

DHAGAGIA SOCIAL WELFARE SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT (2023-2024)



Dhagagia Social Welfare Society (D.S.W.S),

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SECRETARY DESK:

Greetings from DSWS!!!!

It is the happiest movement, We all have to published annual report of Dhagagia Social Welfare Society (D.S.W.S) in an another year 2023-2024. DSWS has reached to its 28 year of dedicated well-being activities from its inception started with community support and response. We are immensely proud of what been achieved in 2023-2024 and look forward to a future as a devoted organization creating positive change in the lives of the people of Sundarbans over the years



I take this opportunity to introduce DHAGAGIA SOCIAL WELFARE SOCIETY (DSWS), a secular, not profit organization working in the field of child and women's rights and development for more than two decades. DSWS has been fighting for children's rights and equality for girls and women. We are privileged to have support from The Government of India, Save The Children, Unicef, Action Aid India, FADV, Azim Premji Foundation, the Hummingbird Foundation.

In the course of our association with Save the Children India, we have also had the opportunity to implement big projects funded by DFID, ECHO, Comic Relief etc. DSWS is managed by a Governing Board comprised of members from different backgrounds like professional social workers, community development specialists, women rights activists, and Retired Govt. Servants etc. who have vast experience in the field of Child protection and women empowerment.

In the course of its work for decades, we have developed the specialization in the field of Child Protection, Livelihood and Women Empowerment, Humanitarian Response Operations, and Climate Change Adaptations. This is also due to a natural coincidence of our presence in the high endemic blocks of Sundarbans which are prone to natural disasters due to a fragile ecosystem, child trafficking, child marriage and gender stereotyping.

DSWS likes to express heartiest gratitude to all its supporters, well-wishers, organizational members, dedicated project staffs, volunteers, partner organizations, Government departments, individuals, national and international donor agencies those have extended their helping hands towards its growth, development and its intensive service facilitation and pro people activities.

WHO WE ARE:

Dhagagia Social Welfare Society (DSWS) was established in 1994. This organization was registered under West Bengal Society Registration Act XXVI of 1961 and registered under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976, u/s. 12AA and 80G Act of the Income Tax Act, 1961 and also registered under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India.

The Organization aspires with the evangelical endeavour to proceed for a society where the moral values and good principles of life living would be followed. The evils will be perished away and the people will live with justice, equity, dignity and peace where mutual trust loves, affection, mutual respect, sisterhood and brotherhood will be maintained and honoured.

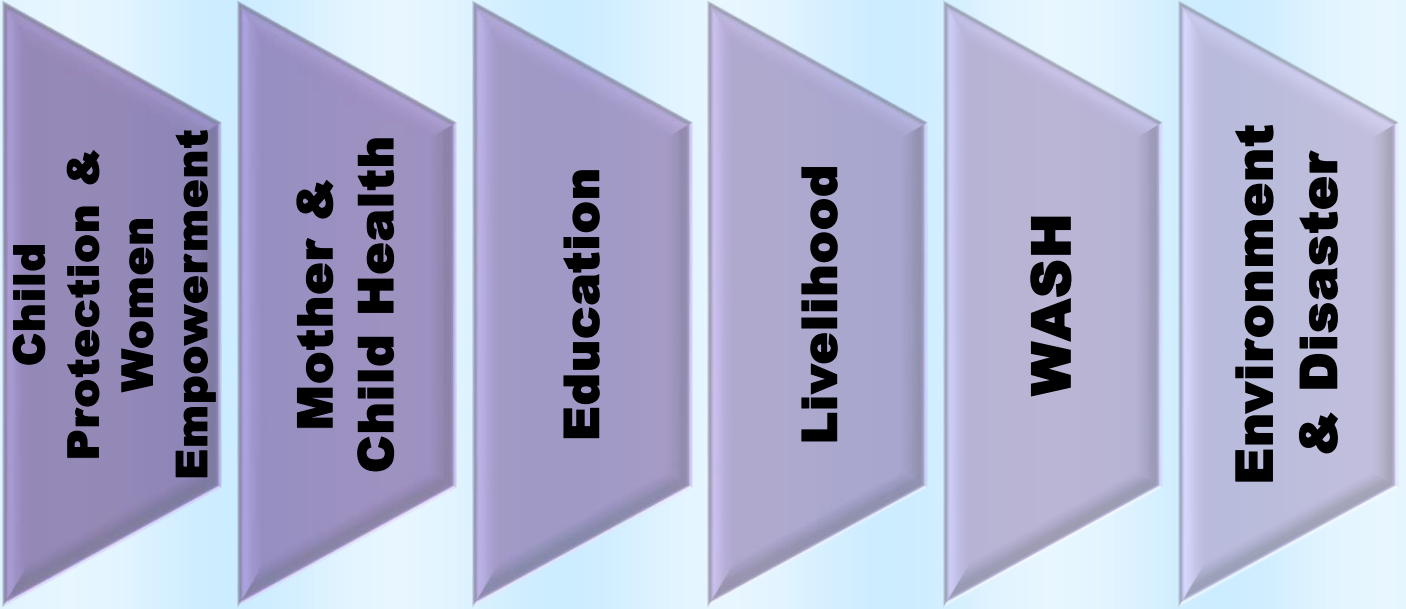
We established Community based Woman and Child protection mechanisms in 207 villages of North 24 PGS, West Bengal and are using these community-level structures as frontline workers and crusaders of change to stop the trafficking of children, child marriage and other incidents of gender-based violence. The Govt. of West Bengal has recognized these Community based mechanisms through the implementation of the ICPS scheme and is trying to replicate such mechanisms' in other parts of the state.

