From the desk of the Director:

Dear CINI friends and supporters,

The month of October ushered in the annual festive season in Bengal for both Hindus and Muslims with Durga Puja on the first day of the month, followed closely by Eid u Zoha. Lakshmi Puja within the first week and after a wait of two weeks, by Kali Puja or Diwali. CINI observed a holiday for a week in the beginning of October which allowed our colleagues to spend quality time with their families. Over the festive season we did not forget our children at our homes who are with us awaiting family re-union after being rescued from an abusive situation. Kolkata Police arranged food and buses for the children which allowed us to share some of the happiness showing them the decorations of Puja celebrations in the city. Many well wishers brought gifts of sweets, clothes as well as crackers which they lit on Diwali evening, allowing them to smile, dance and sing and just being children. Round the year you have sent us donations which allow us to care for these children as well as support other activities benefiting deprived children and women. We send you Happy Puja, Eid and Diwali greetings from them as well as all my CINI colleagues. We are grateful for your support.

Dr. Samir Chaudhuri
Back to school - Little Soma was used to her life as a domestic maid in the far away state of Haryana. Her dreams of getting an education seemed to be farfetched. When she came to visit her parents at Murshidabad, West Bengal, she was identified by a CINI teacher as a drop out. With the help of a CINI teacher and a primary school teacher, Soma was admitted into the CINI-IMPACT Learning center. With time, Soma can now read & write English, Bengali & do mathematical calculations. Recently, she also got admitted in class V of Sompara Girls High School. She is now regularly going to school. Her father Mr. Swapun Das & mother Ms. Laxmi Das are very much happy. They have also assured that they will never stop Soma’s education. Sompara village is situated at Sompara-I Gram Panchayat under Beldanga-II block of Murshidabad district. Majority of the population in this village are illiterate and most are daily laborers. Moreover, the women are engaged in bidi rolling and agricultural work. Maximum number of children stop their education at the age of 14 years and gets engaged in various labour work. From February ‘2013 onwards, CINI has implemented ‘Girl Child Education Programme’ in the district of Murshidabad in collaboration with IMPACT at 40 villages of the district through 40 ‘Learning Centers’ covering about 1600 drop out & never been to school girls to ensure girl child education in Murshidabad district. With the implementation of the IMPACT project and the establishment of this ‘Learning Center’ at Sompara village, the IMPACT teacher Tanaja Khatun has made continuous house visits and tried to make the parents understand the importance of education.

The day of the daughter

The Government of West Bengal has declared 14th August as “Kanyakshree Day” with an objective to incentivize girls education in the State. The main aim of the observation of the Kanyakshree Day is protecting and empowering all adolescent girls and supporting their healthy development by creating an enabling environment for their participation and meaningful contribution to society. The Kanyakshree Frakalyopa scheme aims at improving the status and well being of girl child by; Discouraging early marriage of girls to ensure compliance with the legal provisions pertaining to the minimum age at marriage; Incentivize through scholarships, the continuation of education of the girl child in Secondary and Higher Secondary classes and those undergoing vocational training or sports training; Improving IMR and MMR by delaying the age of marriage and consequently increasing the median age of first birth; Reducing the incidence of drop outs, especially amongst girls from poor families; Eradicating under nutrition and malnutrition of girl child and Preventing trafficking and exploitation of the girl child.

More thoughts on missing children - A one day capacity building program for the members of Child Welfare Committee and Juvenile Justice Board, Home Superintendents and NGO workers under Missing Child Alert Project (MCA) was organized by CINI and supported by Plan India on August 25, 2014 at Anita Banerjee Memorial Hall, Jadavpur University. The Resource Persons for this program were Dr. Bipoli Mallick (Chairperson CWC, South 24 Parganas), Snehit Banerjee (Human Rights Law Network), Nilam Mondal (Human Rights Law Network).

