Annual Report April 2017- March 2018



Equidiversity Foundation

Foreword to Annual Report2017-2018

Dear Friends,

With great excitement and pleasure I would like to present the second Annual Report of Equidiversity Foundation for the financial year, 2017-18. I hope that this report provides a glimpse of the vision, growth, innovations and challenges of the organization and also brings forth the work done in the last year. Equidiversity Foundation stepped into the second year of its journey to empower women and other socially marginalized sections in the community in the political, social and economic arenas, with the hope of impacting peoples' lives and be influenced by them. I would like to sincerely thank my colleagues, our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and spirit; our Trust and Advisory Board for their time and guidance; our partners for their trust in us and their support; and our donors for believing in our goals and sharing our dreams.

We also look forward to gaining your support, understanding, insights and participation in our work.

Anindita Majumdar

Managing Trustee,

Equidiversity Foundation

31 March, 2018

Introduction

Equidiversity Foundation envisions a society where there is gender equality, co-sharing of power and freedom from gender based violence. Equidiversity Foundation is committed to create an environment that promotes gender equality through political, social and financial empowerment with active informed participation of individuals, the community and the State.

Our activities involve:

- Mobilization of community women, elected women representatives, young people, to work on development and gender issues.
- Awareness Generation at the community, individual and state levels around governance, gender equality, individual rights and entitlements, addressing gender based violence-discrimination.
- Awareness Generation through social media to mobilize public opinion and enhance visibility of the issues.
- Advocacy at the state and community levels
- Capacity development and handholding at the individual, community and state levels for active participation in political processes, gender responsive budgeting, community development, fighting gender injustices and inequalities, social awareness, develop life skills, livelihood related skill development and leadership skills
- Networking with the community, state departments & like-minded organizations
- Organization Support Activities to strengthen community based organizations like Women's Rights Promotion Committees, Adult Literacy Centres and Theatre Groups
- Community Fellowship & Internship Programmes
- Documentation, Publication of IEC materials and Newsletters and conducting Research
- Organizational development
- Fund raising and mobilization

Strategies of our work:

- Social mobilization
- Evidence based lobbying and advocacy
- > Capacity development
- > Engagement of men for Gender Equality
- Research and knowledge/skill transfer

- > Institutional building and development in the community
- > Collaboration and coordination with political systems, government institutions, non government organizations and movements for women's equal participation

Our current geographical reach

District	Block	Gram Panchayat (Village Council)
Birbhum	Nanoor Labpur Rajnagar	Kirnahar I, Daskal Gram Kareya II Jamna, Thiba, Darka Rajnagar
South 24 Parganas	PatharProtima Kulpi	Dakshin Gangadharpur SrinarayanpurPurnachandrapur Ramkishorepur
Purulia	Jhalda II	Nowahatu Tatuara
Kolkata		
Total	6 Blocks	11 Gram Panchayats

A Glimpse of the work done

In this financial year we expanded our work in a few Gram Panchayats and also worked as a Resource Organization to other non profit organizations, developing capacities of their staff and beneficiaries on gender, governance and project management. We also became members of three networks working around women and child rights.

Direct Beneficiaries of the work in 2017-18

	Total elected representatives	Women elected representative	Male elected representative & opinion leaders	Women in the community worked with directly	Children,	Total			
	worked with				School	Children	Teacher		
Birbhum	6	74	42	32	1582	11	168	38	1947
South 24 Parganas	3	51	26	25	695	6	110	35	948
Purulia	2	20	16	4	290	-			330
Total	11	145	84	61	2567	17	278	73	3225

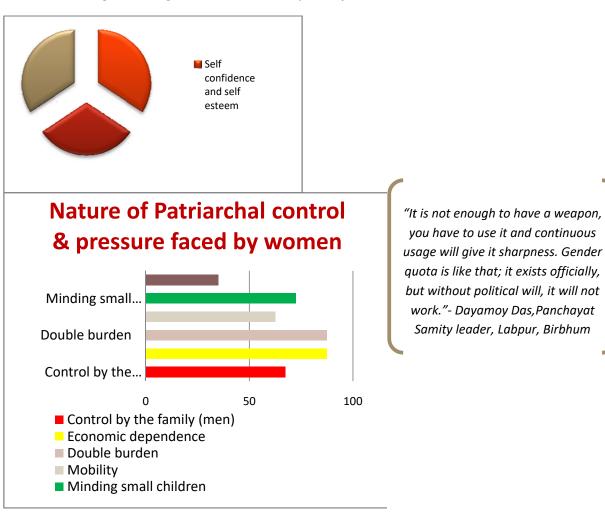
Indirect Beneficiaries of the work in 2017-18 and Total population reached out to

