

**BARADRONE
SOCIAL WELFARE
INSTITUTION (BSWI)**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF
ACTIVITIES:2010-2011**

VILLAGE & P.O. BARADRONE
BLOCK – DIAMOND HARBOUR
DISTRICT- SOUTH 24
PARGANAS
WEST BENGAL 743332, INDIA
TEL: 03174 256224
FAX: 257439
Email: bswi_india@yahoo.co.in
Website: www.baradrone.org

Dear friends and Well-wishers,

We are happy to present our Annual Reports for the year of 2010-2011. This year has been marked as the completion of the 50th year of our organization. The long period of our presence in the midst of the rural people who are knowledgeable. Throughout this prolonged period, we have impacted over 1,00,000 lives in our project areas located in four districts, South 24 Parganas, Medinipur, Murshidabad and Malda.

We have worked mainly in (a) Community Organization & Empowerment; (b) Livelihood improvement / Basic Needs; and (c) Social Support Services. But we have taken up other works like training, collaboration with govt. departments, orientation and exposure of the groups and the staff members to achieve a qualitative essence within our organization.

All these would never have been possible without your wholehearted support and cooperation, and we thank you for trusting us. We hope that some of the testimonies and results that follow in this report will inspire you to support our yet unfulfilled dream of bringing prosperity and health to the lives of thousands of people living in poverty in the areas where we work.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Sanjib Bhattacharya
General Secretary & C.E.O.

Dated: Baradrone, 30th June 2011

BSWI'S MISSION

To accelerate social and economic changes amongst the resource-poor and the marginalized sections of the rural and urban societies.

BSWI'S 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.

GENESIS OF THE ORGANIZATION

Baradrone Social Welfare Institution (BSWI), was set up in the year of 1961 in the form of a small rural text book library for encouraging non-school going / dropout children by providing text books and free tuition by the educated village youths. Over the years, the goals and philosophy of BSWI was transformed and gradually it took the shape of a benevolent integrated rural development organization. Since its inception, many individuals and organizations of distinction have embellished BSWI and with their active cooperation and contribution; today BSWI is considered as a resplendent, translucent and reputed organization in the state and abroad. BSWI is working in the remote parts of West Bengal, where planned interventions to address human problems are yet to be launched. It helps people to be equipped with skills, capacities, values, awareness, self-help and opportunities, by dint of which they can come forward and demand their legitimate claims.

BSWI has a bold vision for creating a world where every person lives with dignity, respect and the opportunity to achieve her or his potential. BSWI is committed to improving the lives of the poor and marginalized through social and economic development processes. Since the year of 1985, BSWI has partnered / has been partnering with foreign agencies like Action-Aid, Oxfam India Trust, Bread For the World, Canada Fund, Irish Embassy and others in community development programs. Over the years, BSWI has reached to more than 25000 children in various villages of West Bengal and impacted more than 100000 needy and marginalized people. BSWI has been providing training and technical assistance in non-formal education, community development, maternal and child health, school governance, integrated literacy, small enterprise development, micro-finance, HIV/AIDS education and awareness and women's empowerment. BSWI also works to strengthen literacy, adult basic education and health programs in collaboration with government departments. BSWI's projects are designed to contribute to individual growth, as well as to community and area development.

Marked by persistence, energized with an entrepreneurial spirit, honouring the wisdom of our partners in the field and the people who benefit from our work - BSWI ignites the flame of self-advancement, the birthright of every human being.

BSWI's programs are divided into three sectors:

- **Community Organization & Empowerment;**
- **Livelihood improvement / Basic Needs; and**
- **Social Support Services.**

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION & EMPOWERMENT

As a result of our intervention efforts, an increasing number of 3500 rural families – especially women – are engaging in independent livelihood activities. These activities serve as opportunities for diversifying and enhancing their incomes. We give particular attention to women because even as they comprise half of the country's population, they remain the most disadvantaged sector among the poor. Yet it is the women who prove to be most effective in fostering change in their families and communities. With our guidance and the members' own experiences, SHGs are playing four key roles through the different stages of evolution: mutual help, financial intermediation, livelihood planning, and social empowerment. As of March 2011, we have promoted some 350

SHGs across three districts, representing a total membership of 5700 rural poor women. These SHGs have mobilized a total savings of 2.5 million Rupees. Also significantly, the financial accounting and Management Information System (MIS) of our SHG program has been streamlined by some innovative systems of community-based accounting.

