



FAsCE India

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From the Director's Desk....

Keeping in line with its motto 'Promoting Progress', Fransalian Agency for Social Care and Education in India (FAsCE India) has been making constant and sustained efforts to encourage growth in all the areas of its activity. Besides, making an earnest effort in promoting child rights through various children-friendly activities, this quarter of the year has particularly witnessed many undertakings, training and capacity building programmes for the empowerment and upliftment, especially of the girls and women through Self Help Groups (SHGs).



Self Help Groups refer to self-governed, peer controlled, informal group of people with same socio-economic background and having a desire to collectively perform common purposes. They are highly relevant today as they make the people who live below the poverty line hopeful and self-reliant. They act as catalyst for bringing this otherwise sidelined section of society to the main stream.

SHGs are formed with the objectives to enhance confidence and capabilities of women; to develop collective decision making; to motivate them taking up social responsibilities particularly related to women development; to inculcate savings and banking habits; to gain economic prosperity through saving, loan/credit; to gain from collective wisdom in organising and managing their own finance and distributing the benefits among themselves; to create group feeling among women etc. SHGs act as the forum for members to provide space for and support to each other.

FAsCE India, from its time of inception onward, has been relentlessly working for the promotion of women-empowerment through its various projects and activities carried out through Self Help Groups and it has succeeded in instilling confidence in many to stand for their rights and to become self-reliant in their lives.

As I place before you this edition of the FAsCE India Newsletter, I thank each and every one of you for your help, support, collaboration and prayers in promoting progress through various humanitarian activities and undertakings. Your presence is always a source of encouragement and motivation for us. May God Bless You!

Fr. Dr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara MSFS
Executive Director, FAsCE India

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Mushroom Enterprise Development Workshop : Four members of FAsCE India Self Help Groups: Rashmi, Mohini and Liza participated in the state level One Day Mushroom Enterprise Development Workshop organized by Mushroom Development Foundation of Guwahati, Assam. The workshop was held on July 1, 2017 from 9.00 AM to 5.00 PM at Institutional Biotech Hub, Cotton College, Guwahati. The day-long workshop highlighted hands on Mushroom growing house demonstration and interactive theory sessions were conducted with audio video presentations. As the participating FAsCE India SHGs are already growing mushroom as part of their



i n c o m e generating activity, this workshop enabled them to fine tune their techniques and learn more about

Mushroom Business Plan Development to procure finance and Market Development Plan, linkages and growing different variants of mushroom. At the conclusion of

the workshop the 30 participants from various SHGs of Assam received their Certificate of Participation and a packet of spawn to their Self Help Groups.

Formation of New SHGs at Patharquary : Self Help Groups are highly relevant today as it makes the people of below poverty line hopeful and self-reliant. From the time of its inception on FAsCE India has been actively involved in the formation and strengthening of the SHGs. On July 31, 2017 three more new SHGs were formed. The Women's Coordinator of FAsCE India facilitated the process of formation with the initial meetings, instructions and visits to the SHG members. Under the guidelines of FAsCE India the new group profiles were prepared and trainings were conducted on book-keeping and record maintenance. The newly formed SHGs are: Aklan, Torali and Ma Devi. The new groups elected their own office bearers. With the formation of 3 more SHGs FAsCE India has 35 dynamic SHGs in Narengi, Guwahati.



Joining Hands with RGVN : Rashtriya GraminVikas Nidhi (RGVN), a non-profit organization to promote, support and develop non-governmental and community based organizations, had an introductory meeting with the FAsCE India SHG leaders on August 2, 2017 at the RGVN headquarters in Rajgarh Road, Guwahati. 10 Urban SHGs of



FAsCE India had fruitful interactions with RGVN team. RGVN is the resource organization which is carrying out the capacity building for institutional development. It facilitates the building of strong institution among the poor and vulnerable, especially the grassroots level institutions like SHGs. It also provides handholding to SHGs, encourages cross learning through interactions with established SHGs, and help them avail benefits provided by the NULM. In the meeting, the RGVN Programme Manager clarified the queries with regard to the collaboration of FAsCE India with RGVN.

Linkage with GMC: A Meeting of the FAsCE India Urban SHG leaders with the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) Community Organizer, Mr. Binod Kamn was held on August 6, 2017 at the GMC Office, Lakhtokia. During the meeting instructions were given to the leaders on the new method of book-keeping under National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM). This was followed by verification of the books and records maintained by the SHGs. The Community Organizer observed that the books were well maintained and the records of the activities are updated and complete with corresponding photographs. At the conclusion of the productive meeting the Community Organizer assured FAsCE India of his availability in carrying out the further formalities and submission of documents to the RGVN office for a fruitful collaboration.



