalks, dusters. Doctor pays visit twice a month. No question of library, toilets etc. No sports session/facility is separately there, but annual sports are arranged every year.

The school runs till 9.30 am. There is no Tiffin facility for them. But, it is a requirement. (From morning the children are there in the school. In winter, it starts somewhat late, at 7.00, ends at about 10.00 am. In the morning this is a long time, on biological/BMR basis.

Teacher:-

The school is run by a solitary teacher, Mrs. Srimati Hajra, who is involved in the project right from the beginning, 1999. Although she handles everything regarding the school alone, when she is ill, others come to help her to handle children, first aid, meeting with parents etc. It was learnt that some new people also want to join this project. However, fiscal scarcity debar SWIRD to involve them.

Mrs. Hajra belongs to local community. She studied up to 10th standard. She was trained by SWIRD with the help of two other NGOs, Nabarun and MAVA. It was learnt that, she was last paid her salary

in May, 2012. For next 5 months, she could not be paid. On asking why she is lingering with the school, despite getting nothing, she replied, she simply cannot leave the children.



Inside of Kishorchawk Kalpana Chaola Balwadi Center

Students:-

Presently, about 40 children of ages between 3 to 6 years (few slightly older) have been enrolled to the school. It was learnt that, at the beginning of new academic session, SWIRD makes a survey among the local people, and try to take up all children in the age group. After 13 years of continuation, this process is quite smooth now and most of the children get enrolled. As we saw, girls come in larger proportion w. r. t. the boys. They are from the local community and thereby of the same socio-academic background as stated earlier. The children obviously enjoyed the school hours. They study, sing, dance, recite, play both inside and outside. Also, important days like 15th August etc. are celebrated. Presently, barring certain exception, there is no general instance/tendency of drop out. The children are given books, uniforms, bags, water bottle free of cost. No fee is taken. To provide the children elementary education, the teachers follow standard books as in all over Bengal- 'Barnaparichaya' for Bengali, 'Dharapat' for Mathematics. For English, they follow the book 'Chhoray Bhora ABC'.

Name of the Center: Kodalia Gandhi Buri Balwadi Center

The center is located in the village **Kodalia**. The general description is not very different, with a lesser population, though no less poor. This center is North side of the railway station, and at more or less same distance from it. The people there were curious about the visit and interactive as well.



Outside of Kodalia Gandhi Buri Balwadi Center

Surrounding Community:-

Children from about 40 families residing in the locality come to the school. Few also come from the other side of the railway line. The families earn their livelihood mainly on agriculture and mason laborer. Most people in the locality are Hindu by religion. Some more proportion of them has already got some basic education.

The project is running on for 15 years. Also, the history of having some educational background turns out to be very helpful creating a positive attitude towards this effort.

Rest is same as in the previous case.

Project:-

The children come to the school on foot. Few come with their parents on bicycles. Mecheda is the nearest town to this village.

The school is being carried out in a local clubhouse from last year. This is a permanent construction with the facility of electricity. Other than essential schooling items it has few chairs, a bench and other things as in a clubhouse. As previously, doctor pays visit twice a month. No library, toilet is there. No sports facility is there as well, however, annual sports among the children from all such schools are held every year.

To have some Tiffin arrangement, which is not there presently, turned out to be a common requirement.

Teacher:-

Mrs. Shampa Mondal is the solitary teacher in this center. She was in the project at the beginning. In between she left and rejoined last year. She is Madhyamik (10th standard) pass local woman aged about 40, and her son sometimes helps her running the school. Every responsibility, not different from stated for previous center, is her concern. However, the locals help her at necessity.



Inside of Kodalia Gandhi Buri Balwadi Center

She was trained by SWIRD with the help of other NGOs Nabarun and MAVA as before. And exactly as in the previous case, she was paid Rs. 1200/- till May, 2012. The need of some regular income and of course, her love for the children motivates her to teach here and continue it.

Students:-

A total of 53 students are enrolled. Out of them, about 40 students remain present every day, on average. Girls are more in number than boys. The process of taking up of new students here is identical. In this particular region, where, already some educated people being there in the community, the tendency to involve into the schooling is more and is increasing.

The present students are local residents and hence of the same socio-economic background as stated. All other things, books, activities in and out of the school, drop-out rate are as before.

