

Behala Keertika

Registration No. – S/IL/5243

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

Behala Keertika is a non-profit, non-political, non-government organization, registered under W.B. Societies Registration Act, 1961, serving to protect and guide vulnerable women and children, through legal awareness and assistance.

Behala Keertika runs a shelter home for destitute and rescued girl children.

The Director of the organisation, **Mrs. Sutapa Chakraborty** has been a true inspiration in this journey of Keertika with the assistance of few dedicated well-wishers Behala Keertika is providing justice to the most deprived, downtrodden and vulnerable section of the society. Mrs. Sutapa Chakraborty had herself worked for the women inmates including non-criminal lunatics of correctional homes, with the purpose of providing their rights and entitlements. She has been fighting since decades to provide legal aid and rights to the victims of domestic violence (mental and physical), sexual abuses, assaults and harassment. She has been instrumental in ensuring legal rights and protection to physically challenged individuals ,to the victims who have been deprived of property , (specially among differently able women and girls) as well as in ensuring right to save environment and right to information.

She has also been instrumental in coordinating inter-NGO interactions and liaison-building procedures between Government, various ngos, autonomous and constituted bodies/agencies since more than two decades. She is involved in close handling of various state-level projects and programme-related matters concerning the following departments: Department of Social and Family Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal; the Directorate of Correctional Services, Govt. of West Bengal; West Bengal Commission for Women; Ministry of Women & Child Development, Govt. of West Bengal. She is also responsible for the administration and supervision of short-stay shelters for abused and trafficked children and for women in difficult circumstances.

VISION

Behala Keertika visualizes a world where peace, cooperation and dignity prevail for the women and the children and a world free from violence and discrimination.

MISSION

- To promote the rights of women and girls.
- To empower adolescent girls.
- To ensure child rights, gender equity and sustainable development.
- To protect, promote and ensure the rights of backward communities and physically challenged people.
- To build up the decision making power among the vulnerable section.
- To build up active citizenship among the students.

OBJECTIVES

- Providing legal aid services to the victims of Domestic Violence.
- Empowering the girls & women to raise their voice against all sorts of abuse and negligence.
- Providing counselling services to the distressed women and girls.
- Ensuring proper implementation of the Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act (2005) in the target area.
- Preventing child trafficking and protecting the children from trafficking by bringing them out from red light area through rescue operation and by providing them a safer & secure environment.
- Ensuring proper implementation of Right to Education Act & conducting study on Active Citizenship.

TARGET GROUP

- Any distressed women, who are trafficked, prone to trafficking, abused, prone to being abused, and victims of domestic violence and other legal disputes .
- Any vulnerable person who needs legal aid due to the legal disputes they are facing.
- Any vulnerable person who needs counselling services from Keertika.
- Teachers, Student, Parents and Educational Institutes, Voluntary Organization & NGOs.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF WORK

The stakeholders/target communities of Keertika are the residents of both urban and rural areas, in and around Kolkata and West Bengal.

STRATEGIES:

- People's Organisation/Institution building
- Capacity Enhancement
- Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Counseling
- Advocacy ,Net working and Alliances Building
- Study & Research

ACTIVITIES:

- Formation of People's Organisation
- Awareness Generation (Legal Awareness)
- Providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence and other legal disputes
- Organizing legal aid campaign to sensitize the Civil Society on various legal issues
- Organizing workshops and seminar
- Providing legal and psychological counseling
- Conducting study & research
- Rehabilitation of socially stigmatized ex-prisoners, trafficked girls and distressed children in a short-stay shelter home (run by Behala Keertika).

PUBLIC LITIGATION SUPPORT

Behala Keertika is a collective of social workers and lawyers, established in the year 1993 and since then the organization is working for the needy people.

It is providing legal assistance to the victim of domestic violence, trafficked, raped victims and needy people and organizing legal awareness camps. We also provide legal support during the transitional process from trial court to high court. Apart from these legal cases Behala Keertika also provides pre-litigational and psychological counseling to of several victims.