Seven FAsCE India SHG leaders under the leadership of Ms. Chaya Kalita, Women's Coordinator of FAsCE India, attended a second meeting with the Community Organizer of GMC on August 28, 2017 at Pathaquary, Guwahati. The agenda of the meeting was Registration under GMC and linkages with the NULM programmes. The meeting was very informative and rewarding as it updated information regarding the functioning of the urban SHGs in mobilizing the women of poor urban households. The discourse also highlighted various activities under GMC's schemes.

SHG Federation Meeting at Patharquary :

The SHG Federation Meeting was held on September 7, 2017 at Patharquary, Guwahati. 25 members from 10 SHGs attended same. Convening the meeting, the President of the Federation welcomed every one and the Secretary recorded the proceedings. The meeting discussed various activities and chalked out plans for the upcoming days. It also deliberated the new initiative with Guwahati Municipality Corporation and Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Nidhi and referred for further actions. The registers and books maintained by the SHGs under the Federation were checked and verified by the Women's Coordinator.



Training on Food Processing and Nutrition: FAsCE India in collaboration with Food and Nutrition Board under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, Guwahati Unit, organized a Training on Food Processing and Nutrition from September 11-13, 2017. 35 women from the different Self Help Groups of



Patharquary participated in the training held in the community. Mrs. Ishita Adhikary Patra, Demonstration Officer of Food and Nutrition Board Min. of WCD Govt. of India, Guwahati was the resource person and she was assisted by Mrs. Pabitra Talukdar, Laboratory Attendant of the same department.

The participants were trained to make jam, sauce and chutney with the fruits and vegetables, easily available in the market and in their kitchen gardens.



The training was conducted with an aim to equip the ladies with an added skill to produce products which has demand and outlet for marketing with good returns. At the end of the three days training, the Director of FAsCE India along with the resource person, distributed the Certificate of Participation issued by the Food and Nutrition Board under the Ministry of Women and Child Development to all the participants.

Awareness on Digitalization of SHGs of Somonpara : An awareness programme on Eshakti, a programme for digitalization of SHGs was organized on July 10, 2017 in collaboration with Bakdil NGO at the FAsCE India Local Office, Somonpara. Eshakti programme is keeping in view of the Government of India's mission to "transform India into digitally empowered society and knowledge economy" launched by NABARD. The resource persons Mr. Don Bosco Sangma and Jonybirth Marak explained about its aim and objectives. The broader aims of this programme are: Integrating SHG members with the national Financial Inclusion agenda and Improving the quality of interface between SHG members and banks for efficient and hassle free delivery of banking services.



The resource persons in their discourse outlined the benefits of digitalization of SHGs and mentioned that Eshakti will increase bankers' comfort in credit appraisal and disbursement, automatic and accurate rating of SHGs, mapping of persons not covered under Aadhaar and ease of transfer of social benefits through Aadhaar linked account and convergence with Government's other benefit schemes. At the end of the programme Fr. John Kelamkuzhackal MSFS, Local Director appreciated the resource persons for the informative programme which has provided tips of strengthening the SHGs and thanked the FAsCE India SHGs for their active participation and eagerness to learn new techniques.

Exposure Programme for FAsCE India SHGs: In the second year of the improved livelihood project at Somonpara, an exposure programme was organized for the SHGs during the months of July and September 2017. The forty SHGs were taken to the field in batches accompanied by the Project Coordinator and field staffs. The purpose was to encourage the women to undertake income generating activities as alternate livelihood opportunities. The visit opened up space for discussions of varied aspects of SHGs including the livelihood activities and related programmes. Importance of capacity building of the group members which would help in correspondence with the representatives of the Government departments towards accessing the bank loans to start income generating activities.



On July 13, 2017 the SHGs visited Horticulture Centre and Nursery at Chandigre, Poultry Centre at Rongram, and Home Science Centre at Sangsangre, Tura. The groups had also a chance to observe the water harvesting system, vermin compost making, grafting of various fruit plants and trees. On September 9, 2017, the second batch of SHGs visited a centre, specialized in making traditional bamboo crafts and furniture at Tebrongre. The members keenly observed the various crafts and furniture made out of bamboo.





The Chibasal SHG participated in a programme, organized by the IBPDL, Govt. Department on Fish Sanctuary, at Chigitchakgre village on September 22, 2017. Among the guests and invitees were the officials from the Fishery Department, Government of India and Block. The speakers urged the groups to preserve and protect the natural resources in order to maintain the ecology and encouraged the groups to take up fish farming as their livelihood activity.

