



Andrewspalli Centre for Integrated Development (ACID)

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Andrewspalli Centre for Integrated Development (ACID) is a non profit organisation registered in 1997 with its registered office at Santiniketan, West Bengal. It started its work initially at Illambazer block and later on shifted its work to at Jogeshganj of Hingalganj Block in North 24 Paraganas.

Vision and Mission

Vision: Our vision is to nourish and empower people by making them self-reliant and self-respectful. The organization has been working with marginalised communities to bring sustainable changes through its various interventions especially in West Bengal, more specifically in three panchayets of Hingalganj Block in North 24 Paraganas and in Birbhum.

Mission:

The mission of the organization is to create a self-reliant community through participatory approach, work with marginalised communities with a special focus on women and children and conduct various programmes for marginalised communities on social, economic and political incidences, which kept them deprived by identifying their own abilities.

Objectives :

- Accessing health, nutrition, education, WASH, livelihood and community developmental opportunities.
- Organise social, cultural and environmental activities.
- Organize seminars, training, workshops, camps, exhibitions, exchange programmes for inculcating leadership and capacity building.
- Develop public opinion and social awareness.
- Organize vocational training centers, educational institutions, hostels, old age homes, orphanages, youth clubs, sports clubs, libraries, etc for improving the living condition of the marginalised communities.
- Provide humanitarian assistance to the victims of disaster and to strengthening disaster preparedness in schools and communities in Sunderban.
- To provide legal aid services to the marginalized, aged and distressed people.

Areas of Work and Activities:

At the beginning phase of its work the organization started implementing projects in Illambazar and Nanoor Blocks of Birbhum districts. However, the major concentration of its work now in Aila hit areas in North 24 Parganas and specially Kalitala, Jogeshganj and Gobindakathi Gram Panchayats of Hingalganj Block of Sunderban in North 24 Parganas. It is running 4 Study Centres, Community Health Activities, Disaster Risk Reduction and Livelihood Programmes. ACID has been in collaboration with Department of Social Work, Visva-Bharati University and with immense support from FADV is conducting a 'Research' on Inaccessibility of Elementary Education among Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. This study is been conducted in Hingalganj Block in North 24 Parganas of West Bengal. ACID has been planning to work out further vision plan in taking research activities to understand the impact of sponsorship programme of FADV in West Bengal and Assam. The organization has been planning to expand its operation in other vulnerable pockets of different districts of West Bengal through vulnerability mapping. The process of identification of new areas has given indication to expand its activities to the vulnerable pockets of Jalpaiguri, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal.

Genesis:

The organization started its journey way back in 1997 in Illambazar and Noor blok in the most backward rural areas of West Bengal. Much concentration is given in tribal villages---to work with tribal people. Many children work in agricultural field, brick kilns. This tribal community is intertwined with nature; their livelihood depends on natural resources extracted from the adjoining forest. The organization aims at sustainable way of extraction of forest resources keeping in mind their traditional harmonious relationship with nature. It started its work with Rangabandh project.

Rangabandh Project:

Rangabandh project made an effort to do sustainable development of the "Santhal" tribes residing in Rangabandh village located amidst the deep forest of "Choupahari jungle" of Illambazar Block of Birbhum District, this is 21 kms from Bolpur (Santiniketan) with assistance of Composite and Integrated Scheme. This marginalised village is deprived of minimum amenities required for their survival. Mostly land less labours living below poverty line are earning their livelihood by working as daily wage labours during the harvest season (one crop per year). The programme includes child education, Health Check up and Health education, need based supply of nutritious food, formation of SHGs, plantation of fruit trees, livestock distribution (goat and chicken), small scale economic activities like leaf plate making, kitchen gardening, encouragement of small savings, awareness generation programme, development of their traditional animal husbandry, ensuring preservation of their traditional culture.

The programme has been designed in such a manner so as to replicate the model in other tribal villages located in "choupahari jungle" gradually. This program was supported by Sir Ratantata Trust.

Hand washing project in 157 schools in Nanoor block:

ACID with support from GIZ and GOWB did a six month special **Handwashing Campaign** in all 157 primary schools in Nanoorblock in 2004.

Sunderban Project

Later phase of its work the organization given attention to the Aila hit areas, specially Sunderban. Sunderban literally means "beautiful jungle" in the Bengali language (Sundar means beautiful, ban refers to jungle). The Indian component constitutes 106 islands, of

which 54 are inhabited and located in 13 blocks in South 24 Parganas District and six blocks in North 24 Parganas District. The majority of the local people depend on the forest resources. A large number of people's livelihood depends on honey collection and fishing activities. They go to forest for resource collection every day or work as boatman, daily labourer, etc. They are facing various types of problems during the honey collection such as tiger attack, snake bite, risk of crocodile, forest robbery and other difficulties are common to them. Beside, Hingalganj Block in North 24 Parganas is very vulnerable and prone to natural disasters. Their lives are surrounded by extreme poverty and uncertainty. The light of education has not yet reach fully. They are totally deprived of the benefits of education and livelihood. Uncertainty and instability of their livelihood have made their life style different from that of other people living in other blocks. So ACID after basic need assessment study started initiating 3 projects with support from FADV in Hingalganj and Gosaba Block of North 24 Parganas.

Thematic Areas:

- Education and Child Protection
- Livelihood and Community Development
- Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion
- Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Management

Education and Child Protection :

Initiated this project a few years back by starting 4 child education centre to educate drop outs, first generation learners and also to provide coaching support to mainstreamed children. Presently under this project there are 2 important components :

- Providing educational support to the marginalised children in Hingalganj Block through community based approach.
- Conducting Health and Hygiene awareness programme for the marginalised children in Hingalganj Block.

