

**ACTIVITY REPORT**

**OF**

**INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

**For the period**

**April 2004 to March 2005**

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## **PROJECTS AT A GLANCE**

### **PROJECT SELF-HELP GROUP**

Started in 2003. Presently ongoing

**Objective:** Our Institute has framed the following project to provide sustainable source of livelihood for the deprived people of West Bengal, India. We are experimenting with a permanent solution to revive the weak economy and save the future generations from extreme poverty. The program is run according to the MDGs, especially the first MDG "Reduction in extreme Poverty and Hunger" and the second MDG "Promote Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women".

**Description:** "Project SELF-HELP GROUP" is a long-term program initiated in the tribal-areas of West Bengal to train indigenous people in different sectors. Part of the program is the IPSCI (Indigenous People Micro Savings & Credit Initiative), where each self-help group opens a collective bank account for savings to gain more independence. The savings will be used to establish small businesses. Vocational training (i.e. handloom, kantha, medicinal plant cultivation) will be given to the members of the self-help groups for further income generation.

**Achievements:**

- 1) Formation of Self-Help Group members in 2003
- 2) Projected Savings of 2004 achieved

### **PROJECT SUSHIKSHA**

Started in 1996. Presently ongoing

**Objective:** Project SUSHIKSHA was launched after a survey by a team of experts who confirmed, "Education of women is the key to development". The program is run according to the second MDG "Achieve Universal Primary Education".

**Description:** SUSHIKSHA is an educational program, especially for Women from disadvantaged backgrounds with no accessibility for the light of knowledge and self-reliance. The curriculum includes basic reading and writing of the local vernacular and basic arithmetic for accounting. Besides, gradual awareness on environmental development for a sustainable better quality of life is also carried out. The project has effect on a population of at least 50,000 slum dwellers of Tollygunge slum in Kolkata followed by 1,000 people from the remote Bhitargarh village, Mecheda in Midnapore district of West Bengal, India.

**Achievements:** Intervention successfully completed in its initial site, a slum in Tollygunge, South Kolkata in 1997. Over 50 non-literate women and girls successfully completed literacy program in Bengali and Mathematics. Participants are trained to make handicrafts as a commercially applicable skill. Distribution of black boards and 500 slates to rural NGOs for the center in 1997 was done. Opening of a center for adult women of Bhitargarh village, Mecheda, Midnapore district in 2000. Twelve women received Pass Certificates from this center in 2001. Cultural and value-based orientation undertaken through this project.

## **PROJECT SUSWASTHYA**

Started in 1997. Presently ongoing

**Objective:** The project SUSWASTHYA was launched after an initial survey of the adopted Tollygunge slum at South Kolkata. The program is run according to the fourth MDG "Reduce Child Mortality" and the fifth MDG "Improve Maternal Health".

**Description:** SUSWASTHYA is a health program, to fight against the greatest threat to the quality of life: unavailability of primary health care services to all the sections of the society. It is a primary health care facility for the rural/urban underprivileged families. The project has effect on a population of at least 50,000 people.

**Achievements:** Established a medical information center and a free monthly check-up facility for 500 families of the adopted Tollygunge slum in 1997. Research and documentation of the causes of diseases in the field area in was done in 1999. Setup of a subsidized clinic for blood testing and a subsidized immunization program against infectious diseases in 2000 Monthly health camps since 2001. Opening of a permanent free clinic in Ayurvedic treatment at Kala Bagan, Behala, Kolkata in 2001 for infected or vulnerable slum dwellers.

## **PROJECT HOPE**

Started in 1998. Presently ongoing

**Objective:** PROJECT HOPE was inaugurated by the renowned actress of India Ms. Moon Moon Sen. The program is run according to the sixth MDG "Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria & other Diseases".

**Description:** Project HOPE started as 2-month long AIDS & HIV Positive Prevention Campaign at the red-light area of Sonagachi in Kolkata. Today the project consists of awareness raising, education, counseling and condom distribution amongst the sex-workers and is aimed at bringing primary healthcare facilities, functional literacy and awareness on social issues to this population. The project has effect on a population of at least 40,000 sex-workers and their families.

**Achievements:** Distribution of more than 1,00,000 condoms amongst the sex-workers since 1998. More than 30 awareness campaigns between September 1998 and April 2003. Project HOPE II included routine health check-ups for around 100 women and children, and food packet distribution. Establishment of a permanent free clinic at Sonagachi in 1999. Research of types of diseases common to the locality with the record of suspected STD/HIV and AIDS cases from 1999. Initiation of a functional literacy program for the sex-workers in 1999. Initiation of a crèche-cum-primary education center for children of the sex-workers in 1999. Training in income-generating skills for alternative careers since 1999. Weekly Homeopathy Medical Clinic established in 2001. Kamasutra based training piloted.