Project : Keertika Protection Home for Girls

Keertika Protection Home run under the administration of Behala Keertika (supported by The Hope Foundation & Sky children onlus) is located under Ward Number 116. The Home offers a safe environment and an integrated approach to all aspects of childcare covering shelter, education, nutrition and health for their emotional, social, cultural and cognitive development. Girls who were at high risk, living in slums and were subjected to violence, abuse by the families and experienced abject poverty which violating their rights of survival and development, have been rescued and identified by the Keertika outreach project, run in the various pockets of Kolkata and it's adjacent area, followed to identify them the girls were produced before the Child Welfare Committee of Kolkata and placed in Keertika Home. Thus all

25 girls who are staying in Keertika home have protective order from Kolkata's Child Welfare Committee (CWC) for their placement in Keertika.

Keertika endeavour to give every child her due rights of Survival, Protection, Development and Participation as advocated under the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child. Keertika believes that a child's learning and socialization are most influenced by its family since the family is the child's primary social group and Keertika believes that Family plays an important and crucial in overall growth and healthy development of a child. Thus it promote the Family strengthening through the projects run by Keertika, so that the child can be reuniting with their families where it is safe and possible. The Keertika project activities and strategies has been designed to strengthening the socio economic condition of the families and creating a safety net in the community level so that where possible child can be reunited with the families. Focus is also giving in promoting Empowerment of Girls through encouraging them for the higher studies, acquiring vocational and personality development skills like decision making, social communication public speaking, knowledge on computers etc. during their early adolescence, so that they can be financially independent and can participate in workforce of India without getting into low skill labours with low wages.

Project Aims and Objectives

The project aims to “**Improve the status of girls in the community**” by protecting their rights of Education, Protection and holistic development which helps them to grow independently. (Impact level changes)

Project Activities and Achievements:

Activities:

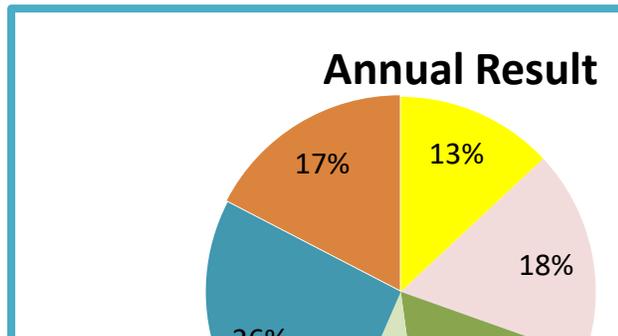
Protection and care of children is one of the fundamental objectives of Behala Keertika. Each activity of the home, planning and adopted strategies are made in compliance with the Child Protection Policy and Child Safe Guarding to ensure a loving, caring and safe environment in which each child can learn and grow into independent, successful and happy young adult. Individual Care plans are prepared for each girl and all aspects of child Protection Policy (developed in line with UNCRC) are maintained. The focus is always given on maintaining improved health for each child. The girls provided with healthy nutritious diet each day, quarterly weight and height assessment, health checkups etc to identify the developmental gaps and ensure care accordingly. Annual eye and dental checkups has conducted where children were thoroughly examined. Keertika Girls have been enrolled in nearby local schools affiliated by WBBSE, WBCHSE and medium of learning has been chosen as per their IQ level and learning capability. Supplementary supports provided to them through private tutors to ensure their retention in school. Girls with low IQ and with slow learning ability have been receiving support of Special educator to bridge their gap and improved their scholastic ability with the help of special education teaching and learning methods and indoor and outdoor sports. Children are being encouraged to participate in various states and national level competitions and events to disseminate their skills of performing dance, yoga and other arts. Girls also participating in educational tours, workshops and trainings, cultural events organized by Behala Keertika. Quarterly trainings have been conducted for staffs to equip them with knowledge and techniques for better child handling and case management. Regular training are conducted for the staffs and children to improve their knowledge on Child Rights,

Protection, adolescent health and hygiene, gender equality etc. in order to empower them. Trainings have been organized for parents as well on child protection, laws protecting children's rights, entitlements and schemes which they can avail from the government.

