BARADRONE SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTION (BSWI)

Reaching the Unreached

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Village & P.O. Baradrone,
Block – Diamond Harbour,
District – South 24 Parganas,
West Bengal 743332, India

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From the Executive Director's Desk

Dear Members, Supporters, staff members and villagers,

The economy which had begun to open up by January 2021 was again impacted by the third wave in January 2022. Since the time, lives and livelihoods were severely impacted. Although a complete lockdown was not declared by the Government of India, there was uncertainty about economic activities with many sectors remaining affected by restricted mobility or curtailed production. Medium, small and micro enterprises, the largest employers in the informal sector, were significantly impacted. During the second wave of the pandemic, the incidence of disease loomed close to our communities, with many of our staff members also contracting the infection. Health services were stretched to their limits in metro cities and smaller towns. Being located in some of India's remotest pockets, we had first-hand knowledge of how bad the situation was in terms of health facilities, and awareness levels of the communities about safeguards against the rapidly spreading infection. Medicines, hospital beds, oxygen, and awareness on getting vaccinated, all required additional support from Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) like ours. We worked in close collaboration with the district administration and NGO partners to reach out to all our community members with essential aids and awareness drives. Collaboration has always been central to BSWI's outreach initiatives. The response to the COVID-19 crisis reiterated our faith in the 'collaborative approach' for development work. Even the union and the state governments, in several forums, acknowledged the collaborative role played by several NGOs in providing support at the last mile at the time of this unprecedented crisis. Besides the unprecedented national and global health emergency, the pandemic continued to create economic difficulties for a majority of the rural poor. The massive setback the Indian economy received during 2020-21 resulted in weakened prices of kharif crops and loss of jobs for migrant laborers in urban areas, besides other debilitating effects on the rural economy.

This year, BSWI enters its 47th year of its operations. I am deeply honoured to have been able to working as Secretary and Director for a long time. Even as the country seeks to contribute effectively to the achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and there are growing aspirations of a better life and means of livelihoods among various sections of the society, BSWI is well placed to grow its influence in the development sector and help impact the lives of a larger population of the rural poor and marginalized. Even as we go into print, we have completed an organizational renewal exercise with the help of National Institute of Rural Development. The new Management Unit has identified key areas of organizational focus as we move to realize our aspiration of transforming the lives of thousands of rural people in poverty regions of the country by 2028. Strategic interventions to realize this ambition will include:

- A systems-change approach by leveraging partnerships and multistakeholder orchestration;
- Developing sustainable models of comprehensive livelihoods (broad components being economy, food and nutrition security, ecology, gender, inclusion of ultra poor, and vulnerable communities);
- Organization restructure to unlock growth by empowering talent; Research and evidence building for monitoring, reporting, and learning; and Use of technology across impact journey to improve process management and impact on scale.

Besides the strong base of social capital and a deep understanding of the grassroots needs and challenges that we have developed over time, we are very fortunate to have had long standing support from many corporates, foundations, and other donor partners to invest both in our engagement with communities and in our organizational development efforts. As we embark on our next phase of the development journey, I would like to thank all our government, corporate, foundation, civil society, knowledge and academia and media partners for their unstinting support over the years, and invite them to be our co-travellers going forward too.

Sanjib Bhattacharya
Secretary, Director &
Chief Trustee

August 15,2023

BSWI Governing Body

Sachita Sarkar — President & Trustee

Mrs Sarkar is a veteran rural development activist with special focus on women's empowerment and collectivities for the cause of societal development. She is a graduate from the Calcutta University and has participated in many development training and orientation programs in this state and outside. Mrs. Sarkar was indirectly associated with our organization for more than fifteen years and now as the President of our organization for last five years. She heads the Governing Body and actively assists all of its activities with her experiences and contributions for the social well-beings.

Anadi Naskar — Vice-President & Trustee

Mr. Naskar is associated with BSWI for more than three decades as a volunteer, staff and active development activist. He has grassroots experience and knowledge about livelihood development, games and sports and SHG motivation and activation. Mr. Naskar is a graduate from the Calcutta University. His contribution to this organization is unparallel and precious. He assists not only the President but also the whole of our Governing

Sanjib Bhattacharya — Secretary-Director & Trustee

Mr. Bhattacharya has been one of the founder members of BSWI since the year of 1976 when the earlier "Library" was transformed to the present organization – BSWI. He has been carrying the legacy of his parents who were the main founders of the organization. Having been graduated from the Calcutta university in Pol. Sc. and Sociology (Hons), Shri Bhattacharya made him over to the development fields without going in for any traditional jobs. Later on, he received the MAP (Management Appreciation Program) from IRMA (Institute of Rural management Anand), Gujarat; MMFP (Management Micro Finance Program) from the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and from ActionAid India; and then MRDP

He started his career from this organization from the year of 1981 as a Project Coordinator (and Founder Member). Mr. Bhattacharya is a highly devoted personality with long-standing experiences in all series of development aspects. He has worked with the Ministry of Rural Development as a Facilitator-cum-Evaluator for about a decade and trained many a NGOs in the districts of South 24 Parganas, East Medinipur, Darjeeling, Malda, Murshidabad, North Dinajpur and Silchar (Assam). on, experience and social

Arati Sarkar — Asstt. Secretary & Trustee

Mrs. Arati Sarkar is a high school qualified woman. She is an entrepreneur for more than thirty years and a dynamic personality for managing and guiding the self-help groups (SHGs). She has been an example of enterprise development for being economically successful. She guides and teaches the several SHGs being run under the aegis of our organization. Mrs. Sarkar is a dynamic and smart women who is a pride to our society.

Haran Chandra Paik — Treasurer & Trustee

Mr. Paik is a veteran development worker and has served our organization since his student life. By profession he was the head teacher of a high school and academically he is a commerce graduate from the Calcutta University. He has vast knowledge in accounts procedures and is certified by the Ramkrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad Narendrapur. He has devoted himself in the cause of the society's welfare and he is vegetarian. He has contributed many significant things into the organization's working

Swapan Bikash Naskar — Member & Trustee

Mr. Paik is a veteran development worker and has served our organization since his student life. By profession he was the head teacher of a high school and academically he is a commerce graduate from the Calcutta University. He has vast knowledge in accounts procedures and is certified by the Ramkrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad Narendrapur. He has devoted himself in the cause of the society's welfare and he is vegetarian. He has contributed many significant things into the organization's working pattern.

BSWI Advisory Body

Mr. Rangan Datta — Chief Advisor, BSWI

Mr Datta is a very respected and creative person who has contributed many great things to the government departments and to our organization. Mr. Datta has provided his expertise in various government departments, agencies and foundations led by the Government of India. He has great contributions to the growth of BSWI in many folds for the last two decades. He retired as a Secretary to the Government of India in the position of Senior IAS Officer on Ministry of Rural Development as Director General as well as the DG of Ministry of Home Affairs Government of India. After his retirement, Mr Datta has worked as an Advisor to the Planning Commission of India; Advisor of the Department of Science & Technology GoI; Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Foundation GoI and many other reputed government organizations.

