BARADRONE SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTION (BSWI)

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018

VILLAGE/P.O. BARADRONE
BLOCK – DIAMOND HARBOUR
DISTRICT – SOUTH 24 PARGANAS
WEST BENGAL, 743332

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A HUMBLE SUBMISSION

Dear Friends, Members, Well-Wishers & Supporters,

May I humbly present this Annual Progress Report of our Organization for the year of 2016-2017. We have provided all the details of our works and the performances achieved during the year too. The Report also contains the Audited Statements of Accounts ratified by our Executive Committee as a Financial Policy of our Organization and we have also tried our best to give the readers correct and complete information in all respects.

The organization has grown tremendously during the year through its expanded activities in varied arenas ranging from Education to Community Health and Livelihoods Development to Women and Youth Empowerment Sectors.

I do hope you would like the presentation, and, in case you have any suggestion to upgrade our works, please feel free to let us know. Your valuable feedback would highly be appreciated as always in the past to improve our functioning in the forthcoming years.

We sincerely thank everyone who has joined hands with the BSWI's activities and goals to make our dreams realities.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

SANJIB BHATTACHARYA
GENERAL SECRETARY,
TRUSTEE & CEO

BARADRONE, May 6, 2018

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT OF BSWI 2017-2018

Introduction about the organisation - BSWI

Baradrone Social Welfare Institution (BSWI) is a pioneer organisation in West Bengal that originated in the year of 1961 as a village level textbook library and free coaching centre. BSWI received financial, material and technical support for carrying out village development initiatives. The opportunities and the association over the years helped create learning/lessons for BSWI and gain organizational experience. BSWI catalyses change in thousands of lives by implementing innovative efforts. We work in four focused areas:

- ⇒ Education, with an emphasis on the universal elementary and secondary education;
- ⇒ Livelihoods, with an emphasis on the economic empowerment of women;
- ⇒ Preventive & Promotional Health, for arresting CMRs, UFMRs & MMRs and promotion of good reproductive health practices;
- ⇒ Women's Empowerment, for improving the status of poor women and advocating for protecting their rights.

Vision

- *To contribute to building a society where all people can gain access to education, health care, and employment opportunities and where people can realize their full potential;*
- *To build a trusted bridge between the dreams and aspirations of individuals who care about suffering people and their realization;*
- *To build a professional organization that is secular, transparent, credible and accountable for all of its activities.*

Mission: To work for deprived people for their uplift and betterment with special emphasis on children and women and to provide them with education and basic needs opportunities and bring them into the mainstream of society.

Details of the Executive Committee members of BSWI (As on 31st March 2017):

Sl. No.	Name	Address	Position in the committee
1.	Prasanta Kumar Mitra	Vill. & P.O. Baradrone, Block – Diamond Harbour, Dist. South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, 743332.	President
2.	Gourgopal Naskar	-do-	Vice- President
3.	Sanjib Bhattacharya	-do-	General secretary
4.	Haran Chandra Paik	-do-	Treasurer
5.	Sanchita Mondal	-do-	Assistant Secretary
6.	Joydeb Mondal	-do-	Auditor
7.	Arati Sarkar	-do-	Dept. Secretary
	Dipali Bhattacharya	-do-	Dept. Secretary
8.	Mrinal Das	Vill. P.O. Panchpara, Block – Gazole, Dist. Malda	Dept. Secretary
9.	Swapan Ray	-do-	Dept. Secretary

Operational sectors of BSWI:

- ⇒ Education & Empowerment
- ⇒ Community Health
- ⇒ Livelihood Development & Basic Needs
- ⇒ Organisation Building

Objectives of the organisation:

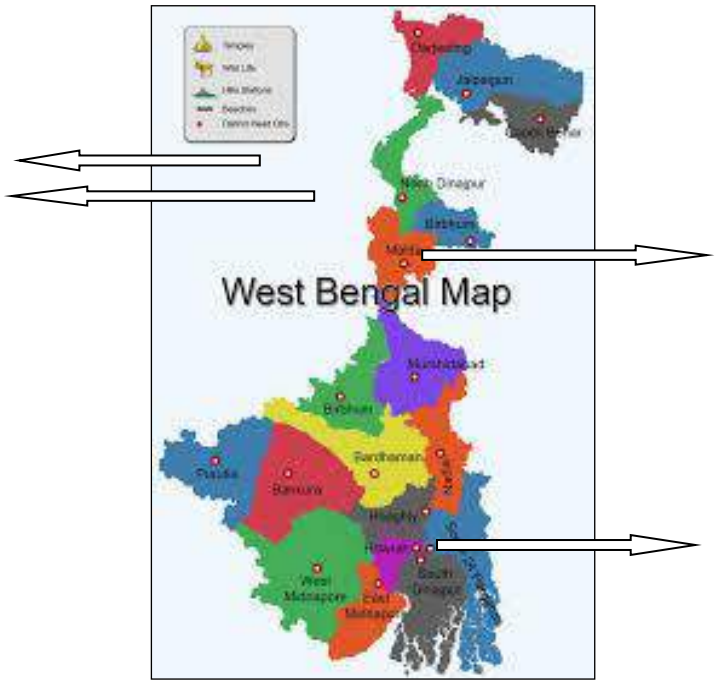
- To liberate the people from the bondage of illiteracy
- To strengthen the target groups attain sound mental and physical health
- To improve the status of the women – socially, economically ad organisationally
- To ensure food and income security for the people living below the poverty line
- To encourage the rural youths participate in rural development process
- To achieve an exploitation-free and oppression-free living environment ensuring harmony and co-existence.

Objectives of the year:

BSWI fixed the following objectives for the year based on the logical dimensions of the need of the area and the indicators in its baseline surveys:

- To mainstream at least 500 adolescent girls belonging to the minority and socially disadvantaged groups and support them attaining secondary education\
- To arrest dropout rate of eligible children, especially the girls and arrest child marriages in its project areas by encouraging children's education.
- To make at least 10,000 target families aware of child nutrition, adolescent health, maternal health, child survival and child development
- To include about 5000 rural women in the SHGs and empower them in socio-economic spheres
- To improve the skills of about 3000 target families in various on-farm and off-farm economic activities to reduce poverty,
- To provide sustainable income to at least 3500 families through agriculture, food security, enterprises and household economic activities.