Promotion and Nurturing of SHGs:

- The SHGs start out as thrift and credit associations of poor women who share similar social and economic contexts.
- BSWI helps SHG members decide the rules of business and pool their savings for small loans, and trains them in playing a “public” role while giving them the experience of working together.
- For the more mature SHGs, BSWI helps them establish collaborative linkages with banks in order to leverage credit that, in turn, meets member’s needs for larger funds.
- The SHG is thus a platform for enabling women to access to banks and public services – and for realizing their full potential to spearhead more long-term changes that affect them as women.
- SHGs become virtual classrooms where the women learn the ideals of democratic governance through practice.
- BSWI helps groups to form secondary organizations such as Clusters and Federations.
- BSWI encourages each SHG (and its members) to learn about their context and articulate a new vision for them and their families. The women then draw up and carry out concrete plans to realize such vision.

Fostering Community - Based Organizations

- Building, nurturing, and strengthening community-based organizations is an important component of BSWI’s strategy for creating a system for sustainability in the developmental processes being undertaken in an area.
- BSWI field staffs work in the community as facilitators who build relevant capabilities, processes, and systems, so that people are able to carry forward the development agenda that they themselves have set.
- Community-based organizations such as Self-Help Groups (SHG), SHG Federations, Village Livelihood Development Committees (VLDCs), producers’ groups, fishery groups, Goat Rearers’ groups, are some of the organizational forms that have been fostered. These include:
 - 3 Producer Companies (one each for Food Processing, Poultry and Goat rearing)
 - 1 Mat weavers’ cooperative
 - 1 Flood rehabilitation organization
 - 1 Khadi & V. I. cooperative
 - 1 Jute/Foam bag knitting cooperative
 - 10 VLDCs
 - 2 Agro/Horticulture Cooperatives.

Leveraging Development Finances

- As a strategic principle, BSWI has leveraged livelihood investments by linking the rural poor to government programs and banks.
- BSWI has always played the role of a facilitator in such linkages.
- Our work in linking people directly with mainstream institutions has proven to be a far more empowering process than merely receiving and channeling finances to the community.
- As they were engaged in the process themselves, the rural poor enhanced their capabilities in handling large amounts of finances as well as in dealing with resource institutions.
- BSWI leveraged development finances from government agencies at the District, State, and Central levels, as well as the banks.
- Additionally, people’s own resources, including savings in self-help groups were also mobilized.
- In addition to facilitating linkages of self-help groups directly with banks for loans, we have also set up partnerships with corporate trusts and apex lending institutions for financing livelihoods.

Capacity Building Programs for the Stakeholders during 2010-2011:

- (i) Visioning exercises for SHG leaders: 20 training programs
- (ii) Training on village livelihood: 12 training programs for VLDC members and SHGs
- (iii) MIS training for staff & VLDC members: 6 training programs
- (iv) Meeting with Panchayat members: 6 programs
- (v) Village-level Awareness Camps on Gender and Rights: 15 camps
- (vi) Leadership Training Programs for members of the SHGs: 6 training programs
- (vii) Training programs on SHG Dynamics & Management Aspects: 8 training programs
- (viii) Workshops on PRI Acts and Government programs to eradicate poverty: 8 workshops

Capacity Building Programs for Staff & Volunteers during 2010-2011:

- (i) On-job training for staffs in community organization & promotion of SHGs
- (ii) On-job training for staff in micro-finance.

LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT/BASIC NEEDS

Livelihood Planning

BSWI used various participatory learning tools including pictorial-based methodologies to help women track and analyze events in their lives and livelihoods, while making plans for changes. These exercises fostered deliberations and discussions on broader issues that are important to – and have an impact on – women’s lives and livelihoods. Exercises were conducted in groups as well as with each household. They are not one-time inputs given to the groups but are part of an ongoing engagement with the women.

Agriculture

With current low levels of productivity in agriculture, BSWI extended assistance in finding opportunities to enhance livelihoods. Over half of BSWI’s livelihood programs was focused on agriculture, its improvement – and the overall management of natural resources – remains key in the battle against endemic poverty in the rural areas. Enhancing productivity and diversification were the core strategies of BSWI’s agriculture programs. Our specific activities have increased the productivity of the main cereal crops to achieve improved food security, and diversification into cash crops such as pulses, oil seeds, and vegetables.

