



**Annual Report
2014 - 2015**

**Shripur Mahila – O – Khadi
Unnayan Samity (SMOKUS)**

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History of SMOKUS

It was mid 1990, a few college going girls with vivacity and social concerns confronted with social reality of suppression, marginalization and pathos of rural gentry. These budding women from various parts of Uttar Dinajpur with an approach to do better for the said rural populace; contact few more women and the organization came in to its existence. Extensive interaction between the volunteers and their own money was the primary resource for the upcoming social organization and their modest planning and its implementation. The organization started to provide various services related with protection of women health under Raiganj, Kaliyaganj and Itahar Block. The effort continued for more than 3 years. By strengthening community people, they have been take part of different movement with various demands about livelihood and establish their rights. Thus the organization was formed for the women, focused for their causes and women empowerment as their basic, so in process rights of the women taken center stage of organizational endeavor. Organization came strongly with the individual victims of domestic violence.

Vision:

A dynamic civil society influencing policies and actions at all levels to safeguard the global environment and promote sustainable development.

Mission:

To build up a cadre of socially conscious youth in the field of community development through capacity building, mainstreaming and strengthen civil society partnership by enhancing participation, contributing to policy and stimulating action.

Area of operation:

The development activities of SMOKUS are spread over 17 Gram Panchayats (100 villages) in 3 blocks of Uttar Dinajpur district, namely

Raiganj Block - Rampur, Bindole, Sitgram, Sherpur, Mahipur and Bahin GP

Kaliaganj Block - Radhikapur Bochadanga, Anastapur, Baruna, Dhankol and Malgoan GP

Itahar Block - Kapashia, Durgapur, Durlovpur, Itahar and Patirajpur GP

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Major Beneficiary Groups: Women's groups belonging to ST/SC, Minority & PWD categories, rural children, adolescent girls & boys, migrated persons & their families.

Network Membership: **PBJJSM (Paschim Banga Jiban Jibika Suraksha Mancha)**

CACL (Campaigning Against Child Labour)

Destination unknown -children on the move

BBA (Beti Bacchao Andolan)

In the year 2014-2014; **Shripur Mahila-O-Khadi Unnayan Samity (SMOKUS)** had a full engagement in its integrated rural development programmes. One such programme was to ensure a maximum number of women are demanding Jobs under MGNREGA scheme through filling up 4(A) application form .And sync with the organisation's aim to increase the capacities of the women so that they may state their rights on their own. With the idea that the women could be made socially-aware and economically fruitful, **SMOKUS** formed women's youth groups and SHGs as social vehicles to help the women reach a satisfactory level of social-security. One of the most notable results of this exercise in women empowerment was the women's significant role in dealing with instances of domestic violence and human trafficking, and in the eradication of vice dens in their locality. The women were likewise effective in reducing the local school drop-out rates of students and stalling the increasing incidence of child labour.

Major Activities:

Staffs & SHGs Capacity building workshop:

On 7th June 2014, **SMOKUS** organized staff training & review workshop at Social Welfare Institute (Caritas Hall Raiganj), Uttar Dinajpur. The workshop was attended by 35 participants (22 Women & 13 Men).

The program began with a welcome note and described aims and objectives of this training. He also thanks to all participants for attending this training and expressed gratitude for their engagement action Plan as well as developing their own capacities in gender mainstreaming. He hoped the workshop would equip them with fresh skills and knowledge to enable them to mainstream gender into their own sectoral



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plans and act as catalysts of change. Next participant gave self introduction one by one. The point on gender and its issues; this is a problem either affecting men or women, involving discrimination, oppression resulting in different situations of men and women.



Participants were divided in 4 groups and sharing their observations of gender situations at home, in the workplace and in public places. This activity revealed a deepening awareness of gender issues and their implications. Then participants expressed their view that there on the problems they often face while working, such as avoiding & deriding transgressor person's etc. participants shared their

experiences through lectures, Role plays.

Further lunch break was taken. Returning the lunch break participants were entertained through Mirror Game facilitated by Mrs. Sampa Karmakar and continued the session.

Facilitators are used different methods like presentations, group discussions, group work, playing game and one to one interactions to diversify the training modules. The Pre and Post test were conducted to access the knowledge and skill acquired from the training. Through role play participants was introduced to the process of gender related to our work, conducting activities within the community.