BSWI's Operational Areas



Coverage of Rural Population in various districts

Sl. No.	Districts	Blocks & villages	Target populations reached
1.	South 24 Parganas	Diamond Harbour I, Magrahat, Kulpi & Namkhana (40 villages)	42,000
2.	Malda	Gajole (35 villages)	37,000
3.	North Dinajpur	Kaliaganj (30 villages)	34,000
4.	South Dinajpur	Samsi (25 villages)	26,600

Other Information

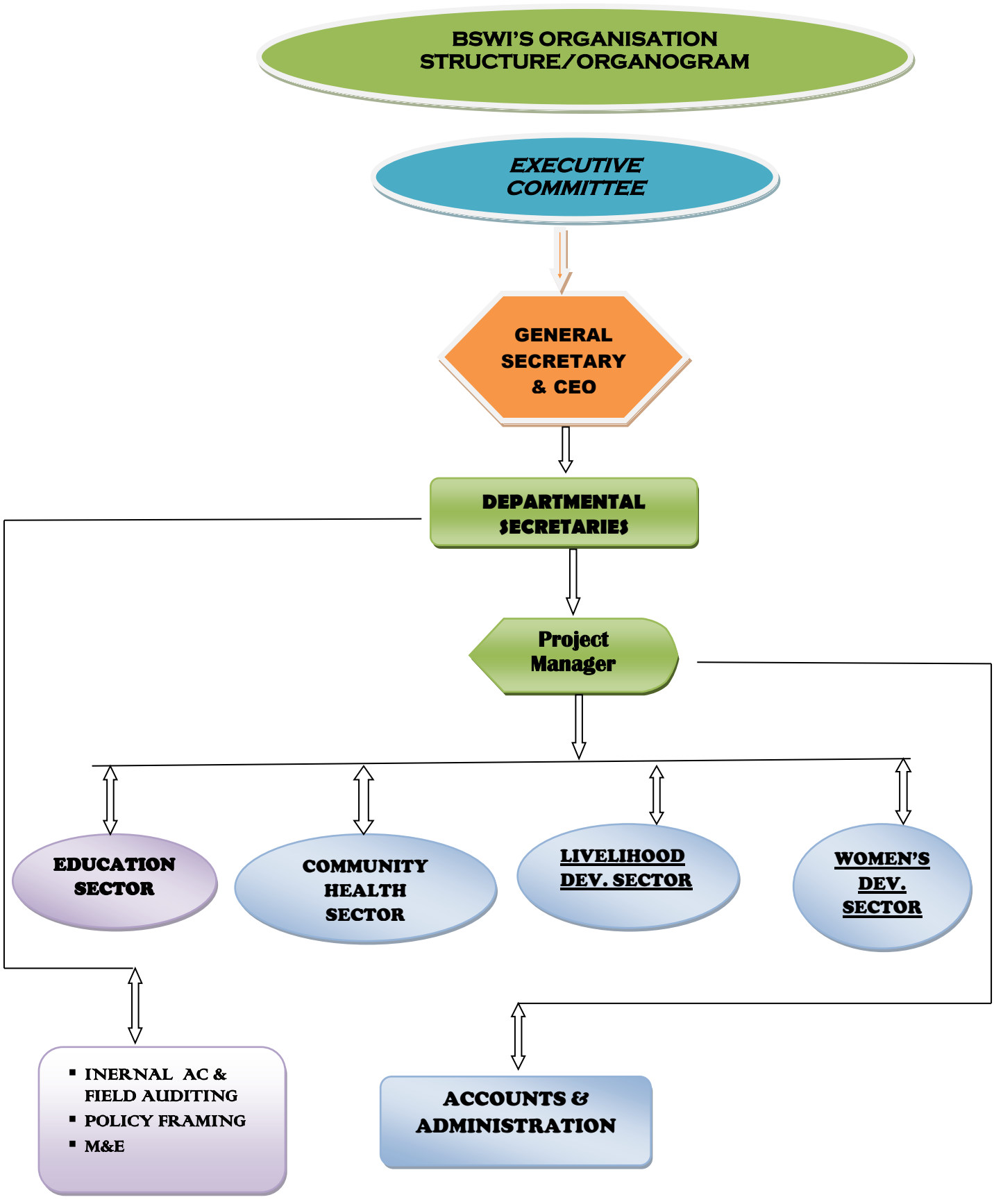
Salary & benefits:

Position	Amount per month	Highest paid staff (CEO)	Lowest paid staff (Night Guard)
Chief Executive Director	Rs. 50,000/-	Rs. 26,500/-	Rs. 4480/-

Remuneration and reimbursements to Board members:

Only the General Secretary is the full timer Executive Director of the organization who receives remuneration from within the Board. No other member receives remuneration from the organization.

Cost of international travel: No international travel has been taken place by any volunteer, staff or board member.


BSWI'S ORGANISATION STRUCTURE/ORGANOGRAM
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
GENERAL SECRETARY & CEO
DEPARTMENTAL SECRETARIES
Project Manager
EDUCATION SECTOR
COMMUNITY HEALTH SECTOR
LIVELIHOOD DEV. SECTOR
WOMEN'S DEV. SECTOR
INERNAL AC & FIELD AUDITING
POLICY FRAMING
M&E
ACCOUNTS & ADMINISTRATION

SECTOR : EDUCATION & AWARENESS

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children – that India ratified in 1992 – all children are born with fundamental rights.

- Right to Survival – to life, health, nutrition, name, nationality
- Right to Development – to education, care, leisure, recreation, cultural activities
- Right to Protection – from exploitation, abuse, neglect
- Right to Participation– to expression, information, thought, religion; and
- Right to achieve these dreams

BSWI's Approaches:

BSWI's role as an enabler has determined our strategic choices at every juncture – from the fundraising methods we employ, to the nature of our relationship with the village organizations and SHG Federations we partner.

Our interventions are designed to include

- Direct action addressing immediate, critical needs
- Community mobilization linking child rights and local pre-dominant issues
- Stringent planning, monitoring and evaluation both, financial and programmatic

Our programs take the form of:

- organization building
- policy analysis
- advocacy

Community mobilization: We believe this is the most effective long-term solution to the multiple causes of poverty, deprivation, exploitation and abuse that constrain the rights of our children. In recent years, we have spearheaded a concerted, district-wide grassroots campaign in partnership with our SHGs, local associations and organizations that aim to establish:

- Authentic data on the situation of children – infant and child mortality, nutrition, enrolment, availability of functioning schools of at least adequate quality, child labour, gender and caste differences.
- Workable models to achieve universal access to primary and elementary education, healthcare, livelihoods and governance combining direct action, community mobilization and policy influence.
- Grassroots community mobilization aimed at ensuring universal access to equitable education through the Common School System and implementation of policies ranging from land rights through to the right to information.