Whichever program was undertaken, BSWI sought to ensure its sustainability. In order to achieve this, we trained and deployed a large number of agriculture extension entrepreneurs to the field. Producers’ institutions around agriculture were formed and strengthened as well.

Programs till 2010-2011:

SRI (System of Rice Intensification): 350 acres of land covering 456 small and marginal farmers
 Vegetable cultivation: 100 acres of land covered covering 187 small and marginal farmers
 Pond excavation for minor irrigation: 30 small ponds and seepage tanks for 30 poorest farmers
 Renovation of community ponds for fishery: 4 large ponds covering 45 fish-farmers’ families
 Horticulture plantation (mango): 50 acres of land covering 146 farming families
 Fishery program: 30 ponds covering 30 families & 6 community ponds covering 66 families

Horticulture

BSWI has demonstrated models towards the optimum utilization of the water resources through- demonstration of fruit crops like mango using the water from created water body. Natural Resources management training has helped the farmers to use their resources in maximum level. Responsibilities of communities are increasing & they are following their norms & regulations to make a better income. Training on different activities helped them to understand the scientific systems & to plan on livelihood development. During the reporting period, 56 farmers have been provided with 480 mango plants (langra variety) and the area covered has been 10 acres. Double-pitcher

systems for summer drip-irrigation have been adopted. Bamboo cages have been provided to protect the plants from cattle. The plant survival rate so far is 100%. The members are maintaining their orchards scientifically and some of them have taken up inter-culture in their orchards.

Land & Water Resources

BSWI has taken the integrated approach to natural resource management and has demonstrated ways to promote the development of natural resources. This approach led to an equitable and sustainable economic growth, ensured household food security, and helped minimize mass poverty. An integrated approach to land and water resources management facilitated participatory planning with the people, develop systems and treatment measures that were most suitable to the resources available. The technologies that BSWI has developed are simple and labour intensive and best suited to the people they are designed to serve.

Water Harvesting Tank

BSWI's integrated approach to natural resource management (INRM) calls for the efficient management of soil, water and vegetation resources, yet maintaining a livelihood focus. INRM recognizes that uncontrolled, unplanned and unscientific use of natural resources results in their decline. Therefore, managing natural resources calls for proper land use while protecting it from erosion; enhanced productivity while maintaining soil fertility; and water harvesting and conservation. INRM not only optimizes the productivity of land and water resources, but also helps fight mass poverty. In other words, sustainable development efforts must take into account the relationship between the needs and priorities of the people, and natural resources.

Through the 5% Model water harvesting, the activity has ensured 1st crop in the area. This model has ensured a water harvesting area of 1, 36,400 c. ft. considering a loss of 20%, to an extent of 24 bigha can be covered under any vegetable whereas another model would encompass an area of almost 3 acre as far as second vegetable crop is concerned. If a combination of vegetable and oil seed is concerned the water has the capacity to cover almost 50% of land under double crop. After the excavation of 5% models beneficiaries are cultivating vegetables on the bund of the ponds & also cultivating fish in the water. The models which were cultivated in the last year are using to cultivate different crops. The Seepage tank model pits has so far ensured 1st crop in the area. This model has ensured a water harvesting area of 49,092 c. ft. Here also, considering a loss of 20%, to an extent of 12 bigha can be covered under any vegetable whereas another model would encompass an area of almost 3 acre as far as second vegetable crop is concerned.

Renovation Community Ponds

We have renovated 3 community ponds this year in three villages of Malda district (Gajole block) covering a total of 36 bighas of land for summer vegetable cultivation. 36 farming families have been benefitted from this program.

Goat Rearing

BSWI has promoted goat-rearing program in Malda district. As with other BSWI initiatives, the focus was on assisting women in optimizing their livestock resources. This has become necessary given that in these project areas, goat rearing was characterized by the use of poor breeds and unscientific husbandry practices that resulted in low incomes and high morbidity and mortality risks. BSWI focused on the induction of new animals, better housing and veterinary care, especially immunization against certain well-known killer diseases like PPR (Peste des petits ruminants). Systems have been set up to procure and administer necessary vaccines in collaboration with government agencies. BSWI has been assisting poor women in goat rearing as a potential livelihood supplement. The program enabled women to obtain credit to buy goats and provide improved shelter and veterinary support. Training a cadre of para-vets to provide animal health care on a routine basis has also been an important intervention. The programs have been implemented in clusters so that capacity building, veterinary support, and marketing could be taken up in a more systematic manner.