BASE LEVEL ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR FARMER'S CLUB

A Seminar cum Base Level Orientation Programme for farmers was held on June 8, 2017 at Thingba Khullen Village, Manipur. The one-day seminar was organized by the State Bank of India, Senapati Baranch. Mr. Bismark, Manager of SBI Senapati and Mr Kiran, Coordinatorr of NABARD, Senapati Branch, enlightened the farmers on the topic "organic farming and agricultural loans". About 90 farmers along with the SHG members profited from the seminar. The SBI Senapati has sanctioned rupees 2,00,000 to the farmer's club.



OBSERVATIONAL VISIT BY BSW AND MSW FROM NEF COLLEGE

Observational visit is an integral part of the social work curriculum, where the students are able to get insight of an organization. It gives them the opportunity to observe and learn from the organizations and institutions engaged in various forms of social work. 75 Students of BSW and MSW accompanied by one faculty member from NEF College of Management and Technology, Guwahati made an observational visit to FAsCE India Head Office on 17th August, 2017. Fr. Saji George, welcoming the students and the faculty, gave a brief introduction about FAsCE India, its vision, mission, motto and objectives. Fr Clean Areng, Associate Director and Ms. Chaya Kalita, Women Coordinator, explained to the students about the major activities and the focus group of FAsCE India through PowerPoint Presentation. This was followed by questions and interactions with the FAsCE India team. For the practical knowledge and information, the students accompanied by Ms. Nabanita Gogoi, Field Work Supervisor of NEF College, proceeded to the field to visit the SHGs and the Piggery Farm run by the Maakali SHG at Amsing Jorabat. The faculty and the students thanked FAsCE India for the enriching sessions, appraisals and the field visit.



PROMOTION OF CHILD RIGHTS

Free Mathematic Coaching in Somonpara : FAsCE India Somanpara, Meghalaya has initiated a special intensive coaching classes, exclusively for Mathematics for the students of class 9 and 10, from July 4-31, 2017 at St Francis de Sales School, Somonpara. At the inauguration of the coaching class Rev. Fr. John Kelamkuzhackal MSFS, the Head Master and the FAsCE India Local Director at Somonpara, welcomed the students and explicated them about the importance of mathematics. Mr. Lathu Gogoi, a renowned mathematic teacher, held the special coaching for the children from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM every day. 75 students grabbed the opportunity in clearing the concept of the mathematical formulae and hands-on working of sums during their summer holidays. The coaching class students were very grateful to the opportunities given to them to learn and perform well in their examinations which in otherwise would have been only a remote possibility for them, as Somonpara is an interior village with very poor access to such facilities.



TOT on Children's Parliament at SOS Children's Village : Training of Trainer programme on Formation of Children's Parliament was held on the August 14, 2017 at Azara, Guwahati in collaboration with the SOS Children's Village.



Ms. Chaya Kalita from FAsCE India Head Office was the resource person for the programme. The main focus of this TOT was to give orientation about Neighbourhood Children's Parliament to 30 young leaders from SOS Children's Village. The activity based sessions dealt with concept of Children's Parliament, its objectives, its functioning and the role & responsibilities of the ministers. During the session role play on formation and functioning of Neighbourhood Children's Parliament (NCP) were performed by the participants for better understanding of its concept and objectives. The groups portrayed the formation of NCP by choosing its delegates a Chief Minister with its cabinet and village

ministers to represent them at the village parliament, for concerns that pertain at village level. At the end of the TOT the SOS Children's Village Animator and the resource person assisted in the formation of the Neighbourhood Children's Parliament.

Clay Modeling and Paper Craft : Every Saturday is marked for co-curricular activities at the FAsCE Supplementary Education Centre at Narengi and it is amazing to see the eagerness of the children for the arrival of this day. Art and crafts help children to sharpen their visual qualities and turn their ideas and feelings into reality. To a greater extent, the theoretical knowledge gets strengthened when relevant co-curricular activities are conducted relating to the content taught in the classroom. Intellectual aspects of personality are solely accomplished by classroom, while aesthetic development, character building, spiritual growth, physical growth, moral values, creativity, are supported by co-curricular activities. FAsCE Supplementary Education Centres emphasis on the all round development of every child and hence, the curriculum is designed inclusive of academics, sports, cultural activities, and art & crafts.





On September 23, 2017, the children of the higher section had their co-curricular assignment on Clay modeling and Paper Craft. Experimenting with clay engages and fosters intelligence, imagination and creativity and also gives the children the confidence to communicate their vision. Each child has given its own expression to the clay given to them for modeling. They modeled birds and fish and helped each other to perfect their art. They also made beautiful butterflies made out of chart papers.