Dr Kanchan Bhowmik — Advisor, BSWI

Dr. Bhowmick is a young man with progressive ideas for agriculture-based livelihood development. As a meritorious student, Dr. Bhowmick is an IIT fellow of Kharagpur IIT. He provides project planning and monitoring support to BSWI and helps the organization in decision making and exposure to new technologies in the agriculture sector.

Aditi Ray — Advisor, BSWI

Ms. Aditi is supporting BSWI in the field of making people learn; designing, preparing and delivering training course targeted for adult learners; Creating post curriculum evaluation and feedback forms; Conducting workshops for formulating intervention in the realm of social work development practice; Writing project proposals, log Frame, documentation reports; Conducting creative writing and storytelling workshops for adults and young adults; Imparting leadership training; Facilitating workshops for community organization and development practice; Developing adequate contents and modules for academic research; Preparing teaching learning materials; Conducting training sessions to impart knowledge based training on Rights and entitlements of women, Gender mainstreaming and empowerment, Child rights; Devising training program to facilitate skill development of organizational staff in terms of documentation, communication and interpersonal skills.

Dr. Rajat Das — Advisor, BSWI

Dr. Das is a qualified medical doctor with more than four decades involvement in social development sector. He was involved with a world-famous development charity and then established his organization ASHA that works in health related programs in many districts of India. He is associated with BSWI as an advisor in its health sector activities. With his support BSWI has made advancement

Mr. Saikat Pal — Advisor, BSWI

Mr. Paul was associated with PRADAN, a pioneer national level rural development organization. He is also a Fellow of the IIT Kharagpur in Soil & Water Management. A young person with genuine zeal to induce sustainable rural development in the remote rural areas, Mr. Paul has been running an NGO and working closely with the government departments in varied development paradigms. Mr. Paul helps BSWI in devising project proposals and monitoring its activities of the

OPERATIONAL SECTORS OF BSWI

EDUCATION & LIFE DETERMINATION

RELIEF & REHABILITATION

HEALTH & WELL BEING

ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT & BASIC NECESSITIES

ORGANIZATION BUILDING & EMPOWERMENT

OBJECTIVES OF BSWI

- 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 organizationally
- 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.

BSWI'S OPERATIONAL AREAS

Coverage of Rural Population

Sl.No	State / Districts	Blocks & villages	Target populations reached
01	W.B. South 24 Parganas	Diamond Harbour I, Magrahat, Kulpi & Namkhana (40 villages)	242,000
02	W.B. Malda	Gajole (35 villages)	37,000
03	W.B. North Dinajpur	Kaliaganj (30 villages)	34,000
04	W.B. Murshidabad	Kandi Samsi (25 villages)	26,600
05	Jharkhand – Rajmahal District	Taljhari Block (21 villages)	11345
06	Kolar District (Karnataka)	Kolar Block (4 villages)	325

OTHER INFORMATION

Salary & Benefits

Position	Amount per month	Highest paid staff (CEO)	Lowest paid staff Night Guard)
Secretary & Director	Rs. 50,000/-	Rs. 26,500/-	Rs. 7000/-

OUR DONORS – PAST & PRESENT

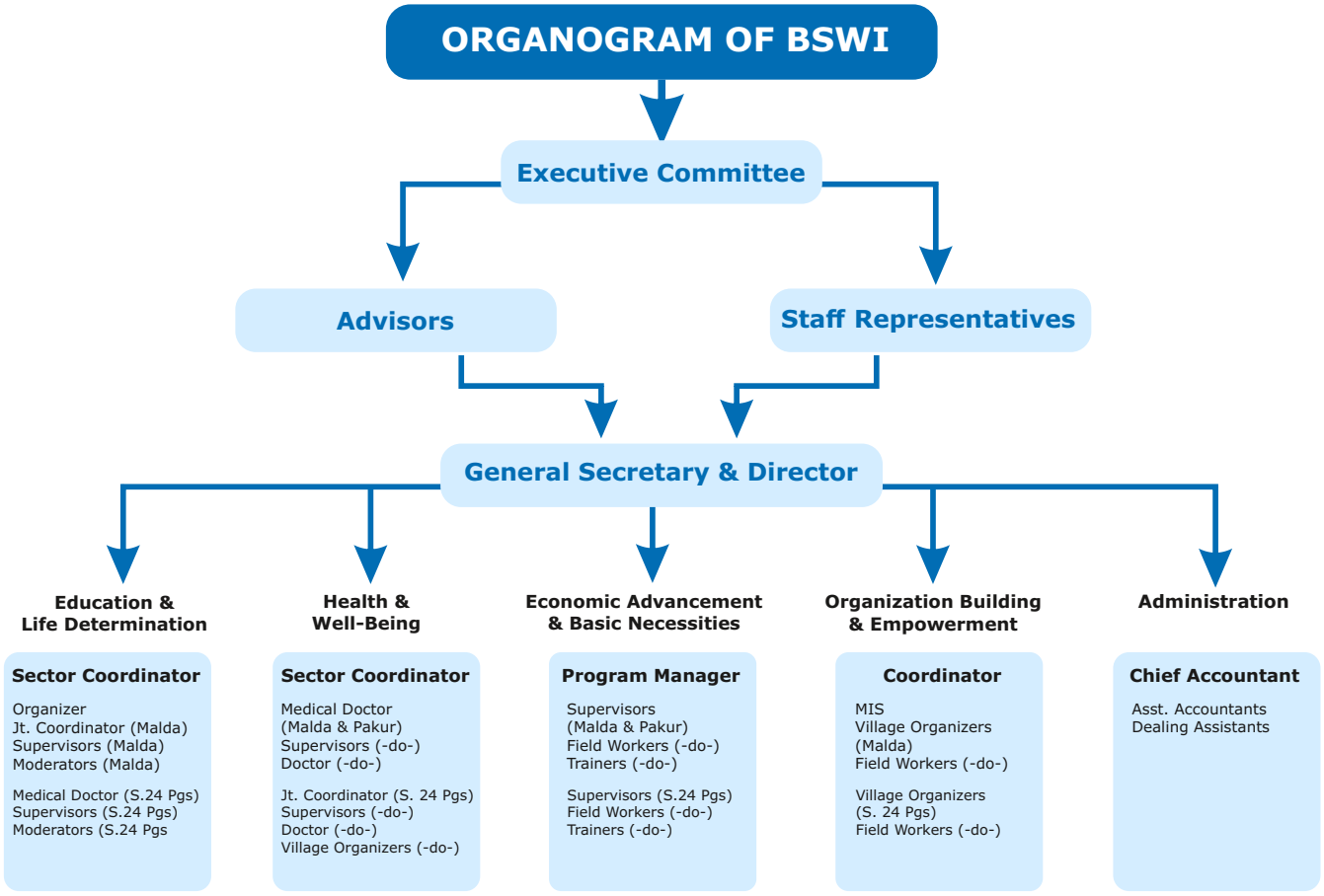
Name of Donors & Year	Projects Supported
PAST SUPPORTERS: Till 2019-2020	
ICCO Netherlands (1978-1984)	Agriculture Development & Irrigation Support
CRS India (1978-1981)	Nutritious Food Distribution for Women & Children
Mennonite Central Committee (1981-1089)	Food-For-Work through Pond Excavation, Fish Cultivation, and Vegetable Cultivation
Khadi & Village Industries Commission (1981-1988)	Spinning and Handloom Works Training & Production Project
Khadi & Village Industries Commission (1982-1987)	Bakery for the Poor & Needy People
Government of West Bengal (Village Road Making) {1980-1983}	Village Road Making
OXFAM India Trust UK (1982 - 1985)	Rehabilitation of Village Robbers
OXFAM India Trust UK (1984 - 1986)	Reinstatement of Potters
Action Aid India (1985-1999)	Integrated Rural Development Project Through Child Sponsorship in 35 Villages
OXFAM India Trust (1986-1999)	Community Health Project in 25 Villages
Ministry of Rural Development, GoI (1992-2010)	Ten projects for sustainable rural development and Livelihood Projects
FORRAD GERMANY (1996-1998)	Installation of Hand pumps and Irrigation Improvement Project
Embassy of Ireland (2013-2017)	Enterprise Development Project For Women