District	GPs	Total Women in the community reached	Total children in the community reached	Total	
Birbhum	6	1614	1070	2684	
South 24 Parganas	3	4350	861	5211	
Purulia	2	4300	-	4300	
Total	11	10264	1931	12195	

Strengthening the rural local self governance (Panchayati Raj Institution, PRI) for addressing gender issues and promoting women's equal participation

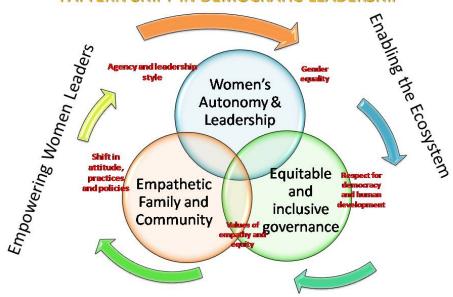
Over the years, the discourse on reservation for women has undergone a shift from one concept of equality- that of "equal opportunity" to the notion of "equality of result". Simply put, this means that merely promoting gender based quotas is not enough to ensure equal opportunity. Direct discrimination and a complex pattern of hidden barriers prevent women from getting their share of political influence. Quotas and other forms of positive measures are thus a means towards equality of result. To achieve equality of result, measures need to be taken to reduce barriers women face.

Equidiversity Foundation has been working on strengthening women's autonomy and decision making in rural governance (Panchayati Raj Institutions) since 2016.



Impact Model we are trying to envisage

PATTERN SHIFT IN DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

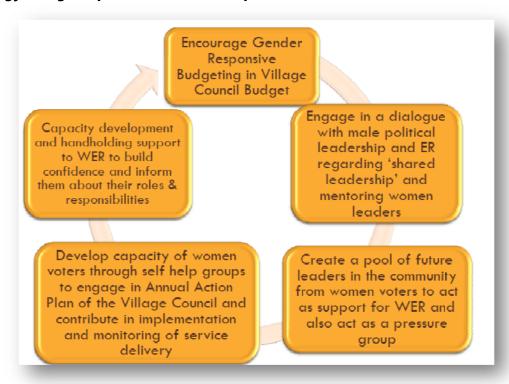


Creating Supportive Networks & Constitutive Structures

Outcomes we are trying to achieve

- ♣ 1. Increased competency and capacities of the existing women elected representatives and women community leaders to engage actively in governance and act as mentors to others
- ♣ 2. Increase active community involvement in local governance, advancing women's rights and accessing govt. schemes-entitlements
- ♣ 3. Enabling and improved ecosystem around them by creating better practices among institutions that affect their lives (Primary Schools, Family, Local Gram Panchayat) particularly on the areas of women's safety and promotion of rights & child protection and furthering child rights.
- 4. Increase self awareness of the male opinion leaders, elected representatives GP staff, political parties to review of their roles and leadership styles and promote gender mainstreaming within institutions and structures

Strategy being adopted to effect the impact model



Some Highlights

We conducted 31 workshops with 1155 women and male leaders of the Gram Panchayat and community on gender, Panchayat Planning and Budgeting, Gram Panchayat Sub Committees etc.





♣ 63.6 % GPs Village Councils held effective annual and bi-annual meetings (Gram

sansadsabha and Gram sabha) with voters

- ♣ 52% of the total women elected representatives took initiative to organize these meetings.
- More than 75% of the voter
 engaging in meetings were women
 and were found raising



gender based issues for acceptance in Village Council Plan

4 Rajnagar Gram Panchayat, Birbhum assigned a budget for a women's community

centre for women thereby providing them with a space for discussion, trainings and meetings.

Women's groups are becoming regular in monitoring meetings of Village Councils



Gram Sabha, Ramkishorepur GP, Kulpi Block



Inauguration of Women's Community Centre, Rajnagar GP, Birbhum



Kirnahar of NanooBlock, Birbhum and SrinarayanpurPurnachandrapur GP of PatharPrtima, and Ramkishorepur GP in South 24 Parganas organized gram sansadsabhas and gram sabhas with the overwhelming presence of women.