Name of the center: Kotalia Mother Teresa Balwadi Center

Contrary to the name, the school for this center is shifted to the village, Deulbandh. The population is about 2000, engulfed by poverty. The surrounding area reminds of a typical village in Bengal.



Outside of Kotalia Mother Teresa Balwadi Center

Surrounding Community:-

The lifestyle is also typical for a Bengali village, with most people being farmers, particularly share-cropper. Some also earn their living as mason laborers. Children from about 30 families residing in the locality attend the school. This is a Muslim dominated village with a large number of Hindus also residing here.

The center is running for 15 years. Though there was almost no educational background present, the culture is seen to be developing and as a feedback process, the consciousness is growing up and people now are very supportive to the project.

Project:-

The school building is a permanent construction with a good physical condition. All points and requirements regarding the project and infrastructure are identical, though the facilities are not as available as the previous case for obvious reasons.

Teacher:-

The lone teacher is Mrs. Triptikana Mondal, aged about 40 years. She was involved at the beginning, but could not continue for physical reasons and rejoined last year. She studied up to 10th standard. In this particular case, we learnt that a local woman, who is also guardian of a children studying in

the school, regularly helps in various aspects for the running of the school and taking care of the children.

The question/status of her training and salary etc. are identical. And on asking why she is still attached to the project, the answer is the same; she could not leave the children.



Inside of Kotalia Mother Teresa Balwadi Center

Students:-

Total of 40 students, from about 30 families, are presently enrolled, with boys more in proportion to girls. They are mostly first generation learners. Their activities in and out of the school are same as before. They go to primary education (1st standard) after leaving Balwadi center, as usual.

Name of the center: Tahala Matangini Balwadi Center

The village this center is located at is called Tahala quite far away other sites visited. This is a little different from other places as we have seen. There is sign of a bit prosperity, as a whole, could be seen in the roads, house and of course in the fact that as was seen going to school is rather common phenomenon there.

Surrounding Community:-

The particular area where the center is located is completely somewhat more densely populated. The community comprises more Muslims regarding religion, and economically, though nowhere near the mark of good living standard is slightly more well-to-do w. r. t. other places we have seen yet. They are mainly potter by profession. Some also do harvesting or mason labor or daily labor for their living.



Outside of Tahala Matangini Balwadi Center

It was learnt that, there is a sense of education among the mass there, and about 50% of the parents have primary education there. The center there, is the oldest one, running for 20 years, and obviously very supportive to their cause. The community extends helping hand if it needed.

Project:-

The children from the local community attend the school. They come from nearby, maximum 10 minutes making a distance away. The class is carried out at a verandah of a local resident, which is delightful, except rain and winter. It is part of a permanent construction of in good physical condition. Of course, they want to carry school on under a better shade. Other points are same.

Teacher:-

Mrs. Nilima Mondal is the solitary teacher, who, right from the beginning, is carrying the out all the responsibilities related to this center. She is a woman aged about 45 years and she studied up to 10th standard. As she told, she joined the project for both purpose, to teach the children as she loves them as well as it may help her family to some extent.

It was learnt that, people want to involve into the project at this center. However financial condition is the obstacle. Training and other things are as before.

Students:-

Presently, 44 students are enrolled and the boys and girls are more or less equal in number. The activities and other things are as before. However, a statement heard from the teacher is worth mentioning:

“The parents and other people are getting the idea of what education is and what it means, how basic necessity it is.”



Inside of Tahala Matangini Balwadi Center

Special Remark:-

It appeared that, though the teacher knew there was going to be a visit to SWIRD centers, TAHALA may not be in their list (to be taken to visit). However, it turned out to be the most impressive and really impressive.

Name of the center: Sarada Basan Gargi Balwadi Center

This is the final site visited. The corresponding village is Baradabar. It is also a rather prosperous village, far away from the railway station closer to Bombay Road. It has primary and secondary schools in it and H. S. School nearby.

Surrounding Community:-

The area has a bit denser population. This is a Hindu dominance regarding number; most people in this community are fishermen. The people slightly more well-off, compared to other centers and more importantly most of them have an educational background.



Outside of Sarada Basan Gargi Balwadi Center

The project/center here is comparatively young, starting at year 2000. And it has a good impact and gets good supportive feedback from locals.