Resource Organizations: In the development sector there are numerous organizations that play a critical role of being a resource hub. These organizations have expertise in various areas of development, expertise that could enhance the quality of smaller, newer initiatives. These resource organizations work towards building the capacities of BSWI. These organizations build capacities through innovative teaching methods, materials and training programs for teachers, community works among others. They also play a vital role in policy influencing efforts at the micro level.

Activities performed during the year 2017-2018:

(a) Capacity Building & Awareness

Sl. No.	Programs/Activities	Villages/Blocks/Districts	No. of participants
i.	Meetings with SHGs in villages	65 villages; 8 blocks; 3 districts	18900 women members
ii.	1 day Orientation meetings with grassroots level associations	43 villages; 6 blocks; 3 districts	1125 society members
iii.	Meetings with government school teachers	43 schools in 46 villages; 8 blocks; 3 districts	176 teachers
iv.	Meetings with Adolescent girls and youths	45 villages; 8 blocks; 3 districts	347 adolescents
v.	Meetings with parents of dropped-out children and girls	56 villages; 5 blocks; 3 districts	2028 couples
vi.	Meetings on prevention of early marriages with villagers	26 tribal villages; 4 blocks; 2 districts	1090 villagers

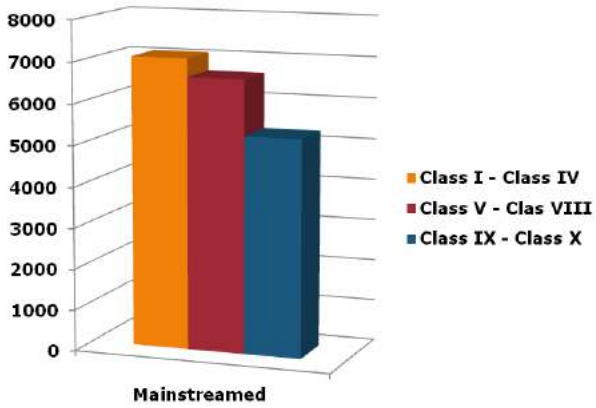
(b) Direct Aid Programs

Sl. No.	Programs/Activities	Villages/Blocks/Districts	No. of participants
i.	Free tuition programs for girls in junior schools	30 villages; 4 vlocks; 3 districts	120 girls
ii.	Excursion and exposure of the learners	-do-	120 girls
iii.	Games & sports competition	-do-	120 girls
iv.	Celebration of Girl Children's Day in villages	-do-	1300 villagers and children
iv.	Book grant assistants for the needy and curious students	15 villages; 2 blocks; 2 districts	230 students
v.	Readmission in government schools	26 villages; 4 blocks; 2 districts	230 students (tribal girls)
vi.	Drop-out girls sent to government high schools	17 villages; 4 blocks; 3 districts	86 girls
vii.	Supplied school learning materials, bi-cycles, admission fees, uniform and school bags	17 villages; 4 blocks; 3 districts	230 girls

(c) Program Impacts

Sl. No.	Programs/Activities	Villages/Blocks/Districts	Impacts/ results
i.	Retention of readmitted learners in schools	All program villages	96.22%
ii.	Prevented early marriages of girls	All program villages	89% (116 girls)
iii.	Attitudinal level changes of the villagers & parents towards girls' education	All program villages especially in the tribal villages	76% of the eligible parents/households
iv.	Public Cooperation received – grassroots societies/associations/SHGs and local Panchayat	All program villages	Very high level of public cooperation achieved
v.	Cooperation of schools received	All local schools	Very high level of cooperation achieved
vi.	Local participation & local contribution raised from the program villages	All program villages and all eligible households	A good amount of free labour, supply of materials and subscriotion was raised from the community.

(d) Performance over the years



This year too, BSWI worked towards ensuring children live, learn, play, express themselves…bringing about lasting change in their lives. At BSWI, we are committed to our vision for a happy, healthy and creative childhood for every child. Over the course of the next 10 years, and to continue to make children and their rights a priority, we have reiterated goals that BSWI as an organization is committed to strive for. These include ensuring children in BSWI-supported areas have access to free and quality education, primary healthcare and are safe from violence, abuse and exploitation. To achieve far-reaching impact on a large scale, we have enabled local grassroots associations/organizations by providing them with training, program monitoring capability, increasing voluntary spirits, perspectives and capacities in addressing issues that affect children and their families.

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SECTOR: COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Community Health & our work

As India's investments in health have been growing over the past decade and the National Health Mission has been seeking to expand availability of healthcare, the main challenge remains to ensure access in service utilization by all, especially the poor. BSWI works at the family, community, institutional and government levels to bridge the gap between service providers and service users. It helps deprived communities acquire information, knowledge and capacity to access healthcare services. Trained and motivated local women, organized in Self-Help Groups or acting as community-level workers, interact with families to facilitate access to primary health care services for women and children residing in villages. We educate communities in issues relating to child health, reproductive and sexual health, and appropriate hygienic practices to prevent common illnesses at home. We motivate families to seek full immunization coverage, periodic ante-natal check-ups and diagnostic tests during pregnancy, and early treatment in case of illness. We pay special attention to adolescent health, addressing reproductive and sexual health to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, early and unwanted pregnancy.

Health education is the development of individual, group, institutional, community and systemic strategies to improve health knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour. The purpose of health education is to positively influence the health behaviour of individuals and communities as well as the living and working conditions that influence their health.

Nutrition & our work

Malnutrition is more widespread in India than in Sub-Saharan Africa. One in every three malnourished children in the world lives in India. About 50 per cent of all childhood deaths are attributed to malnutrition, according to UNICEF. As many as 48% of Indian children under the age of 5 are stunted that is a sign of chronic malnutrition. Girl children are more vulnerable than boys to malnutrition and mortality (NFHS 3, 2005-2006).

The problem of malnutrition is not always as straightforward as simply lack of food. Many families do not always share food equally among their members. Mothers and infants, especially girls, are rarely given priority. Traditionally, in Indian families, women eat last. When food is scarce, men may receive more than women, boys more than girls, older children more than younger children. Diet may be imbalanced owing to limited understanding of nutrition as much as lack of food availability. For example, less than half of Indian children under six months are exclusively breastfed (NFHS 3, 2005-2006).