With the financial assistance from FADV currently supporting 196 children and making them capable with a view to reduce drop-outs, supportive guidance through four study centres and nurturing them with a close and frequent home visits. The sponsors are in regular touch with children through picture postcards and their progress reports.

Success Story :

The children of Dakshin Gobindokathi Adivasi Para are all first generation learners and belong to marginalised community. Mostly they are from below poverty level (BPL) and also deprived of knowledge regarding various schemes. Initially they weren't regular but slowly because of our team's effort they hardly miss their classes. Parents have started taking ownership and encourage their children to attend classes regularly.

Livelihood and Community Development :

ACID empowered 150 households from marginalised communities since 2014. Initially it conducted Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Social Mapping and divided the community into four groups. This helped us to choose our beneficiaries to whom we provided accessibility to different livelihood opportunities in accordance to their skills and wish.

We have provided training to the villagers to grow their own 'Nutrition Garden' and also aware them about the importance of 'AzollaPinata' and it's harvesting process. This is a very cost effective and high protein food for pig, cow and goat. The beneficiaries can grow AzollaPinata in their ponds or any water body. They are presently harvesting AzollaPinata.

Besides, we have identified malnourished children between 3 to 10 years among 42 households. We have encouraged them to start growing 'Nutrition Garden'. They are growing banana, papaya, guava and citrus fruit. They also grow seasonal vegetables.

Marginalised communities were provided training in managing and growing livestock or Animal Husbandry. ACID team has taken members of SHG groups for exchange and exposure visit to other SHG groups so that they learn about various livelihood opportunities.

A group was trained and named 'Barefoot Technicians' who shoulder responsibility of veterinary care service in three Gram Panchayats (GP).

Presently we are providing livelihood support for making the communities and women economically independent in 10 villages under three Gram Panchayats in North 24 Parganas. The target is to empower 250 beneficiaries by end of 2016. Different livelihood opportunities is supported the community dwellers to understand their abilities and enhance their capacities. So far 144 beneficiaries were benefitted since October 2014 through this project. Its a learning and a beautiful experience for us when we see the 12 members, all of whom are women team members of Saraswati Swanirvar Dal (SHG) from Madhabkathi village initiated and regularly operates a piggery farm. All of them are first time entrepreneurs and very excited about their farm. They underwent a rigorous training before starting entrepreneurship activities..

Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Management (DRR)

ACID with support from FADV is strengthening disaster preparedness in schools and communities in Sunderban. The approach is child centric and presently we are working in 12 villages under 2 GP (Jogeshganj and Kalitala). Our services are reaching to 4 Government Schools. We have trained the villagers and formed Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) comprises of 15 members in each village. Presently each VDMC members has undergone training of Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA) and their primary objectives are to find out risk factors in each village, to acquire knowledge about various hazards that people face in each village, to identify the vulnerabilities and capacities of each village, to find reasons behind each hazard and to prepare a detail village disaster management plan. The other responsibilities of the VDMC are **mitigation work**. In accordance to the Disaster Management Act of 2005, to conduct any activity that reduce the risk of the disaster in the village.

Success Story :

ACID has constructed a cemented road for the villagers in DakshinJogeshganj. The villagers and ICDS workers and also the children were benefitted as the road was difficult to access during rainy session and children were facing difficulty in attending ICDS centre, according to Ashima Mistry, who takes care of the ICDS centre and work as a ICDS worker.

Able to form Kiosk, comprises of 12 VDMC members and 24 Task Force Team (TFT). Each Task Force Team has 4 divisions such as : a) Search and Rescue , b) Shelter and Sanitation, c) First Aid Team and d) Early Warning Team (they are responsible to be alert and inform others about the weather forecast). TFT has been trained by civil defence and other resource person

ACID has also formed 12 Children Clubs under Disaster Risk Reduction project in 12 villages. Each club consist of 20 members each. Children are trained to perform WASH activities and to get acquainted with terms and terminology. They were trained to understand the importance of hand washing, low cost sanitation, to stop open defecation, to improve the hygiene practices, water purification methods by using traditional ways and to aware these children about do's and don'ts of disaster so that they can educate other children and their parents. In the 4 Government School we have set up School Disaster Management Committee (SDMC). Each school has a School Task Force Team (STFT). Mostly the children have become more alert and active. They have knowledge to manage the critical situation during any disaster. Mock Drills are conducted regularly in each school.

Awareness camp and Training Programmes:

- Awareness programme for the disabled persons in Hatsherandi under Nanoor Block of Birbhum district.
- Awareness programme on sanitation and health education at Rangabandh Adibasipara of Illambazar Block under Birbhum district. The tribes were made aware of the low-cost model of latrine developed by the UNICEF. Similar programmes were organised in Mohulara village and Kankalitala.
- Awareness generation programme on women and child care and income generation was held at Rangabandh village. Micro-credit system was introduced to help the women beneficiaries to introduce and encourages savings.
- Organised training programme on leadership for the rural youth. The purpose of this programme is to empower the deprived people towards a better quality of life in Illambazar and Nanoor Block.
- Organise vocational training programme for the women in the tribal village in particular and rural communities so that they support their families economically. So training programme on Kantha Stitch, basket, marketing etc. were organised in Hatsherandi village.
- Organizing two children education centre in the tribal village of Birbhum to inculcate importance of education in them and also to provide them with after school coaching support.

Super Cyclone Aila response:

Deployed 28 volunteers in Hingalganj and Sagar block after Aila and assisted more than 2100 household with food and drinking water supplies immediately after Aila. Besides that ACID had supported various NGOs with volunteers to conduct village and gram panchayat level needs assessment for providing immediate relief to the victims of the disaster.

For any information one may contacted:

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