- ♣ Village Councils have started taking the lead in celebrating important days Women's Day, Health Day, International Day to Stop Violence against Women and Girls', World Environment Day etc to promote its commitment to gender issues.
- ◆ Dakshin Gangadharpur GP incorporated building a centre for cluster for their meetings and trainings. It also accepted a plan from 12 women from the cluster to construct and supervise toilets in 100 households. The GP mooted a convergence between the sanitation and MGNREGS schemes.

Jaba Nandan, an elected representative who is also the Convenor of the Women and



Child Social

Development Sub Committee

of Rajnagar Gram Panchayat, Rajnagar, Birbhum, West Bengal has been leading the Nari Jagaran Committee in her GP from the front. She was an ardent advocate for a community centre for the Nari Jagaran Committee (NJC). She lead the movement and today the women in the committee have their own space within the Gram Panchayat. Under her leadership, the Gram Panchayat observed the Women's Day and Anti Violence Against Women's Day. She is currently spearheading an anti illegal liqour den closure movement in the community with community women and NJC and have been successful in mobilizing political party and administrative support.



Social Mobilization & Institutional development in the community

At the local party levels, despite having so many women contesting Panchayat elections, important positions are held mainly by men. All political parties show their allegiance to women's participation by creation of a separate women's morcha or wing. Women still predominate only in positions and activities that support male party leadership at the grassroots level. Without access to the institutional knowledge, with very limited resources, few role models and mentors and sometimes even limited family and community support, women's participation in political parties has remained well below that of men. While the women morchas play a significant role in rural politics through outreach and mobilizing other women and coordinating the activities of women members of the party, their contribution to policy development (particularly around gender based violence), promoting women's interest in policy platforms and as an advisory to party leadership on gender issues remain unexplored. Moreover, a lack of awareness among women on constitutional, legal rights & entitlements prevent them from questioning authority and institutions refusing to ensure protection of their rights. Embroiled in gender trappings, women are unable to connect with their own strength and explore ways of self empowerment.

One of the spotlight of this year's work was the formation and strengthening community based women's committees known as the NARI JAGARAN COMMITTEES.

300 women to set up 9 Anti Gender Based Violence Vigilance Committees to address violence like domestic violence, early marriage, sexual harassment from a rights based perspective and create awareness

Highlights of the activities of Nari Jagaran Committees

♣ Women are seldom included in the MGNREGS scheme. Women have gone to the GP asking for work under the scheme but of no avail. About 1500-2000 women

under the leadership of the NJC *gheraoed* the Gram Panchayat and the BDO office and expressed their concern. With so many women being present in the Block office, the District Magistrate was informed and he was forced to come and meet the women. The women expressed their problem and later the DM directed the BDO and the GP office to give work to women under MGNREGS. The Pradhan of the GP gave a letter informing that women will be included in the scheme.

Another big achievement of the NJC was their movement to close down the illegal liquor shops that has been mushrooming near the main roads. Women were harassed and taunted when they walked passed the shop and had to bear the



brunt if physical and mental abuse by their husband at home using addiction as an excuse. The NJC had mobilized 500-600 women on 3 occasions and had taken out a rally protesting against these shops. But these efforts were of no avail. In June 2017, 2500 women created a road block in Ranchi road. Women sang, danced and chanted slogans but refused to budge. Officers came down from the Block, the Zilla Parishad and the Police Station. They

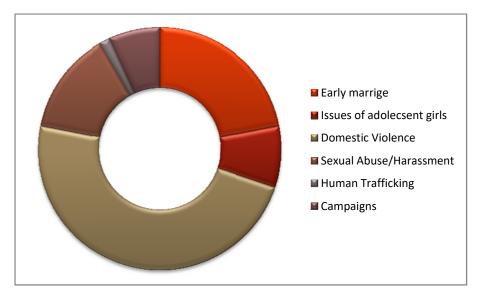
sealed the shop and promised the women that they will not allow the shop to continue its business.

♣ The BLRO office was not regularly attended by the officer and women going there for work were ignored and treated with disrespect. The NJC of the 2 GPs got together and mobilized nearly 1000 women who went and protested against the officer. Following this incident, women and others are dealt with promptly.