Our ultimate aim is to ensure full physical and mental growth and development in children by ensuring appropriate nutrition throughout the critical periods of the life cycle. Our interventions seek to address a variety of determinants of malnutrition in children, adolescents and pregnant women, as they relate to healthcare, hygiene and sanitation, child care, appropriate feeding practices (including breastfeeding), growth monitoring and promotion, adoption of low-cost home available foods, promotion of gender equality. In addition to promoting community-based nutrition interventions, we care for severely malnourished children.

During the year, we have carried out our work in nutrition in partnership with:

⇒ The family – to promote pregnancy weight gain through appropriate feeding and caring practices of pregnant women, breastfeeding promotion, introducing semi-solid low-cost nutritious foods from six months onward in the child's diet (in terms of improved food quantity, quality and frequency), safe water and hygienic practices, early seeking of health care for childhood ailments, adequate feeding of girls and women, and empowerment of women to choose for themselves and their children;

⇒ The community – to enhance health & hygiene education of women and adolescents and nutrition education involving women's groups and local elected members of Panchayat Institutions, promote environmental sanitation, including use of toilets, maintenance of drainage and safe disposal of solid waste, prevent early marriage and pregnancy;

⇒ Institutional services – to ensure referral and treatment of severely malnourished children to our health clinic and the Government hospitals.

Health education & our work

Low cost preventive measures are the core of our community health program. Improved health habits, positive attitude building in health care and protection, reduced gender discrimination and child survival and development and development of motherhoods are the primary agendas of our works in this sector. Awareness generation on child survival and protection, women's health aspects, adolescent health behaviour and issues are our focus areas and we have been working on this since last three decades. We believe that Health Education improves the health status of individuals, families, communities, states, and the nation. Health education enhances the quality of life for all people and reduces premature deaths. By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the costs (both financial and human) that individuals, employers, families, insurance companies, medical facilities, communities, the state and the nation would spend on medical treatment.

Poverty is perhaps the worst form of violence against children. In a country where 40 per cent of the population is poor, vulnerability to various forms of deprivation potentially affects almost one in two children. The number of children involved in work which seriously damages their education and holistic development is unknown, but estimates range from 12.6 million, as estimated by the government (Census 2001), to 60-115 million children, as claimed by civil society

Our activities during the year

⇒ We have conducted 236 village based orientation camps on RCH in 20 villages

⇒ We have conducted 15 Nutrition Demonstration Camps in 15 villages to improve nutrition awareness and preparing nutritious foods from locally available food (cereal, rice, wheat, pulses etc.)

⇒ We have conducted 2 SHG workshops and staff trainings/orientation in the main centre on preventable diseases like diarrhoea, water-borne diseases and filth, insect borne diseases like malaria, worm infestation etc.

⇒ Conducted series of awareness generation camps for adolescents at village levels and schools on menstrual management and hygiene

⇒ Distributed low cost sanitary napkins for the rural women and adolescent girls

⇒ Conducted health check ups and Bavy Shows in various villages and in the main centre.

⇒ Through our health clinic we have provided medical aid at subsidised prices to 198 poor patients who were unable to afford to the full cost of medicines.

⇒ We have provided free eye check-ups and distributed spectacles to more than 600 needy and poor villagers in Diamond Harbour, Kulpi and Magrahat blocks.

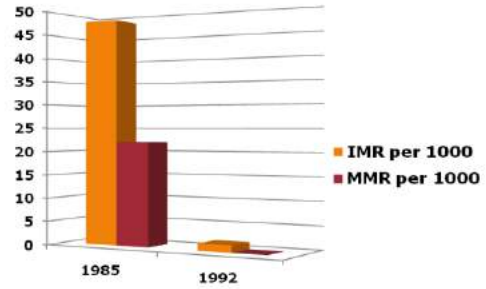
BSWI's Future Perspectives:

- To establish a Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) to provide care for severely malnourished children where balanced food would be provided in small but frequent amounts in order to increase a child's weight safely over a period of several weeks
- To work with run-away, missing, sexually and physically abused children, at risk of early marriage, out of school, or victims of other forms of violence. BSWI is keen to open a Child Protection Resource Centre that would coordinate program activities and foster innovation in both institutional and community-based child protection work.
- To offer education and protection services to children who are most vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and trafficking in the districts of South 24 Parganas and Malda. There is acute need to implement several programs along the borders of India with Bangladesh where child trafficking is a serious as much as an elusive problem.

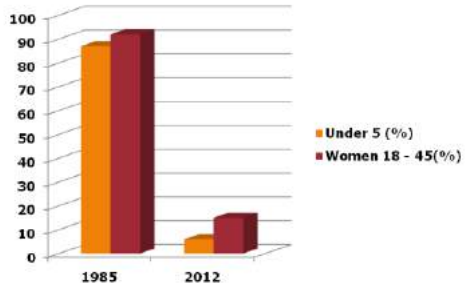
- To offer services for eye-care for the inhabitants of the remote rural areas of Malda district to protect the people from severe eyesight losses.
- To work for the differently-able persons, especially the children, in both South 24 Parganas and Malda district through Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approaches and centre-based support services like special education, physiotherapy, occupational therapies etc.

BSWI'S ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH SECTOR

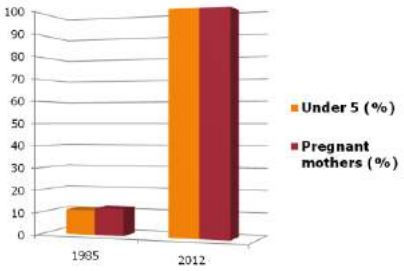
Status of mortality rate of infant and mothers over the years in BSWI's project area



Comparative status of malnourishment of children and women over the years in BSWI's project area



Increase of immunization status over the years in BSWI's project area



SECTOR: LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT & BASIC NEEDS

To BSWI, Livelihood Development is ideas through which the community can reach to a situation from where they can take off. This is regarded as a starting point for the community to be prepared and equipped for sustainable economy at the local level. During the year, BSWI has revised its Livelihood Development Policy keeping in view the demand of the target communities with whom we work.

Livelihoods principles and the livelihoods framework

The livelihoods principles and framework of BSWI would form the basis of all livelihoods programming. The fundamental principles of livelihoods programming are that it is people-centred, multilevel, dynamic, and ultimately aims to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

People-centred

BSWI's Livelihoods programming would fully involve the people whose livelihoods are affected. Our livelihoods approach would identify programmes based on the priorities and goals defined by people themselves and would support their own livelihoods strategies. It would be built on people's strengths.