Project:-

The children come to school are all from local community. The school building is kind of a Clubhouse (office of local 'Women's Committee' - 'Mahila Samiti'), and is permanent construction having all an office generally has. Other necessities and points are as before.

However, a new and important point came. All these are rented shedding and anytime they could be taken back by the owner. Some are not fit for school also. It would be much better if they could afford a construction on a bond as their 'own'.

Teacher:-

Mrs. Sankari Barman, a 30 years old local woman, is the sole one teaching and taking care of the children. She turned out to be the most educated of all, studied up to BA 1st year. She, according to her speech, learnt that, this center needs a teacher 2 years ago, and she could not let opportunity to teach these little children go. Other points are same as before.



Inside of Sarada Basan Gargi Balwadi Center

Students:-

This center can be characterized by the attendance of the students. Almost 100% of the 41 students enrolled come every day. The boys and the girls are nearly equal in number. This is a newer center, and is growing well, with most parents having primarily education. A slightly better economic condition certainly helps them continue their study.

General Conclusion:-

There are common points, common requirements and so on. Overall, the effort, as far as we observed, is not only appreciable, but really effective and highly impressive, particularly looking into the fact that, without almost any external help, they organized themselves and local people on a long term effort, and turned their lives and minds towards education, starting from zero or in case negative. They successfully search out positively minded people from the community, irrespective of their religion and economic condition, and create a precedence and way so that this can go on.

We learnt that, past students not only keep communication to them (and vice-versa), but they also teach their new generations.

The teachers require special reference. We know how non-trivial it is to teach 5 children at a time. And they are taking care of around 40 children per head, at a time, on the average, for long term. A meager amount of Rs. 1200/-, or whatever, in our opinion, cannot really value their effort.

Recommendation:-

The effort given by SWIRD must be considered as priority. In the present economic scenario Rs. 1200/- per month is really an unfortunate figure which is also stopped for 5 months. We strongly recommend to increase the funding for this purpose and make it regular so that

1. the salary of the teachers can be increased and
2. some Tiffin for the children can be arranged

(These two are the immediate necessities.)

About the NGO:-

About 20 years ago, a group of 7-8 local women, with the help of some local people, formed the NGO. Most of the founders were educated women, and according to Mrs. Krishna Roy, right from the time when they came to the village after marriage, they felt the urge to do something meaningful for the people, especially for the women living in the villages in miserable condition- to make them self-dependent and conscious. Education is the most important necessity to achieve it.

Except giving education to the children in the locality, the NGO has assembled women from various villages in the region to form self-help groups. The most difficult part initially, according to them, was to make people understand why they need education, why they would altogether come out and assemble and be a part of something called a 'self-help' group. Also, the conservative families, with their lack of education, created lot of trouble. It took a long time and continuous effort and of course the help of positively minded local people to overcome these barriers to some extent.

Presently, though they want to create more centers, improve the present ones and involve more people in the project, the financial problem is the major problem they are facing.

Financial information and statistics:-

At the beginning, a few comparatively rich people helped them. Presently 'Asha for Education' is the only funding agency.

We do have a record of past funding and spending, and is attached herewith. As far as we saw, most of the expenses were done for infrastructural purpose- books and other things, rent, annual, competition, workshops etc.

SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Regd No:- S/ 69263 of 1991-92