Canadian Embassy (1994-1997)	Training in Hand Gloves and Woolen Products for the Self-Help Group Women
Consulate General of Japan (2009-2011)	Construction of Livelihood Trg-Cum-Production Center for the Villagers
Tata Trusts (2008-2012)	Integrated Livelihood Development Project in North Bengal
JRD Tata Trust (2012-2017)	Integrated Livelihood Development Project in North Bengal
Tata Global Beverages Ltd (2014-2019)	"Gaon Chalo" (meaning LETS GO TO VILLAGES) For Youth Employment
TechMahindra ESRO (2012-present)	Health, Hygiene and Nutrition Development of the Poor and needy women, children and adolescents.
PRESENT SUPPORTERS: 2020-2021	
MPLAD – GoI (2020-2021)	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
District Rural Development Office Malda (2020-2021)	-do-
Dept of Health, GoWB (2020-2021)	Medicine Supplies and food distribution
Volkart Foundation Indian Trust (2020-2021)	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Belur (2020-2021)	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
S.J.Jindal Foundation (2020-2021	Medicine and Curative Care for the Poor & Needy
Rotary Trust (2020-2021)	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
Ambuja Trust (2020-2021)	COVID Medical & Relief Support
Consulate of Denmark	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
Italian Development Corporation	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
Embassy of Georgia	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme
Embassy of Malayasia	COVID Medical & Relief Support
Consulate of Singapore	COVID Rehab & Relief Support Scheme

PRESENT SUPPORTERS (2022-2023)	
VASTENACTI, Netherlands	**Education & Health Project for Child Brickfield Workers**
Embassy of Greece	**Enterprise Development Project**
Human Dignity Foundation, Italy	**Awareness Building on Human Rights Project**
Swedish Consulate, India	**Bridge Education for Adolescent Girls**
S. J. Jindal Foundation Bangalore	**Curative Care for the Poor & Needy**
Dept. of Rural Development, GoI	**Integrated Natural Resource Management Project**
Dept. of Rural Development, GoI	**Integrated Animal Husbandry Development Project**
Ministry of Tribal Welfare, GoI	**Livelihood Development Project**
National Center for Jute Diversification, GoI	**Jute Diversification for Tribal Women**
TATA AIA	**Micro Insurance Project for SHG Members**

BSWI TEAM

- PROJECT DIRECTOR: One.
- EDUCATION SECTOR: One Sector Coordinator; Two Joint Coordinators; Twenty-Two Moderators.
- HEALTH SECTOR: One Sector Coordinator; One Doctor; 12 VHWs; 2 Supervisors.
- LIVELIHOOD SECTOR: One Sector Coordinator; Two Joint Coordinators; Six Field Staff.
- ORGANIZATION BUILDING: One Sector Coordinator; Two Organizers; Two Field Staff.
- ACCOUNTANTS: One Chief Accountant; Three Assistant Accountants.
- OFFICE ASSISTANTS: Three Staffs.
- BSWI FARMHOUSE & CAMPUS: Two Caretakers; Two Watchmen.



ABOUT BSWI

Introduction

Baradrone Social Welfare Institution (BSWI) is a pioneer organization in West Bengal that originated in the year of 1961 as a village level textbook library and free coaching centre. Gradually, BSWI stepped forward by partnering with the government and non-government charities in India and abroad and over the years it has played a major role in developing many governments and international agency funded projects and National Rural Development Programs. BSWI is continuing to work for change that is sustainable and self-perpetuating, bringing skills and systems that help women, families and communities gain confidence and take charge of their own lives. The opportunities and the association over the years have helped create learning/lessons for BSWI and gain organizational experience. BSWI catalyzes change in thousands of lives by implementing innovative efforts.

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 empower individuals, families, communities and society by helping ensure their rights to live and help them come out from the barriers of poverty, illiteracy and well-being.

Our Dreams:

- A society where all people can gain access to education, health care, and employment opportunities and where people can realize their full potential;
- Establishment of a trusted bridge between the dreams and aspirations of individuals who care about suffering people and their realization; and
- Transforming to a professional and devoted organization that is secular, translucent, credible and accountable for all of its activities

Our Values:

- Respect – Believing in and appreciating the dignity and potential of all human beings;
- Integrity – Maintaining social, ethical and organizational norms and adhering to the code of conduct;
- Commitment – Fulfilling organizational goals with full commitment towards our duties and responsibilities; and
- Excellence – Setting high performance standards and being accountable for and responsible towards our work.

BSWI
TEAM OF STAFFS

ADOLESCENTS VOLUNTEERS
TEAM

KISHORE KISHORI
BAHINI

EDUCATION & LIFE DETERMINATION

BSWI's Education
Center for Child Brickfield Workers

BSWI's Bridge Education
Center for Dropout Girls

Nutritious Food
Distribution for Children

In 2022, the KANNYA SHIKHAKENDRA (Girls' Education Center) was established in Baradrone, West Bengal as a response to the high rate of drop-outs in the rural community. BSWI traced this down to factors such as poor foundational skills, lack of access to quality teaching, safe infrastructure or even nutritious meals. An empty stomach never devoured much knowledge!

We set up a safe space for providing quality academic engagement to academically weak students (grades 1-10) from BPL families providing them remedial education support along with nutritious mid-day meals, health camps and regular counselling sessions. Our successes in Baradrone became a foundation for our statewide programs and the flagship school now serves as a laboratory for continued program development.

BSWI's Bridge Education Class for Dropout Girld

BSWI's Primary School Class in Progress

BSWI supports the Right to Education Bill, 2009, with the aim of achieving universal enrolment, increasing school retention and improving the quality of education. In particular, we are concerned with deprived children, those who are denied access to education as a result of traditional or social barriers, such as caste, poverty, gender or ability. Evidence shows that children who are in school not only are empowered with education, but also tend to be more protected from abuse and exploitation. We strive to identify children who have dropped out of school, or at risk of leaving it. We partner with school authorities and teachers, school committees, families, children's groups and local elected representatives – rural Panchayat Institutions – to map out-of-school children, motivate the school system and families to get them back to school, and prevent dropping out. To prevent dropping out, we offer remedial education services through coaching centers being run on school premises or in the community. Services are in operation prior or after school hours to help students who may be first generation learners, or deprived of a conducive home environment where to do their homework. A network of our frontline workers and Self-Help Group members partner with government, rural schools and communities, and engage in a dialogue with families to highlight how the benefits of education would, in the long term, outweigh the loss of foregoing a low and temporary wage which a child may earn by leaving school. We work to overcome forms of social exclusion based on caste and gender discrimination that continue to play a part in keeping children, particularly girls, out of school.