- ♣ The Nari Jagaran Committees have been instrumental in organising and mobilizing women to protest against violence on women and observe significant days like the Women's Day, Campaign against Violence on Women etc.
- → The Nari Jagaran Committees have taken the initiative and held 46 awareness programmes around gender and violence against women in their communities and have reached out to 7043 people.
- ♣ Community women have also mobilized themselves into 2 theatre groups, in Purulia and Birbhum These Theatre Groups have been integrated into the Nari Jagaran Committee. The Purulia theatre group has 20 members and have been performing on women's rights regularly. They were invited by the Zilla Parishad to perform in the Sabala Mela, Purulia to perform.
- ♣ The Committees have intervened in and dealt with 67 cases of violence ranging from domestic violence, early marriage, sexual abuse etc.



More than 77 meetings of the NJC have taken place in the last year. 2 Nari Jagaran Committees have opened their own accounts and have collected an average fund of Rs. 5000.



With the support of Equidiversity Foundation, a few community women have



taken up the initiative to start Adult Female Literacy centres in 2 Gram Panchayats of Jhaldah II block- Tatuara, Nowahatu Gram Panchayats. 2 community women work tirelessly to keep the 4 Adult Literacy Centres functional. 120 women including 2 women elected representatives come and study in these centres regularly. The Adult Literacy Centres not only provide women literacy skills including reading and writing, but also a working knowledge of arithmetic. These centres are also forums for discussion of women's rights, gender issues and government entitlements so that women are able to access them and fight for their rights. The centres also help mobilise these women as members of the Nari Jagaran Committees to fight gender based violence and discrimination. Women from these centres also support the Theatre Group to continue its task of spreading awareness on gender issues like early marriage, domestic violence, school dropout etc.



2 women from the Literacy Centres found the strength and confidence to join a women's theatre group spreading awareness on women's rights and gender based violence in the villages. The theatre group is one of its kind in Purulia where women are not seen so actively playing a part in activities like street play. The theatre group have performed in programmes organized by the local police station and government fairs.

More than 200 classes have taken place in these 4 ALCs. There are 120 women in the centres. All members are members of the Nari Jagaran Committees.

- ♣ An examination was conducted with 60 women in ALCs in Tatuara where 45 women passed that level. The women have been trained on how to maintain accounts and records in their self help group books and many are able to do that.
- Livelihood planning from the women of the ALCs have been submitted in the gram sansad sabha for consideration.
- ♣ Many women have registered for different entitlements like SASPFAU from the government following awareness in the ALCs. All women were encouraged to open individual bank accounts.

Women's Participation in livelihood activities& transfer of knowledge/skills

Our goal in this area is to-

- a. Improve livelihood opportunities for socially and economically backward women
- Develop skills of women to undertake new livelihood activities and improve existing ones
- strengthen development of women community/self help group leaders, for active participation in political processes for inclusion of their livelihood activities for support and sustenance
- d. improve women's access to assets and resources
- e. promote sustainable and environment friendly livelihood opportunities





Livelihood Activities done in 2017-18

We initiated our livelihoods activities in South 24 Parganas, in 2 Gram Panchayats-

Dakshin Gangadharpur and Sreenarayanpr Purnachandrapur GP. The activities undertaken includes- mushroom cultivation, vermicompost production, nursery, incense making, stitching

and embroidery.

Toilet construction in 100 households by the women's cluster initiative was supported by the Gram Panchayat for the first time in Dakshin Gangadharpur GP.



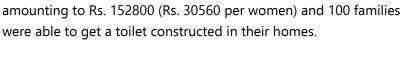


Highlights

4 138 women took training on mushroom production



- (two varieties) and produced 74.6 kgs of mushroom. Even though only 4 women sold the mushroom at an average of Rs. 180-200 per kg, most women used the mushroom for consumption and distribution.
- As a result of this, 90% women have submitted plans to the cluster (self help group conglomeration at the GP level) for oyster mushroom production in winter 2018, with 40% showing interest in developing a business plan. For marketing, collaboration has been made with the local Co-operative Bank who has offered to buy the mushrooms produced under 'Sufala Scheme' in the near future for distribution of office messes.
- ♣ It was also very heartening to see 2 members of Dakshin Gangadharpur Nari Jagaran Committee conduct these trainings.
- ♣ 5 women from the clusters were able to earn 800 person days under MGNREGS schemes



- With the financial support provided by SXC Alumni 1960-61 Batch Trust, 11 very poor families were able to build toilets without having to pay their share of the cost (Rs. 900 per family).
- **4** 30 women took training on katha stitch and embroidery and 8 have started earning Rs. 450 on an average for
- embroidery work for a small boutique, working in spare time.
- 9 women were involved in vermicompost production which they used essentially for their own agricultural use. A total of 560 kg of vermicompost was produced by them.



