

2018-19

ANNUAL REPORT



RURAL AID

A Rural Development Organization

CONTACT ADDRESS

6/160A Bidhan Colony, P.O Santoshpur, P.S Survey Park, Kolkata - 700075

Society Registration No

S/62602 dated 4th August 1989 under West Bengal Societies Act XXVI of 1961
80G Registration: DIT (E)/1683/8E/160/96-97 dated 19/01/07



www.ruralaid.org.in



ruralaid03@rediffmail.com

From the Secretary's desk



It is my immense pleasure in presenting the 30th Annual Report of Rural Aid for the year 2018-19. During the past 30 years, beginning with a small but firm step taken with belief and conviction, to traverse the Path of Development and to work in a focused manner with and for the socio-economically deprived and marginalized women and children for addressing their issues and needs, Rural Aid has come a long way. It has learnt a lot from its well-wishers, donors and the society with whom it has effectively engaged with while carrying out various charitable and welfare activities. We as an organization have gained learning experiences from many unforeseen and operational challenges – organizationally, financially and programmatically too, which have enabled us to gather our strengths and convictions with renewed energy each year to work more and more for the causes of poor Children and Women, marginalized and hard to reach situations. Due to these learning and practical experiences, we have been able to take up more and more pressing issues relevant to the context and each year dedicating ourselves to the development agenda of the relatively deprived and marginalized rural people of West Bengal.

The opportunities gained from different exposures and trainings over the years from different agencies and forums have helped in sharpening Rural Aid programmatically and organizationally over these 30 years of our existence. Resultantly, from time to time, we have adopted different approaches and strategies and evolved development interventions that aim at addressing multiple vulnerabilities and have multi-sectoral linkages. From an initial reactive and philanthropic service-delivery approach to coping with disasters in the Sagar Islands, we have gradually grown up to a greater understanding of developmental issues and taken up actions to address the issues affecting the lives of the poor and marginalized specially the women and children in North Bengal. There is still a lot to learn, a lot many miles to go and many milestones to reach through our sectoral interventions in Child Rights, Children's Health, Education and Protection; overall Health and Nutrition; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Livelihood and Women's Empowerment.

We are grateful to and would like to humbly thank all our partners in change standing by us – our valued donors, local communities and local Self Government bodies, National and State Government and allied agencies, individuals and other civil society actors. With the belief put upon us and the strengths gathered from our well-wishers and the financial as well as technical supports extended by our valued Donors, we are enabled to continue to work objectively for the positive changes and sustainable development together to make a Lasting Change for the benefit of our children in particular and the marginalized society at large!

We also take this opportunity to thank the Governing Body (Board) Members of Rural Aid for their regular support and guidance in organizational and programmatic matters. We are also grateful to our dedicated and untiring staff member's for walking the mile to fulfill Rural Aid's Vision, Mission and Objectives. But without them it would have been not possible to meet the challenges, bring in the new learning and positive energies and taking up new avenues to ensure Rights and Access to Equal Opportunities for the people.

(Sutapa Dutta (Chakraborty))
Secretary

Governing Body (Board) Members of the Organization:

The Governing Body members of Rural Aid come from different arenas and background. Rural Aid's erstwhile President was a Headmaster of the school, from where the Founder Mr. Sovon Dutt had studied, was a big influence on the group's functioning. Post his demise Dr. Sailen Halder, a medical practitioner is the current President. These members are from diverse professional background in the Board-from a Chartered Accountant who is the treasurer, to banking professionals and individuals from the community. There is a balanced and healthy composition of people from rural and urban background in the Governing Body which as per our Society's norms customarily meets on quarterly basis. Besides this, our Governing Body also meets periodically as and when issues concerning the organization (programmatic, financial or administrative) emerges. Before undertaking any programme the Board meeting is held whereby the entire project, the scope, goals and its programmes are discussed in detail along with the objectives of the respective funding agency.

The Core Members :

Dr. Sailen Halder	Medical Practitioner	President
Mr. Saroj Bandopadhyay	Retd. AGM, State Bank of India	Vice – President
Mrs. Sutapa Dutta (Chakraborty)	Social Work	Secretary
Mr. Tapan Kumar Dey	Retd. Bank Officer	Assistant Secretary
Mr. Kashinath Podder	Service	Treasurer
Mrs. Basabi Rozario	Service	Member
Mrs. Kshama Sen	Retd. Teacher	Member
Musharraff Hussain	Advocate, Kolkata High Court	Member

OUR AUDITOR:

Partha Sen & Associates

214, Balia East, Garia, Kolkata - 700084.