The objectives of this program were:
- Sharing of Scenario of Child Protection in South 24 Parganas district
- Discussion on Role of different Stakeholders in Juvenile Justice System (CWC, JJB, NGO & Home Superintendents)
- Sharing of Repatriation Process.
- Discussion on legal framework in dealing with trafficking cases.

The program turned out to be an interactive platform as all the participants shared their own thoughts and concerns. It was also helpful as the program concluded with various introspective suggestions like:
- Awareness programs should be organized by Childline for the Police Personnel. Follow ups at regular interval should also be maintained to address the gaps.
- Ignorance of the parents of trafficked children has resulted to innumerable trafficking incidents. Therefore, awareness of the parents is required to make them more alert about these issues.
- A list of all the requirements for serving the best interest of the child could be prepared through collective effort and the Government might be approached.
- Separate homes for repatriation of children of Burmese National Muslim origin, who migrated to India for fear of losing their lives, should be set up instead of sending them back.
The National Nutrition week is observed annually to address the problem of malnutrition, especially amongst the women and the children. National Nutrition week is observed in India from 1st to 7th September. This year the theme for National Nutrition week 2014 was “Poshak Aahar, Desh Ka Aadhar” which means that “Nutritious Food is Basic for Nation Building”. CINI celebrated Nutrition Week through various awareness programmes and allied events across its units and divisions. Team members of CINI actively participated in the various activities and gave their best to promote healthy eating practices & its benefits among the community people. It was very encouraging to observe the participation from the Government service providers and community towards the promotion of healthy living.

Celebrating the Indian Independence Day! Girls from the educational centres of Ward 56 and 56 in Kolkata, supported by OTIS – United Technologies Corporation India Pvt. Ltd. celebrated Pre-Independence Day on the eve of Independence Day in the community. All the girls made Indian National Flags and some tricolor badges. On August 14, 2014, the girls in groups visited the community and reached out everyone to distribute the national flags and badges. They met everyone from the club members, to the parents, general women and adolescent girls, factory workers, sellers in the market etc. The children attached the badges to the community people’s dresses and asked them to put up the flag on August 15, 2014 in their own homes in a high position to honour the tricolor and to pay tribute to all the freedom fighters who dedicated their valuable lives to make our country free. They also made them aware regarding the significance of the different colours of the national. Children approached all with a message “to feel proud for being an Indian by putting up the national flag badge in their dress”. All the community people appreciated the innovative endeavor and encouraged the children to do more programmes. All the club members and the parents of the children promised to help them to continue education and in any kind of work in the community for their welfare after seeing, feeling and realizing the depth of this initiative.

A state level consultative meet was organized at Ranchi on July 22, 2014 to commemorate the completion of 40 years of CINI. Sri Sajal Chakravarty (I.A.S.), Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand was the chief guest at this state level consultative meet towards creating child & woman friendly communities in Jharkhand. Various representatives of government departments, experts, development partners and CINI employees, all working for the cause of women and children in the state had participated in the meet. The objective was to share how CINI went through its journey towards creating child and women friendly communities in West Bengal & how the learnings can be replicated in Jharkhand. Sri Job Zachariah, CFO, UNICEF, Jharkhand said that, “I congratulate CINI for completing 40 years. The role of NGOs is to add value to government programmes. The government does not lack funds but we need good NGOs to work in partnership through convergence.” CINI’s Founder Director, Dr Samir Chaudhuri presented CINI’s experiences and learnings in the past 40 years. He said that, “We are working closely with the government in West Bengal and Jharkhand to add value to government programmes and to empower all communities. Convergence of government funds and programmes is the way out and CINI is here to be a technical partner to work with the government and the donors. The Planning Commission has mentioned the concept of Child & Woman friendly communities in the 12th plan.”