Multi-level and holistic

Our livelihoods programming would recognise multiple influences on people at different levels, and would seek to understand the relationships between these influences and their joint impact upon livelihoods. This would include influences at the macro level (State, Nation) and at the micro-level (community and household). It would also recognise the multiple actors (from the private sector to national level ministries) influencing livelihoods. It would acknowledge the multiple livelihood strategies that people adopt to protect and secure their livelihoods and multiple livelihood outcomes.

Dynamic

Livelihoods change over time. Our livelihoods approach would aim to understand and learn from change so that it can support positive patterns of change and help mitigate negative patterns. It would explicitly recognise the effects on livelihoods of external shocks and the longer-term processes that may erode livelihoods, such as climate change, HIV/AIDS and economic decline. It would also recognise the potential for competing livelihood strategies. People compete for jobs, land, etc, and this makes it difficult for everyone to achieve simultaneous improvements in their livelihoods.

Sustainable:

To BSWI, livelihoods are sustainable when:

- they are resilient in the face of external shocks and stresses
- they are not dependent upon external support (or if they are, this support itself is economically and institutionally sustainable)
- they maintain the long-term productivity of natural resources, and
- they do not undermine the livelihoods of, or compromise the livelihood options open to, others.

BSWI believes that a person's **livelihood** refers to their means of securing the basic necessities -food, water, shelter and clothing - of life. Livelihood is defined as a set of activities, involving securing water, food, fodder, medicine, shelter, clothing and the capacity to acquire above necessities working either individually or as a group by using endowments (both human and material for meeting the requirements of the self and his/her household on a sustainable basis with dignity.

BSWI's concept of **Sustainable Livelihood (SL**) is an attempt to go beyond the conventional definitions and approaches to poverty eradication. These had been found by us to be too narrow because they focused only on certain aspects or manifestations of poverty, such as low income, or did not consider other vital aspects of poverty such as vulnerability and social exclusion. We now recognize that more attention must be paid to the various factors and processes which either constrain or enhance poor people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable manner.

Our SL concept has been found to be offering a more coherent and integrated approach to poverty. We have arrived at the following composite definition of a sustainable rural livelihood, which is applied most commonly at the household level: To us, "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local levels and in the

BSWI's works in this sector during this year were:

- Awareness building on Natural Resource Management;
- Training & orientation on Household level income generation activities;
- Group-based production programs and skill building;
- NRM & On-farm activities for small and marginal farmers
- Promoting animals and small ruminants rearing by the women;
- Strengthening and streamlining Self-Help Groups (SHGs);
- Employment creation by linkages with corporate sectors and commercial houses;
- Strengthening and expanding the works of the formed SHG Federation (SHGF) named "*PROBODHAN*" vertically and horizontally;
- Initiating Social Enterprise Projects owned, run and managed by the SHGF.

Awareness building on Natural Resource Management;

Natural resource management refers to the management of natural resources such as land, water, soil, plants and animals, with a particular focus on how management affects the quality of life for both present and future generations. Natural resource management deals with managing the way in which people and natural landscapes interact. It brings together land use planning, water management, biodiversity conservation, and the future sustainability of industries like agriculture, mining, tourism, fisheries and forestry. It recognises that people and their livelihoods rely on the health and productivity of our landscapes, and their actions as stewards of the land play a critical role in maintaining this health and productivity.

BSWI's campaigns and awareness generation on NRM has been promoting an awareness of the connection between environmental systems and the social sciences. The program helped the stakeholders understand how decisions are made regarding the use or protection of our natural systems. In a combination of theoretical and hands-on learning, farmers, students and stakeholders gained the knowledge needed to manage human interactions with the nature. This work has been carried out in schools, local associations, farmers' clubs and villagers and conducted in 54 villages in the South and North Bengal districts. A total of 4658 participants participated the awareness and orientation programs theoretically and on-field training programs.

NRM (Natural Resource Management) & On-farm activities

Our Natural Resource management deals with managing the way in which people and natural landscapes interact. It brings together land use planning, water management, biodiversity conservation, and the future sustainability of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. We recognize that people and their livelihoods rely on the health and productivity of our landscapes, and their actions as stewards of the land play a critical role in maintaining this health and productivity. Our Natural resource management specifically focuses on a scientific and technical understanding of resources and ecology and the life-supporting capacity of those resources. Our focus has been on "Community-based natural resource management".

Community-based natural resource management

Our community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approach combines conservation objectives with the generation of economic benefits for rural communities. The three key assumptions being that: locals are better placed to conserve natural resources, people will conserve a resource only if benefits exceed the costs of conservation, and people will conserve a resource that is linked directly to their quality of life. When a local people's quality of life is enhanced, their efforts and commitment to ensure the future well-being of the resource are also enhanced. Our community based natural resource management is also based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Land management

In order to have a sustainable environment, we have recognized that understanding and using appropriate management strategies is important. In terms of understanding, we have emphasized some important points of land management like:

- Comprehending the processes of nature including ecosystem, water, soils
- Using appropriate and adapting management systems in local situations
- Cooperation between scientists who have knowledge and resources and local people who have knowledge and skills

Our activities in NRM during the reporting year have been:

a) Soil management and soil conservation
b) Pond excavation and re-excavation
c) Community-pond renovation
d) Fish cultivation
e) Animal rearing
f) Vegetable cultivation
g) SRI for food security (staple food – rice)
h) Mango orchard cultivation and management
i) Organic cultivation

Food Security & SRI (System of Rice Intensification)

Food security entails ensuring adequate food supply to people, especially those who are deprived of basic nutrition. Food security has been a major concern in India. According to UN-India, there are nearly 195 million undernourished people in India, which is a quarter of the world's hunger burden. Also roughly 43% children in India are chronically undernourished.

We have successfully implemented the SRI in water-crisis areas of North Bengal during the year and in previous years too. SRI is a methodology aimed at increasing the yield of rice produced in farming. It is a low water, labour-intensive method that uses younger seedlings singly spaced and typically hand weeded with special tools. It was developed in 1983 by the French Jesuit Father Henri de Laulanié in Madagascar. SRI concepts and practices have continued to evolve as they are being adapted to rain-fed (unirrigated) conditions and with transplanting being superseded by direct-seeding sometimes. The central principles of SRI are:

- Rice field soils should be kept moist rather than continuously saturated, minimizing anaerobic conditions, as this improves root growth and supports the growth and diversity of aerobic soil organisms.
- Rice plants should be planted singly and spaced optimally widely to permit more growth of roots and canopy and to keep all leaves photo synthetically active.
- Rice seedlings should be transplanted when young, less than 15 days old with just two leaves, quickly, shallow and carefully, to avoid trauma to roots and to minimize transplant shock.