A drawing competition

Class in progress

Having worked in various strings of Education since the year of 1976, BSWI has been able to give the people of the project areas a nudge regarding the need and utility of education – both bookish and moral. This flavour of education is now tangible in the project areas of BSWI and we are happy to state that today more and more people are coming forward to achieve education for themselves and for their wards. An outsider will not be able to distinguish between the situations in the areas in the year of 1976 and now in the year of 2022. There was a day in 1976 when not a single matriculation passed girl was available in most of the project villages to work as BSWI's education facilitator, and BSWI had to provide such workers in the villages from 'Baradrone' village and from the local block town Diamond Harbour. Today, we see that hundreds of girls and boys are attending high schools and even college education as a result of our constant work in the educational spheres.

Bridge Education Class in Progress

Teachers'-Students' meeting in BSWI hALL

ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR PROJECT FOR THE CHILD BRICKFIELD WORKERS IN DIAMOND HARBOUR

Child Brickfield Workers are now in Schools

Children joyfully participate in schools

Brickfield Children getting tiffin

We are already implementing the project on “Child Brickfield Workers' Education & Health Improvement” by receiving financial assistance from a Switzerland based organization with the following perspectives:

Effort 1

We have created a good amount of awareness amongst the parents realising the need of education in their kids' lives and at the same time we are creating awareness in health and personal hygiene among the parents and their kids who work in the brickfields of Diamond Harbour. The target children do not have any access to education and regular health benefits

Result 1

Our work has advanced efficiently in generating awareness amongst the parents about the need of their children's quality education and they are encouraging the children to attend the project's schools regularly. The attendance level has been 100% during the course of this project in this current year (2022-2023). The children are also enjoying the classes and have advanced in their studies

Effort 2

We have taken the issue of the children through campaigns and dialogues with the local administration and education department about child rights and about supporting children's education and well-being by ensuring their rights

Result 2

Our work has given a nudge on them like never before and they are supporting the project's children with books, primers and some other school materials. They have also joined hands with our organization in the campaign and sensitising the target parents for their children's all-round development

Effort 3

We are deeply involved in creating local level target-groups' associations who would work as watch-dogs for ascertaining child rights and reporting to the sponsoring organization very soon

Result 3

The target group members and the local brick-kiln workers are awakening and becoming alert about their children's legitimate claims and rights gradually

Effort 4

We have set up five pre-primary education centres (PPEC) for 125infants of the working parents and five non-formal education centres (NFEC) for 125 children (6 years +) who are either working in the brick-kilns or are assisting their parents in their works according to their capacities

Result 4

Efficient and devoted teachers have been selected who take care of the children whole-heartedly in the teaching processes. The teachers are regular, objective-oriented and affectionate to the children. The children love to join the schools regularly with punctuality and they are learning lessons with fun and joy

Effort 5

We are providing nutritious food for the enrolled children on a regular basis

Result 5

The malnourished children are becoming healthy by reducing mal nourishments and the improvement is tangible now

Effort 6

We are conducting regular health check-ups and curative care for all of the infants and the children at free-of-costs

Result 6

Morbidities are seen to be decreased among the children and they look healthier than before when we started this project here

Effort 7

Effort 7We are arranging exposure visits for the children to visit historical places and for nature tours.

Result 7

The children's knowledge is improving and they are glad to getting opportunities to go out and enjoy joyful learning

Effort 8

We are organizing Children's cultural programs and sports for the brick-kiln children

Result 8

The children have never got such scope of learning about the nature and about the country's historical places. Their enthusiasms have increased to a great extent and they are very happy in the project's education programs being aided by your esteemed organization

BSWI's Girl-students earned Talent Awards

BSWI's Primary Education Centre

Tribal Children in BSWI's School in Malda

Bridge Education Class in porgress

Brickfield Children enjoying fun in exposure visit

OUR NEW STEPPING IN KARNATAKA

With the intent to work in the southern part of India, where there are less development works by the nonprofits, BSWI stepped into the rural areas of Karnataka state in the Kolar District. Located in southern Karnataka, it is state's easternmost district. The district is surrounded by the Bangalore Rural district on the West, Chikballapur district on the north, the Chittoor district and Annamayya district of Andhra Pradesh on the east and the Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu on the south.

as goddess of city of Kolar. Kolar is leading India in production of Mango, Tomato, Milk which exported to various other nations as well. Kolar district is in a semi-arid, drought-prone region and covers an area of 8,225 square kilometres (3,176 sq mi). Some rural pockets of Kolar are Kolar is popularly known as the land of silk, milk, Mango, and (earlier) gold. Kolaramma is considered educationally backward and BSWI was interested to provide school education through a local organization and together BSWI has began an educational program for the underprivileged children of the target area.

SECTOR: COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELL BEING

Adoloscents

BSWI started working on Adolescents Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights in 2020 and its partnerships with the Government and Private agencies to strengthen adolescent programs began in 2020. There was an emphasis on enhancing the capacity of adolescents to grow as advocates for change. BSWI initiated working with parents and other community members, stakeholders, local self-government bodies and service providers to create an adolescent friendly environment that prioritises their participation. It also began working on system strengthening more closely with key Government Departments to increase adolescent friendly services. BSWI began to undertake programming as well as networking and advocacy efforts aimed at addressing the needs of adolescents, particularly girls, holistically during this period.

The vision for the next five years' adolescent strategy of BSWI is 'Ensuring ALL adolescents have a successful transition from childhood to the adulthood'. The strategy aims for the fulfilment of rights of adolescent girls and boys, which are central to our Child-Friendly Community framework. BSWI also recognizes that adolescents are not simply recipients of development efforts. They have the potential to respond positively to life challenges and be positive agents of transformational change, as collaborators and as leaders. Thrust areas for adolescent programs are:

- **Develop, enhance and scale up Adolescent-led Empowerment program models**
- **Influencing parents to create family-based safety net – Physical & Virtual and building capacity of key community stakeholders, including the service providers and the local self-government Enhancing evidence-based documentation and strengthening local, state and national-level network and alliances**
- **Promoting evidence-based advocacy for investment, replication and scaling up of adolescent empowerment model through Government system and structure.**

Reach

Adolescent girls reached through community-based interventions – directly: 19039, indirectly: 120000

Major Highlights of 2022-2023:

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of West Bengal has set up the Reproductive Maternal New Born Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH).
- BSWI shared the experience on Rashtriya Kishor-Kishori Bahini for adolescent health and hygiene.
- Swasthya Karyakram (Healthy Girl Services) at district level workshops organized by the Technical Support Unit of MoHFW ,Government of West Bengal.
- BSWI became member of the 'Group on Adolescent health of RMNCAH' coalition MOHFW, Govt. Of West Bengal.
- BSWI provides the project areas' youths to receive free psychosocial counselling on various issues like sex and sexuality, relationship problems, parental, and mental health counseling.