## **PROJECT SHRAMDAAN**

Started in 1996. Presently ongoing.

**Objective:** The program is run according to the first MDG "Reduction in extreme Poverty and Hunger".

**Description:** SHRAMDAAN is an employment generation program, where the Institute referred jobless men and women in different companies for employment taking the full guarantee of the person in case of any mishap. The project has effect on a population of at least 50,000 people.

**Achievements:** Around 80% of all referred persons remain permanently employed from 1996 onwards. Training and provision of mixer-grinder machines to the village women of Bhitagarh village in Mecheda, West Bengal to earn money independently.

## **Observances and other Programs**

### **WORLD HEALTH WEEK**

**07 April 2004**

**Description:** For seven days we distributed health drinks to more than 700 children from poverty stricken areas of Kolkata.

### **HIV AIDS CAMPAIGN ON ELECTION DAY**

**10 May 2004**

**Description:** More than 150 people including political candidates were handed over condoms, leaflets and AIDS-ribbons as part of our HIV/AIDS prevention campaign.

### **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE FAMILIES**

**15 May 2004**

**Description:** A walk was organized with the help of Swarna School and other non-profits to promote faithful conjugal partners and preventing vulnerable activities amongst any members of the family to fight back the lethal attack of HIV/AIDS. Condoms were distributed during the walk.

### **WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY**

**5 June 2004**

**Description:** After a month-long survey in the Red Light Zone of Sonagachi on the level of health and hygiene consciousness, a Three-Point Program was adopted on World Environment Day. Safe drinking water was promoted through distribution of Zeoline tablets to the sex-workers and other inmates of the red light society. Personal hygiene was promoted by way of distribution of condoms amongst sex workers and other members of the red light society. More than 100 saplings were distributed to sex-workers for adding greenery to the environment. The occasion was graced by Dr. P. K. Agrawal (Principal Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare and Health, Government of West-Bengal).

### **WORLD DAY FOR PREVENTION OF DRUG ABUSE**

**26 June 2004**

**Description:** More than 500 leaflets with contact information for rehabilitation of victims of torture, drug addicts, were distributed in vulnerable localities of South Kolkata. Slogans against illegal drug peddling, illicit trafficking of women and children were raised by the volunteers of IISD.

### **WORLD POPULATION DAY**

**11 July 2004**

**Description:** This day was observed in a unique way. First, two lady senior citizens, namely Anjali Roy Chowdhury, a housewife and Dipti Chatterjee, Ex-Principal of Rajdanga Primary School, pledged to donate their bodies after their deaths to the Cause of Medical Research. This benevolent act was carried out at the IISD Headquarters with the witnesses being Nesar Waris, Joint Secretary - Human Rights Commission; and S.B. Roy, Senior Vice President of Eveready Industries. Subsequently, we conducted a WALK on Population Day with the participation of students from Swarna School, Non-Profit Representatives, Two Dwarf Sisters and people from all walks of life. Condoms were distributed by our volunteers in the route. There were placards displayed messages on the Prevention of Population Explosion and Safe-Sex Promotion for Prevention of HIV/AIDS. Placards had slogans implying the effect of population on Gender Equality and Rights, Education, Maternal Health, Child Mortality and Poverty and Hunger Alleviation. Our route was: IISD Headquarters - Rashbehari Avenue - Lake Market - Rashbehari Crossing -Kalighat - Monoharpukur - Sarat Bose Road - Lake Road - IISD Headquarters.

### **INDEPENDENCE DAY EVE**

**14 August 2004**

**Description:** The observance started with the Sit-n-draw Contest of various groups participating and painting on Indian Independence. Each participant received gift items for their participation like tennis balls and Racket/a set of pencil-rubber-ruler/Kellogg's Cornflakes packet. They also received refreshments

before leaving the venue. Results and prizes would be distributed on the 4th of September 2004. The contest was held from 9am to 12noon as per schedule.

The free medical check-up-camp was organized between 2pm and 4pm. Dr. Devashis Panja (Chairman Association of Ayurvedic Doctors in India) and Dr. Anup Dutta, renowned Herbal Medical professional, did medical check-ups for people serving as domestic help and their family members, security guards of the complex and the rickshaw drivers who are the local residents' support for short travels. Condoms were distributed as a part of HIV/AIDS Prevention campaign to the patients. The main feature of this session was that Mr. Chitta Acharya of Barrackpore, pledged his body after death for the cause of Medical Research and advancement under our auspices. His ultimate surrender of his body for the sake of the Nation's progress was apt for this day of observance of Independence Day Eve. We, the citizens of India, conveyed our gratitude to him for this act of benevolence.