Proponents of our SRI activity claimed its use increases yield, saves water, reduces production costs, and increases income and that benefits have been achieved in our project areas of North Bengal. Our SRI activity has raised irrigated rice yields to about double the present average without relying on external inputs, also offering environmental and equity benefits. In the last three years more than 4600 farmers reported that they had beaten the old yield record, The best was a young farmer named Kakon Ray, who reported setting a new record in rice production of 17.59 tons per hectare using SRI, beating the traditional record by 3 tons. We have brought 7360 hectares of land under SRI method in the last year without any project assistance and achieved only through mobilizing the farmers of Malda district.

O*ur Portfolio of activities implemented under NRM*

The priority areas have been soil and water conservation (including watershed programmes, dry land farming systems) plantation and horticulture (tree based farming, Bamboo based farming, mango based farming, wadi development, organic farming). We have covered a total of 567 small and marginal farmers and other large farmers during the year in Malda district.

We have implemented micro-watershed management, irrigation water management, soil and water conservation, community-based fisheries management, and conservation of biodiversity. Our experiences have shown that participation of different types of stakeholders is useful, essential for effective and sustainable management and conservation of natural resource systems.

Promoting animals and small ruminants rearing by the women

BSWI organised skill development programs in cattle rearing, duck rearing, poultry rearing, pig rearing and goat rearing. Initiated with the Japan Consulate's financial assistance, we have constructed an ideal *Livestock-Skill-Training-Cum-Demonstration Centre* where we planned to provide skill training to at least 5000 women in a five year time-frame till 2018-2019. Till this year, we have trained 3986 women in the above activities. They have received loans from the SHG Corpus Fund and leveraged SHG loan from local banks and government cooperatives. Average earning has been around Rs. 40,000/- per annum (based on our study in 2017).

Training & orientation on Household level income generation activities

Skill training programs have been conducted for women, farmers and entrepreneurs in various household level income generation activities involving 85 women, 134 farmers and 26 entrepreneurs in animal husbandry, fishery, orchard development, kitchen gardening, sewing and knitting, garments making, simple business management. After the training programs, the successful trainees (236 persons) have been linked with bank finance, SHG finance and government financing schemes.

Group-based production programs and skill building

The SHGs are involving more than 6200 women of rural villages who are unemployed and unskilled. They deserve immediate skill development and employment. BSWI organised skill development in sewing garments, wool knitting, leather bag making, jute diversification and bamboo basket making for immediate income generation. The SHGs of the same trades combined together and set up their production units under the aegis of the SHGF (*PROBODHAN*) with the name of *PROCHESTA* (meaning 'Efforts'). As on the end of the year, a total of 230 women have been enrolled in the Group-based production programs and they are earning palpable income.

Strengthening and streamlining Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Over the years, we have promoted 600 plus SHGs combining of about 6200 women from three districts of West Bengal. This year we have conducted a Study on 'SHG Performance' and according to the recommendation of the Study, we have streamlined the SHGs and registered 93 SHGs with the *NRLM* as a strategy to help them leverage government and at the same time we are coordinating them as friend-philosopher-guide. Without stopping after reaching a milestone we would go on to reaching other milestones ahead and hence communicating with other SHGs not yet visited. By the end of the year 2018, we shall reach another 300 SHGs in the districts of North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas.

Employment creation by linkages with corporate sectors and commercial houses;

To provide self employment and earning opportunities for women and unemployed youths, we have involved a business strategy in the year of 2015-2016. Our involvement with "Gaon Chalo" initiative of Tata Global Beverages Ltd (TGBL) and "Saath Sath" initiative TataAIA Life Insurance Co. has provided income for a few hundred women and youths. Gaon Chalo is aimed at marketing Tata Tea in the remotest corners of rural areas and TataAIA aims to cover the poorest villagers with micro-insurance schemes for protecting their lives. We have reached in four districts by covering about 20000 families, 200 plus small village groceries and 450 village level tea stalls where we have been selling Tata Tea of various categories. In the Micro-insurance program of TataAIA, we have so far covered more than 500 poorest women and 300 other households who have insured their lives. Both the programs are aimed at creating rural employment with a focus of women and unemployed youths. Women from SHGs have been enrolled in these programs as a special focus so that they can stand on their own feet and are self-sufficient.

Besides, we have tied up 500 odd SHGs with Bongiyo Grameen Vikash Bank (a Govt. Of West Bengal Undertaking) and Government Cooperative Banks (SKUS) of the four districts where 2400 women have opened their savings accounts and 1600 women have got bank/cooperative loans for doing household business and trades and agricultural activities. The loan repayment status to the banks and cooperatives is hovering around 99.22 per cent as on March 2017.

Strengthening and expanding the works of the formed SHG Federation (SHGF) named "PROBODHAN" vertically and horizontally

The SHGF named PROBODHAN (Awakening) has been strengthened with the fullest participation of the SHGs and the decision makers of the SHGF. The PROBODHAN has been made an autonomous body where they are taking up various social and economic programs. The programs are: Garments sewing; selling of cloths and garments; selling of low cost quality sanitary napkins and selling of Tata Tea. Producers' Units has been set up in a village named Panchpara in Gajole block where the SHG members work on sewing, selling of cloths and selling of sanitary napkins. PROBODHAN has registered a company named Sreema Garments through which they sell cloths and various garments at fair prices. The SHGs of the same trades combined together and set up their production units under the aegis of the SHGF (*PROBODHAN*) with the name of *PROCHESTA* (meaning 'Efforts'). As on the end of the year, a total of 230 women have been enrolled in the Group-based production programs and they are earning palpable income.

Initiating Social Enterprise Projects owned, run and managed by the SHGF

We have promoted a social enterprise with the name of PROBODHAN as a people's organization that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements in financial, social and environmental well-being of the stakeholders - this aims at including maximizing social and economic impacts. Our Social Enterprise has been structured as a non-profit and takes the form of a social business and a community interest group. What differentiates our social enterprise from other organizations is that their social mission is as core to their success as any potential profit. To us, Social impact and social enterprise are not the same. Social impact may refer to the overall effects of a business, but a business that has social impact may or may not be a social enterprise. Our Social Enterprise Program has socially bound mission statements and it operates with the goal of solving a social problem as a part of their mission.