Goat Rearing Status of this year:

We have completed 20 sheds for setting up of 20 goat rearing units. Training program has been conducted by SEDP Bankura for all of these 20 members and 2/3 local youths as stated earlier. 16 beneficiaries have earned on an average Rs. 10000 during this year by selling their goats.

Fishery

In this year fish inputs have been distributed in 36 ponds, i.e., 6 community ponds and 30 individual ponds. Total users families are 248. 30 members have been trained in scientific fish rearing with the help of the block level fishery extension officers, BSWI's staff and local progressive fishermen. Inputs like fish lings, fish meal, and pond culture etc. were provided in time. The members have provided some fish feeds by their own as local contribution. The systematic way like regulations & norms following, netting, meetings are being taken up by the fish beneficiaries. They have their own fishermen groups account & saving the profits for future use. Fish-farmers' committees have been constituted in each of the ponds where BSWI has provided support. In each committee, three members have been entrusted with total management and responsibility for keeping records and accounts related to the business transactions / local consumption out of the ponds. It is hoped by the users that good fish-yield would be achieved in the monsoon. They have also decided to set aside a portion of the surplus for future investment in the ponds and the rest would be shared by them.

We have set up a Community Fishermen's Groups' Rules & Regulations as follows:-

- A monthly meeting will be held on regular basis between the pond users group & the staff's of BSWI & all families will be present in each monthly meeting at village level.
- Discussions should be noted down in the resolution books which will be kept properly by the users group.
- All users group should open a savings account in bank or local cooperatives & after that the fish & other inputs will be distributed.
- Users group will maintain the files & bills of purchasing of fishes & other inputs properly, & that'll be monitored by the staff's of BSWI.
- Feeds should be distributed properly in sacks (attached with bamboo) & stated in the ponds.
- Beneficiaries can test the water quality of their own ponds by the block level fishery officers.
- Netting will be done monthly in the ponds by their on costs to improve the quality of fish.
- On the first year bswi will provide the fish feeds to grow up & to build the capacity of the users but from the second year beneficiaries have to bear the costs of each activities by their own.
- Beneficiaries jointly can cultivate different vegetable on the bund of the pond to utilize the area properly.
- Users group will decide whether they will use the water of ponds in the agriculture fields or not.
- Users group will consume some fish in the time of village occasions.
- On the time of cash withdrawn from savings account a resolution should be made & signature of all beneficiaries should be present there.
- Before fish distribution beneficiaries' contribution regarding pond management like cow dung should be provided by the beneficiary.

Broiler Poultry Rearing:

BSWI has developed a model of decentralized smallholder poultry rearing which has emerged as a powerful tool for the livelihood promotion of rural poor women. Women from tribal and other poor families have been organized into cooperatives to serve the growing needs of small town and urban markets. BSWI provided poor women hands-on training and assistance in securing finances from either the SHG revolving funds or government programs. These women reared a batch of 150-200 birds in rearing sheds built on their homesteads. In around 45 days the birds were ready for sale. The women's cooperative, organized by BSWI, also provided inputs like feeds, chicks, and medicines. At the same time, the cooperatives made arrangements to market the birds. Some of the producers have been trained to provide veterinary care and manage linkages on behalf of the co-operative. By working together the women realized the importance of scale economies to the poultry business.

In the agriculture farmhouse of our organization, we have been organizing a poultry unit comprising of 1500 broiler birds for the training and skill development of the rural people, especially the women from the target communities. So far, 24 batches of 1500 birds have been reared and 30 women have been trained in this activity.

Training-cum-Demonstration Centre on Animal Husbandry

BSWI has constructed a “Training-cum-Demonstration Centre on Animal Husbandry” in its own farmhouse receiving financial assistance from the Consulate General of Japan - Kolkata for giving training to 350 group members in each year in poultry, duck rearing, dairy and goat rearing. To start with, we selected 50 women members from the SHGs and the programs were started in January 2011. The constructed Livestock Training-cum-Demonstration program has been organized in the farmhouse where all the trainees sit together and get the technical support of the trainers in terms of scientific rearing practices, disease control, backward & forward linkage development, production skill development, managerial skill development and for working in a group-based/collective approach. This would not be possible if the trainees only receive theoretical training and immediately start working in their houses in isolated manners.