The Home Superintendent and Case worker of Keertika home have met with 37 Key stakeholders (Panchayet, Pradhan, local neighbours, school teachers, Bank Managers etc) and 90 networking visit in the community to sensitize them regarding the prevalence of Child abuse, child protection and their rights to be protected from any form of abuse, violence, neglect and exploitations. Child Development Project Officer, District Child Protection Officers, Govt officials of social welfare department, officials in Fire Station, Ward Councillor, Officers of Kolkata Municipal Corporations have also been met with in order.

During this year, Altogether 23 girls out of 25 have received formal education. Rest of 2 girls one was admitted into Nursing training course (ANM) and the other one getting her non-formal education by in-house private tutors.

Among 25 girls five girls successfully passed in Madhyamik Examination and one girl successfully cleared her Higher Secondary Examination in May, 2019.



Significant Achievement:

The condition of the families have been improved as they have been supported to access basic entitlement and essential sustainable services like shelter, water, sanitation, energy, education and health.

KEERTIKA home focuses on merging families with various Government schemes and entitlement (such as West Bengal Khadya Sathi Scheme, Indira Awas Yojna, old age pension scheme, Kannyasree Prakalpa, Self Help Group Bima Yojna and Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna, Sukanya Samridhi Yojna; Disability card for children etc.) to ensure their rights of citizenship and entitlement as per their age and socio-economic status.

SUCCESS STORIES of KEERTIKA PROTECTION HOME:

KEERTIKA's PRIDES:

Success Story 1:

One of the girls of Keertika, Niva was in an extremely vulnerable condition before entering Keertika Home. Her mother is a sex worker. After her father's died, when she was very small, her mother was being separated with her in-laws as they were unable to take their responsibilities. After that under compulsion, Jahanara has started to earn money by becoming a sex worker and used to live in a brothel. During living there, Niva was physically abused by her neighbor. Apart from this, it has

been seen that sometimes the clients of her mother wanted to physically abuse her child and sometimes they threatened her mother. Her mother does not want to raise her daughter in a brothel environment. So, her mother wanted to keep her in secure shelter where she will be continued her education and stay with care & protection. After coming in Keertika Home, sometimes she felt depressed as she knew her mother's profession. She felt highly anxious & frustrated to think of her mother's condition.

She had joined in Keertika in 2016. After four years of a long period of her staying, now she is 12 years old and studying in class VII. Academically she is very well. She stands every year in School. She becomes confident and her positive self-esteem has been boosted up. Her inner conflict was resolved regarding her family matters and peer relationship. Her decision making and problem solving ability have been improved through regular counseling which will help her in future. She is an active and responsible child committee member. Her leadership ability and sense of forgiveness is really appreciable. This year she scored 79% marks and stood third position in her class in annual examination. She feels that she is blooming like a flower in Keertika. Now her mother left that profession and earns money as a domestic helper. Keertika helps her mother to link with various Govt. schemes through which she gets benefit, like Khadya Sathi prokolpo, Jan dhyn Yojona account etc. Behala Keertika has done a great work to support a bud which might be torn up before blooming and now she is blooming with her essence of human quality. Hope her success in life.

Success Story 2:

Life does not run always on a red carpet way. Everyone does not get chance to lead her/his life smoothly. Meena one of the girl of Keertika Protection Home, did not get chance to live a quality life since her age of 13 years. When she was 13 years her father started to rape her. She was tortured both physically and sexually on daily basis. She was often threatened by her father if she would inform anyone, she would be killed. She had informed her mother about the torture, as she could no longer handle it but her mother could not take any step against her husband. After completion of Madhyamik Examination her father had taken her to a rental room near his working place. Here she has been enrolled to the new school and continued her study. She had a dream to become a doctor. Her father again started to rape her day by day. Sometimes her father watched pornography, videos in front of her in drunken mood and wanted to involve her in this activities. She wanted to get rid from her father but no one was there to support her. Destiny did not deceive her always, thus, she got chance to contact with Behala Keertika for her protection and care. After that, Behala Keertika had decided to give her protection, care and right to live with dignity as well as opened POCSO case against his father. The Girl's traumatic and painful experience sometimes threw her in a turmoil emotional situation. By the support of counselling and different supportive therapies, she became empowered to handle her negative vulnerable emotions & became able to enhance her positive self-esteem.