As a young organization, PROBODHAN is run, managed and owned by the SHGs' representation. It provides financial relief by supplying daily needs at fair prices to maximizing the families' financial surpluses and thereby promoting more saving for their future. This also helps the rural poor families bypass the exploitation of the markets' higher rates, market-middlemen's vested interests and the oppressing attitudes of the local moneylenders. As on March 2017, PROBODHAN has reached to more than 500 poorest families with its products like garments, women's wears, sanitary napkins, Tata Tea and Life Insurance policies of four districts. The annual turnover has been over rupees 25 lakhs during the reporting year. It has created employment opportunities of women who are the members of the SHGs by which they have been confident; saved a good amount of money (around 15 lakhs) and have been recognized as important members of their families.

SECTOR: ORGANISATION BUILDING & EMPOWERMENT

BSWI believes that empowering girls and women is powerful. Today, we know it is the key to economic growth, political stability, and social transformation. World leaders, experts and scholars alike are giving their voice to this critical endeavour. When women succeed, nations are more safe, secure and prosperous. The Women's Empowerment Principles are a set of Principles for business offering guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. They are the result of collaboration between the National/International Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. BSWI opines that the empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself. In addition, it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development.

***Women's empowerment** has become a significant topic of discussion in development and economics. It can also point to the approaches regarding other trivialized genders in a particular political or social context. Women's economic empowerment refers to the ability for women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from the System and the Society.*

During the year BSWI mobilized groups of tribal and socially backward communities against exploitation and addressed the socio-economic issues in its project area. For the last ten years BSWI has focused on community based development with the following objectives:

- ⇒ Assist people in obtaining basic development and infrastructure facilities for education, health care, drinking water, and housing.
- ⇒ Encourage sustainable development with regard to natural resources.
- ⇒ Raise consciousness of legal rights among the stakeholders.
- ⇒ Organize tribal communities to resist exploitation, assert their rights and control their natural resources.
- ⇒ Promote accountable, grassroots-level institutions for socio-economic independence and self-governance.

BSWI addressed the following challenges of its project areas:

- ➢ Land alienation, exploitation by non-tribal groups, industrialization and displacement, state violation of constitutional and protective legislation
- ➢ Loss of control over natural resources and rights to decision-making
- ➢ Economic exploitation and abuse by moneylenders and traders
- ➢ Ill-health and inaccessibility of health services resulting in high mortality;
- ➢ Inadequate and substandard educational facilities with a very high drop-out rate at the school level particularly, of girl children.

BSWI has carried out the following activities during the year:

1. Capacity building

BSWI, with its long-standing experience in community organization, provided capacity building support to small groups and local organizations working for people's rights as they find it difficult to obtain information and inputs on their own. BSWI assisted four hundred community based SHGs and producers' collectives in its different project areas in capacity building, education and health, legal aid, linkages, information and documentation, organization management, financial support, campaign support, marketing and technical expertise.

2. Support to Development Activities

BSWI implements development programs in the project villages through local community participation to meet their basic requirements of housing, drinking water, education, health services, etc. by linking up with either government departments like SC & ST Welfare, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, or with institutions/organizations concerned with the development of the vulnerable groups. BSWI

has also encouraged communities to build up local sustainable institutions for over-coming exploitation through women's thrift societies, producers' collectives (mango, fish, goats etc.), health and education committees and farmers' associations.

3. Information support

Communities affected by private or government projects have a right to information on these projects and their likely impacts. Information should also be accessible to local groups and communities on legal rights, laws and regulations, and other programs relevant to them. As there is an information-vacuum due to reluctance from government and industries in sharing it, BSWI collects information, compiles into brief informative documents and disseminates it. Demystifying legal and technical information, particularly in the context of development projects and spreading this literature in the vernacular is another important activity of BSWI.

The United Nations Development Programme constituted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for ensuring equity and peace across the world. The third MDG is directly related to the empowerment of women in India. The MDGs are agreed-upon goals to reduce certain indicators of disparity across the world by the year 2015. The third MDG is centred towards promoting gender equality and empowering women: "Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education by no later than 2015". While India's progress in this front has been brave, there are quite a few corners that it needs to cut before it can be called as being truly revolutionary in its quest for understanding what women empowerment is. As UNDP says, "India missed the 2005 deadline of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education. However, as the Government of India MDG Report 2009 notes, "participation of women in employment and decision-making remains far less than that of men, and the disparity is not likely to be eliminated by 2015." Achieving GPI in tertiary education also remains a challenge. In addition, the labour market openness to women in industry and services has only marginally increased from 13-18 percent between 1990-91 and 2004-05.

4. Linkages

Small local groups need to come out of their isolated struggles as issues affecting people are based on micro-level policies of the state. BSWI, with its experience and access to other people's networks helps local struggles by providing linkages to larger movements and fora so as to build up a strong lobby support for the issues in the regions.

5. Technical expertise and alternatives

BSWI supported small organizations and communities with technical expertise in seeking alternative sustainable development designs which can be managed by the communities. This includes harnessing locally available natural resources for meeting basic needs of food, income and employment. With the help of the technical experts BSWI also took up impact assessment studies and gave constructive alternatives which are ecologically and socially enduring and press for balanced development.

6. Research and Documentation

BSWI took up research, studies and prepared reports on issues related to tribals/scheduled areas, environment, human rights, land alienation, rural development programs, legal issues, etc. Some of the studies undertaken by BSWI have been on the impact of the Natural Resource Management, Business development by local producers, Long Term Perspective Planning, and feasibility studies for micro-finance project.

Women's Empowerment

The coverall objective of this sector is to empower women to fight against poverty, exploitation and subjugation and enable them involve fully in development activities to meet the millennium development goals. The specific objectives of the project are to empower women and young girls economically and educationally to enable them participate in development activities, initiate the community to advocate for support and education of girls, to increase the enrolment of girls in the school, to change the life of poor women and their families through revolving fund provision and empower their households economically.