"It has been wonderful experience for children like us to be engaged with BSWI's Child Friendly Village Campaign (CFVC) for last three years. We enjoy going to local officials, Panchayat representatives, police. We also participated in PRI planning meeting and share our appeal. I am happy that BSWI and our Panchayat have been sensible to our appeal and have taken initiative like migration register, keeping provision for child protection activities under Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). Thanks for BSWI for creating these spaces in the CFVC campaign is truly empowering" Laboni Mondal class X from Hatuganj Girls High School, Diamond Harbour Block of South 24 Parganas district (November 2022).

India,
as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC), is committed to ensure children to enjoy their right to survival, development, protection, and participation. The National Policy for Children (NPC) 2013 re-affirms the commitment to the realization of the rights. The role of local self-governance/ Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) is critical to strengthening child rights governance at community level. The PRI are the nearest and closest to the children to understand, take action and monitor children's situation within their community.

BSWI has felt it important to include child rights agendas in its annual development planning for holistic socio-economic development, through leveraging and implementation of Government Schemes. This article is to share experience of a three year long adolescent lead campaign focusing on incorporating the child rights activities and budget to the agenda of BSWI in collaboration with the PRI in West Bengal. The campaign is continuing since October 2020 under the banner of Child Friendly Village Campaign (CFVC).

The campaign was started in 62 villages in the year 2022 and in the year 2023 it reached 139 Sansad, around 19 GPs, and 5 blocks in 3 different districts. The adolescent leaders again started their campaign in Feb-March 2023. In September 2022 the child protection unit of UNICEF West Bengal was invited by STARPARD (Society for Training & Research on Panchayats & Rural Development unit of the Govt of WB for capacity building of P&RD functionaries on GPDP) to the state-level orientation program for an orientation on child protection issue and on the inclusion of child protection issues in GPDP 2022-23. In November 2022, the Secretary of the P&RD dep., Govt. WB issued a letter on GPDP 2023-24, where 'Child-Friendly Panchayat' was mentioned as one of the 9 thematic areas. This letter has built further synergy to the campaign to amplify the appeal to include the soft components such as child-centric awareness, mobilization activities in GPDP.

Adolescent leaders (from schools/ Kanyashree Clubs, CPCs, Kishori groups, RKSK groups) have been leading this campaign since the beginning of the campaign in 2021 under the leadership of BSWI. While meeting with the stakeholders the adolescents have taken a collective pleading, tied wrist bands to the stakeholder, and participated in the events like extempore speech, essay competitions, and poster competitions and theme-based street plays were organized on different occasions.

Adolescent girls' meetings in villages

Adolescent girls winning awards from SDO

Girls participated in menstrual management workshop

BSWI organized Awareness Camps in government schools

Rally organized by BSW

Meeting on menstruation management

Health & Nutrition

Strategic Priorities of Health & Nutrition

Ensuring right to health requires countries to invest in primary health care, including – maternal, reproductive and child health. Improving maternal, reproductive and child health not only helps to secure the right to health, but reduces poverty and stimulates economic growth. Progress in maternal and child health depends on improvements in a range of areas both within and beyond the health sector. Systemic failures may deny the right of women and children to have access to adequate health care services. These may include inequitable distribution of health care facilities, high levels of poverty, absence of quality services as well as issues of discrimination and violence.

The Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2016, include a range of global targets for mothers and children. Progress towards these targets requires both health, nutrition as well as allied interventions across sectors. Health sector improvements may include immunization, family planning, skilled birth attendance and the provision of antenatal and postnatal care while nutrition interventions involve support for breastfeeding, focus on infant and child feeding practices and nutrition-sensitive interventions across a range of sectors. Improvements outside the health sector include reductions in the total fertility rate, economic inclusion, good governance, participation of women in politics and workforce, strong leadership, poverty reduction, female education and a conducive policy environment.

BSWI, since inception, has been working with an array of these issues across its health and nutrition programs. While working directly with women and children towards increasing their accessibility and availability of basic health care services, over the years BSWI has also shifted its priority towards improving system efficacies in delivering services for women and children. Through its pioneer approach of creating child friendly communities (CFC) - along with empowering communities through structured processes of knowledge and skill building; BSWI has started working closely with government departments of health and nutrition, the ICDS centres, sub - health centres as well as frontline workers in building their capacities and forging linkages for better service delivery. Linkages were also established with local self governments or Panchayats and ULBs in ensuring the rights and entitlements for the mothers and children. Given this, BSWIs primary strategic areas of work in the year 2022-2023 included Maternal and Child Health, Maternal and Child Malnutrition, Adolescent Health and Nutrition, HIV AIDS and Tuberculosis.

Village-level Maternal Health camp of BSWI

A mother delivered healthy baby

Maternal and Child Health

Maternal and child health has always been the priority area of work of BSWI since inception. BSWI has been working towards strengthening the existing government systems by working in a facilitative approach. BSWI's work in the area 2022-2023 has been in strong collaboration with the flagship programs of National Health Mission in rural areas. Through the different projects implemented in the year, efforts have been made towards identifying gaps in service delivery, sharing of data with Government, development of joint plans in addressing the same and capacitating the frontline workers towards better service delivery.

A range of community sensitization programmes also followed in reaching out to the most vulnerable communities and involving self-help groups towards community mobilization and demand generation.

Key Highlights

BSWI with support from its donors conducted an in-depth baseline study across three blocks from three districts of West Bengal covering a sample of 2400 women to have an understanding of the health and nutrition status in these areas. The data was analysed, published and widely shared with Government and other stakeholders in order to induce policy actions

Adolescent Health & Nutrition:

Adolescence is one of the crucial periods in an individual's life since the body and mind goes through several unexpected and unknown changes. BSWI sensitises the adolescents regarding sexual and reproductive health, nutrition and education for helping them get prepared for the unknown challenges of this age. Prioritising adolescent health and nutrition forms a critical component of the LCA (Labour Condition Application) since a healthy girl will develop into a healthy woman and subsequently will deliver a healthy baby. Moreover, as the menace of anemia looms large in the state and the country, therefore sensitising them regarding consumption of balanced diet, iron-rich food and safe health and hygienic practices forms crucial components of BSWI's interventions. Focussing on regularising the consumption of IFA (Iron & Folic Acid) tablets by the adolescent girls for combating anaemia is yet another interventional priority of BSWI. We have adopted strategies of forming adolescent groups and identifying peer leaders as its interventional approaches for adolescent empowerment. In this connection, BSWI provides handholding support to district administrations for successful functioning of various social welfare schemes such as Sabla, RKSK, Kanyasree, etc., for combating gender-based violence, child marriage and trafficking in various districts of the state.

Key Highlights

BSWI provided training to 1015 adolescent girls on the issue of creating “Early Marriage free villages” from 15 villages of Malda district in West Bengal. In the districts of South 24 Parganas (West Bengal), Taljhari (Jharkhand state), North Dinajpur and Murshidabad, 150 adolescent groups have been formed reaching out to 2250 members. 985 peer leaders from these groups have been trained on basic issues of health, hygiene and nutrition.

