ANNUAL REPORT – 2017

Institute of social work

29B, Chetla Central Road, Kolkata – 700 027

Phone No. 033 2479 6607, 2449 8685;

E Mail ID – iswcht@gmail.com

During our journey with the socially and economically disadvantaged women and children of our society, we have built up 39 successful pillars of years. Overcoming many challenges and obstacles throughout these years, presently, ISW is a vibrant organisation engaged in a wide range of activities that result in impressive impacts on the lives of women and children we have worked with. The means of such achievements have been the various schemes carried out by us.

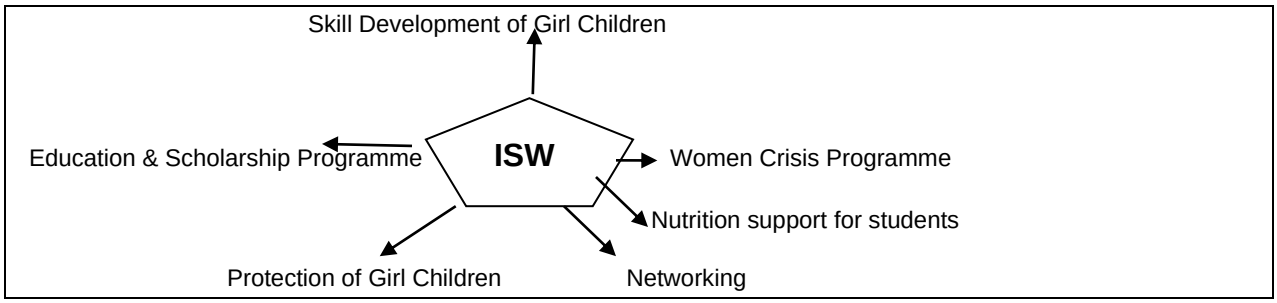
Lack of awareness about fundamental rights, want of legal protection and lack of education lead to social discrimination of poor women. ISW has realized through experience that empowerment of women is possible by both general education and legal awareness and also by acquisition of vocational skills. Our efforts have been to that end only. It is the belief of ISW that empowerment of women and children can fight against increased vulnerability to various odds. This is done through innovative interventions at grassroot level. This is clear that generation of skill among underprivileged sections of society including women can create empowerment towards livelihood.

There has been design of policy reforms emanating from International and National discourses on empowerment; but to make the policies work on ground poses real challenges. ISW emphasizes on context specific nitty-gritty through study of local profiles and enlists active participation of prospective beneficiaries. ISW evaluates the differential local needs and priorities and aim to acquire trust and confidence of the potential beneficiaries.

Having attached utmost importance to slum areas where women are at the receiving, ISW has always supported slum women. ISW also works among children and backward communities in different districts involving delivery of education and social services.

ISW holds a pivotal position in transforming the lives of 32,000 children and 44,000 women. It is an honour for us to have gained the goodwill of women and children with our limited means and financial resources, which has been possible due to honest and sincere efforts demonstrated by ISW volunteers. A number of activities – all addressed to the cause of downtrodden people living in slums and selected areas outside slums – are being carried out by ISW.

The diagram below shows the gamut of ISW activities.



PROJECT IN HAND

A number of projects have been taken up in backward areas of Kolkata and among backward communities in certain districts.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN BARASAT

With the aim of bringing back school dropouts to mainstream, ISW started holding special classes for the dropouts from 1981. Within a span of 2 years, a programme called Sishu Vikash Bharati (for Primary Students upto Class IV) was set up to groom children in primary education

and Kishore Vikash Bharati was extended to include secondary students within the fold of the programme.

	No of Teachers	No of Students	No of working day / month	Duration of classes
Nursery	**4**	**60**	**25**	**11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**
Coaching class	**8**	**90**	**25**	**4 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

Owing to the government's policy of admitting students at higher classes corresponding to their ages, a maximum number of students left Barasat School to join higher classes at Government Schools. But many of them were found to be unable to cope with the academic pressure. ISW has fulfilled this gap by introducing special coaching centre for such students.

The students are also imparted lessons in extra-curricular activities like dance, music, recitation, paper cutting, painting, clay modeling and other handicrafts.

Vocational training programme for Adolescent girls (Barasat) & skill development training by NSHM Udaan skill foundation.