Ph: 033 – 24 620964, 24144308

OUR BANK DETAILS

	Indian Funds		Foreign Funds
Bank Name	State Bank Of India	Canara Bank	State Bank of India
Branch	Karanjali	Jadavpur	Karanjali
AC/No	11541969228	98010117892	11541967129
A/C Name	Rural Aid	Rural Aid	Rural Aid
Address	Vill- Karanjali, Dist South 24 Parganas, Pin: 743344	Jadavpur, Kolkata, West Bengal, Kolkata – 700 032	Vill- Karanjali, Dist South 24 Parganas, Pin: 743344
Branch Code No	04701; IFSC: SBIN 0004701		4701

Profile of the Founder of Rural Aid -

Mr. Sovon Dutt



FOUNDER

Mr. Sovon Dutt, Secretary of Rural Aid grew up in Belpukur village in Kulpi Block of south 24 Parganas district. From his childhood he had the influence of his maternal grandfather who being a doctor in the village had an altruistic way of helping people in the area. Another influence and in his life was the head master of his school who motivated him into social work. Mr. Dutt completed his B.Sc in Botany from Kolkata. Thereafter he returned to Belpukur and he along with seven likeminded youths of the village with inspiration from the local High School head teacher came forward to work on the deprivations of the locality. Belpukur by virtue of being remotely located lacked services and Government amenities pertaining to health, education and livelihood. The group came together to work on ways to uplift the conditions of the villagers especially in the field of sanitation, livelihood, community development and child care programmes. However the work was done in an unstructured manner without any funding. They did not have any formal background of social work but had a high spirit to do something for the development of the area.

Mr. Dutt grew with the organization which started working informally from 1987. In due course of their work they undertook sanitation programmes in the area of South 24 Parganas with special emphasis to Kulpi and Sagar Island. He gained insight on installing tube wells for drinking, pond excavation and sanitation programmes for building toilets in the area. While undertaking the sanitation programmes he made an inroad in school sanitation and expanded the work from community at large to children with the help of crèche programmes. While working in South Bengal, he got the opportunity to see the situation of people in North Bengal's Dooars area. Mr. Dutt built an understanding on sustainable livelihood programmes by introducing mixed cropping, making vermicompost, medicinal plants and vocational trainings for women and developing Self Help Groups. It also paved the way to look at the issues of trafficking and unsafe migration which were offshoots of the larger underlying problems in the area. It resulted in a shift in looking at developmental issues from a service delivery mode to rights perspective.

VISION OF RURAL AID

Rural Aid aspires for a society where values like love, peace with justice, equality and equity will prevail. There will be equitable sharing of resources. People will live in keeping harmony with nature. Empowering the poor and marginalized for Improved Livelihood System and to ensure their equal right.

MISSION OF RURAL AID

To promote self – reliance and sustainability among the reference community by strengthening their organization and promoting and supporting sustainable development initiatives which ensure their livelihood. The organization will work with special emphasis on tribal, women and children at North Bengal. The organization will keep faith on people's knowledge, skill and experience.



OBJECTIVES OF RURAL AID

- To provide a platform to the community for leading an Equitable and Dignified Life
- To organize and strengthen vulnerable village groups, women, adolescent and children on their Rights and Entitlements through knowledge sharing and empowerment processes
- To sensitize, mobilize and build capacities of the community on Right to Food, Work & Livelihood and in increasing the skill, knowledge, experience, ability, of the common people, and liaison with the System upon the same
- To mobilize and strengthen small and marginal farmers on sustainable organic agricultural practices aiming at Sustainable and Healthy Environment while addressing issues of Climate Change, and Economic Growth and sustenance of these marginal farmers
- To ensure Right to Education with special emphasis on the Girl Child, School Dropouts and children from the Primitive Tribal Groups
- To develop community linkages with the Government for provision of services and entitlements
- To generate awareness and empower community upon personal health and hygiene through Behaviour Change and Communication
- To generate awareness and build capacity of the community, community based Task Forces and related stakeholders with the Government System upon Climate Change, Sustainable Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
- To generate awareness and capacity against exploitation, harassment, and Rights of the people and children among stakeholders within community and governance
- To create a conducive environment for women & Children for preventing abuse and trafficking/unsafe migration of children and addressing issues of Child Protection through formation and empowerment of responsive Community Based Groups

Operational area and coverage of Rural Aid under ongoing projects

- Rural Aid is presently operational in an in-depth manner in the two districts of North Bengal – Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar
- The 4 Blocks being covered under operations – Kalchini, Dhupguri, Madarihat and Alipurduar
- The number of Gram Panchayets being covered - 11 in Kalchini, 4 in Dhupguri and 8 in Madarihat
- The number of villages reached - 36 in Kalchini, 40 in Madarihat and 8 in Dhupguri

The Target Groups being engaged with and reached- Women, Children, Marginal & Small farmers, Forest Dwellers, Tea- Garden & landless laborers, Person with Disability, Victims of trafficking and disasters and so on belonging to SC/ST/OBC & BPL

Background and History of the Organisation

Rural Aid is a registered voluntary organization involved in social action and economic development. It was formed in 1987 and later registered in 1989. It got registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) in 1995. The organization is also registered to be entitled to receive Tax Exemption for the donations received under section 12A and 80G of the I.T. Act, 1961. The work of Rural Aid focuses on ensuring the rights of the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society through sustainable development. Issues related to rights of women and children, literacy, health, water and sanitation, food security, livelihood, Disaster management, environment, governance have been the focal points of interventions made by the organization. Rural Aid today has altogether 35 Full time staff having expertise in various sectors.