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World Breast Feeding Week is an annual celebration which is being held every year from 1st August to 7th August in more than 120 countries. It is being organized by WABA (World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action) & is now observed in over 120 countries by UNICEF, WHO and their partners including individuals, organization & Govt. According to World Health Organization (WHO) for infant exclusive breastfeeding is mandatory up to 6 months and then supplemented breast feeding for at least one year & up to 2 years or more. Breast feeding is the best way to give a newborn the nutrients they need. Breast milk is highly nutritious with easy to digest proteins & natural immunities that protect babies against diseases & infection. Colostrum, the milk that mother’s produce in the first days after birth, is not only dense in nutrients, but is also rich in antibodies that protect babies from bacteria & viruses that cause infection. Breast feeding is cost effective and is a vital step in reducing under nutrition in children. Like every year on 1st-7th August, CINI observed the World Breast Feeding Week in its implementation area which aims to make sustainable development in health and nutrition. Events were carried out to promote and generate awareness among communities on importance of breast feeding. This year the theme was “Breastfeeding: a winning goal-For Life”. The key feature of observing this week is to spread the message of importance of breast feeding. Breast milk is the prime source of nutrients for newborn. This will help a baby to have healthy physical and psychological development.

A positive change - CINI is working in Advancing Young People’s Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights through a Government-Civil Society Partnership in four districts of West Bengal supported by MacArthur Foundation. The project is operational since mid 2012 and focuses on Life Skill Education and Adolescent health. Though it was a bit difficult to work at the initial stage because of typical Indian mindset, but gradually teachers accepted it and realized the need of the project. Recently, a review meeting was held for the schools in South 24 Parganas district. A presentation was given on overall scenario of the project followed by an interactive session facilitated by District Inspector (DI), (Secondary Education-South 24 Pgs) and Assistant Inspector (Secondary Education-Alipur). Several good things came out from the teachers.
- Different Govt programmes like WIFS, School Health running well because of the intervention
- Children are protesting against early marriage and stopping it with the help of Teachers and CHILDLINE
- Anwesha counselors are visiting schools regularly (that was a bit difficult for them since one counselor has to visit all the schools of block beside her clinic)
- Referral system with different service delivery points established and running
- Relationship between teachers and students has become more friendly
- Students, specially Peer Leaders has become much vocal and developed leadership skills
- In some schools teachers have started to take exam on these issues
- Teachers expressed their willingness to continue this initiative for some more years and ensured their full cooperation and also requested DI to arrange for fund to run the project
- After getting much positive feedback DI assured that he will try to arrange funds to continue the project and also requested CINI to possible, to increase the area of intervention.

A top up grants from PACS - “Strengthening Access and Utilization of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) through Community Engagements in selected five PACS districts of West Bengal” is a top up grant that has been received from Poorest Areas Civil Society Programme (DFID). Under this project few Self Help Groups have been identified and are being trained on the intricacies of RSBY. Members from these groups are expected to run the RSBY Sahayata Kendra at the block/gram Panchayat level, mass mobilize the community during community meetings as well as make frequent home visits for tracking of drop outs from enrolment by the tracking tool and facilitate listing of the beneficiary name in the district list. They will also be trained in developing skills on RSBY which will then be performed in other far flung GP locations towards community awareness. CINI have already organized a two days training of SHGs on street performances in Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri.

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CINI Goodies

Please contact us in the details given below to buy the various CINI goodies like coffee mugs, key rings or to donate in our programs.

We would be glad to receive your support through this newsletter.

An Appeal

Adopt a Mother, Save her Child - For just 15,000 rupees to cover the first 1000 days period, you can be linked to a mother and her child and see the difference your donation makes not only to their lives but to the lives of others in their community.

Educate a Child - For a donation of 8,000 rupees, you can support a child in education over a two year period. The Educate a Child programme concentrates on children aged from 5 to 16 years in deprived urban areas. It focuses on getting children into education and keeping them there.

Day Trip to Monobitan - CINI has developed a wonderful day trip concept at our MONOBITAN facility for underprivileged kids. You invest only Rs.15000 and gain the happiness of 70 street children.

We are also active in Social Networking

Follow us at:

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