It has been realized by ISW that skill development leading to livelihood opportunities is the only way to tackle trafficking and prevent child marriage. The required skills would help fetch means of livelihood. This helps to alter their economic and social background. The ambition of the project is to enable girls to earn their living. Bodhipith, an NGO is helping these ISW-trained girls earn their livelihood by selling their products. Finally, ISW implemented a project named "Empowerment of adolescent girls through skill development". Five different kinds of training are imparted through these projects – Food preparation and serving, computer, caregivers for home, handicrafts and nursing.

About 65 girls have been trained by NSHM Udaan skill foundation on retail selling, hospitality and computer. Many among these students secured job through campus interviews.

SPECIAL PROGRAMME AT BARASAT

One innovative initiative of ISW has been in area of providing outreach services to children of brick kilns workers located in interior and relatively inaccessible places. It is not only imparting primary education to such children but also generating awareness among the parents and encouraging children to take part in the process. Actually, it is a difficult task and most of these children above 10 are employed in brick kilns and don't have any inclination to pursue any form of education. Our teacher-volunteers have done a commendable job in terms of reaching out to them and enrolling 30 children in the school located at Saibana brick kiln in interior Barasat. But most of the attending children belong to the age group of 6 to 10 years. Notably, ISW provides Nutrition Support everyday to each child who attends school.

We have taken a similar initiative for the children of domestic workers residing at Surya Sen Palli in interior Barasat and our teacher-volunteers have reached out to them and enrolled 32 children in our Education Centre in the local area. Our teachers have to take a great deal of trouble in reaching the sites as public transport is hardly available but they all do it with pleasure.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AT BARASAT

1. 15 number of students successfully completed Computer Training Programme.
2. Home Nursing, Home Management (General Duty Assistance) - 15 number of Young Girls successfully completed this training during the year.

PROGRAMMES HELD IN BARASAT

1. A consultation programme on protection of child was held on 13.04.2017
2. 10.01.17 School Foundation Day and cultural programme was held
3. 12.02.17 Celebration of Saraswati Puja
4. 26.01.17 Republic day was celebrated
5. 13.05.17 & 15.05.17 Rabindra Jayanti was celebrated with music, recitation and dance programme

6. Mother's day was celebrated at Maldeep under joint guidance of ICDS (Govt. of W.B) and ISW. 85 mothers were present. This was aimed at creating awareness about mother and child health. 27 health officers were present from Health office to speak about Mother's Day.

Badal Sarkar's 82nd birthday was celebrated at ISW Project Campus, Barasat on 15.07.2017 to 17.07.2017 which was a collaborative effort of Badal Sarkar Natya Charcha Kendra and ISW

On 14.11.2017 Children's Day was celebrated at Barasat project centre with the initiative of Teachers of Barasat project.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME AT RAYTALA

It is a far flung area of Kakdwip in South 24 Parganas district where children do not have schooling experience as there is no formal school. ISW has started to impart education to these children through its centre. At present, only 1 teacher teaches about 60 students who have otherwise no scope for education.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AT AKRA

Daily labourers and local resident families of fishermen do not have the opportunity to educate their children and these children are taken care of by ISW centre. 90 children are attending pre-school from Monday to Saturday between 10.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Along with studies, the students are also trained in Music lessons by a teacher on Tuesday and Sundays covering 20 students.

KHIDDERPORE PROJECT

Khidderpore is the oldest centre of ISW at 5A, Bindubasini Street, Kolkata. Three classes are run here – one vocational training class, one junior coaching class and one senior coaching class. Among the three classes, junior coaching classes are conducted for the students of local primary schools and drop outs. Senior coaching is held for local adolescent girls studying at secondary, higher secondary and college levels. A vocational training on tailoring is going on for adolescent girls.

JUNIOR COACHING CLASS

This coaching class runs from 12 to 4 p.m. There are 60 students and one teacher. The students are from pre-primary class to class IV and also school dropouts. All the subjects are taught to students of Bengali, Hindi and Urdu Medium School. Besides academic subjects, *mehendi* and drawing are taught. Students are also helped to perform their school projects. Students are also getting Nutrition Support.

SENIOR COACHING CLASS

The senior coaching classes are held for students from class V to college level. The class runs from 12 Noon to 4 p.m. There are 4 teachers for 60 students. English, Bengali, Mathematics and Science subjects are taught. If necessary, coaching classes in other subject(s) are also organized. This year six students have passed the Madhyamik examination and ten students have passed the Higher Secondary (HS) examination. All of those who passed Madhyamik have enrolled in class XI in various schools and who have passed HS have enrolled in 1st year of undergraduate courses in different colleges. They all have enrolled again in the senior coaching class.