Micro-Credit

BSWI’s micro-credit investments focus on two areas:

Increasing the capacity of groups to provide loans: When groups reach a certain level of autonomy and understanding, they become eligible to receive funds from larger institutional lenders. This exponentially enhances the number of people they can provide with loans. BSWI has so far promoted 310 groups of women across 45 villages enrolling about 5000 members. Loans have been given to the members (1689 members) during the year amounting Rupees 23,51,000/-. The recovery percentage is around 94% at the end of the year.

Providing “credit-plus” services: Credit-plus services are non-financial services such as health care and literacy training that are provided when the groups of women gather for processing their credit. These programs give women a “one-stop-shop” where they can meet a number of their needs.

The Self-Help Group Model: BSWI works along this predominant model that begins with organizing women into groups in order for them to save money. The women then lend to each other from their savings.

Capacity building and income generation:

BSWI has imparted Skill Building Training Programs for 600 women on savings and credit dynamics, management of micro-finance and MIS. 1200 women have been supported with working capital credit from the groups’ revolving funds. On an average the members earned Rs. 24000 a year by doing small business and trades.

Micro-enterprises:

Two food processing centres are running in Malda block as well as in Baradrone campus. Leadership Development training programs were organized for the participants of both the centres for 3 days each. The projects have been financially assisted by CAPART New Delhi. All of the 100 participants took part in the training programs. Simple Accounting training programs were organized for both the groups of participants for 3 days. All the 100 participants took part in the training program and currently they are in the process of production of various food items being certified by the FPO.

In Baradrone village, one Foam leather bag knitting unit has been set up with 50 women from various SHGs. They received training in this activity and now they are producing foam bags on regular basis.

In Paschim Mediniour, the participants of the Improved Mat Weaving Unit have been working in both traditional and technical means. This project was financially assisted by the Irish Aid New Delhi. The participants of both the units were greatly interested and motivated to see how rural women were working in the technical viable units. The exposure visits were helpful for the participants to gain mental strength and momentum to work in the respective units. The participants were imparted training on Business Management simultaneously with their skill development and production programs. All the 100 participants were covered in the training program.

Average monthly income of the participants in the initial period after training has been Rs. 720 per month. This increased gradually and they earned an average of Rs. 18000 year. Program reviews was conducted in March 2011.

All sorts of remedial measures pertaining to the production programs were taken as recommended by the program review team members. Both the programs have been handed over to the participants, i. e., Producers' Groups from the month of October 2010.

Sectoral Interventions

BSWI has developed a menu of sectoral livelihood streams. These have grown as a result of our experiences of livelihood planning with SHGs in different locations and areas of study. Periodically, new sub-sectors were added based on experimentation, collaboration, and exposure to initiatives outside BSWI. We undertook reliable experimentation before implementing the livelihood programs in a new location. Such phase was vital, so as to avoid massive failures, which the rural poor cannot afford. Based on people's choices, resources and capabilities, BSWI piloted a livelihood innovation with a few families of Gajole block of Malda district, in order to master and adapt technology, identify training needs, develop training programs and create a successful prototype before promoting it as a large-scale intervention. Over the years of its consistent work, BSWI has succeeded in developing a variety of appropriate technologies for enhancing productivity, with the objective of generating sustainable livelihoods for rural poor communities.

BSWI organized exposures and training programs, trained community-based service providers (selected by the SHGs), promoted organizations where necessary, developed service linkages, and leveraged missing infrastructure from public agencies.

Goat rearing and Fishery are two of the classic examples of BSWI's programs that began with a handful of families and are now proceeding to reach bigger numbers. These two programs alone were poised to be promoted among several families. So far, BSWI has promoted poultry co-operatives, goat cooperative, fishermen's groups in three districts of West Bengal (South 24 Parganas, Malda, Medinipur). A Producer Company for agriculture development, another one for Improved Mats and a third one for Food Processing (in collaboration with the Irish Aid and CAPART) has been set up in various locations.

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Education & Empowerment program:

Over the past year, the domestic child workers, children of migrant labourers / domestic workers became the largest group with which we work. They make up about 25 percent of the total number of children who are out of school and hence are a critical group to target.

BSWI's Child Protection Policy was conceptualized in 1987 and is geared to bringing a lasting improvement ensuring that "every child gets an equal opportunity to a childhood." Later in 2002, we modified our CPP by incorporating the MDGs, i.e., "Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five; Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling; Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education and at all levels". We emphasize on children's protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; free, equal and quality education; and supportive environment; and their freedom of choice.