Our Vision: To work towards promoting social justice, equity and harmony in the society.

Our Mission: To work with the poor & marginalized section of the society especially women and children on the issues of their rights and livelihood security.

Managerial and financial capacity: The organization has wide experience in effective management and expertise to implement the project on health, women and child welfare, livelihood, education, disaster management, skill training program, design development program, EDP training etc. It has also sound financial capacity to handle the International agencies, govt. projects and good linkages with Govt. departments like MSME, PBSSD, DDGKY, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal, Department of Education, Department of Rural Development & Panchayat, State Bank of India etc.

CORE THEMATIC AREAS:



Child Protection & Women Empowerment:

- **(Supported By: Azim Premji Foundation)**

We protect women and children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence in our working areas. Our programs focus on the most vulnerable women and children while aiming for the safety and well-being of all women and children. We believe every child deserves a future and we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence in our working area. Community based protection mechanisms will be in place to stop trafficking of children for domestic work, marriage, abuse or other hazardous occupations and make child domestic work socially and culturally unacceptable through practical means (models of best practices) by which child domestic work can be successfully reduced and gradually abolished in the high endemic districts of West Bengal, India.

GOAL: Stop trafficking of children and young women from the State of West Bengal by mainstreaming community-based child protection and monitoring mechanisms.

One of the approaches to be adopted to reduce the vulnerability of the girls to trafficking would be to ensure their enrolment in the schools and to extend remedial coaching support to improve their scholastic performance and prevent dropout. Through this, DSWS also aims to address the deep rooted issues of gender discrimination which is a key causal factor of early forced marriage of girls and trafficking for worst forms of labour including commercial sexual exploitation.

With the mentioned four strategies **DSWS** intends to combat trafficking in women and children by establishing a protective mechanism through a growing awareness of community and vulnerable children and their families on risks factors and consequences of trafficking. The project will adopt a community led participatory approach for strengthening the local protection system which also include rights awareness and legal assistance (for the victims and their families).

The initiative aims towards capacitate the local CBOs, communities, civil society organizations, elected bodies of local self-government and other key stakeholders for creating safety nets (e.g. community level task force for anti-trafficking) for combating trafficking, child marriage, gender discrimination and on the other hand advocate with relevant government departments and law enforcement agencies for effective implementation of laws to ensure the legal rights of trafficked victims / survivors. Strategically the advocacy work will be continued through national and state level networks and forums on anti-trafficking.

Achievements of Child protection program at Sandeshkhali Block-I&II (2023-2024):

- 227 functional Children Groups formalized with an active membership of 4152 children (3523 Girls & Boys).
- All Children group members are good fighter against trafficking and gender-based violence.
- 227 functional Child Protection Committees with an active membership of 3714 stake holders (2734 Women & 1288 Men).
- All Child Protection Committee members are good fighter against trafficking and gender-based violence. Government authorities are using them as a resource person in the program of gender discrimination and child protection. Demonstrated model Child protection mechanism in the District that is being recognised by Government at State and District.
- Total 43 child marriage prevented.
- Total 227 dropout children got admission in school (through direct intervention)
- 124 Children received SC/ST Certificate
- 528 children got coaching support.

The essence of this project has been to involve the community in every stage of the program. In the present project 75% of the stakeholders, PRIs and other duty-bears have been sensitized and awakened on the issue to such an extent that they are now ready to combat it by taking effective actions in an organized manner.

Some parents are now thinking of keeping their children at home and engaging them in some kind of alternative income generation activity.