A cultural evening was conducted the same day. Six of our interns from Switzerland, England, Turkey, Portugal, Netherlands and Japan spoke of their experiences in Kolkata and their country in brief for the benefit of those present. There were presentations of Indian classical dances by young students of Bharatanatyam and Odissi. This was followed by presentations of modern dance with Hindi film songs. The teams were judged for the Best Dressed and Best Presentation under two categories namely, Toddlers and Youngsters. Two melody queens sang classical based songs. Judging was done by the Interns so that the true ethnic culture in the eyes of the foreigner gets the winning points on the day of the observance.

A Lucky Draw was conducted where pearl jewelry, clocks, glassware, leather items, geometry box, colors, bags and other items went to the participants.

Refreshment was served to all the guests and there was an atmosphere of celebration of the Indian Independence.

Berger Paints gave financial support for the Event and Kellogg's gave its cornflakes and pencil holders along with posters for the event. Rose Bud Boutique gave a leather wallet for the Lucky -Draw.

The event was a success and awareness and readiness is now prepared for any future social welfare event to take place. The program was held at VIP ENCLAVE, VIP ROAD, Kolkata.

## **LAUNCHING OF PROJECT SUSHIKSHA**

**4 September 2004**

**Description:** The program started from 2.30 pm onwards. First prize distribution was done to all the sit-n-draw winners of the 14th August, 2004. Sit-n-draw contest followed by distribution of slates, books to all enrolling Sushiksha students. Ratna Banerjee was introduced as the Teacher of the Sushiksha Centre for Bengali, Mathematics and value-orientation lessons. Parijat Pal Choudhury, eminent beautician was introduced as the trainer for income-generating beautician course for the Sushiksha students. Sally Rogers and Ceren Abi were given their letters of citation for having done survey of the VIP ENCLAVE COMPLEX as part of their assignment with IISD. SALLY also received a certificate for her exceptional contributions in our observance for WORLD POPULATION DAY. Our Letter of Appointment was handed over to our Nepalese representative for a Nepalese branch of IISD. Chitta Acharya officially handed over the papers for submission to IISD for his body pledging done on 14th of August, 2004 to enhance completion of formalities with the Medical College. The observance ended with refreshment by IISD with some fellowship interaction with the Morning Glory Montessori School Lady Principal and her colleagues and NGO representatives.

## **WORKSHOP FOR SELF-RELIANCE OF HIV PATIENTS THROUGH ORIGAMI**

**16 September 2004**

**Description:** A Day-long Workshop was conducted from 9.30am to 5.30pm by our Institute on Origami for HIV patients provided by Kolkata Network for HIV Positive People with the support of the Confederation of Indian Industry, Eastern Region. It was held at the offices of the Confederation of Indian Industries.

Origami is a safe Japanese Art form of folding colored papers into various attractive shapes and sizes, which is not only aesthetically mind engaging but also a source of income if channelized into utility items like Greeting Cards, Book Markers etc. The items taught were Crane, House, Letter-Rack, Twin Boat, Windmill, Bell-Flower, Flower pot and Flying Crane. Chiho was supported by a senior trainer of the local Indo-Japan cultural Centre Shelly Sen. Sen would be our guide for further evaluation and lessons on advanced Origami for the endeavor to be successful.

While our Intern from Japan Miss Chiho Miyake took this workshop for the HIV students to learn this Art, CII pledged to endeavor to find a corporate market for these students so that they find an aesthetic source of

livelihood which would help them bear all their living cost including their medicine cost. Besides the effect of this craft work would alleviate the mental depression of the patients thus making them feel vibrant enough to lead normal lives like others and not live miserably with the guilt of being a HIV patients.

Shelly Sen donated Rs.100 towards future purchase of any raw materials for the Origami practice to be on. The 25 HIV-positive students were extremely vibrant and joyous over the prospect of becoming self reliant through such a safe profession. The smiles and enjoyment by them also ensured the mental strength which Origami could provide.

Thus Japanese art form was exchanged for a significant change in the lives of the HIV positives in India by our Institute and the Confederation of Indian Industry involvement speaks volumes of its serious commitment to reduce the economic vulnerability of these patients.

The workshop concluded with the recommendation that these students should form a SELF HELP GROUP and do business with all the items it makes and on 30th November, 2004 an Exhibition of their items of Origami would be conducted by the same tripartite partnership for sale and survey of market of the items made.