Our objectives are:

- To ensure all children are studying in school and enjoying free, qualitative education without dropouts.
- To protect children from all kinds of violence and abuse and to live dignity in life.
- To promote community based organizations to implement child rights and protection measures.
- To capacitate various people's forums in the field of child right and protection and implement the MDGs (goals 2, 3, 4) in their areas.
- To sensitise the community to ensure children's basic rights to survival development, protection and participation.
- To make a measurable improvement in child and women's health, health awareness and services.
- To enable community to learn from each other to identify needs, resources and skill to translate collective action, mobilize, manage and supervise.

We evolved strategies for achieving the objectives by bringing together our perspectives from the situational analysis, preliminary goal-setting, sector reviews and from identification of the strengths and weaknesses of our organisation. Our strategies were aimed at devising systems that can create a basis from where the target population can itself take off.

We designed appropriate indicators and institute MIS for reviewing the progress of our works. We emphasized on understanding the state of preparedness of the community to manage its own affairs in our process of reviews. We undertook Annual Reviews involving staffs, managing committee members, self-help groups, village-level people's organizations, government's representatives and external evaluators.

Interaction of parents with government departments

BSWI's education & empowerment program focused on innovative solutions at the elementary school level that increased children's access to schools and improve their quality of education. At the same time, drop-out rates has been drastically arrested from such children of marginalized communities by ensuring the retention rates in the state primary schools and in the people-contributed non-formal schools. Side by side, to make the women more confident and empowered, literacy classes have been organized in the project villages through raising people's contribution and by promotion of women's self-help groups (SHGs).

Access: Children were lacking access to education for many reasons. For some there are not enough schools where they have been living ; for those with disabilities, schools are often not equipped to provide them access. And for others, such as children of women domestic / sex workers, working children, access to education was very difficult in the area. Caste system and lack of gender orientations have also been responsible for which access to education denied them admission in schools.

BSWI promoted and sensitized the Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs) to implement child rights and protection of children from all kinds of violence and abuse at village level. BSWI provided Teaching Staff support in the govt. primary schools. To highlight child rights and its implications among the public, BSWI organized Child Rights Day in the year. Learning Centres of BSWI are very popular those provide opportunity for the parents and children to learn more about schooling, education, village information, and opportunity for skill development. BSWI undertook a 'school-eligible children-survey' and based on this information parents were motivated to enroll their children in schools. BSWI conducted periodical health camps and health education programs with the support of govt. health sub-centres and primary health centres and all immunizations were provided for all children. Curative support for simple ailments was provided from BSWI's clinic while chronic and acute cases were referred to appropriate hospitals. To encourage and expose the children's talent and capacity, BSWI organised Cultural Fairs and exhibitions. These events educated the people about children's talent, child situation and violation of child rights. BSWI is the member of a state level NGO Network to campaign child rights and protection.

We promoted SHGs and VLCPCs for getting their involvement for designing programs. This is intended to facilitate community participation and sustainability. We undertook regular reviews involving the target communities. At all stages of evaluation, we followed participatory ways so that their perception and understanding of the development process, roles and responsibilities get incorporated in such exercises. The key challenges and risks were:

- Low level of literacy and skill
- Dominating role of men and religious leaders
- Dowry and child marriages
- Religious taboos and social blocks.

BSWI tried to overcome the challenges and risks by (i) Widening the scope of education, legal awareness and skills (ii) Making the people articulate their feelings about gender discrimination (iii) Inducing a sense of pride in the village religious leaders in giving justice to children of the community (iv) Working as a facilitator to link grassroots organizations with external environment.

BSWI's targets are currently based on the MDGs and situations of our area, such as:-

- Reducing under-five mortality;
- Increasing net enrolment ratio in primary education;
- Increasing the proportion of students starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary education;
- Increasing ratios of girls: boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- Building linkages between the VLCPCs and mainstream agencies, institutions and statutory bodies.

We designed appropriate indicators that enabled ongoing reviews of progress and course correction. Our whole thrust was on the qualitative side, and MIS was instituted accordingly.