Total Beneficiaries of the livelihoods programme

Type of livelihood	No. of women taking training	Production No. of women engaged in income generation		Average income per kg/pc (Rs.)			
Mushroom farming	138	74.6 kg	4	Rs. 180-200			
Embroidery and katha	30		8	Rs. 3843			
Vermicompost	9	560 kg	9	Used in growing crop			
Sanitation construction	5	100 toilets	5	Rs. 152800 (800 person			
				days @ Rs. 191)			

Strengthening Children's Autonomy & Leadership to promote child rights, gender equality and child protection

Recognizing children as active agents in their own lives is a fundamental recognition of citizenship and of the dignity of every child, with implications for every arena of their lives. When children have opportunities to make choices; to attempt tasks for themselves and to take on increasing responsibilities, their sense of themselves as competent members of society grows.



Profile of the schools we work with:

- 32.7% of the children come from Below Poverty Level families
- > 77.46% belong to scheduled castes and other backward classes.
 - ≥ 58.65% are minority Muslims.
- Almost 30% of the children are first and second generation learners.
 - > The teacher student ratio is poor in

these schools.

Most of the schools do not have playgrounds and benches for the students.

We work with children through a process of "Child Parliament" to enable them to look at their problems, find solutions and voice their opinion in a shared space particularly on issues like child safety, early marriage, gender equality malnourishment and environment sustainability.

Why Child Cabinet?

Recognizing children as active agents in their own lives is a fundamental recognition of citizenship and of the dignity of every child, with implications for every arena of their lives.

The concept of Child Parliament is quite old and under the government notifications, the government Primary Schools are mandated to implement it within their schools. However, although the Child Parliament exist on paper, but the objectives of the child parliament- to ensure participation of children in matters that concern them within the school and their right to be listened to, freely express their views on all matters that affect them are hardly ensured.





Hence Child Parliament remains a tokenistic exercise for the schools.

We believe that "Child Cabinet" has the potential of promoting child rights through participation. Participation contributes to personal development, better decision making and outcome and serves to protect children, promotes tolerance and respect for others and finally, it strengthens accountability.

We started working in 8 Primary Schools in 2 Gram Panchayats of 2 Blocks- 1 GP in Pathar Protima Block and 1 GP in Falta Block.

Our goal in this area:-

> Increased autonomy and awareness among children (through better emotional health, life skills, awareness and information, exposure) to equip them to



understand, critically think and deal with issues that concern them, particularly around rights, safety and protection.

> Increased ability to challenge dominant forms of masculinity and femininity by which boys and girls develop a transforming mindset towards equality, equity and social justice.

Enabling an improved ecosystem around children by creating better practices among institutions that affect their lives (Primary Schools, Family, women self helpgroups, Local Gram Panchayat) particularly on the areas of child protection and furthering child rights.



➤ Enabling children and youth to become agents of change and social entrepreneurs.

Area of Work

District	Block G	GP	PS	Students		Teacher	Members in Cabinet			Minister	Total	
				Male	Female	Total		М	F	Т		
Birbhum	Labpur	2	11	540	530	1070	38	70	96	168	64	1340
South 24 Parganas	Pathar Protima & Kulpi	2	6	439	422	861	35	52	58	110	31	1037
Total	3	4	17	979	952	1961	73	132	154	278	95	23777

Target Population:

- 1. 6-14 years boys and girls going to Primary Schools
- 2. Teachers of the Primary Schools
- 3. Parents of the Children engaged in Child Parliament
- 4. Gram Panchayat and Sub Inspector of School and related line departments

Highlights

- ♣ The Child Parliament provided the children with an opportunity to participate in issues of importance. It helped them to come together, discuss together, decide together and involve together in action and in fun.
- ♣ The school teachers warmed up to the idea of introducing election through ballot and



polling station by giving the children power to elect their cabinet. The ministers were chosen through nomination post election. Although initially the process was frowned upon and though to be 'risky', the intense excitement shown by the children made it a worthwhile process.