Girls have participated in awareness program in school conducted by BSWI

Nutritious food provided by BSWI has made the girls hoyful and energetic

TB and HIV

India was identified as a country for possible break-out of HIV epidemic. But with extensive interventions and concerted efforts of the government, NGOs and civil society organisations this endemic could be prevented. BSWI has been working in the HIV sector since 1995 with the basic objectives to “prevent, halt & to begin the reverse of impact of HIV/AIDS in India”. BSWI's 4 key strategies of working in the sector include

- Reducing the vulnerability of HIV infection amongst High Risk Groups (HRGs) and most at risk population (MARP)
- Improvement of the Quality of Life of PLHAs through a community-based Care and Support model
- Enhancing the capacity of human resources in case of prevention, care, support, at district as well as state levels
- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS by involving & capacity building of different stakeholders at different levels Concurrently, BSWI has been fighting against Tuberculosis since a long time and has been vigorously advocating in the community regarding the disease. BSWI has engaged the communities through involvement of 16 local NGOs to rollout TB elimination campaign. Local level organizations working for different agencies were included in the NGO led model. Orientation on TB incidences and its care, management has been done for all 262 wards across three districts. In accordance to its methods, BSWI has been working in a convergent approach with state and central governments in the HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis sector too. rough extensive advocacy, network linkages, capacity building programmes, BSWI aims to eliminate the social stigma, discrimination and denial of access to health services surrounding HIV & TB infections and contribute towards safe motherhood and child survival.

Key Highlights

- With advocacy and capacity building support from BSWI, HIV screening of pregnant women was initiated in UPHCs of North 24 Parganas. Training on WFPT was imparted to 7 UPHCs and 4 Maternity Homes.
- In order to identify potential stakeholders for elimination of TB at community level, dynamic mapping study was done involving community participants for all 22 wards under 4 Urban Local Bodies, namely Kolkata Municipal Corporation, Howrah Municipal Corporation, Baruipur and Rajpur-Sonarpur Municipality.

- Identification, capacity building and engagement of 262 frontline volunteers (TOUCH Agents) were done to conduct community level activities for TB reduction.
- BSWI conducted 616 community level meetings on TB and reached 1,25,720 population, essentially among the slum dwellers and peri-urban people.

Advocacy

Advocating for the cause of women, children and adolescents form another key component of BSWI's work. BSWI as a West Bengal secretariat of White Ribbon Alliance (WWB) is pioneering a model for advocacy in maternal health and contributing towards a paradigm shifting maternal health. WWB affiliated to the White Ribbon Alliance India, is a multi-state network of maternal health that advocates campaigning for more resources and the right policies to prevent maternal and new-born deaths nationwide. Ensuring safe motherhood requires that maternal health be made a national and a public priority.

WWB does this by creating a platform for key influencers, such as media, government officials, youths, political leaders and public personalities, to talk about maternal health, seek solutions and become champions for change. The White Ribbon Alliance West Bengal, through its district level partners implement a project for improving the Quality of Care of Pregnant Women and New-borns and to advocate for improvements in HR, infrastructural and budgetary allocation and utilization commitments by state government in their efforts towards Quality of Care (QoC).

Awareness Classes of Village level volunteers for HIV & TB

Advocacy rallies organized in North Bengal by BSWI

Rallies led by BSWI and other NGOs are in progress on HIV & TB Awareness

Child Protection

The Preventive Model on Child Protection stems from BSWI's institutional core approach Child Friendly Communities (CFC), a distillation of the primary healthcare/public health experience developed since its foundation in 1976. The model aims to take a shift from a clinical to an epidemiological approach in child protection. It seeks to overcome prevailing curative policy and practice in favour of preventive methodologies. It is further believed that preventing harm before it occurs as opposed to curing its effects afterwards is also an ethical imperative – and a fundamental human right. Preventive measures are also likely to be more cost effective, thus reaching the universe of children rather than a few. BSWI's Child Protection programme design is conceived at 3 subsequent, logically interlinked levels, aimed at creating child protection processes spanning from the governance, to the program to the individual sphere.

The Child Protective Communities model is best implemented in and contributes to the creation of Child Friendly Communities, at one end of the spectrum, and supports a multi-layered referral mechanism to serve the individual child, at the other end. During last year, it had focused on:

- Ensuring prevention of child marriages through convergent action with other programmes for adolescents.
- Strengthening the community-based safety net through strengthening of the VLCPCs & BLCPCs, formation of Children Group & Children Parliament and strengthening of Vigilance Group, developing child tracking mechanism and working out vulnerability assessment of children.
- Strengthening community level convergence mechanisms on child protection and linking the same to block and district level convergence mechanisms.
- BSWI was also engaged in strengthening the evolving government child protection system, focusing on maximizing preventive approaches and minimizing institutional approaches within the given framework of the Juvenile Justice System, the Integrated Child Protection Scheme, National Plan of Action, and National Policy for Children, respective state plans of action and other related legislations and policies. Yet another significant initiative has been the effort by BSWI to conduct the District Needs Assessment focusing on Child Protection in the districts of Malda, South & North Dinajpur, and in South 24 Parganas.

Free of cost life-saving treatments for the children and women are provided by BSWI in its clinic

BSWI collaborated with a block level hospital in eye care program

Curative Health

BSWI helps improve access to medical facilities by providing clinical and diagnostic services at a primary health care level - with a special focus on the underprivileged.

Community Health Clinics

BSWI supports communities through Community Health Clinics which bridge the gap and help provide primary healthcare services to rural villages with no access to healthcare. Providing medicines for the poor and the needy, they sustained access to affordable treatment in remote areas.

Speciality Health Camps

BSWI provides early detection and screening camps with specialists like gynaecologists, paediatricians, ophthalmologists and dentists on a time-to-time basis in collaboration with Government, CSRs, non-profit institutions and other stakeholders.

Village Trained Health Workers are Treating rural patients in BSWI's Project

Medical Care for the Poor and the Needy

Primary care is essential for the well-being of communities but there is still a critical need for proper medical care in rural West Bengal.

To strengthen the underserved, we have been making a quality care affordable and accessible to the socio-economically backward rural population. This project is being aided by Sitaram Jindal Foundation with funds for medicines and primary healthcare services. We have been making quality treatment accessible to 24 villages across rural areas in Diamond Harbour subdivision in West Bengal.

We are dedicated to providing the good quality services for our beneficiaries and have taken measures to maintain it. We have a robust monitoring system in place for the daily supervision of activities.

We provide:

- Low-cost doctor consultation;
- Supply of free medicines
- Highly affordable prescription spectacles
- Free cataract and pterygium surgery through other NGOs who are engaged in eye-related treatments.

Patients are being treated in BSWI's Health Clinic

ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT & BASIC NECESSITIES

Economic Advancement Principles And The Livelihoods Framework

The economic advancement principles and framework of BSWI form the basis of all livelihoods programing. The fundamental principles of our livelihoods programming are that it is people-centered, multilevel, dynamic, and ultimately aim to achieve sustainable livelihoods

People-Centred

BSWI's Livelihoods programming fully involves the people whose livelihoods are affected. Our livelihoods approach identifies programs based on the priorities and goals defined by people themselves and support their own livelihoods strategies. It is always built on people's strengths.

Multi-Level And Holistic

Our livelihoods programming recognizes multiple influences on people at different levels, and seeks to understand the relationships between these influences and their joint impact upon livelihoods. This includes influences at the micro-level (community and household). It also recognizes the multiple actors (from the private sectors to the administrators and local state bodies like PRI) influencing livelihoods. It acknowledges the multiple livelihood strategies that people adopt to protect and secure their livelihoods and multiple livelihood outcomes.