In the time of staying in Keertika Home, her turning point in life is to pass with good marks in higher secondary examination. She has got the chance to fulfill her dream partially. She has joined for nursing training in St. John Ambulance Institute. She also completed vocational training in computer, beautician and tailoring. Thus, she became enough empowered to deal with her own

problems regarding her safety. She does not want to go back to her home. Therefore, she has been recruited as a staff at Keertika Protection Home. She has got victim compensation from POCSO case which is being supervised by Behala Keertika. Wish her Life will be flourishing by her positive qualities and she will be able to lead her life with utmost dignity. Hope her life has been bloomed again like a new flower by the help of Behala keertika.

EXPOSURE TRIPS:

Throughout the year different educational and recreational exposures have been arranged for the children and staffs of Keertika.

The children of Keertika apart from studies are also involved in different kinds of extra curricular activity. They also celebrate several social and religious occasions on their own in the protection home. They are invited for participating in Children's protection day celebration, Book Fair organized by the West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights. Besides several organizations, NGOs give the opportunity to the children for their active participation.

Project : Women's Friendly Community

Behala Keertika is running a new project '**WOMEN'S FRIENDLY COMMUNITY**' at 20 Wards in Budge Budge (2,7,8,9,11,12,13,16,17 & 19) and Pujali Municipality (1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9, 11 & 14) in collaboration with The Fund for Global Human Rights (**FGHR**). This project ensures a violence free ambience for most vulnerable women, through awareness generation in the community for future access of justice delivery system and other accountability in need for local stake-holders i.e. municipal councilors, ward committee members, learned community persons, teachers, club members and other youths.

Objectives

Creation of a Violence-free Ambience for Women who shall enjoy all Rights and Entitlement.....facilitated through Public-Partnership Model....Women Group and Stakeholders complementing each other through Concerted Initiatives.... Optimum Utilization Government Scheme / Legislations.... Women being benefitted directly.

Proposed Activities

- Selection of Girls/Women for formation of WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE & formation of WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE.
- DEVELOPMENT of TRAINING MODULE for training of WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE.
- Selection of CBOs in the respective target areas through conducting WORKSHOPS.
- Training of WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE
- CAPACITY BUILDING of CBOs
- Conducting WORKSHOP/ SEMINARS with the STAKEHOLDERS.
- Conducting INTERFACES between WOMEN'S COLLECTIVES & STAKE-HOLDERS.
Providing HAND-HOLDING SUPPORT to leaders of WOMEN'S COLLECTIVES, for ensuring ONE-TO-ONE. Service Delivery.

Project Description

5 Blackbird workshops, 6 Community Based Organizations workshop, 18 Trainings of Trainers with Women Collectives, 8 Interface, 1 Exposure Visit & 1 Sub Divisional Seminar have been conducted during this project period. Women's Rights, Acts related to women's rights such as Domestic Violence Act; Immoral Trafficking Act; IPC 498 A, Sexual Harassment at workplace Act; IPC 367, Hindu Marriage Act; Muslim Marriage Act; Maternity Benefit Act etc and Govt Schemes & Entitlements has been discussed through Power point presentation. Apart from these few important issues such as how to lodge GD, FIR and its roles to protect our rights as a citizen of India, Role of community based organization etc. More than 60 participants participated in each workshop and they have very much enriched by these workshops. Women's Collectives have been formed in 20 Municipal wards and 18 trainings have been conducted during this period. TOTs with Women's Collectives have been designed as the project objectives based on Women's Rights & its related Acts, Governments schemes & entitlements related to women issues and Counselling. This Training of Trainer programme is really very wonderful and effective. All the participants participated actively and gained knowledge that was enriched them. A training Module has been developed for the women's collectives and end of every session Training modules were distributed among the trainees. The participants choose a name of their collectives and they elected their leaders also. 56 cases have been registered for counseling and legal support from April, 19 to March, 20.