- ♣ Thought & Feeling Box (Moner Baksho): We introduced a concept of "Though & Feeling Box" through the Child Parliament where every child in the Primary School was given an opportunity to write about their problems, feelings, thoughts on any matter making them anxious, happy, fearful or concerned. The Ministers are in charge of opening the box and looking at the issues.
- → The Child Parliament in South 24 Parganas had 7 Ministers and 2 Deputy Ministers heading Education, Health and hygiene, Gender Justice, Environment, apart from the Prime Minister and in some schools, a Deputy Prime Minister.
- ♣ The 'MonerBaksho' is opened every 15 days and the papers found inside are opened by the Prime Minister in the presence of other Ministers. Some of the issues that have been voiced by the children include their likes and dislikes within the family and school. Some children have also written about their qualities.
- ♣ Issue based meetings were conducted with 28 ministers on gender, health, roles and responsibilities.
- "Plant a tree" programme was undertaken as a part of caring for the environment programme.
- ♣ World Hand Washing Day was observed in 1 school. Awareness about the 6 steps of handwashing was spread among 63 children and 12 women involved with Mid day meal. Quiz was conducted on nutrition, health and hygiene with the children. In future we want the Health minister to initiate the programme to observe the Hand Washing day.
- ♣ Children's Day was observed together in all schools on 14 November. The programme not only involved the teachers and the students, but was also attended by the elected representative in the area, the members of the Nari Jagaran Committee.
- Art competition on environment and sanitation was introduced and prizes given. Quiz competition was conducted with the children around Child Parliament
- ♣ 1 Rally was organized with placards around right to education, health and gender equality.
- As part of our 'Respect for the Environment' Programme, we held two awareness and demonstrative camps on vermicompost. The teachers and students have expressed their keenness to make the compost in one pit in the school.
- The concept of wall magazine was introduced in one school.

In Birbhum, the Ministries included Sports & Culture, Food, Education & Environment, Health and Gender Justice. The Parliament was led by the Prime Minister. Apart from

these Ministers, the Child Parliament in Birbhum also has an Advisory Committee comprising of 4 additional students.

> As part of our earlier 'Eat a fruit, plant a tree' programme in the schools, the children had planted many trees and have been taking good care of them. The trees have grown to chest heights. Inorder to further their 'respect your environment'



এক সময় অধিকাংশ স্থূলেই প্রতিটি ক্লাসে একজন করে মনিটর নিয়োগের ওয়াজ ছিল। ওই সব মনিটরদের কাজ ছিল চক-ভাস্টার রঞ্জণাবেক্ষণ, ছড়ির যাবস্থা করা এবং পড়ুয়াদের অভাব, অভিযোগ, আচরণের কথা শিক্ষকদের জানানো। বর্তমানে ওই রেওয়াজটি আরু নেই বললেই চলে। মনিটরদের জায়গা নিয়েছে মন্ত্রিসভা। নিয়মানুযায়ী, প্রতিটি স্কুলে এক বছরের মেয়াদে ছয় জন প্রতিনিধি নিয়ে গঠিত হয় ওই সংসদ। নির্বাচিত প্রতিনিধিদের নিয়েই গঠিত হয় মঞ্জিসভা। প্রধানমন্ত্রী থেকে গুরু করে স্বাস্থ্য, শিক্ষা-পরিবেশ, খাদ্য, স্বাস্থ্য , সুরত বাগদিবা জানায়, স্কুলের বন্ধুরা মন্ত্রী কুটাই দ্রেদির নিশি বাগদি, খাদ্যমন্ত্রী কুটাই দ্রেদির নিশ্বরাদির পরিবেশ, খাদ্য, স্বাস্থ্য বাগদিবা জানায়, স্কুলের বন্ধুরা মন্ত্রী কোনেই, এটা তেবেই বেশ মজ্জা ক্রীডা-সংস্কৃতি এমনকি বিস্থা বিশ্বরাদ বিভাগেও রয়েছে মন্ত্রীসভায়। স্বাগ্যম্থা এই স্কুলের সহরারী বিশ্বর পথানী কর্ত্তরারাজ, টুপ্পা যোধ মন্ত্র শাস্ত্র শাস্ত্র প্রধানমন্ত্রী বিশ্বরাদ ব স্বাস্থ্যমন্ত্রী দেখবে ছাত্রছাত্রীরা নিরমিত নখ, চুল কাটে কি না। কার দাঁত অপরিষ্কার রয়েছে ইত্যাদি বিষয়। পড়ুয়াদের গাফিলতি নজরে এলে তাকে সাবধান করে কবার সংশোধনের সুযোগ দেওয়া হয়। তাতে কাজ না হলে শিক্ষকদের দৃষ্টি