Vill :-Kushar , P.O :-Pulsita, Dist :-Purba Medinipur

Project :- Balwadi for Elementary Education

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2012

RECEIPTS	RS.P	PAYMENTS	RS.P	RS.P
To Opening Cash Balance		By <u>School Dress & Shoes & Socks</u> (for 404 Balwadi Students)		
Cash in Hand	Nil	School Dress 2 Sets	101000.00	
Cash at Bank	299604.40	Shoes & Socks	40400.00	
		Water Bottle	20200.00	
		School Bag	30300.00	
To <u>Grant A/c</u>	299,678.42	Tiffin Box	<u>4040.00</u>	195,940.00
(Received from ASHA FOR EDUCATION , Sanfrancisco) as 2nd Installment		By <u>Teaching Materials & Others</u> (Black Board, Slate, Chart, Drawing Books, Books, etc)		31,500.00
		By <u>School Equipments</u> (Floor Mat, Water Filter & Jug)		7,650.00
To Bank Interest A/c	3,400.00	By Medicine Exp		10,440.00
		By Work Shop on Drop out Children		48,620.00
		By Games & Sports		20,550.00
To Own Contribution	16,000.00	By Ten School Shed Rent		60,000.00
		By <u>Salary A/c(March to Feb.2012)</u>		
		Ten Balwadi Teachers	144000.00	
		Two Field Monitors	36000.00	
		One Accountant	18000.00	
		One Doctor	<u>36000.00</u>	234,000.00
		By Travelling Exp.		4,960.00
		By <u>Administrative Exp</u> (Telephone, Photograph, Printing & Stationeries etc.)		3,120.00
		By Closing Cash Balance		
		Cash in Hand		30.00
		Cash at Bank		1,872.82
		SBI, Mecheda Branch, A/c No:- 11111859499		
TOTAL	618,682.82	TOTAL		618,682.82

Krishna Roy.
SECRETARY
SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT



SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Regd No:- S/ 69263 of 1991-92

Vill :-Kushar , P.O :-Pulsita, Dist :-Purba Medinipur

Project :- Balwadi for Elementary Education

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2012

EXPENDITURE	RS.P	RS.P	INCOME	RS.P
To <u>School Dress & Shoes & Socks</u> (for 404 Balwadi Students)			By <u>Grant A/c</u>	299,678.42
School Dress 2 Sets	101000.00		(Received from ASHA FOR EDUCATION , Sanfrancisco)	
Shoes & Socks	40400.00		as 2nd Installment	
Water Bottle	20200.00			
School Bag	30300.00			
Tiffin Box	<u>4040.00</u>	195,940.00		
			By Bank Interest A/c	3,400.00
To Teaching Materials	31500.00			
Less, Capitalised	<u>5000.00</u>	26,500.00		
To School Equipments	7650.00		By Own Contribution	16,000.00
Less, Capitalised	<u>5150.00</u>	2,500.00		
To Medicine Exp		10,440.00		
To Work Shop on Drop out Children		48,620.00	By <u>Deficit A/c</u>	223,073.58
To Games & Sports		20,550.00	(Excess of Expenditure over Income)	
To <u>Ten School Shed Rent</u>	60,000.00			
Less, Outstanding Exp.for 10-11	<u>15,000.00</u>	45,000.00		
To <u>Salary A/c(March 11 to Feb.2012)</u>				
Ten Balwadi Teachers	144000.00			
Two Field Monitors	36000.00			
One Accountant	18000.00			
One Doctor	<u>36000.00</u>			
	234000.00			
Less, Outstanding Exp.for 10-11	<u>51000.00</u>	183,000.00		
To Travelling Exp.		4,960.00		
To <u>Administrative Exp</u>		3,120.00		
(Telephone, Photograph, Printing & Stationeries etc.)				
To <u>Provision for Depreciation :-</u>				
On Black Board @ 15%		750.00		
On School Equipments @ 15%		772.00		
TOTAL		542,152.00	TOTAL	542,152.00

Krishna Roy.

SECRETARY

SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT



SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Regd No:- S/ 69263 of 1991-92
 Vill :-Kushar , P.O :-Pulsita, Dist :-Purba Medinipur
 Project :- Balwadi for Elementary Education
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2012

LIABILITIES	RS.P	RS.P	ASSETS	RS.P	RS.P
<u>General Fund</u>			<u>Black Board</u>		
As Per Last A/c	132,804.40		This Year	5,000.00	
Less, Deficit adj.	<u>132,804.40</u>	-	Less, Depreciation @15%	<u>750.00</u>	4,250.00
			<u>School Equipments</u>		
			This Year	5,150.00	
<u>Un secured Loan</u>		100,800.00	Less, Depreciation @15%	<u>772.00</u>	4,378.00
As Per Last A/c					
			<u>Deficit A/c</u>		90,269.18
			(After adjusting of		
			Rs.132804.40)		
			<u>Closing Balance</u>		30.00
			Cash in Hand		
			Cash at Bank		1,872.82
			(SBI, Mecheda Branch,		
			A/c No:- 11111859499)		
TOTAL		100,800.00	TOTAL		100,800.00

Krishna Roy.
 SECRETARY
 SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