SHG Members selling Tata Tea

Ballpens are being assembled in BSWI Training Hall

Livelihoods change over time. BSWI's Economic Advancement approaches are aimed at understanding and learning from change so that it can support positive patterns of change and help mitigate negative patterns. It explicitly recognizes the effects on livelihoods of external shocks and the longer-term processes that may erode livelihoods, such as climate change, natural calamities, various pandemics and economic decline. It also recognizes 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.

We work along the following lines:

- Promotion of Animal Husbandry amongst the SHG members: In the main centre's farm house in Baradrone village, BSWI has been organizing animal husbandry training-cum-demonstration activities for the SHG members and each year it has been training about 350 women members of the SHGs.
- System of Rice Intensification (SRI): BSWI introduced this technique in its North Bengal project area since 2009 to enhance the productivity of rice, the people's staple food. In 2021-2022, more than 3500 farmers followed this technique in 5250 acres of land. During the period of 2022-2023, 16,000 small and marginal farmers multiplied paddy production by 1.7 times.
- Improved Vegetable Cultivation: Second activity in this category has been vegetable cultivation. BSWI encouraged vegetable cultivation as a supplementary livelihood activity and provided seeds, saplings, seedlings and fertilizers to 2300 marginal and small farmers.
- Water management: In order to augment a captive source of water, BSWI supported digging of small, field level tanks in 215 individual farms during the year. The farmers could irrigate their small vegetable plots with this storage.
- Releasing of Mortgaged Land & Supplementary Economic Activities: Considering the high incidence of land-mortgaging, BSWI is encouraging releasing of the lands and encouraged SHGs to advance loans to the needy families. So far about 2000 acres of mortgaged lands have been released by the small and marginal farmers and most of them are tribal families. 1200 small and marginal farmers have been benefitted out of this unique program of BSWI. Other associated activities included encouraging goat rearing as a supplementary livelihood measure. In order to explore the potential of marketing the local produce, BSWI commissioned a study on 'Livelihood Options with Market Mapping and Value Chain Analysis' in 2016. The recommendations are being materialized by BSWI all along these years now. Training and capacity building of farmers and other beneficiaries is also on-going project activity

- A Garment Making Unit named “PROCHESTA” has been set up in Panchpara village of Gazole block, Malda district in West Bengal involving 25 SHGs. 124 women members of different villages are doing these activities and earning palpable incomes.
- Social Enterprise: A Social Enterprise Program has become active under the SHG Federation “PROBODHAN” (meaning – Awakening) by selling garments in fair price basis that is helping the poorest community obtain products in fair price. Various rural development works like providing school materials to poor students, free medicinal support to the needy and destitute, admission/re-admission of dropout girls and other needs are being supported out of the surplus being generated from the Enterprise. The uniqueness of this program is that the buyers are also earning money while purchasing the products.

System of Rice Intensification practiced by marginal farmers

Sowing of Paddy plants done in SRI Systems

Reaching Out to more Rural Households:

Enhancing Outreach: During the year 2022-23, we impacted 7,215 households through direct interventions and partnerships. In terms of our direct-action outreach, we had planned to reach more than 5000 households through our on-field teams – a 36% growth in our outreach. Despite the Post-COVID challenges on the ground, we achieved a steady growth in our outreach. Three new Gram Panchayats have been added to our direct-action plans during this period. A large percentage (65%) of the outreach comprises the most vulnerable sections of adivasis and dalit communities.

We had articulated the following key engagement areas for the year 2022-23:

- Strengthening SHG collectives such as Village Organizations (VOs) and Cluster Level Federations (CLFs);
- Piloting of a comprehensive livelihoods approach, and standardizing it for wider adoption; Livelihoods intensification with asset creation and promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) for agriculture, horticulture and livestock to ensure better end-to-end services;
- Developing Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)-Community-Based Organization (CBO) collaboration, strengthening the local governance system to enable large-scale systems change;
- Strengthening engagement on gender, nutrition, forest and land rights; and
- Large-scale outreach and impact through partnership with government departments and CSOs.

5% Model Pit for irrigation on small plots

Community Ponds renovated

We have been facilitating women from marginalized communities to form SHGs since 1993. We continued our journey towards establishing and nurturing these community-based units of transformation in all villages we are working in. Also, we have been the on-ground implementation partner of State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs) for forming and nurturing VOs and CLFs which are the secondary and tertiary collective of these women. With the maturity of the three-tier community collectives, SRLMs are now directly engaging with and supporting these collectives on aspects of institution building and financial intermediation, as well as capital infusion and bank linkages. We have supported the SHGs and their tier organizations on various development programs such as livelihood intensification, gender consciousness, nutrition and health, water and sanitation, grassroots governance, access to various kinds of rights and entitlements. SHG collectives are gradually emerging as social infrastructure being promoted by the state with which various agencies – CSOs, public systems and market actors – are collaborating on several issues of common interest.

Livelihood Intervention

The significance of livelihood interventions has increased during the current economic distress. BSWI has articulated three different approaches to livelihoods enhancement during this year:

- A community-led extensive approach (pursuing livelihood interventions through trained cadres and community-institution leaders). In this approach of productivity enhancement building upon area-specific or contextualized agriculture and livestock-based prototypes were focused upon.
- An intensive market-oriented approach of high value crops accompanied by collectivization of farmers into FPOs; and
- A comprehensive livelihoods approach hinging on the five pillars of ecology, gender, inclusion of vulnerable, nutrition and income enhancement.

Productivity Enhancement of Major Crops

Smallholder women farmers are supported in making livelihood plans based on their resources and land types, considerations of food and nutrition security, aspired cash incomes and agriculture-labour availability in their respective households. Community Resource Persons (identified farmers who can provide training and on-field assistance) support SHGs and VOs to make household-level crop plans, which are then aggregated at VOs to procure farm-materials such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides,

either from local traders or directly from seed and fertilizer agencies, or from the block administration at subsidized rates, or from Agriculture Entrepreneurs (AEs). The AE model was initiated based on the need for small and marginal farmers to have a skilled person interact with market actors, on the one hand, and local youth seeking a means of livelihoods beyond agriculture, on the other. The AEs provide various kinds of services to smallholder farmers like access to good quality inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, quality sapling supplies through their nurseries, farm-mechanization services and output aggregation and market linkages, helping the farmers to focus on adopting newer and improved agricultural practices. Due to the second wave of pandemic, this year also, crop-planning had to be done remotely, using online meeting apps, to avoid physical meetings. For all categories of crops, we experienced a negative growth of output in Kharif over last year. The downturn was an outcome of the econd wave of COVID-19 due to which the entire preparatory phase for the season was undertaken during lockdown. However, in Rabi, there was partial revival because of the reduced impact of COVID-19 and since most of our locations received good rainfall. For cereal, pulses, oil seeds and vegetables our farmers experienced positive growth over this year.