21 students of this class have attended the SBI digital training programme in SBI training centre at Salt Lake. There are also provisions of Nutrition Support for these students.

Vocational training class runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 2 shifts. There are one teacher and 15 students. Tailoring of Ladies wears is taught here. For the last one year, exhibitions have been arranged in various places with products made here. There had been exhibitions in Nari Seva Sangha, Chetla Park, Mohar Kunja and Gitanjali.

Seven students from this unit have attended the 9th foundation day programme of life project4 for youth at Calcutta International School on 14th October, 2017.

AN EDUCATION CENTRE FOR DISTRESSED CHILDREN (CHETANALOK-SHANTINIKETAN)

The project started by ISW with the objects of keeping the children in a healthy environment and also in arousing their interest in studies. Children from age group of 5 to 14 years and coming from families of rickshaw / van pullers, casual daily labourers and vegetable vendors attended the centre. Classes are held 6 days a week between 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., with 90 students and 4 teachers on roll.

To make the centre more attractive, various extra-curricular activities like singing, games, painting and dancing are organized towards overall development of children. Under the aegis of ISW, Rabindra Jayanti was celebrated in June 2017 with active participation of the boys and girls. The School row remains open on Sunday also between 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

As the students are coming from poor families, most of them suffer from malnutrition and hence ISW has provided nutritional support to his children.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS AT CHELLA-KUMARPARA (BOLPUR)

To stop drop outs and early marriage of girl children, ISW has started the project with 30 adolescent girls coming from families of vegetable vendors, agricultural labouers and other casual workers. At present 85 girls are attending the centre. Students who are going to secondary and high schools are attending ISW centre for proper guidance.

The centre runs 6 days a week 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and it functions from morning to afternoon on Sundays. Students stay here whole day. On Sundays, they study at first half (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and in the second half, they read study books. On that day, lunch is provided to 85 students. On Sundays, students enjoy through activities like drawing, games etc.

- A computer training class has been started at Chella Kamarpara for senior students, under which more than 20 girls are taking this training.
- A handicraft Training Programme started recently for the girls at Chella-Kamarpara.
- Occasionally, study circles are arranged for the girls to arouse their consciousness about the society they live in and also their surroundings.

.

A special programme was organized at Chella to honour the successful candidates of Madhyamik and Higher Secondary examination, who were also students of special education centre of ISW during two years. A colourful cultural programme was organized by the girls and teachers on that occasion. A number of people from local community attended this programme and it generated inspiration among the parents to educate their girl children.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

In 2007, ISW introduced a Scholarship programme to help the students, specially girl students from socially and economically handicapped families to pursue higher studies. The programme covered 40 students with support from the Friends of Kolkata, an Australia based social service organization. So far, between 2007 and 2017, about 325 girl students have received the benefit of the program. These students, given their family background, would not have been able to continue higher studies if this support were not there. The impact of this support has been enormous in terms of not only installing self confidence among the girl students but also empowering them to earn their livelihood. Many of these girls have secured jobs and supporting their families financially and otherwise.

Special mention may be made about the Barasat area where the scholarship programme covered about 55 students coming from backward families between 2009 and 2017. All these students are doing well.

We would like to report that unfortunately our scholarship programme addressing good students of the poor families to continue their studies unhindered is now fraught with uncertainty as the Australian donor agency Friends of Kolkata has been in disarray for quite some time. Although some Australian students familiar with our programme are raising and sending some funds to us for sustaining the scholarship programme, but the same is found to be inadequate compared to needs. The girl students receiving the benefits of scholarship are facing hardship.

Global links, a cross cultural programme engaged in promoting women entrepreneurship by imparting knowledge and skills to poor women, has partnered with ISW to take the initiative forward among slum women in Kolkata.

There has been a modest beginning of the programme under the aegis of ISW in that 10 women were selected from slums for undergoing the requisite training. As part of the programme, students from Sri Sikshayatan College have volunteered to guide the selected women in acquiring skills and taking up entrepreneurship. The process of training is in progress and it has aroused a lot of interest among the selected women.

It is heartening to note that one of our girl students has secured admission at Frankfinn Institute of Air Hostess Training. On successful completion, it is expected that she would be able to find out a good job and her life would see huge transformation.