Success story

Tagari Chakraborti, a 35 year old woman from Hetalkhali, Maheshtala is one of the more tangled cases that our organisation has tackled. Tagari lived with her husband Ratan and two children in a house owned by her father-in-law, who is a priest. Ratan does menial jobs and doesn't earn adequately to sustain the family. Tagari's family is majorly dependent on her father in law's earning. Her mother in law is a physically paralysed woman, and doesn't have much say in any matter. Tagari tries to engage in handiwork to earn a little extra for the family. After standing up against several mal-intentioned advances by her father in law in the absence of her husband, Tagari stopped receiving any financial support from him that would help sustain their livelihood.

So she left with her sons and went to back to her father's house. Her father isn't a very well of man, and couldn't be of much help. Thereafter, along with her sons, Tagari was brought to Keertika. After doing two home visits to verify the situation, many sessions of counselling and discussion with her father in law, on our third visit, we managed to get Tagari a respectable place in the house. We had to file a General Diary at the nearest police station for safety reasons. However, with much reasoning we managed to gather the empathy of the neighbours and also got the father in law to realise his shortcoming in the situation. Tagari is currently at her father- in- law's house, safe and happy to have reached a common ground.

The impact of Women Friendly community project has been proved to be extremely effective on the society.

Only family was on focus for a woman before she joined the women collective, but now it has been extended to the outer world. They were not concerned about their ability and strength but now they could able to make their self-identity established in the society. In total 56 cases had been reported for intervention and members of women collective tried to deal with these cases with their knowledge and ability which they gained from training. The bonding between community based organisation and women collective has become stronger and they dealt the cases jointly in respective wards with confidence. The networking among the beneficiaries, local police station, local councilors, social welfare department, protection officer, DLSA and women commission has been very effective and community people would be

greatly benefitted out of it. This project aimed to create a violence free ambience in the target community and this process has already been successfully initiated by the women collectives and key stakeholders through making a safety chain in the community.



ToT's of Women's Collectives



Capacity Building Workshop



Exposure Visit to DLSA, south 24 pgs



Distribution of Module among the members of Women Collective

Ward Level Child Protection Unit

The Department of Women and Child Development and Social welfare, Government of West Bengal has laid much emphasis on creating a child safety net and is committed to combat the menaces like trafficking, illegal adoption, and all other issues related to harm the safety and security of the children. Child Protection Committee has been formed in Wards / Blocks / Villages to strengthen and gear up to meet the challenges for creating a protective environment for all the children in need care and protection. Behala Keertika got the responsibility to form Ward Level Child Protection committee (WLCPC) at 125 Ward under Kolkata Municipal Corporation with the cooperation of Councilor, Child Welfare Officer of Thakur Pukur Police station and other members of respective ward.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

Keertika regularly organizes awareness camps in both rural and urban areas. Keertika collaborates with Women's Commission and conducts such camps. Keertika also collaborates with other NGOs and regularly conducts workshops and orientation programmes on various legislations, with special focus women's rights and Child's right.

Keertika conducts several legal awareness camps in Kolkata, south 24 parganas and its adjacent areas in collaboration with DLSA and SLSA, West Bengal.

Keertika conducts training programmes on Gender mainstreaming, Climate Change and its effect on Livelihood and Gender, women & child rights & related acts, life skills and Government schemes & entitlements, Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act in collaboration with Baikunthyopur,

Kultoli Block, Vetkipur, Hasnabad, Anchigram, Bhawanipur, Nazat, Ram Ganga, Sandeshkhali, Sundarban, south 24 pgs & CASA. The village women and school students were actively participated in this programme and shared their experiences with all.

Keertika facilitates conducting training programmes on Human Rights, Gender Mainstreaming, Equity & Equality, Women & child Rights & it's related laws, PWDV Act, Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place Act, 2013 in many government organization of repute.



Training programme conducting at South Bashirhat N-24 pg



Three days long ToT in government organization (OFB)

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

All throughout the year students from all over world come to our organization for their internship programme. Students from Ireland, India of recognized University, different law colleges and psychology students of different Universities come for internship programme. This year also close to 18 students have completed their internship programme from our organization.

CONTACT DETAILS

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