আর্কষণ করে মন্ত্রিসভা। আর প্রধানমন্ত্রী করেন সমন্বয় রক্ষার কাজ। এ দিন ওই স্কুলের তৃতীয় এবং চতুর্থ শ্রেণির ৪২ জন পভুয়াকে নির্বাচক ইসেবে বেছে নেওয়া হয়। তানের হাতে ব্যালট হিসেবে দেওয়া হয় একটা

করে নানা কারলা লেই কারলে কই জন গড়ুলাম নথো যে কোনত চার জনের নাম গোপনে লিখে বাালট বাঙ্গে ফেলতে বলা হয় নিবাচকদের। তাদের মধ্যে থেকে সর্বোচ্চ ভোট প্রাপক হিসেবে ক্রমানুসারে ৬ জনকে বেছে হয়। তার পরে নির্বাচিতরা মিলে গঠন করেন মস্ত্রিসভা। এমন মস্ত্রিসভা গঠনের জনা ভেট দিতে পেরে উদ্ধানিত তৃতীয় শ্রেণির হাত্রী মিলি বাগদি, চতুর্থ শ্রেণির প্রকাশ বাগদিরা। তারা বলছে, "এত দিন বাবা-মায়েদের মূখে ভোট দেওরার কথা শুনেছি। আজ আমরাও বাড়ি গিয়ে ভোট দেওরার গল্প করব।"

খুশি মন্ত্রিসভার সদস্যরাও। প্রধানমন্ত্রী তৃতীয় শ্রেণির লিপি বাগদি, খাদামন্ত্রী বন্দোপাধায়রা জানান, শিশুসংসদ নির্বাচন দেখে স্কুলবেলার মনিটার পড়ে যাছিল। সেই সময় মনিটররাই ক্লাস পরিচালনার পাশাপাশি শিক্ষকদের সঙ্গে যোগসূত্র রক্ষা করত। প্রিসাইডিং অফিসার তথা নির্বাচন কর্মী হিসেবে হাজির ছিলেন স্থলের ভারপ্রাপ্ত প্রধান শিক্ষক মানবেন্দ্রনাথ দাস, রূপায়নকারী সংস্থার পকে ঝুমা গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় হাজরা, শিক্ষাবন্ধু হেমন্ত মুখোপাধ সদস্য সুকান্ত পালেরা। তাঁরা জানান, এই নির্বাচনের মাধ্যমে গঠিত মন্ত্রিসভা স্কুলের সামগ্রিক বিকাশের ক্ষেত্রে সহায়ক হবে। পড়ুয়াদের মধ্যে নেতৃত্বগুণও গড়ে উঠবে।

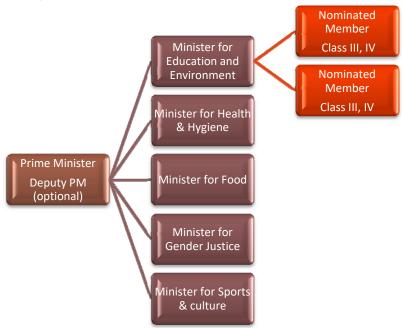
programme, awareness on vermicompost and benefits were talked about. In one school, the ministers showed keen interest and told their teachers they wanted tom learn making compost that they can use for their plants. The ministers collected the utensils and other materials, while we provided them with earthworms. One pit of vermicompost was produced by these children who are regularly monitoring it.

- ♣ The Gram Panchayats have recently set up vats in the schools and the health and hygiene ministers actively monitor the use
- ♣ We advocated with the 3 Gram Panchayats in their general meeting to hold one regular meeting every 2 months with the teachers to address their needs and concerns.
- 4 The 'Monerbaksho' is opened every month and issues are discussed. Initially, the children drew, wrote skits, poems in the box. But slowly they have started opening up. On one occasion, a note was found that one particular teacher was beating children all the time. The children kept silent out of fear. The ministers took the piece of paper to the headmaster. Eventually, the beating stopped. On another occasion, a piece of paper revealed that a child was very distressed because his mother was beaten up every day. The ministers shared the paper and the

headmaster was proactive in finding out the depressed boy and called his father and had a personal discussion.