Along with the parents, the some children, especially the girls have become motivated to stay at home rather than go outside to work.

Some stakeholders (parents, Teachers, Club members, ICDS workers, PRI members, Health workers, Govt. officials) are playing a vital role in terms of building awareness and creating public opinion, giving effort in enforcing the child labour, Child Trafficking, Child marriage, Child abuse ban.

KEY CHALLENGES ON THE PROGRAM:

- Natural disaster's
- Communication gap between Administrative Departments and different islands
- Lack of convergence (in few cases) between different Departments.



CHILDLINE PROJECT

• North 24 Parganas District Childline Project

Dhagagia Social welfare society works as NGO partner with Childline Indian Foundation for North 24 Parganas District. It works as Collaborating organization in this district. It directly looks after 6 Blocks of this district namely Barasat-I &II, Barrackpore-I&II, Amdanga and Rajarhat.

Presently there are all total nine members working in this Childline project. One Coordinator, one counselor, six team member and one volunteer.

Being a partner of a 24 hour national free emergency phone outreach service like Childline, members of Childline team of Dhagagia Social welfare society works not only providing emergency support to children in need of care and protection on a 24*7 basis but also their had some other functioning like outreach and awareness generating programme regarding Child rights, Childline and its activity.

- Childline team celebrated National Children's day every year not only that from National Childdren's day to International Children's day Childline team celebrated "Childline se Dosti" Week and engaged in different programmes like signature campaigning , drawing competition etc.

Babughat Bus Stand (Kolkata) Childline Project:

Dhagagia Social welfare society works as NGO partner with Childline Indian Foundation for Kolkata Babughat Bus Stand. It works as Collaborating organization in this district. It directly looks after Babughat Bus Stand area. Presently there are all total twelve members working in this Childline project. One Coordinator, one counselor, seven team member and three volunteer. Being a partner of a 24 hour national free emergency phone outreach service like Childline, members of Childline team of Dhagagia Social welfare society works not only providing emergency support to children in need of care and protection on a 24*7 basis but also their had some other functioning like outreach and awareness generating programme regarding Child rights, Childline and its activity. Babughat Childline team trying to generates awareness to Bus Stand area by this outreach and awareness, generating programme. Babught team handled 318 cases in this year.

Mother & Child Health Program

The Sundarbans is a cluster of low-lying islands in the Bay of Bengal famous for its unique mangrove forests- the world's largest. This region is ecologically fragile and climatically vulnerable. It faces severe threats of climate change through frequent cyclones and tidal waves, the increasing salinity in water and soil has destroyed the productivity of the land. Changes in the environment have a large influence on the health of the local communities, as climate change induced disasters bring with them unique challenges. Children and women are likely to bear higher risks for their vulnerabilities. They are prone to communicable and preventable diseases such as diarrhoea, vector-borne diseases like malaria, dengue, kala-azar, chikanguniya and infections associated with under-nutrition. Poverty and deprivation in this region looms and as a result many children are sold or trafficked to major cities to work as domestic helpers. Early marriages of girls are common combined with a high rate of school drop-out. There are only two Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres near to Sandeshkhali II block, at Basanti (in South 24 parghana) and Bashirhat (in North 24 Pgn) though both are very difficult to access to due to rivers in between and longer road connectivity.

The project's location - Sandeshkhali II Block in the Sundarbans, West Bengal, has a long history of disasters, mainly floods and cyclones. It has a fragile ecosystem, vulnerable to damage and disruption. DSWS has been working in the area since 2004 on prevention of child trafficking and child labour in Sandeshkhali I & II blocks. The focus has been on creating a community based child protection and monitoring mechanism to stop trafficking of children and distress migration from the area which is largely induced by the fragile environment. The intervention also ensured reintegration of the child survivors with their families and resumption of formal education or vocational training in collaboration with the local NGO partners and governance structures.

The purpose of this project was to reduce cases of malnutrition among children below 5 years of age in the project area in Sundarbans. The health seeking behaviour and practices of the community members were addressed through various activities at local level and by facilitating their active participation in the planning, implementation and review of this process. The strategy of the intervention was also include water, sanitation and hygiene issues. Concerted efforts were made to support the Government system through training and consultations and strengthen quality of service delivery and mechanisms. Moreover, regularizing community level meetings on hygiene and sanitation in collaboration with PRI were also contribute to system strengthening. DSWS worked with the PRI and Health Services aiming to make these as mainstream agenda of the local governance system. Stronger linkages was established with services of Government Departments like Department of Sundarban Affairs, Department of Child Development, Women Development and Social Welfare, Public Health Engineering Department etc.