In this context, ISW would like to express its gratitude to Prof. Tapan Mitra whose generous support has enabled ISW to institute a special scholarship programme for extremely needy and meritorious students who enroll for higher studies post HS. These special scholarships are funded by Tapan Mitra Fund for academic support. The founder of the fund, Prof. Mitra himself, an academician by profession and an ex-faculty in Economics at Cornell University of USA, is committed to supporting higher education pursuits of underprivileged girl students. Despite the fact that he is staying far away in the USA, the scholarships granted by ISW to 5 students have resulted in those students' scoring high marks in HS examination

WOMEN CRISIS PROGRAMME

Keeping in mind that women often become victims of domestic violence in different ways, ISW operates centres at three places, viz. Barasat, Joynagar and Chetla. The main object of running this is to extend legal help to the distressed women to fight out their problems in the courts of law. ISW also provides counselling services to women in need of love, security and safety.

Name of the Centre	No of Case reports	No. of sub judice cases	No. of case under counseling	No of case solved	No. of case discontinued
Chetla	27	14	12	-	1
Joynagar	37	2	28	-	7
Barasat	19	6	4	6	3

The effect of legal counselling project of ISW has been quite encouraging in that the incidence of domestic violence against women in settlements served by ISW has gone down. This project has created awareness among the communities served, where husbands and in-laws have been observed to be reforming themselves in realization of the consequences of legal aid and counselling.

Counselling and legal aid are given thrice a week at the project campus at Barasat and Joynagar and at the ISW city office in Chetla, Kolkata. Each of these centres is manned by one Counsellor, one Assistant and a Lawyer.

NARI O SAMAJ – A PUBLICATION OF ISW

From this year, ISW is publishing Nari O Samaj, a magazine, every 4 months. It is a document comprising collection of Newspaper clippings pertaining to issues affecting women and children and other vulnerable sections of society.

This document contains relevant information for dissemination among the readers and the society at large.

NETWORKING

NAWO

It was formed after Beijing conference. The name being National Alliance of Women is a national platform for women. ISW members participate in the activities of NAWO. NAWO organized a programme involving discussion on gender difference as prevail in the present days. The programme was held at the Academy of Fine Arts. Members from Barasat, Kidderpore attended this programme.

AMAN NETWORK

Aman network, which protests against women violence, includes ISW as an active member. The staff members of ISW participated in training on PWDV Act organized by the Network at different areas. AMAN encourages a non-violent world where self respect and human rights of individuals and recognized and everyone has across to equal opportunities irrespective of gender.

AMAN STRATEGY:

- To build alliances and pool resources at the regional, national and international levels to address domestic violence.
- To help increase choices and resources for survivors of domestic violence
- To build public support against domestic violence
- To advocate at the national and international levels to address domestic violence and related issues.

MAITREE: As a part of social networking, ISW works closely with Maitree, another, NGO engaged in empowerment of women. ISW participates in various mass movements organized by Maitree. It is a platform of Women's movement.

FUTURE PROJECTS

It has been realized by ISW that the most important tool for social reformation is education and plans to extend its related activities to new areas far and wide. ISW aims to form an enlightened society in future, starting with elementary education.

To bring about social change by building up an educated community, ISW plans to educate vulnerable children and adolescent girls including skill development programe for young girls and boys at remote villages in Birbhum and North 24 Parganas districts.

As a part of future activities, ISW plans to set up an old age home in Barasat. ISW in fact has been working on the project for quite some time. Currently, the building plan is in the process of being finalized. Once functional, the facility would cater to old persons at affordable cost.

ISW aims to ceaselessly continue its projects to protect girl children from various risks, especially to prevent their vulnerability of being trafficked for child prostitution.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

ISW has been enlightening and enlivening the lives of the socially and economically handicapped people, irrespective of caste, creed or religion. ISW has been continuously endeavouring to find out the people who are in genuine need and need to acquire the support rendered by ISW.

Skill development to facilitate occupational empowerment of boys and girls and thus leading to improved livelihood has been a new area of ISW's devotion and intervention, which ISW is trying its best to address with limited fund and with the

help of dedicated and committed resource persons. ISW's continued efforts have been instrumental in uplifting the socio-economic status of under privileged people. The ceaseless hard work of ISW has earned the trust and confidence of the vulnerable communities. ISW is proud to have inspired the poor women and children in exposing their potentials and generating demands amongst them for innumerable services rendered by ISW.

Nevertheless, there are still gaps between the needs and what ISW intended to deliver on ground, especially pertaining to the needs of women and children.

Prompted by success of selected interventions in remote villages, ISW plans to work in more villages that are located far from cities and town towards empowerment of women and proper development of children.

The families served by ISW are better off than yesterday; women have gained self confidence to protect themselves against social injustice and discrimination.