Participants appeared to have a good grasp of basic concepts and the exercises served to highlight their understanding. Participants were also briefed on various techniques for gender analysis. New participants are very enjoying this extra type of training; they were never expected this types of training.

At the end of the workshop, feedback session & participants were asked to think of transformative actions addressing gender equality/equity that they would implement in their working areas immediately.

The workshop ended with a vote of thanks by Jaba Bhattcharjee; Secretary of **SMOKUS** who suggested that the information and inputs generated should be analyzed and worked upon further to promote.



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Sensitization at District, Blocks & GP levels along with GUS: Sensitization programme at different levels has been organized to share the project activities among the Govt. functionaries like CMOH, ICDS DPO, DCPO, DNO (MGNRGA Cell) (District Level); BDOs, Joint BDOs, BMOHs, CDPOs (Block level) and Gram Pardhan, PRI members, Panchyat secretaries newly elected members, ANMs, AWWs (GP Level) but also involve them actively in all stage of implementation process. The main objective was to clarify the roles and responsibilities of different Govt. Officials and importance of convergence ICDS and PRI etc. In GP level sharing meet a plan of action was prepared to roll out the programme at GP and Gram Sansad Level with involvement of the participants.

Aligning & Strengthening of SHGs: SMOKUS directly get in touch with 404 SHGs out of these this year along with indirectly more than 432 SHGs. We always regularly arrange community meeting with SHG groups and listening their grievance and crisis and then give proper suggestions and recommendations. We organized such type of meetings where we make provision for all the different groups as the groups can exchange their ideas and views in the meeting. Thus all the different SHGs are is more enriched with ideas and views. We collect and store all data of SHGs. Thus we navigate all the SHGs if necessary. We always analyze the work performance of different SHGs and give suggestion or recommendation to all groups if necessary. We always give the status report of present position and situation of different SHGs and give suggestions.



Further we provided them IGP (Income Generation Programme) loan. The amount of loan money is determined by the group leaders, based on the entrepreneurial skills, performance of individual members and fund availability. **SMOKUS** facilitate internal lending to the SHG group members through provision of small loans for micro-enterprises ranging from Rs.1000.00 to 5000.00 from their area level savings. **SMOKUS** encourages groups and individual members to access government-sponsored schemes, and facilitates bank linkages to enable some capable women members to move up the financial ladder. Thus we make a delightful route for all the groups.

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Made Sansad Level Planning Through Mahila Sansad:

98 sansad level planning was made by women group of SHGs in Raiganj, Kaliyaganj & Itahar blocks near 100 villages, seeing this initiative other groups too joined them.



Exposure Visit:

- 1) Exposure visit of community women in RSBY empanelled hospital was held on this year. This exposure visit was facilitated by SMOKUS. 32 Community women visited two hospitals, the Raiganj district hospital and Jeevandeep Nursing Home (private hospital) empanelled hospital under RSBY at Raiganj; Uttar Dinajpur District. In this hospital Community experienced smart card usage practically; observe the benefits and process of utilizing card, hospitalization process, and services available at Hospital end resulting increase in faith on benefit of this RSBY scheme in presence of hospital Superintendent. They also got the opportunity to talk with him.
- 2) 100 Children had a trip in care of SMOKUS at the amusement park under Raiganj Municipality, where, after having their lunch they spent few hours and enjoyed lot of fun there by playing, boating and traveling on toy train. At the end, they returned back home before evening filled with full of joy in their hearts and new experiences.

Celebrating Safe Migration Week (3rd Feb-9th Feb 2015):

On 3rd February 2014, a campaign programme of Mass Awareness Rally with Tableau on Child Rights and Child Education was organized at Raiganj Town. The Tableau was decorated with colourful posters and banners containing attractive images and meaningful messages on Safe Migration and Child Rights covering all the aspects of these issues, along with displaying the theme of this special observation Week most prominently. During these days of Safe Migration Week, the tableau along with a drama troupe of 8 child performers has covered a vast rural area by moving across each of ten samsad villages to aware the rural mass on Child Rights and Safe Migration.



