

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for the
month of August
2020*

Celebrating Independence Day with a difference

This year the NSS volunteers celebrated Independence Day with a difference. On 15th August, an online craft session was held for about 20 underprivileged urban children. This initiative was collaborated with World Vision India. Samadrita Banerjee a BMM (Sem-V) student taught the enthusiastic children how to make paper hyacinth stick. The programme started with a short prayer by Sharanya Mukhopadhyay (NSS Board member) and followed by a quick sharing on Independence Day by Pratick Mazumdar (active volunteer of NSS). Pratick encouraged the children to be proud Indians and always stand by one another irrespective of caste, religion and race. The children were overwhelmed learning a new craft and requested more such sessions in the future. The programme ended with a short Vote of Thanks by Anusree Gattani (NSS Board member). World Vision personnel commended the students for a well organised session which was thoroughly enjoyed by the children.

On 16th August 2020, the department reached out to the children of Nurshikdarchowk and Shalpokur villages. Around 100 packets (comprising of hand sanitiser, mask, soap and biscuit) were distributed among children of Nurshikdarchowk and Shalpokur villages respectively. Two NSS volunteers from Raghobpur campus along with Prof. Cheryl Francis undertook an awareness session on handwashing for the beneficiaries.



Figure 1: A young girl receives the essential items packet in Shalpokur



Figure 2: Children receiving the packet in Nurshikdarchowk village



Figure 3: Mothers of children below 10 years gather to collect their packets



Figure 4: Awareness session hand washing by NSS volunteers



Figure 5

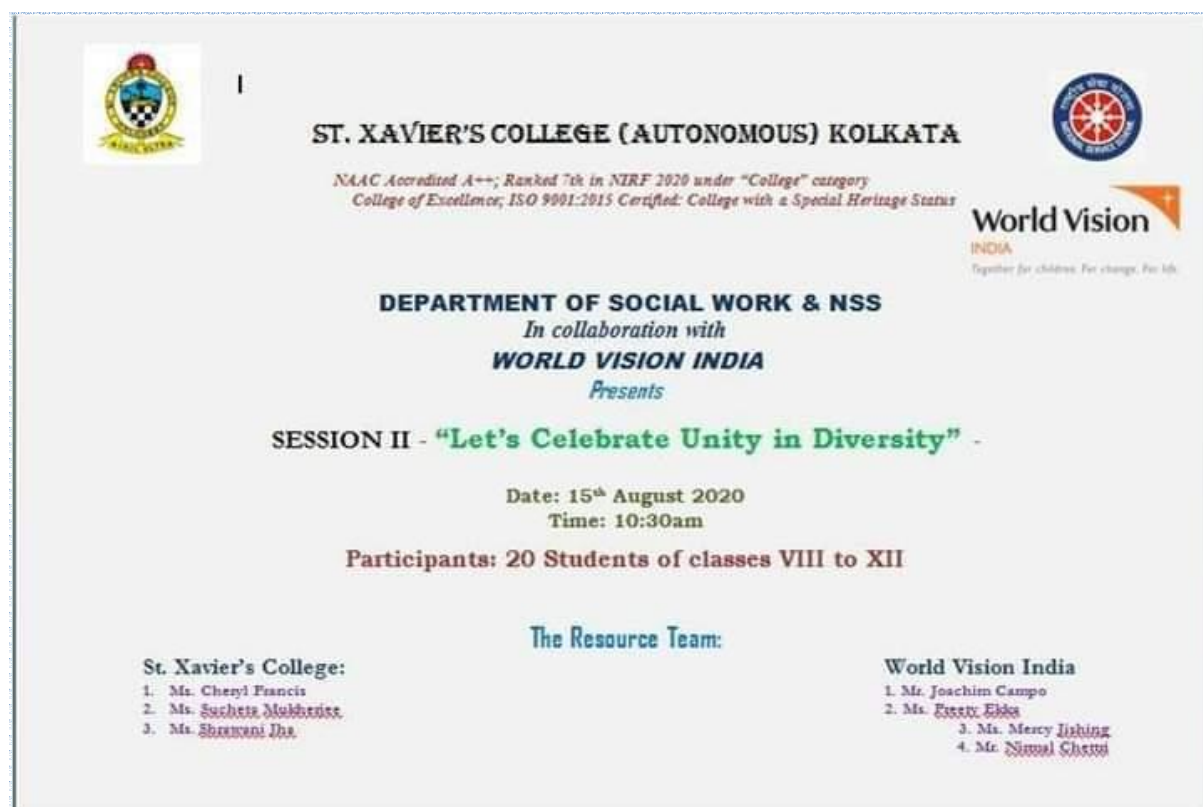


Figure 6

Figure 5 and 6: Children enjoying the craft session and the promotion poster

Reaching out digitally: the new norm