Specific objectives:

- To improve health seeking behaviour and practices on Infant, Young Child, and Maternal Nutrition among local marginalized communities who are severely impacted due to changes in the environment and climatic condition in the region and the decaying local economy
- To strengthen the capacities of communities and other duty bearers to prevent and respond to environmental health issues



EDUCATION PROGRAM

DSWS based in Sundarban, envisions to ensure quality education for all children from under resourced and at risk sections of society. Through its various action research initiatives in pedagogy, curriculum development, teacher development program, children supplementary learning centers and child protection, DSWS has spread its work not only in West Bengal but also in Jharkhand.

Due to and loss of livelihood, wages and income among most of the parents, children are either forced to child labour or they are willing engaging themselves to some work heading towards high chances of school drop outs. Therefore, reintegration of these children were done followed by re-enrolment.

- a. Liaison with school teachers and we were developed plan for enrolling children b. Out of school children identified through the survey was linked with formal schools.
- b. We are continuing 14 Multi-Activity centres in Sudarban area for education support to poor marginalize children.
- c. DSWS volunteers were identified children lacking interest in schools and re integrate them in schools after proper family counselling and required steps, particularly in post-disaster situation. Continuous tracking and home visit of irregular children to be done to make them regular.
- d. DSWS volunteers were conducted 32 sensitization program on RtE Act, gender equality, Child rights in 16 schools of Sundarban.
- e. DSWS volunteers were conducted 32 sensitization program on Girls education in 16 schools of Sundarban area.
- f. 227 children were mainstreamed through DSWS team members.
- g. We gave educational support to 528 marginalized children through coaching support.



LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM

(Supported by: Sustain Plus & well-wishers of DSWS)

We believe that sustainable livelihoods contribute to child protection by providing an enabling environment for growth. Therefore, we work to build the capacity and assets of vulnerable populations, mainly women and adolescence from underprivileged communities, through vocational training and livelihoods strategies enabled by Self Help Groups.



DSWS is one of the members in various committees in Block, District and State level of Govt. of West Bengal. DSWS is also one of the training partner of Paschim Banga Society for Skill Development (PBSSD) and DDGKY and West Bengal Swarojgar Corporation Limited.

DSWS has the advantage of a strong community level presence in working area from 1994 and enjoy a good rapport with the parents, local government, teachers, youth, women artisans and children there.

At the same time **DSWS** has strong networks with the administrative departments at all levels (Village level, GP level, Block level, District level and State level) and also strong networks with the 46 women SHGs who are involve in our existing production/Training centre. 258 women artisans got agriculture training. They established mangrove nursey and they planted 12 lakhs mangrove plants in river embankment of Sundarban. They are selling their products (plants) from nursery to Governments and NGOs.



DSWS has strong network with local government, PRIs, Govt. departments like District Administration viz. District Rural Development Cell, District Industries Centre, Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, Regional Director, Eastern Regional Office, O/o Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Kolkata, PBSSD, MSME Department ,Private sector like Bandhan Creations, NABARD, State Bank of India etc. for livelihood generation programmes. In addition to that local youth clubs, Mahila Mandals / Samity are also associated with DSWS. Regular contacts with new buyers are gradually increasing.



We distributed 05 hydroponic machine, 50 HP solar pump (Supported by: Sustain Plus) to community members of Monipur Gram Panchayat of Sandeshkhali Block-II under North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal, India.

Mangrove Plantation

(Supported by: Tellus Carban)

The SHGs in Mithakhali, Monipur, Atapur, Purba Atapur are working in raising the mangrove samplings for the plantation work. All the SHGs in these villages were identified. We required to contract with 16 SHGs to raise 06 lakhs of mangrove saplings. They are the leading stakeholder in raising the saplings and protecting the plantation plots. We selected 16 SHGs from the enlisted SHGs as per the given below criteria: •Have prior experience of raising mangrove nurseries or familiar with the work • Have bank account and other books of records updated • Agree to protect the mangrove sites at least three years after the plantation • The SHG must be constituted with female members • Priority will be given to the vulnerable women groups • The SHGs which members are residing beside the rivers must be prioritize.



Financial Statement for the year 2023-2024

Income	INR 1,11,29,964.00
Expenditure	INR 1,11,29,964.00

Special Thanks to:

- Community People
- Local Stakeholders
- Block Officials
- District Authority
- State & Central Authority
- Childline India Foundation
- Azim Premji Foundation
- Sustain Plus
- Tellus Carban
- Well Wisher