Social Empowerment

BSWI has carried out major activities like conducting community mobilization workshop for different community members and reducing harmful traditional practices, educational support to poor in school girls, revolving fund provision for poor women and engaging them in different income generating activities, training self-help group members in income generating activities, formation and strengthening of women's producers' groups and women-farmers' clubs. BSWI has worked in 47 villages of South 24 Parganas, Malda and West Medinipur districts of West Bengal for a total of 345 self Help Groups (SHGs) of women. During this year, BSWI has promoted 56 SHGs in these areas. A total of 5165 women from the marginalised sections have participated this activity. During the year, BSWI has conducted the following activities for the members of the SHGs in the villages:

- BSWI has conducted 122 community mobilization workshop for different community members, educational support to poor in-school girls, awarding outstanding girl students, revolving fund provision for poor women and engaging them in different income generating schemes, training women farmers in agro-based income generating activities and providing them with revolving fund.
- Different activities have been conducted such as advocacy and sensitization workshops for community, religious and women representatives and concerned bodies on gender equality, human rights (women's right) and child rights.
- Sensitization workshop for religious and local leaders: BSWI organized workshops for community representatives on women's rights and gender equality. Twelve similar workshops have been conducted in the year in different locations where more than 670 such persons participated. The participants of the workshops after completion of the workshop and when back to their residence localities have taught the community they lead. This activity was intended to bring change in attitude of the community towards women, reduce violence of their rights, and ensure their equality.

Economic empowerment

Formation of SHGs: BSWI has utilized a cadre of trained leaders of existing SHGs to expand the social mobilization to new pockets in adjoining blocks. The activities involved were:

Micro-Credit:

Supporting poor women through provision of revolving fund: BSWI through its SHGs, supported 3412 women with micro-finance averaging from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 5000 for doing various household income generating activities. The activities they practiced were paddy processing, puffed rice making, cereal packaging, rice packaging, paper bag making, net making, vegetable growing and selling, tea stalls, small eateries, tailoring and embroidering, woollen garments making and selling, household poultry, inland fisheries, goat rearing, pig rearing, cattle rearing, milk vending, utensils vending and series of small enterprises. The money that was paid back by former beneficiaries has been given for the other poor women during the year who were in the waiting lists.

Capacity building: SHG & Federation members

The group members/leaders, Federation leaders were provided training and orientation in leadership, gender, rights, communication skills, group dynamics, managerial aspects, maintaining accounts, PIME and regulation of their savings and credit program. BSWI also organised workshops that had the twin participation of both the women's SHGs and the Federation members as well as the leaders of the Panchayats, banks and government officials. As a result of these training, orientation and workshops on different social and economic aspects, the confidence of the members of the women's SHGs and Federation members increased.

In India, women are devalued traditionally and the men are normative reified. According to Hindu mythology, the word 'Ardhanarishvara' meaning "The Lord whose half is a woman". We need both male and female each other. We must work all together and both needs each other to survive and flourish. Women should also be in place of man in today's society. As they are now highly qualified, make remarkable contributions to the economy through their paid work. They work in a wide variety of professions around the country from teachers and secretaries to welders and doctors to machine operators and child care workers too.

Livelihood Planning:

BSWI has worked with both men and women in the family, helping them to improve their livelihoods and access complementary services from public and private institutions. Combining PRA tools such as livelihood and resource mapping, interventions such as achievement motivation training, area planning and envisioning exercises, BSWI has helped SHG members and their families develop medium-term livelihood goals for themselves. Various participatory learning tools including pictorial-based methodologies were used to help women track and analyze events in their lives and livelihoods, while making plans for changes. Exercises have been conducted in groups as well as with each household. They were not one-time inputs to be given to the groups but were part of an ongoing engagement with the women.

India as a country is still recovering from years of abuse in the time of the Raj and more years of economic suffering at the hands of the License Raj. It is only now that globalization, liberalization and other socio-economic forces have given some respite to a large proportion of the population. However, there are still quite a few areas where women empowerment in India is largely lacking. To truly understand what women empowerment is, there needs to be a sea-change in the mind-set of the people in the country. Not just the women themselves, but the men have to wake up to a world that is moving towards equality and equity. It is better that this is embraced earlier rather than later, for our own good. Our country should be catapulted into the horizon of empowerment of women and revel in its glory. We have a long way to go, but we will get there someday. We shall overcome.

Strengthening Knowledge:

The major intentions of BSWI in this sector have been to sensitize the target group women about their rights, gender dimensions, and responsibilities as the stakeholders in the development process through innovative awareness programs. BSWI has been sensitive in this issue by, the final process of empowering the target group illiterate women to acquire functional literacy skills and to be equipped with various social-political-economic knowledge and capacities to be self- reliant. The role of knowledge building and improvement in capacity building cannot be undermined and the VADCs for the rural women were found to be the additives to the process of capacity building and empowerment of women.

Group based Enterprises

BSWI promoted many self-help groups of women in its project villages. The members of the self-help groups need earning from rural enterprises. BSWI realised that it could train and provide economic benefits in various animal rearing activities with its expertise and dedicated manpower by setting up the enterprise units. Since then, the units have not only demonstrated viable enterprises to the local women, but also provided training, technical support and guidance to other NGOs / Panchayat Bodies. BSWI has been able to provide training in various enterprises and facilitated setting up of their own enterprises to hundreds of women who have been able to cross the acute poverty line. The programs are: Dairy, Poultry, Fishery, Duck rearing, Goat rearing, Jute bag knitting, woollen garments knitting, Foam bag making, embroidery, tailoring, improved Mat making, Food Processing etc. In all these units, 426 women are working and getting remunerative incomes. The enterprise programs are run and managed by the producers' groups under the supervision of our organization.

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Gaon Chalo

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SIR DORABJI TATA TRUST AND THE ALLIED TRUSTS

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TATA
Leadership with trust

Irish Aid
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MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

CASA
Member of actalliance

Canada
CANADIAN EMBASSY

在コルカタ日本国総領事館
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SMALL INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT BANK OF INDIA

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TATA AIA LIFE

GuideStarIndia

TECH MAHINDRA ESRO

CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE

FISH LEATHER BAG TRAINING CUM
PRODUCTION CENTRE
at
B.S.W.I

BSWI's Inspirations

"He ***only lives who lives for others' – Swami Vivekananda***

"Do not say, "It is morning," and dismiss it with a name of yesterday. See it for the first time as a new-born child that has no name." **– Rabindranath Tagore**

"Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love." --- Mother Teresa

"See the good in people and help them …Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever" ------- Mahatma Gandhi

"Honor your daughters. They are honorable" - Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Peace Prize Winner of Pakistan

"The solution to women's issues can only be achieved in a free and democratic society in which human energy is liberated, the energy of both women and men together" - Tawakkol Karman, Nobel Peace Prize Winner of Yemen

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