The Department is reaching out digitally to nearly 100 underprivileged urban children through World Vision India. Whole of August 2020, the staff along with some volunteers held introductory session for the children in 5 batches of nearly 20 children. During the session, the staff guided the children as well as NSS volunteers to focus on the positive things they experienced in the last five months of fighting COVID. Children, volunteers and staff shared what new skills they learnt during lockdown. The children shared how they are trying to stay focussed and continue learning in the absence of school. Some children also shared that even though the pandemic has hit them hard financially they are happy to spend quality time with their parents who were otherwise busy during normal circumstances.

These introductory sessions were a tool for the Department to conduct a needs assessment of what they children actually want to learn from our volunteers. While some children were very keen to learn art, craft, sketching, others wanted handholding support in school curriculum, and a handful wanted to learn dancing. Most of the children wanted to learn spoken english to be able to converse fluently in english.

The NSS volunteers and the children were able to connect with each other instantly and shared about their respective lives freely. It was very heart warming to see that most of the children wanted to pursue their higher education in St.Xavier's College.

After the first round of introduction, the first batch of children had a session on craft on 15th August. The children learnt how to make sticks of hyacinth flower made of paper. This craft session was taken by a NSS volunteer (student of Multimedia department). The children enjoyed the session and wanted to learn more from their *-didi'*. The NSS volunteer was overwhelmed with the response from the children and thanked NSS for giving her the opportunity to teach children which she yearned for long.

The Department in the coming months will hold follow-up sessions for the children based on the needs assessment and involve more NSS volunteers to reach out digitally to children. The Department is also working out how volunteers can also reach out to our village children.