Rural Aid works for the poor, marginalized, vulnerable and deprived sections of society in tea gardens and forest areas in Jalpaiguri and in remote areas of Sagar Island in South 24 Parganas. Its target community includes poorest and most marginalised section of society with emphasis on women, children and people belonging to backward and minority communities. It works in Sagar Island in South 24 Parganas district and in Satali and Mednabari Panchayat in Kalchini Block. They have initiated work on trafficking and Child Rights in 5 G.P's in Kumargram Block. R.A is working towards providing a platform to the community for leading a dignified life.

Rural Aid was formed in 1987 by a group of enthusiasts of Belpukur village in Kulpi Block of South Parganas. Sovon Dutt along with some likeminded youths of the village initiated the effort to work for the uplift of the area with inspiration from the local High School head teacher. By virtue of being remotely located Belpukur lacked services and Government amenities pertaining to health, education and livelihood. The area did not have the basic amenity of potable drinking water. The group came together to work on the development of the village. However, the work was initiated in an unstructured manner without a clear blueprint for development and how to go about it. The group had the passion to do something for the area and they began with water and sanitation programme.

The organisation was registered in 1989. The first funding with regards to development of the area was initiated through funding from CAPART for installing tube well in the area for safe drinking water.

Subsequently in 2003 a programme for pond excavation was undertaken with aid from CAPART in Sagar Island. Sagar island was chosen as the members of Rural Aid knew the area very well and there were ponds in the area which would benefit from excavation. Water for People also started supporting R.A in the programmes. They gradually extended to sanitary toilet programmes under the ambit of sanitation and hygiene programme. Apart from community they worked in schools so that children could access toilets rather than having to use open spaces. In due course Rural Aid expanded its work with the help of Central Social Welfare Board's Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for 25 children in Kulpi Block of South 24 Parganas district. They subsequently received funding from West Bengal State Welfare Advisory Board for another crèche programme. This programme was undertaken as the conditions of children were poor with regards to their health, education and development. This not only gives children a chance to get nutrition and avail pre-primary schooling but also helps mothers who are working to get a safe space for their children.

In due course of their work, Mr. Sovon Dutt (the then Secretary) came in contact with CASA. A visit was undertaken by the contact person from CASA and possibilities of funding were explored. During that period Ms. Sutapa Dutta (Chakraborty), Programme Manager (now the Secretary of the Organisation) of Rural Aid was located in North Bengal. It was through CASA's encouragement they initiated a programme in North Bengal. Thus while continuing the work in South 24 Parganas, the organisation with the initiative of Ms. Chakraborty started assessing the situation of people in villages and tea estates in Dooars area of Jalpaiguri district. Rural Aid initiated an assessment of the situation in North Bengal. The plight of the tea gardens in North Bengal was grim. It was also found that the situation of the significant tribal population was also grave. They came in touch with Mr. Dilip Banerjee (ex-Officer on Special Duty, Public Health Cell, Panchayat & Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal) who not only acted as a resource person but also guided the group. In 2003 Rural Aid initiated work for the uplift of the tribal and marginalised through exploration of an agricultural Income Generation Programme. The organisation started focusing on the development of the marginalised section with special emphasis on women and children.

With support from CASA and IGSS, Rural Aid focused on sustainable agriculture with emphasis on mixed cropping, bio intensive garden, vermin compost and growing medicinal plants. The other focus was on formation of SHG's where vocational skills were imparted and the groups took their products to various exhibitions and fairs. In addition, Capacity building of the groups, building linkage and strengthening people's participation with the PRI and working on disaster management were the areas Rural Aid started focusing upon. In North Bengal flash floods and inundation of the rivers are a perpetual phenomenon which cripples the functioning of life. They received grant from CAPART (Council for Advancement of People's Action & Rural Technology) for organising vocational trainings with children and people with disability so that they could become self-reliant and less dependent on the family. In due course they started working on the aspect of vocational training for providing livelihood options to women in sick tea gardens and forest villages. A Balwadi programme with support from W.B Welfare Advisory Board was initiated in Madhubagan Tea Estate to deal with the education of pre-primary children in the age of 4-6 years. It was through the assessment they came to know that trafficking and unsafe migration was rampant in the areas of North Bengal more so for the vulnerability of the sick tea gardens, remoteness of the places, ignorance and poor economic condition of the people.

The work on prevention of trafficking was initiated through Action Aid in 2006 whereby community awareness and formation of Reflect groups within the community has been developed to prepare a preventive and pressure building mechanism in the community while establishing linkages with the local

self governance, block, sub division and district level for seeking redress of the deprived community. They have been invited to be a part of the Anti-trafficking Committee both at the Block and District level. 3 staffs have been included in the R.P.F Mitra Yojana programme whereby cards have been issued to them for joint rescue of trafficked children. Rural Aid gradually expanded its scope of work from care and welfare to development and rights. Issues pertaining to women and children, literacy, health, food security, water and sanitation, livelihood, governance, disasters have been taken up by the organisation. On the basis of the baseline findings work was initiated on the formation of Child Protection Committees. Children's groups (Star groups with adolescents) were formed subsequently to orient them and the community on Child protection issues. Rural Aid started working on Child Protection issues in Kumargram Block with emphasis on trafficking from 2009.