Impacts:

- The parents have been aware of their children's rights and privileges. They have made commitments to control the dropout rates of their children.
- The number of school going children increased, and the ratio of girls : boys has increased.
- Enrollment of the children (girls too) in post-primary education has increased to huge extent.
- Instances of violence and abuses on children, child labour and child marriages have highly been reduced.
- The govt. schools have been aware of VLCPCs as 'watch dog' and its functions.
- The panchayat members have become active to promote infrastructural development of the govt. schools.
- The state govt. has allotted increased teachers in schools as a result of our constant advocacy.
- Now the rural children understand more about their behaviour with friends, family, community and over all society.
- The parents are happy about the positive changes in their children.
- The religious leaders have been active in campaigning for achieving child rights and promoted girls' education.
- Through our constant motivation in villages, health of women and children improved and the child mortality has been completely arrested.

We measured the impacts of our services by assessing the situation that has emerged due to our collective development initiatives. The impact assessment was done to measure the improved capacity of the target community to ensure protecting the lives of the disadvantaged children. We focused on the following issues in the impact assessment :

- Sustainable development (food, shelter, employment, etc.);
- Developed and expanded initiatives to help children survive and develop;
- Empowering women and girls.

Community Health

For two decades, BSWI has been striving on designing and executing innovative programs that combined basic education and health information. They have been:

- Providing people, in particular women, with information about how to remain healthy, and where and how to take advantage of health services, encourages them to take action to improve their own and their family's health
- BSWI mobilizes community support for improved maternal and child health, prevention, treatment, and awareness on HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, nutrition and reproductive health, as well as threats to personal safety such as domestic violence and sexual exploitation of girls and women

BSWI fills the gap between what people with low-literacy skills understand and what health care providers expect their patients to know. By helping the health care providers design plain-language materials, using words and symbols patients with low-literacy can understand, and helping low-literacy adults learn important health information through adult literacy programs through the SHGs and farmers groups.

BSWI's Health Awareness Initiative has raised significant awareness among health care providers about the link between low-literacy and poor health outcomes. Through trainings and the orientations, BSWI continued to train village health volunteers and local quacks to improve their communications with patients and incorporate plain language and cultural awareness into their community outreach efforts.

To ensure parents have the right information and skills they needed to become better health advocates for themselves and their children, BSWI trained Village Mobilizers and SHG members on how to integrate health and literacy education, and access and use appropriate health information resources. To support this effort, BSWI has developed posters, flip charts and plain language health education materials for village mobilizers and SHG leaders working with parents with limited literacy skills.

Through the SHGs, BSWI has expanded work initiated over the past seven years, in collaboration with the government department, local clubs, women's organizations and local quacks. The overall objective of the program is to help reduce maternal and child mortality and improve maternal and child health. The program has reached disadvantaged girls and women with health education that is provided through the village workers and SHG leaders.

Through the awareness program, BSWI provided women and girls with opportunities to participate in health education, acquire literacy and life skills, and improve their utilization of reproductive health care services already available. Community awareness campaigns and orientation programs also provided health information to young women and link women and girls with health care providers. Together the program components have created a supportive environment for girls and women to enhance their health knowledge and enabled them to better access to health care services.

THANK YOU!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with thanks the generous contribution and assistance made by the following organizations and donors since our inception to make our goals a reality:-

PAST DONORS

- CRS, Kolkata
- Oxfam (I) Trust, Kolkata
- Action Aid (India), Bangalore
- Mennonite Central Committee, Kolkata
- Canadian Embassy, New Delhi
- Kamini Jain Charitable Trust, New Delhi
- CAPART, New Delhi.
- Irish Embassy, New Delhi.
- Churches Auxiliary for Social Action, Kolkata
- Bread For the World, Germany
- SIDBI, Kolkata
- CARE, West Bengal
- GTZ W.B., Kolkata
- CRY, Kolkata
- Indo-German Social Service Society, New Delhi
- Ministry of Textiles, GoI
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GoI
- Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, GoI
- S. Jindal Trust, New Delhi
- Volkart Foundation, Mumbai

We acknowledge with thanks the generous contribution and assistance made by the following organizations and donors to make our goals a reality at present:-

- Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India.
- CAPART, NEW DELHI (A Govt. of India Rural Development Unit)
- Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai
- Irish Embassy, New Delhi
- The Consulate General of Japan, Kolkata
- The Ford Foundation, New Delhi
- Institute of International Education (IIE) USA, New Delhi
- S. Jindal Trust, Mumbai
- Volkart Foundation, Mumbai
- Planning Commission of India, New Delhi.