Meetings & Campaigns:

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Meeting Types	No. of Meeting	Issues
Village Vigilance Committee Meetings	68	Monitoring & record keeping procedure of Migration including Child Migration, Safe Migration, Child Rights, Child Trafficking, Child Marriage, Child Labour, PRI
Community Meetings	207	Generating awareness on MGNREGA, JSY, RSBY, Service ICDS , Discrimination, Domestic Violence, Anti Trafficking ,Migration, Child Rights
Orientation Meeting	79	Aware and Strengthening the community people about MGNREGA, Health, and Nutrition & RSBY as well as give the SEGs a platform to raised their voice at GP Level.
Campaigning	66	Aware and Strengthening the community people about MGNREGA, Health, and Nutrition & RSBY as well as give the SEGs a platform to raised their voice at GP Level.

MGNREGA Campaigns: On the occasion of “World Women Day”, a fortnight MGNREGA Campaign(6th March 2015 to 20th March 2015) has organised by SMOKUS in Uttar Dinajpur district’s three blocks respectively Raiganj, Kaliaganj and Itahar , 17 GPs and 97 villages in state of West Bengal. The campaign will generate work demand from socially excluded communities; the campaign aims to create and establish a community driven process to address gaps in the rural employment guarantee scheme. It will directly lead to work demand generation largely by socially excluded communities.



In March 2014, more 3468 rural women, mostly from SC, ST and Muslim communities, joined together & filled up & submitted 4(A) job application form at their GPs under MGNREGA scheme. The campaigns organised by SMOKUS to make them enable to raise their own demands of right to Job under 100 days work for livelihoods.

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The campaign has helped every women to obtained their rights and claim official entitlements. It has also helped to change caste and community customs. An important high point in the campaign - which drew community women from 3 blocks (Raiganj,Kaliaganj & Itahar) in Uttar Dinajpur district. SMOKUS has been created to exert pressure on decision makers to provide more resources for communities for new laws, schemes and systems to benefit their lives.

Capacity Building Trainings:

Trainings	No. of trainings	Total no of participants	Issues
Capacity Building Programme staffs ,SHGs and PRATYA	12	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Understanding the community group in development context➤ Understanding facilitation Process and Group strengthening.➤ Role of the individual as a committee member➤ Understanding Rights and different social challenges.➤ To develop common understanding on gender concepts and definitions➤ To find out gender discrimination in our work & how to implement

Other Activities:

- **Independence Day Celebration**

15th August 2014–Discussion and flag hosting

- **International Breast feeding day observation 2014**

6th August 2014 – Generating awareness at community level an importance of breast feedi

14th November 2014– Rally and programme

- **Celebration of the Child rights Week Celebration**

Children’s Day Celebration – 14th November 2014:

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The celebration on Children Day began with the felicitation of guests with flower bouquet.



Further the programme was hosted by Bapi Nabadas of Jalipara Child Centre. Then the programme was inaugurated with a welcome song by the children. Later children from various centres performed dances, songs, and recitations. After that a drama on “**Early Marriage**” was performed by the Children. A unique feature of this drama troupe is that it was formed with the children of ‘ABUJH’ Child Resource Centre of the

village of Kailadangi. These children had remarkably performed this short drama in the School crowd in local dialect. This drama is a story of a child Marriage, whose friends, after being informed about his distressing condition, are trying to protect the rights. The drama was started with the scene of Play of a field by a child just placed at the centre, which is greatly symbolizing a child who always needs care, love and protection of the community to grow with its full potentiality. When the child was busy with the plant relaxingly humming to a melodious song in low tone, character of child Marriage entered and in conversation with his friend in respect of his own life at workplace, conveyed the information all about the reasons behind the origination of child Marriage and all aspects of the violations of Child Rights highlighting his lack of opportunity of schooling and playing with mates. Finally, in the concluding part, all his friends were gathered centering the plant and raised voices against this injustice happening with his friend by sensitizing the parents as well as the village crowd, who were already present there as audience. After the end of this short drama, the sensitization process on Child Education and Child Rights was still continued through drama speech followed by speeches from the stakeholders, like, teachers, Panchayat members and elders of the respective villages. Then Jagadish Jali of Jalipara Child Centre gave a spectacular short speech on Child Rights and was appreciated by all.

International Child Rights Day Celebration on 20TH November 2014

The Celebration of International Child Rights Day began with a song sung by children, further welcome note by Manoyara Khatun, from Antara Child Centre for welcoming all and he facilitated the full programme.