Identifying the root causes in these areas where unequal position of women, food insecurity, absence of livelihood opportunities led the organisation to focus on these aspects. In the purview of their work they found that empowerment of children is essential for them to develop holistically and enjoy their rights. They realised work in the realm of trafficking can be addressed if other aspects of education, health and livelihood can be furthered with the help of Government services and entitlements. Rural Aid while empowering the community on their rights in one hand through sensitisation and awareness programmes with the help of groups, on the other hand worked with the LSG and Government officials at the Block and District level to lessen the chasm that existed between the community and Government services. While initiating the rescue of children and women who were missing either as a result of unsafe migration or trafficking, they started delving on the deeper underlying causes. It has resulted in regularizing the anomalies in the payment of contractors for work being undertaken, stop gambling in tea gardens with the help of Police and Panchayat (one major reason for workers losing their earnings), enabling women to voice their protest against alcoholism and domestic violence, seek information and put across their demands before the Local Self Governance for entitlements and schemes, initiate the habit of sending children to schools and understand the relevance of education.

In the long and short journey of 29 years, Rural Aid has come a long way, each year becoming more and more relevant to the context and each year dedicating itself to the development agenda of the poor and marginalized rural people of West Bengal with renewed vigor. Rural Aid has, over the years, evolved development interventions that aim at addressing multiple vulnerabilities and have multi-sectoral linkages. From an initial reactive approach to coping with disasters in the Sagar Islands, the organization has gradually grown to a greater understanding of developmental issues and taken up actions to address the issues affecting the lives of the marginalized specially the women and children in North Bengal. This understanding permeates Rural Aid's other sectoral interventions in Children's Education, Rights and Protection; Health and Nutrition; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and Livelihood and Women's Empowerment.

PROJECTS

School Project in Totopara supported by BEGAP, UK

Bright Eyes Global Action Project (BEGAP), UK with Rural Aid as its partnering organization is supporting and promoting a school in Totopara in Alipurduar District, West Bengal State. This is a small Education Project aiming at addressing the educational needs of the Toto – a Primitive Tribal Group. The Project aims at providing Pre and Primary School Education to children covering school dropouts and out of school children besides the regular ones. The Project also aims at preserving the Toto Language and Culture which is almost on the verge of extinction. BEGAP works mainly towards capacity building amongst the children by attracting them to the school namely Chittranjan Toto Memorial Education Centre which is sponsored and supported by BEGAP. This is a small education project which has 71 Children and 5 Teachers, all from the village. The project is running for 5 years now on. All the teachers speak in the children's own native language, which means the lessons are being taught in the children's mother tongue. This is something many communities and ethnic minorities in India are fighting for under the implementation of pre-primary education in Anganwadi centres under ICDS and Primary as well as Upper Primary education in schools under the **Right to Education for all**

Our school Chittranjan Toto Memorial Education Centre is meant for the children belonging to the marginalized section of the society and coming from different ethnic groups having different mother tongues. This school is meant to impart education to children from their Pre-primary (Nursery, Lower KG, Upper KG) to Primary (Grades 1 to 4). With the beginning of our new educational session, we have been able to enroll and retain 71 children (43 boys and 28 girls) who learn their lessons, play, paint, sing and dance – basically enjoy being together in this school of their own. *The children are being taught in their mother tongues – Toto, Nepali and Bengali, keeping the spirit of Right to Education for all Children.* Besides, they also learn English and Hindi. Parents say that they are happy with the progress of their children and the education they are getting.



SAD Project

supported by FADV



The Sostegno a Distanza – SAD (meaning Support from Distance) Project supported by FADV.

The project focuses on the children belonging to the families of the tea-garden labourers most of whom are temporary workers. Under this project portions/lines of 6 Tea-Gardens are covered, namely, Gairkata Tea Garden, Haldibari Tea Garden, Moraghat Tea Garden, Telepara Tea Garden, Lakkikanto Tea Garden and Nangdala Tea Garden. Majority of the Tea-Garden workers are Scheduled Tribes, who are minor castes and ethnic groups such as Adivasis. The children covered under this project belong to the families whose daily income is less than Rs.5000 a day and most of these families are not covered under the BPL list (Below Poverty Line), and hence, cannot access most of the government schemes and facilities meant to secure livelihood and housing. Hence, it is very difficult to convince the families to send their children to school, instead of sending them to work. Even after enrolment of the children in school, it is difficult to retain them. The beneficiary children study in class 5 to class 12. These children have to travel 2 to 5 km to reach their schools.

With this backdrop FADV started the Education project, since 2006. This year, there are 231 children under the project from 14 Tea Garden and 5 Gram Panchayat, in Dhupguri. Chalsa, Jalpaiguri, Madarihat and Nagrakata Block, under Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar District. The beneficiary children belong to the age group of 11 to 18 years of age, and they belong to Scheduled tribe community. Among the existing 231 children, 91 are females and 137 are males.