### **SEMINAR ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA**

**08 March 2004**

**Description:** Partho Banerjee, a human rights' activist from New York, USA, presented his valuable views on the Human Rights conditions of Immigrants in the USA under the latest immigration laws introduced by the Bush-Administration.

The seminar was attended by students of Human Rights and other volunteers and social workers of the Institute. It was held at the Institute's headquarters.

### **UNPD KOLKATA 2005 – UN OFFICIALS & MEET AMBASSADOR AND IISD COORDINATORS**

**January 19-21, 2005**

**Description:** This is an unprecedented Meet between the global market of the **United Nations System** (8 heads of UN and UN agencies' procurement section) and the **Indian industrial community** (131 heads of companies) to probe possibilities of procurement of Goods and Services from the Indian Sellers.

The partners were United Nations Procurement Division, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of West Bengal, Confederation of Indian Industry, Eastern Region; and Hyatt Regency Hotel, Kolkata.

The MEET Ambassador was Veena Singh (UN-NGO-IRENE, Convenor, India). The Coordinators were Maya Sen (New Delhi); Rongsengla Marsosang (North East of India) and Miriam Rupprecht (Kolkata Headquarters).

### **INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY**

**21 February, 2005**

**Description:** Institute of International Social Development organized a **Seminar** to celebrate **International Mother Language Day 2005** on February 21 in the **Auditorium** of **Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped**. This year, worldwide, the day is devoted to the language of the visually and hearing impaired. The seminar conducted by the Institute had the topic "Evolution of Sign Language – from a prehistoric mode of exchange to a modern way of productive communication". The program was organized in cooperation with the Regional Centre of Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, which is an Autonomous Institute under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. Eminent speakers from different disciplines: beginning with an anthropologist, who spoke on the early, pre-speech importance of signs as a way of exchange, the seminar pointed out the evolution of sign language and then emphasize the relevance of sign language to integrate persons with hearing impairment in today's working life. Besides the representatives from various governmental institutions and NGOs dealing with hearing impaired, the Institute also invited corporate persons who are successfully employing hearing impaired persons. The seminar gave the representatives with such diverse backgrounds as well as the audience an opportunity to exchange experiences and discuss possible means to improve together the living and working condition of persons with hearing impairment.

## **SOUTH ASIAN TSUNAMI RELIEF REHABILITATION, REBUILDING PROGRAM**

**1 March 2005**

**Description:** The Institute called for donations for the survivors of the South Asian Tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

## **FOOD AND NUTRITION AWARENESS PROGRAM**

**1 March 2005**

**Description:** This program, coordinated by Miriam Rupprecht, was in partnership with the Ministry of Human Resources, Woman and Child Welfare department; IISD, and Janakalyan Seva Samity. The program elaborated on nutritious food at affordable prices which are essential for lactating mothers, and pregnant women. The essence of only breast feeding during the first six months after the birth of a child was also elaborated by the doctor from the Ministry and how the child's future development laid in the hands of the mother's willingness to breast feed the child for this minimum duration. The session attended by 70 women comprising of pregnant, lactating and young married women concluded with cooking of a vegetable mix, which is an affordable nutritious food, and samples of a sweet ball or laddu for children. The nutritious value of both these preparations were discussed and then samples were distributed amongst the women and 30 children. This program was conducted in the club premises of JSS at Tollygunge slum from 2pm to 5.30pm

## **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

**March 8, 2005**

**Description:** Formation of a Self Help group of sex-workers or former sex-workers was done to also make them collectively bankable. Achieving the MDGs through them in the area over the next decade is the goal of the program.

## **NEW YORK ACTIVITIES**

### **DPI/NGO Conference**

**57<sup>th</sup> Annual DPI/NGO Conference on “Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action”**

The UN Representative Shomik Chaudhuri attended the Conference as an observer from September 8 to 10, 2004 at the UN Headquarters in New York.

### **PREPARATIONS FOR THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.**

9 Feb – 18 Feb, 2005

The UN Main Representative Shomik Chaudhuri attended the Conference as an observer.

### **\*\*NGO Forum of the 2005 High Level Segment of ECOSOC\*\***

Mr. Shomik Chaudhuri the UN Representative, attended the ‘**NGO Forum of the 2005 High Level Segment of ECOSOC**’ on the theme “**Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities**” at the ECOSOC Chambers of the UN on March 10, 2005. Mr. Chaudhuri made recommendations at the forum (which was web cast all over the world) on behalf of the Institute, which were drafted as part of the final Report.

The Recommendations of the Institute were published as a part of the **Report of the Substantive Session of 2005** held in New York, from 27 June-27 July 2005, as part of Item 2 of the provisional agenda.