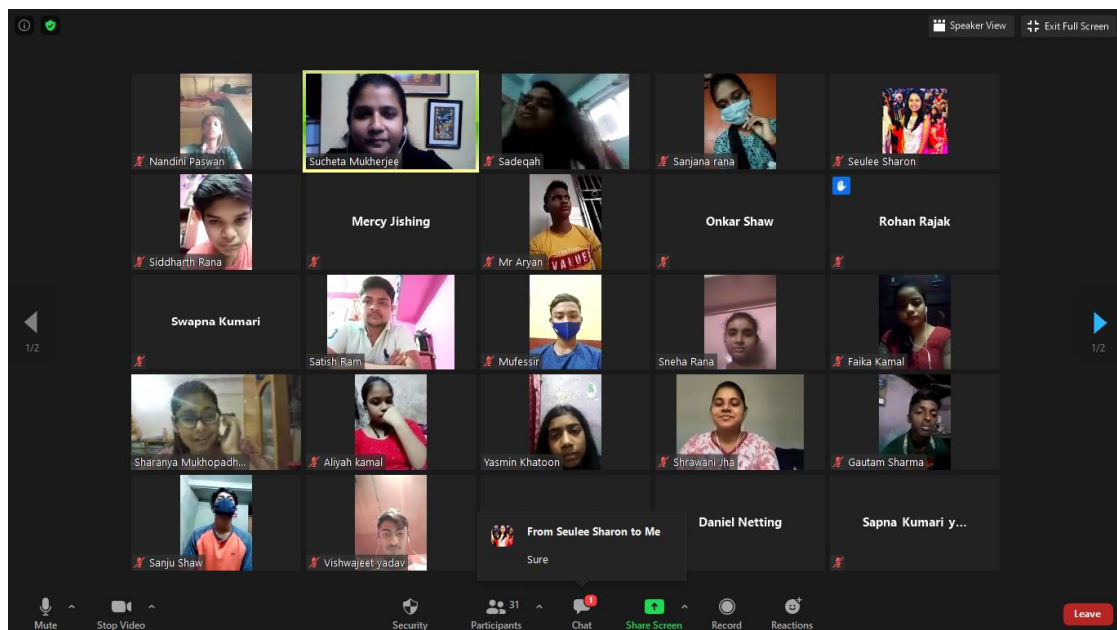


Figure 7

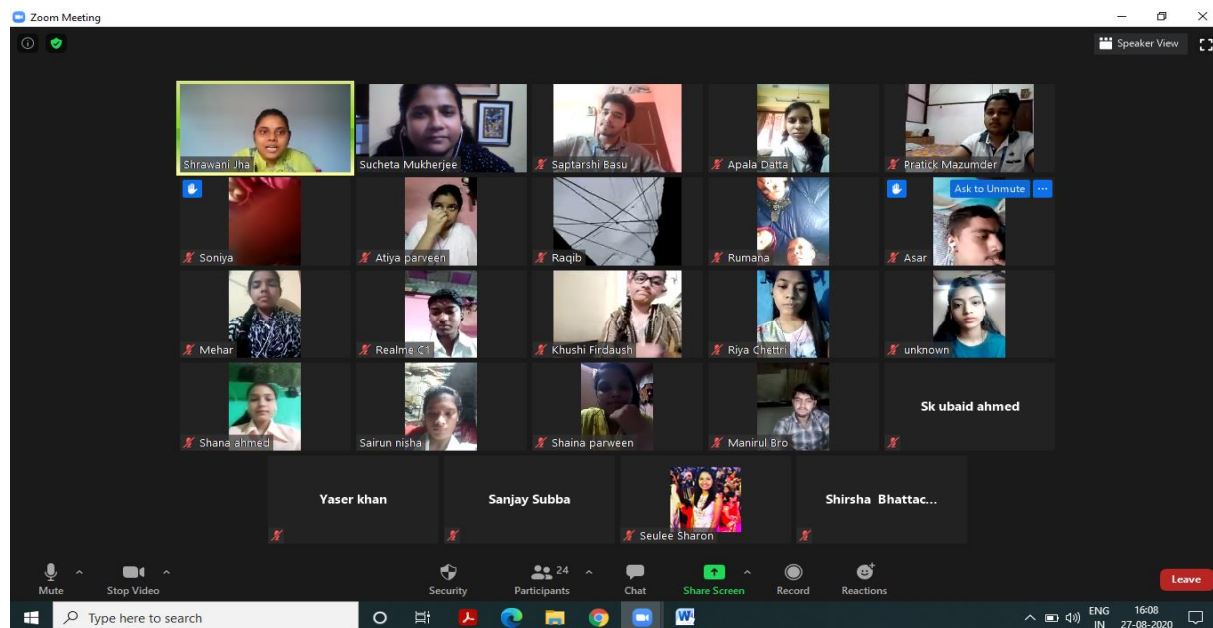


Figure 8

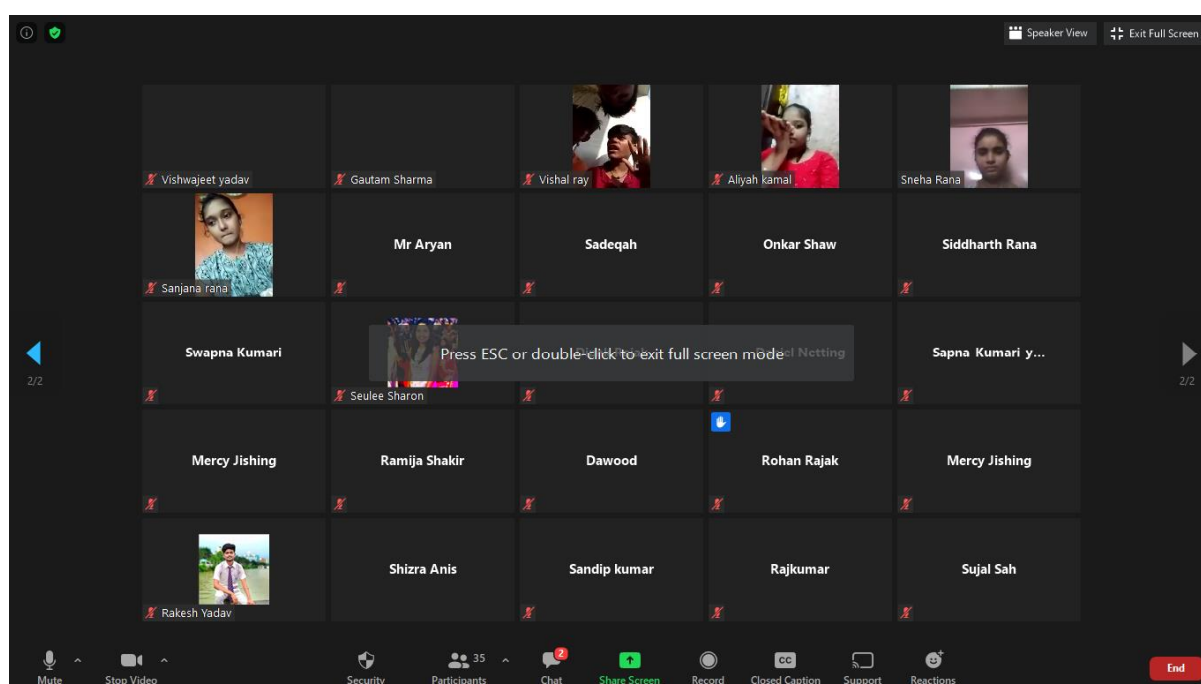


Figure 9

Figure 7, 8 & 9: Introductory sessions underway with the children

Prelim discussion with Rotary Club for outreach work

On 2nd August 2020, Ms. Cheryl Francis went to Raghampur campus to attend a scheduled meeting with Rotary Club of Calcutta South Circle. In the prelim discussion which was attended by Rev.Fr. Johnson Padiyara, Ms. Cheryl Francis and members of Rotary Club, it was discussed how the club can be instrumental in reaching out to the vulnerable communities in the adopted villages.

Rotary club expressed their willingness to train women in producing hand sanitisers, undertaking organic farming and providing sewing machines to make masks. It was decided that the Department will schedule a meeting between Rotary Club and the SHG members for an interaction and conduct a focussed group discussion to understand the need of the women. Ms. Francis explained to the Club members that providing training alone will not be sustainable as the SHG members also need handholding support in procuring materials to marketing the finished products.



Figure 10: Meeting in progress with Rotary members at Raghampur campus

Orientation session on skill enhancement for rural youth

On 23rd August 2020, Raghampur campus came to life with the chatter of 66 youth. The youth came to the campus to attend an orientation session conducted by MSME Technology Centre, Kolkata in collaboration with Rotary Club. The 66 youth from five surrounding villages were oriented about the scope of skilling themselves with various long term and short term technical courses conducted by the MSME Technology Centre, Kolkata under the Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India

During the session Mr. G.C. Das, Manager, MSME Tool Room-Kolkata explained various aspects of the training programs such as structure of the course, admission and other related areas.

The participants were encouraged to join and upskill themselves with various technical courses. The resource person further explained to them about the importance of vocational and technical skills in the present scenario.

As a follow up, Ms. Shrawani Jha (NSS Programme Officer of Raghampur campus) telephoned all 66 participants and after a round of tele-counselling, a list of 30 students were prepared who expressed their desire to pursue vocational course under MSME Technology Centre.

In due course, an in-depth orientation will be planned wherein MSME will guide the students and help them pursue vocational courses.



Figure 11: The orientation session in progress



Figure 12: Participants during the session



Figure 13: Rotary Club team addressing the gathering



Figure 14: Mr. G.C. Das, Manager, MSME Tool Room-Kolkata addressing the youth

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

Due to technical glitches, only 20 UBA survey sheets have been uploaded on the UBA portal. The department is facing this problem for the past five months and has communicated the same with UBA RCI and NCI team. The department has been assured that the matter will be resolved at the earliest.

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