Objectives of the Project

EDUCATION:

The project's logic goes perfectly in the direction of contributing to the succeeding of **SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

The project, indeed, aims at enhancing **children's well-being and resilience** in the disaster and child abuse prone areas, the major scope of the entire program is to contribute to the improvement of children's life and development to have future **adults aware and proactive.**

To achieve these objectives the project activities have been clustered in three main results, 1) **Access and Quality of Education**, 2) **Life Skills Development** and 3) **Strengthening of Resilience.**

1) With this perspective FADV and Rural Aid intend to increase and support 248 children's access to formal and non-formal education. 2) In addition to education, intended as writing, reading, counting, etc., there is a range of **psychosocial abilities** for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, they are defined **Life Skills**. They are loosely grouped into three broad categories of skills: **cognitive skills** for analyzing and using information, **personal skills** for developing personal agency and managing oneself, and **inter-personal skills** for communicating and interacting effectively with others.

The project would like to develop all the three categories through three different approaches: **Meditation, debate and team sports.**

FADV carrying out **capacity building** for partner's staff on the development of life skills, specifically on those related to Meditation and debate that are distinguish practices implemented in FADV's education projects in Italy. The capacitated staff in turn will capacitate teachers, counselors and support staff that in turn will train children and young people through a **cascade methodology.**

Through the implementation of the project FADV and Rural Aid wants to **strengthen the resilience of children and young people** focusing on two main issues that distinguish the areas of intervention: **climate change** and **disaster risk reduction and protection from child abuses.** These issues will be **mainstreamed** also in the activities related to non-formal education and in the practice of debate.

Climate change is global in its nature, but it has different effects at local level, in the developing countries, less prepared to develop adaptation strategies, population is at large risk. Especially the most exposed: the eldest and children suffer from considerable **physical and psychological shock.** The increasing impact of climate change associated with the **unequal vulnerability of the population living in the most disadvantaged contexts** need an intervention addressed to **disaster risk reduction, disaster mitigation and environmental education.**

Early marriage, child labor, unsafe migration and trafficking are the most frequent child abuses carried out in the targeted areas. The project wants to inform the children about these threats and strengthen their **awareness and resilience** in facing the abuses.



HEALTH:

The project aims at ensuring good health status of children and their families by providing supplementary nutritious food and by reducing the instances of widespread communicable, water and vector borne diseases.

To achieve these objectives, the project activities have been clustered in three results,

1) Access to supplementary nutrition food 2) Good Health status of Children and 3) Improved Hygiene

1) Supplementary Nutritional pack providing to all the 248 children every month. The food pack consists of packets of soya bean, gram flour, broken wheat, etc. The children are provided with take-home food ration. The food items are provided based on local food habits and cultural practices.

The childrens are provided with nutrition education is provided to the parents during community meetings, where they are told as to how they can make the best use of existing food resources available locally and which are affordable to them.

2) Health camps has been conducted, every quarter, to ensure good health status of children. The objectives of the health camps is to bring awareness among the children and the families about the diseases they are suffering from and providing free medical advice and medicines. It helps early detection and prevention of diseases.

3) Hygiene education has been provided to the children and their families on regular basis. The children has been included in awareness sessions on improving and maintaining personal hygiene practice. The children and their families are trained on the same using PHAST cards. The issues like hand washing, covering mouth when coughing, having regular baths or showers, brushing teeth, wearing clean clothes, stopping open defecation, environmental sanitation, food hygiene management, etc. has been discussed.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

At present we have 209 children in the project and majority of them are in above class VII. This year 22 numbers of children have appeared for Higher Secondary and 39 numbers of the children appeared for class X board examination. Among them Jiwan Lakra secured 72% in his class X board examination and presently, he is studying at St. Peter School in Siliguri. Likewise Ghanshyam Prasad secured 72% in his class XII board examination and he aspires to be a doctor, presently he has been preparing for the NEET examination.

Free Tuition Centre

There are 4 tuition centres under the project. These tuition classes are specifically for the two subjects, English and Mathematics. There are 5 numbers of specialized tuition teachers who teaches these two subjects in the tuition classes according to their respective specialization and 178 numbers of children have been benefitting from the tuition classes.



QUARTERLY DISTRIBUTION

As usual, this year also Rural Aid distributed education materials (Copies, Pen, Pencil, Eraser, Correction pen, book cover, stapler and pin etc), nutritional pack (Sattu, Dalia, Black Gram, Matar, Masoor dal, Peanuts, Soyebean etc) and toiletries kit (Hand Wash, Hair Oil, Shampoo, Washing soap, Bathing Soap, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Detergent Powder, Talcum etc) on a quarterly basis to 231 children.



DISTRIBUTION OF CHRISTMAS GIFT & REIMBURSEMENT OF BILLS

Every year we distribute the Christmas gift to the children. This year we distributed blankets as a Christmas gift to 231 children of the project.

231 children have been reimbursed against their uniform kits, books and the school fees bills during this year.





HEALTH AND MEDICAL CAMP

During this year, there were 5 health camps organized for the children of the project. All the camps were accompanied by the professional medical practitioners and the medicine were distributed to the children as per the prescriptions. Around 200 numbers of children were benefitted from the camps. There were 2 community medical camps, around 250 numbers of community people participated in the camp, they were examined by the professional doctor and given the medicine as per doctor's prescriptions. All the health and medical camp were held in the project location i.e Lakhikanto Tea Garden, Huldibari Tea Garden and Gairkata Tea Garden.

AWARENESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Awareness on climate change is one of the crucial parts of the project. During this year we organized 8 awareness campaigns on various burning issues related to climate change such as Save Electricity, Save Natural Resources, Reduce Plastic Use, Renewable and Non-Renewable Energy, Solid Waste Management, Stop Water and Air Pollution etc through street play, art exhibition, rally, bicycle rally, flash mob etc. We also observed International Day for Disaster Reduction and Environment Month from 19th Nov-18th Dec, 2018, where we organized several rally and took the active part in cleansing the surrounding.



ANNUAL SPORTS

We are not only concerned about the academic performance of the children but we do encourage children to take part in the extra-curriculum activities as well. In our endeavour, we organize annual sports every year and this year we organized annual sports on 18th Dec, 2018. There were events such as 50mts, 100mts, 200mts, 400mts races, Long Jump, for both girl child and boy child separately, spoon and marble race, chocolate race and dressing race for the infants. Around 250 children were participated in the sports this year.



DEBATE, MEDITATION AND COUNSELLING

These are other essential activities of the project. To encourage the mindfulness and critical thinking skills, every week we conduct the classes for meditation and debates. We pay home visit to the children and counsel both the parents and children in an individual level about the importance of education and the career option as well.

PEERS GROUP

Presently we have 4 children peers group at Huldibari, Basaline, Tinline and Lakhikanto centre respectively. Every month they conduct the meeting to plan their activities. During this year, they organized the several awareness programmes on Climate Change. They were trained on the issues related to climate change by FADV. Recently, we assist them to conduct election to form a cabinet.



Applying Thought in School **A Programme Initiative under WIPRO Education Grants**

Rural Aid is presently carrying out its programme intervention in Education – Applying Thought in School, under the Education Grants of WIPRO aiming at strengthening the processes and environs under the Public School Education System. While focusing its programmatic goals towards ensuring Child Centric and Child Friendly education for all children, the final larger goal is to realize enhanced Learning Outcomes among children in Govt. Primary Schools and thereby 100 percent children's enrolment, school regularity, and retention in schools in the long run.

While the focus is on enrolment and retention of students in govt. Primary schools and enhanced learning outcomes among the students in the age group of 6 to 9 years of Grades 1 to 4, the aim is ensuring completion of at least Elementary Education by engaging with the Govt. Primary and High (including Upper Primary Schools) and Govt. System (Education Machinery) upon seeing through proper implementation of Right to Education (RtE) for all children in 24 villages of Kalchini Block in Alipurduar district covering 24 Govt. Primary and High Schools (the High Schools include the Upper Primary Section).

Towards ensuring Quality as well as Child Centric Education, Rural Aid under the intervention presently and in the long run, will be working upon Model Building of the Govt. Primary Schools through capacity building of teachers and other govt. and community level stakeholders and engaging as well as collaborating with the System. Rural Aid will carry out in-depth school intervention programme in 6 govt. Primary schools out of the 24 schools being selected. The organization will be carrying out stronger and strategic advocacy processes in and with the remaining 18 govt. Primary schools for replicating and escalating the in-depth programme along with the learning being generated. Rural Aid along with its stakeholders will be carrying on evidence based Systemic advocacy (aiming at amendments in and proper implementation of policies, Acts, and Rules) through the different reports and studies which it intends to bring out in the near future in order to leverage the focused issues (Enrolment, Retention, and Quality) pertaining to education at the District and State level.



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with the System. Rural Aid will carry out in-depth school intervention programme in 6 govt. Primary schools out of the 24 schools being selected. The organization will be carrying out stronger and strategic advocacy processes in and with the remaining 18 govt. Primary schools for replicating and escalating the in-depth programme along with the learning being generated. Rural Aid along with its stakeholders will

be carrying on evidence based Systemic advocacy (aiming at amendments in and proper implementation of policies, Acts, and Rules) through the different reports and studies which it intends to bring out in the near future in order to leverage the focused issues (Enrolment,



Retention, and Quality) pertaining to education at the District and State level.

During the year 2018-19, two Capacity Building Training sessions had been carried out by Vikramshila Education Resource Society (WIPRO's Resource Partner) for the staffs under the said programme from 7th August to 9th August 2018 and 15th to 17th January 2019 in which Rural Aid team members have Intervention for building and strengthening the practical understanding on language & Mathematics and manage time on Oral work, Read aloud, Phonics & writing etc. for stage I & II.

The capacity building sessions were imparted towards developing basic conceptual. Besides these, Rural Aid have also gathered basic knowledge on History of Education (World and India) and theoretical overview, National Policy on Education, National Curricular Framework 2005 and understanding on Knowledge, Learning and Cognition. Besides this, the capacity building sessions have been designed and carried out to develop the team's basic capacity to initiate Engagement with the Teachers (schools), Community and Children upon the issues and causes pertaining to Quality Education and thereby strengthening academic transactions by teachers in govt. primary schools and enhancing learning outcomes among children.