Joyful Reunion : The previous edition of the FAsCE India Newsletter shared about the rescue and rehabilitation of 3 orphan children to Shanti Daan, a home run by the Missionaries of Charity at Jalukbari. The siblings were rehabilitated here for their much needed medical care and nutrition as they were malnourished and in poor health condition. The FAsCE India team made a visit to the centre to check with the development of their health conditions. It was heartening to find the children in good health and adapting to their new home with much ease and comfort. They recited nursery rhymes, staged action songs and said the prayers they learnt with great joy and enthusiasm.



NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

New India Pledge Rally on Independence Day : Commemorating the 70th Independence Day, the SHGs and Area Level Federations of Guwahati took out the New India Pledge rally on August 15, 2017 starting from 9.00 AM to 2.00 PM in 19 different Municipal Wards of the city. This rally was organized under the leadership of the Commissioner of Guwahati Municipality Corporation and under the patronage of ASLUMS, CMMU Guwahati city in collaboration with RGVN. Five FAsCE India SHGs along with the other groups of the Ward under the Assam State Urban Livelihood Mission Society, Govt. of Assam, participated in the rally from Patharquary. Shri. Atul Bora, the Local M.L.A., was the Chief Guest and the Officer in-charge of Noonmati Police Station was the Guest of Honour on the occasion. The vibrant Community Based Organizations took active part to spread the New India Pledge for achieving the target of New India Movement 2017-2022. On this occasion six pledges were taken: Dirt Free India, Poverty free India, Communalism Free India, Casteism Free India, Terrorism Free India and Corruption Free India.



Joint Independence Day Celebration at Amsing Jorabat : "United we stand, divided we fall". The Self Help Groups: Jyoti, Shristi, Maakali, Maya Prity, Pragoti and Kiran, came together to celebrate the 70th Independence Day on August 15, 2017 at the Anganwadi Centre in Amsing Jorabat. The local area leader, Mahesh Pan Tati, hoisted the national flag which was followed by the National Anthem by the children from the neighbourhood and SHG members. The Presidents of the SHGs shared their thoughts, highlighting the significance of the day. The Chief Guest, in his address, exhorted the children to be responsible citizens and perform their duties to contribute towards building their community.



Teacher's Day Celebration : The FAsCE Supplementary School Children of Narengi and Bongaon jointly celebrated the Teacher's Day on September 3, 2017 at SFS Hr. School Conference Hall, Narengi, with lot of joy, happiness and enthusiasm to express their appreciation and gratitude for the altruistic commitment of their teachers. They expressed their gratitude to their beloved teachers through colourful and thematic cultural programme. The day's celebration began with a solemn prayer dance followed by the welcome and felicitation of the Chief Guest Fr. Praveen MSFS, Provincial Secretary of MSFS Province of Northeast India Province, teachers and invited guests.



The children staged mesmerizing dances and a skit depicting the importance and influence of teachers in their lives. The Chief Guest, in his words of encouragement, highlighted the significant role played by the teachers in the society in moulding the lives and the character of the children. Fr. Saji George appreciated and thanked the teachers for their unconditional services, hard work and sacrifices and exhorted them to continue their services for the marginalized and the needy. On this occasion, the teachers were presented with gifts as a token of appreciation and the celebration was concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Fr. Clean Arengh.

SUCCESS STORY

Earning Livelihood by Weaving : One of the main aims of the SHG is to make the people self-reliant and self-sufficient. The various training and capacity building programmes are orientated towards this aim. The SHGs are introduced to various income generating programmes by the organization and they receive various trainings respectively. After equipping themselves with the knowledge and practical experiences, the members work hard to earn their livelihood through various income generating activities like weaving, kitchen garden, cattle rearing, mushroom cultivation etc. and try to become self-reliant.

Individual Initiative added new IGP Skill to the Group : Mrs. Deepali Mukherjee, a member of Jyoti SHG of Amsing Jorabat, with her keen interest took initiative of learning chair weaving skill at the local furniture store.



Thereafter, she taught the skill to her SHG members and practiced and perfected the skill by reweaving old chairs with plastic and cane gauges. At present they have a steady income coming in with the



orders they have received from the Narengi Army Camp for reweaving their old cane and fabricated chairs. A better life is a matter of an opportunity given to the women of FAsCE SHGs to redefine their empowerment by most tangible example set for the lesser privileged counterparts in their neighbourhood towards progress.