"The main aim of today's programme was creating awareness among the people. And it was great to see the children themselves working and pitching in for it," said **Mr. Biplab Sarkar**. The children of Koiladangi Centre performed a mime play on “**Gach Bacahao (Saving Trees)**”, which was

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highly appreciated by the guests and the present people. The play shows a recycle process that how man gets affected by cutting trees when lack of h₂o occurs and people who cut down trees die because of fresh air and gas. Later children from various centers performed Dance, Songs and recitations.



The Headmaster of Antara Primary School and the associates conveyed the message from their part regarding awareness of the themes and appreciated SMOKUS by saying that there are lots of factors that lacks from their part in providing the children, but the way SMOKUS is encouraging the children with care, love and nourishment, it's obviously a novel work. The children have been more responsible and aware about their rights. At the very end Miss Jaba Bhattacharjee, secretary of SMOKUS, addressed the audience and thanked all for being present at this very special day and gave a short speech on the importance of Children and their rights.

- **Interface session with children, parents and other actors on 14th November 2014:**

Children have shared their problems regarding education, some school dropout cases of their friends who have migrated out of West Bengal with District Chief Judge Smt. Annanya Bandhpadhyay, Smt. Monorama Roy (Chairperson - 'Child & Women Development' sub-committee of PRI) and Mr. Habibur Rahaman (PRI Member). Smt. Annanya Bandhpadhyay asked the children what they want to be in future. Some answered that they wanted to be a Teacher; some said they haven't fixed their aim yet. The PRI members committed to children that the Gram Panchayat always works for the children. In the time of preparing the Gram Panchayat action plan child related issues will reflect.

- **Rally on 14th November 2014:**

A Child Rights Awareness Rally has organized at 'Camp Para' & 'School Para' of Koiladangi village. The children, parents and other actors have participated in that Rally.



Stopping Child Marriage

Through the SHGs/PRATYA, SMOKUS always is having focus to stop Child Marriage by continuous campaigning through the group against child marriage. Besides this, SMOKUS have been looking to explore new ways or resources to stop Child Marriage by organizing and conducting different village level, Block level meetings and workshop. SMOKUS always

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interact and sensitise the people of remote villages about the violation of child rights through Child Marriage. In some cases SMOKUS stopped Child Marriage by the help of local youths. SMOKUS strongly believes that the Child Marriage could be stopped in near future by awareness building, by higher education and by creating enabling society. Thus SMOKUS is geared up and already make considerable advancements in preventing Child Marriage.

Child & Adolescent Club

Adolescents are always acted as useful tools for curbing the trend as they can directly their “peer” who is getting married due to parental pressure. SMOKUS has realised & learnt it during the PACS-Days and has adopted this strategy where required. As preparatory step, the adolescents are picked up and trained to constitute different adolescent clubs & Groups. Building the capacities of Adolescent Groups has conspicuous objectives as follows-

- Improved knowledge amongst adolescents regarding nutrition and **RSH issues like early marriage**, early pregnancy, unsafe sexual behaviour and contraceptive usage
- Improved pre-pregnancy nutritional status for girls
- Enhanced awareness and positive health and nutrition related behaviours among adolescent girls and boys.
- Delay in pregnancy and childbearing among adolescent girls
- Improved awareness regarding availability of sexual and reproductive health services among stakeholders.
- These clubs are always encouraged to raise their voices on the “Rights of Adolescents” and trained with life-skills, resulting a loud notion against Early Marriages.

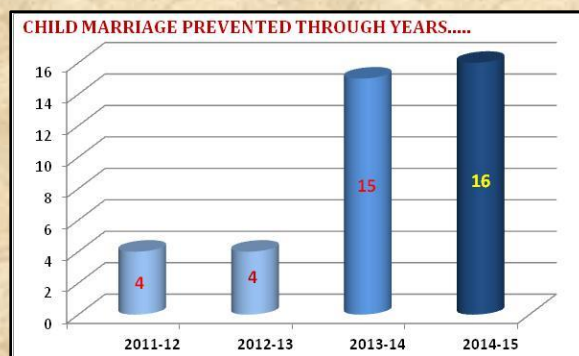
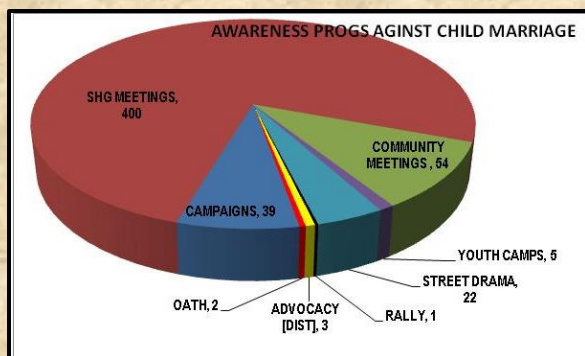
The relevant numbers are presented below....