Under the second year of programmatic intervention, 12 meetings with school teachers & Headmasters of the focused 6 schools under direct intervention and 18 schools under advocacy intervention. Preliminary meetings with school teachers and Head Masters in the six focused schools (to be built up as Model Schools in the future) and 18 indirect advocacy schools were carried out for rapport building. Thereafter Rural Aid had collected the information and data from the schools for knowing and understanding the status of schools and children in better way, aiming at more strategic and realistic intervention in order to meeting the programme objectives and had Compiled the data being gathered. Rural Aid staffs collaborated with the schools and supported the school teachers during the new session in admission and enrollment processes, distributed books with the teachers to students. Rural Aid team identified dropout & never been to school children and directly enrolled them in schools. The organization has enrolled 13(Male-8, Female-5) children in primary schools.

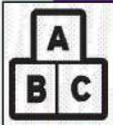
The staffs under the programme carried out objectively engaged with the community level stakeholders and parents of the children focusing on awareness generation, capacity building and counseling of these stakeholders for the causes of the intervention. They formed community based groups comprising of parents, SHG members, members from the community, members of panchayats and conducted 12 focused on the issues of Status of Education, Importance of education, Free and compulsory education for all children, issues of Child protection, Importance as well as roles and responsibilities of Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPC) in creating a safety net and protective environment for all children including all the allied, linked and line departments. Counseling of and Interaction with parents regarding school absenteeism and low attendance, drop out children and children who have never been to school were carried out by the staffs of Rural Aid team.

The programme while aiming at bringing in Quality in the Public School Education System works towards building on a sustained relationship and engagement with the School Principals, Teachers and School Management Committees as the primary stakeholders and duty bearers; the other most important stakeholder under this intervention is the Children themselves for whom the Quality Child Centric and Child Friendly Education is meant. The team carried out direct and sustained engagement with children in the selected schools and the 6 Children's Activity Centres before and after the school hours, aiming at supporting the educational needs of these children and thereby their learning.

The Focused Objectives of this activity under the Programme are



Understand, teach children and strengthen the academic needs of children, especially those who are relatively weaker in academics, the re-enrolled dropouts, and those vulnerable of dropping out of school due to various factors



Further research, evolve and develop organically to strengthen the process of directly engaging with such children and providing onsite educational support



Develop and strengthen the capacity and voices of children for realizing their Participation Right and role as peers within and beyond the school periphery in the arena of Education, their Right to Quality Education and participation in school, within family and community



Develop identity, self, self-belief, self-esteem, creative and cognitive thoughts and actions, confidence, dignity, communication, leadership, team and "We" feeling among the children to strengthen their participation and retention in schools



These 6 Children's Activity Centres are being run on daily basis for two hours each day before and after the school hours. There are 25 to 30 children on an average in each of these centres aged between 6 to 9 years who are from the operational area and are either going for their studies to the 6 selected directly intervened govt. primary schools or other primary schools in the neighbourhood in the tea gardens. There is a total of about 200 children reached under this programme. Engagement and interaction with the children within and beyond the school arena is being carried out in a sustained manner through formal and informal meetings and sessions on games, drawing, art and craft, story-telling; besides awareness and capacity building on children's Right to Education, Child Rights and protection issues.

CASA Supported Project



SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

The project is being implemented in 480 households of 5 Tea Estates under 3 Gram Panchayets in Kalchini Block in Alipurduar District. The goal of the project is to provide resilient livelihoods and sustainable food security to the excluded and socio-economically marginalized women and men in disaster prone and food insecure Tea Garden areas of Dooars Region through Capacity Enhancement of the targeted communities towards sustainable livelihood and promoting smooth access to the available rights & entitlements in the tea garden areas; and working towards building a strong Network amongst the CSOs and community representatives to advocate on the issues identified through the district and state level platforms (Alliances) with the Governance.

The project aims at building and developing Community Based Organisations through capacity building sessions, mentoring, and advocacy meetings, and to develop Leaderships within the community, upon the issues pertaining to Livelihood, Good Governance, Rights and Entitlements, Gender, Justice, accessing Social Securities, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management. 5 villages are under the operational coverage.

So far 5 Nos. Disaster Management Groups, 5 Nos. Women's Pressure Groups and 5 Nos. Adolescent Groups have been formed and nurtured comprising of 425 members. 85 percent of the members are women and belong to Schedule Tribe community.

Awareness programmes have been conducted for these groups upon understanding different social security and livelihood schemes. Special Training programme have been conducted for the Disaster Management Groups on **First Aid team, Rescue and Relief distribution.**

Out Comes of the Awareness Prog.

All the 426 targeted families under the project have received their Digital Ration cards (291 families within these have received their BPL Digital Ration Cards) towards accessing the services under Food and Social Security. 110 targeted families had applied for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Gitanjali (Shelter Scheme). Out of these 110 families, 62 have received sanctioned homes under PMAY while 2 of them have received their sanctioned homes under Gitanjali. Homes have been sanctioned for further 29 families out of the 110 while for the remaining families home sanctioning process under the given schemes is going on.