SRI (System of Rice Intensification is done successfully

Rearing Small Ruminants: For Better Health and Income

As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)- 5 (2019-20), in India, an overwhelming 83.4% of men and 70.6% of women in the 15-49 age group eat non-vegetarian food. The central Indian tribal region contributes to significant production of fish, mutton, goat, pig, and poultry. Mostly small and marginal farmers, landless communities, and single-women headed households depend on goat, backyard poultry, and other small livestock for their livelihood. The Santhal Pargana region in Jharkhand is the biggest supplier of goat meat and backyard poultry to adjoining states. However, primitive practices followed by rearers lead to high mortality and morbidity, so the households can rarely increase the herd size. Also, non-existent veterinary services and informal market arrangements make it further complicated for small rearers. During 2022-23, we piloted a prototype on Integrated Livestock Rearing (ILR) model which has the potential of being replicated at scale. It focused on two major outcomes – establishing a community-paid service delivery system to ensure vaccination and deworming of livestock at the doorstep by Pashu Sakhis (women para-vets) and maintaining a cold chain system. Six cold chain/vet-medicine supply units have been set up, each providing para-vet services to 345 households within a radius of 15-20 kilometers. We piloted an intensive livestock rearing model with 40 families around improved rearing practices such as supplementary feeding and goat-sheds, etc., to ensure extra annual income of

Rs. 30,000 from ILR. Timely and assured vet-care services and ethno-vet practices were initiated through the pashu-sakhi (Helper for Animals) model. The vet care services are mostly aimed at vaccinations, deworming and other medicines. The ethno-veterinary practices include adoption of effective local or traditional methods for curing diseases and rearing small ruminants. We are partnering with SRLMs Jharkhand to build the livestock rearing activities. The pandemic has accentuated the dependence of smallholder farmers on livestock. Collectivizing them to take up the activity at scale to enhance their incomes has thus been an area of increased focus. In addition, livestock entrepreneurs have been supported to provide services and production technologies such as goat heat synchronization, artificial insemination services, promotion of goat breed farm, chick-rearing centers, backyard poultry breed farms, and super napier, azola, and barseem cultivation, silage and hay fodder production and storage for feed production. The following are the key achievements during the year.

SHG Members rearing Black Bengal Goats and earning good amount

Rearing cocks and chicken in household

Household hatching of ducks

Rearing fishes to address malnutrition and top-up the household income

In Central Indian Tribal Regions, people usually have access to two or three community ponds on an average in every Gram Panchayat. Farm pond construction and community tank renovation works are being taken up under MGNREGS and other watershed programs, especially for in-situ moisture conservation and irrigation. Considering high market demand for fishes and people's popular dietary choice, especially in the eastern parts of the country, small-scale fisheries have been initiated in these waterbodies to enable farmers to get an income in addition to their farming income. Fish rearing is also an effective way to address concerns of malnutrition. In terms of nutrition, fish contain low-fat but provide high-quality protein. They are a rich source of Omega-3 fatty acids, Vitamin D and B2 (riboflavin), calcium and phosphorus and a great source of minerals such as iron, zinc, iodine, magnesium, and potassium. Thus, eating fish can address various kinds of nutrient deficiencies found among communities we work with. Besides, given lower levels of fish production is tribal areas, farmers realize better prices for their produce compared to their coastal counterparts. Considerable work has been done in West Bangal's five blocks and in Jharkhand's two blocks to develop fisheries suitable for farm ponds. We, in fact, partner 6 NGOs from Jharkhand and North Bengal areas on this through a knowledge-sharing platform. Interventions are made on nursery rearing and supply of fingerlings, capacity building and linking of women farmers' groups with the Department of Fisheries, Integrated Tribal Development Agencies, and Zilla Panchayats involved in pond construction and other fishery activities. Species cultivated are rohu, catla, mrigal, grass carp, common carp, silver carp, tilapia, pacu, and freshwater prawn.

Fisherwomen's Federation catching fish

Fishes for selling in local markets

A SHG member selling fish in local market

Comprehensive Livelihoods Approach

In 2022- 2023, we started adopting a comprehensive approach to promote livelihoods on a bigger scale, in which the interventions around various aspects of livelihoods have been conceived as a whole, and not treated as a bunch of semi-separate individual thematic interventions. This approach will impact every individual holistically, across multiple dimensions of lives and livelihoods. The major aspects of the comprehensive livelihoods approach are: Ecology: Increased water level, rate of increase of organic carbon in soil, percentage of area under green cover/perennial vegetation, zero synthetics; Nutrition:

Number of women with dietary diversity score with first 1000 days' nutritional care, body mass index score, percentage of women with anemia; Gender: Income in the hands of women, women in production systems, women in public sphere and decision-making roles, role parity; Inclusion of smallholder farmer families: Social and economic exclusion barriers reduced, vulnerabilities reduced, increased access to entitlements, participation in forums of decision making, access to insurance; and Income: Farmers earn a gross income of Rs. 120,000 per annum, including all sources, with scope for 10% growth in income every year. Aligned to this idea, in 2022-2023, we worked in 62 villages following a comprehensive livelihood approach. A strategy to roll out the implementation process emerged towards the end of this year which we plan to scale-up in the coming years.

Organization Building & Empowerment

NRLM has been rolled out throughout the country. The development discourse has led to the universalization of women's SHGs and their linkage with financial institutions (banks). The initiative of collectivizing women, with above 80% coverage of villages, built the foundation of different development interventions like economic, social and political empowerment, improvement in health and nutrition, participation in governance, etc.

This has considerably reduced BSWI's direct engagement with the primary groups. As of March 31, 2020, BSWI was working with 356 SHGs. These SHGs have been made effective in integrating development interventions anchored by various stakeholders (government departments, block officials, health officials and panchayats). They are also able to exercise greater influence in ushering in governance and social changes. different stages (formation, grooming, and graduation). The task of building and strengthening these groups is now vested largely with the leadership of the higher tier like Village Organizations (VOs), and Block or Gram Panchayat Level Federations (BLFs/GPLFs). BSWI facilitated the development of IEC materials for community mobilization. We helped conduct trainings to aid the roll-out process in the community and groom these leaders to form primary groups. We conducted leadership trainings, visioning exercises and perspective building workshops to strengthen these institutions

In some areas, we continued to work with communities to saturate the Gram Panchayats by mobilizing left-out, marginalized rural households into SHGs. Our efforts led to 6,068 new members forming 434 new SHGs. We set up systems for nurturing these collectives and developed a trainers' pool for strengthening SHGs. We prioritized development of women's knowledge and skills in accounts, norms and processes and on improving women's participation in village planning. Working toward the overall well-being of communities, SHGs accessed bank credit to the tune of INR 218 lakhs, and mobilized INR 148 lakhs from government programs.

SHG members' meeting, training and workshops are in progress

SHG meetings, Meetings on micro-finance and village committees' meetings are held regularly

BSWI's Inspirations

He only lives, who lives for others”
- Swami Vivekananda

One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives” – Netaji Subhas Chandra Bos

Do not say, “It is morning,” and dismiss it with a name of yesterday. See it forthe first time as a new-born child that has no name.” – Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Laureate (India).

'There can be no greater gift than that of giving ones time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return.

Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”
— Mother Teresa, Nobel Laureate (India).

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 Gandh, The Father of Nation (India).

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

BARADRONE SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTION

(BSWI)

ESTD : 1961

24 PARGANAS (S)

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WEST BENGAL

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