CHILD MARRIAGE STATUS							
AWARENESS PROGRAMMES							
CAMPAIGNS	SHG MEETINGS	COMMUNITY MEETINGS	YOUTH CAMPS	STREET DRAMA	RALLY	ADVOCACY [DIST]	OATH
39	400	54	5	22	1	3	2

CHILD MARRIAGE PREVENTED THROUGH YEARS.....

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total No of child marriage prevented
4	4	15	16	39

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Data on prevention of Child Migration under 14:

Gram Panchayat	Prevention of Child Migration below 14 Yrs.
Bindole	14

Child & Adolescent Club

We also help to constitute different child clubs and adolescent clubs by the children and by the adolescent respectively. For that reason we pick up children of age group three to nine years and nine to twelve years. We always cared and nurse that type of clubs by giving guidance on education or on social customs and on cultures. Thus we built their promising future.

Child Resource Centres:

Child Resource Centres, a continuous effort are being taken to make the children aware and educated on their Rights, and about the relevant issues on Child Labour, Child Trafficking, Child Marriage and environment. For this purpose, a syllabus on the respective subjects covering almost every aspect of the said issues and routine has been prepared. In addition, various unique forms of participative activities has been adopted to impart the knowledge and information to the children along with the formally recognized teaching methods of question-answer, discussion etc. Such activities includes, different types of folk games, songs, poetry recitation, dance, drawing, drama, tree plantation etc., which are innovatively used or made connected with the respective subject or topic by the animators and facilitators as a most effective supportive activities to their learning process. During this year, around 60-65% of the syllabus on the above mentioned subjects has already been covered. The children of five Child Resource Centres are also coming at the Village Information & Resource Centre at Bindole to learn computer.

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Sl. No.	Name of the Centres	Location of the Centres	Gram Panchayat	No. of Students		Grand Total
				Boys	Girls	
1.	SABUJ	Bajbindole	Bindole GP	10	20	30
2.	KACHIPATA	Antara	Bindole GP	18	12	30
3.	ABUJH	Kailadangi	Bindole GP	13	17	30
4.	KACHIKACHA	Jalipara, Baliya	Bindole GP	13	18	31
5.	ANKUR	Kaichdangi	Rampur GP	13	17	30
Grand Total				67	84	151

Case Study

Community initiatives to send rescued child to Child Line

Location -

Village: Koiladangi

Block: Raiganj

District: Uttar Dinajpur

State: West Bengal

This border (India - Bangladesh) area village has a high migration rate and all the villagers are belongs to minority community. People of this village usually find seasonal employment in different parts of country. During the season one man of this village has gone to Delhi and starts his job as a rickshaw puller. After some month he has gone to old Delhi Railway Station to return his home. In that station he has met with a 10 years old child (Md. Nousad Ali (**changed name**), S/o: Md. Yunus Khan (**changed name**), Village: Remal, PO: Darbhanga, PS: Kamtol, Bihar) who is weeping alone at the station. After some conversation the man is informed by the child that the father of the child bring him to Delhi for a job for him. Then after the child has worked at a 'Jari factory' at Jamunanagar as an unskilled labour and always he is beaten by the factory owner. For that reason the child has come to Railway Station to go back his home. Then the man has brought the child with him to send the child to his parents. After two days they have come back to Koiladangi village. Then the man has met with NGO worker in that village to get some suggestions to get back the child to his home. After that the NGO worker has organized a meeting with the members of VVC. After some discussion the committee has decided that they have sent the child to child Line. Then they have informed the Child line through mobile phone. After that two staffs of Child Line has come and take the child to their custody. After seven days the village NGO worker & members of VVC has taken information about the child through child Line staffs & NGO and they have informed by NGO & Child Line that now the child is staying with his parents in his village.