Art competition on environment, hygiene was organized.

Children working as ministers in the Child Parliament



The children have raised important issues like absence of teachers, irregularity of maintaining time by the teachers, the cooks of mid day meal not tying their hair while cooking. They also raised issues at home like gender discrimination, child labour, not having toilet at home, father preventing mother from attending meetings, women bathing in pond in absence of bathroom etc.

Activities undertaken by the children through Child Parliament

- Maintain cleanliness in school
- Checking hygiene of the students
- Notifying the teachers about regular absence of students
- Contribute to school wall magazine
- Involve girls in sports and physical exercises
- Notifying teachers about the interest to observe important days
- Involvement in flower gardening
- Implementation, supervision and caring for plants through a programme called 'Eat a fruit, plant a tree' within the school premises
- Supervising the mid day meal cooking

- Mobilize students for sit and draw activities
- Supervising and maintaining the "Thought & Feeling Box".

Role of Teachers

- The ministers have a special identity card
- Through a notice the names of the ministers are displayed
- When the Ministers identify an issue, they bring it before the teachers for resolution
- For motivating the ministers, the school has given them awards for their performances

The changes noticed

♣ There was a shift in the movement of the concept of Child Parliament from paper to actual functioning. Initially this concept was perceived as an additional burden

for teachers and stydents. Parents were of the opinion that studies will get hampered. There has been a definite shift of this mentality.

♣ The children involved in the Parliament as Ministers take their role very seriously and are motivated to perform their role.

The Gram Panchayats have accepted this project in right earnest. The Convenors of the Education Sub Committee and the Women & Child Social Welfare Sub Committee pay regular visits to these schools and enquire about the functions of the Child Parliament. The involvement of





children in monitoring mid day meal has benefitted the school and they play a positive role in keeping the cooks on their toes. Moreover, they hold regular meetings with the teachers as part of their monitoring role.

Networks and Partnerships

Equidiversity Foundation became members of three networks-

- Aman: Global Voices for Peace in the Homes a national network against domestic violence
- Bhabna Network-a regional network against early marriage
- An alliance of NGOs working for Child rights, child protection and emergency response led by Terre des Hommes Foundation
- We also partnered with "Breaking Silence around Gender Based Violence through Story Telling" project of the US Kolkata Consulate whereby 4 community leaders from Purulia and Birbhum developed their capacities on story telling methods and brought 4 performances in Pathar Protlia Block, South 24 Parganas and Nanoor Block, Birbhum.



Working as a Resource Organization

In 2017-2018, we offered our services as a Resource Organizaion and built capacity of

- 300 women farmers associated with Jeevika Development Society, NGO working on women's empowerment on gender and PRI in a phase I training.
- Developed capacity of 45 team members of Samaj Unnayan Kendra, NGO working on disability rights on social analysis, programme management etc.
- Our Managing Trustee worked as a Consultant with Swayam to integrate gender in rural governance in Diamond Harbour, South 24 Parganas.

Institutional development of EDF



We had a two days annual planning in the beginning of the year. Apart from planning activities and determining strategies, it was also an opportunity to review our vision-mission and objectives.

Our Team Nasiruddin Gazi (Resource Person)

Trust Board Purulia

Namita Kalindi

Anindita Majumdar, Managing Trustee Jayanti Mahato

Shyamali Acharjee Volunteers & Interns

S. Ghosh

Birbhum

South 24 Parganas

Prittwish Tripathy

Dilip Banerjee Bijoya Ghosh

Chandana Baksi Lakshmi Ghosh

Debahuti Mukherjee

Advisory Board Supporters & Donors

Bulbul Baksi SXC Alumni 1960-61

Sanjay Sen Tuhina Majumdar

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Staff
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Jhuma Ganguly Hazra Mridula Majumdar

Rupasi Chaudhury Nandini Chaudhuri

Beli Bagdi Rudradeb Chaudhuri

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Anindita Majumdar

Sumita Roy

Mandira Banerjee

Rabindranath Pramanik Asish Kanti Bhattacharya

Lalita Midhya Swayam

Labani Mondal Loka Kalyan Parishad

Financial Statement