Interventions towards Food Security

In order to meet the nutritional requirements, food security and livelihood, 50 families have been provided with trainings in Mushroom Cultivation and developing Kitchen Gardens. These families have already developed their Kitchen Gardens and Mushroom farming within their respective homesteads which has helped them to meet their food and nutritional requirements as well as sell their vegetables for ensuring their livelihoods. 5 village level Micro Planning meetings have been carried out with 170 villagers in 5 villages for drawing up plans and budgets for village development and addressing the infrastructural needs (drains, roads, culverts and school kitchen gardens) and issues pertaining to social securities

Women Pressure Groups

Total 5 Nos. Women Pressure Groups (W.P. G's) formed (one in each targeted tea gardens) by the women's to work jointly to improve their status in the society. At present total 220 young and energetic women's & Girls joined the groups. Total 20 Nos. active members of W.P.G's (5 Nos. from each groups) has been selected and provided special trainings on Rights, Entitlements, Legal issue so that they can aware and lead their group. The leaders are also playing a vital role by spearing aware and guiding the target community peoples in placing their demands to the appropriate authority.

Under the banner of W.P.G's the women and girls of the project area breaking their silence and placing the demands for development of infrastructure in their area for As well as to enlistment of names in various government beneficial schemes like Pension schemes i.e. PMAY, Old age pension, Widow Pension, etc.

Disaster Management Group

All the 5 Nos. DMTF Groups were linked with the Block Disaster Management Department and actively doing the Rescue and Relief works in collaboration with the Block Disaster Management team. The members of the DMTF groups are also working actively for the development of village by preparing and submitting developmental proposals in the Gram Sansad meeting for construction of Dam, Culvert, River Bank and Roads reduce the risk of the Disaster in the tea gardens ..



Railway Childline Services



Railway CHILDLINE is a project of Ministry of Women and Child Development. Childline India foundation is a non-government organisation (NGO) in India that operates a telephone helpline called Childline, for children in distress. It was India's first 24-hour, toll free, phone outreach service for children.

The CHILDLINE Collaborative Organization run by Rural Aid has been functioning in from 4th October 2018 in Alipurduar Junction Railway station to provide 24 hours telephonic emergency services for children in need of care and protection. The organization was the only organization in the country running two CHILDLINE projects (Free toll no. 1098. In six So far (October to march) more than 36 (boys-18 girls-18) children have been provided with services of medical treatment, repatriation to native places, counseling, referral to shelter homes and rescue of child laborers and victims of child abuse through CHILDLINE Collaborative Organization services, Programmes of outreach and awareness and open houses are conducted to create public awareness for Child Rights and CHILDLINE services.

The twelve member team working in the Alipurduar Junction Railway station premises takes care of three Railway stations New Alipurduar Station, Court Station, Alipur station with support from 3 police stations to deal with cases in Alipurduar .

CHILDLINE works for the protection of rights of all children aged from 0 to 18. Their special focus is on all children in need of care and protection, especially the more vulnerable sections, that includes:



- Street children and youth living alone on the streets.
- Victims of child sexual abuse.
- Child labourers working in the unorganised and organized sectors.
- Domestic help, especially girl domestics.
- Children affected by physical / sexual / emotional abuse in family, schools or institutions.
- Children who need emotional support and guidance.
- Children of commercial sex workers.
- Child victims of the flesh trade
- Victims of child trafficking.
- Children abandoned by parents or guardians.
- Missing children.
- Run away children.
- Children who are victims of substance abuse.
- Differently-abled children.
- Children in conflict with the law.
- Children in institutions.
- Mentally challenged children.
- HIV/ AIDS infected children.
- Children affected by conflict and disaster.
- Child political refugees.
- Children whose families are in crisis.



Railway Childline Services Alipurduar Junction

Railway Childline Service

It is the phone-receiving centre. Each city may have one or more collaborative organizations. The functions of the collaborative organization include receiving calls from children/adults dialing **1098**, responding to the calls and long term follow-up of calls received. Additionally, the collaborative organizations are responsible for awareness, training, research and documentation.

Programmes and activities of the organizations includes medical facilities (preferably a health van), 24-hour shelter, legal aid, counseling etc.

The Railway CHILDLINE tackles issues related to trafficking, begging, child labor and child abuse, and more such issues related to runaway children. When a case of a child received from CHILDLINE call centers immediate action is taken to rescue a child take his/her details, medical checkup of the child and guide the child to appropriate welfare center on the case by case basis.

The CHILDLINE Collaborative Organization coordinates with the GRPs, RPF, District Hostital Alipurduar Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and Shelter Homes at for shelter of children.



It also helps the children who are in need of care and protection. Child line number is - 1098. The Childline received average two million calls in a year, most from children wanting to rescue from their place of work.

Training and capacity building exercises are an essential component of starting a CHILDLINE service in a new location. This includes, among others,

(i) Generating awareness and sensitization among citizens about child rights and protection, recognition of children in need of care and protection, and procedures to follow to report a case to CHILDLINE.

(ii) Training selected nodal, support and collaborative organizations in laws specific to child protection, rescue and rehabilitation of children

(iii) Building alliances with allied agencies.

