

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for
the month
of
July 2021*

Administrative activities

Departmental meetings: The department staff had 8 virtual meetings this month. In these meetings the team discussed mainly about the implementation of various online activities for the students and rural development initiatives for the adopted villages.

‘COVID Appropriate Behaviours and Myths & Misconceptions about Vaccinations’ - Preparing the young brigade to fight COVID

With the increased virulence of COVID-19 and the impending third wave in our country, the department organised a Talk on **‘COVID Appropriate Behaviours and Myths & Misconceptions about Vaccinations’ - Preparing the young brigade to fight COVID** on 1st July 2021. Around 80 students from both the campuses attended the Talk.

Dr. Bibek Maulik, a consultant paediatrician and neonatologist currently attached to District Hospital Howrah as Specialist Medical Officer-in-charge of Department of Paediatrics was the resource speaker for the session. Dr. Maulik has been treating COVID patients of all age groups since the onset of the pandemic. As the Talk coincided with Doctor’s Day Ma’am Cheryl Francis, in her welcome address thanked Dr. Maulik and the medical fraternity for their tireless work during the pandemic, Dr. Maulik acknowledged the wishes and said, ***“For the medical fraternity today is also a martyr’s day, as during the second wave alone, we lost 700 doctors to this deadly virus. These doctors lost their lives while treating their COVID patients”***.

Dr. Maulik divided his Talk into 3 major parts: (i) COVID appropriate behaviour; (ii) COVID appropriate behaviour if infected by the virus and the course of action that needs to be implemented; and (iii) importance and urgency to get vaccinated. During the session, the Dr. Maulik stressed on the fact that, ***“It is a war we are fighting against this virus and the youth have a major role to play which will ensure victory”***. While sharing his personal experiences on dealing with Covid patients and their family members he cited a number of Dos and Don’ts such as, -

- a. Mask-up.
- b. Not attend or organise parties.
- c. Avoid mass gathering.
- d. Not be complacent after taking the first dose but follow all the COVID appropriate behaviours.
- e. Create awareness, especially among rural people about COVID appropriate behaviour and the importance of vaccination.

The session was made interactive and students got the opportunity to clarify their doubts. At the end of the session, during a quick feedback, Akash Sarkar, a semester VI commerce student from Raghupur campus, said that this Talk greatly helped him. He said, ***“A couple of months back my whole family got infected and now when it is time to get ourselves vaccinated, I discouraged my family from getting vaccinated thinking we do not need it as we already have antibodies. After today’s session, I realised how wrong I was. Today itself I will go to the concerned authority in my locality and get ourselves registered for the vaccination.”*** While Debajan Basu, a semester IV computer science student from main campus, was happy to have learnt how he could help to check the spread of the virus, ***“Many of my neighbours are still reluctant to get their vaccination, I will create awareness among them by making posters and telling them how important it was to get vaccinated to have a victory over the virus”***.

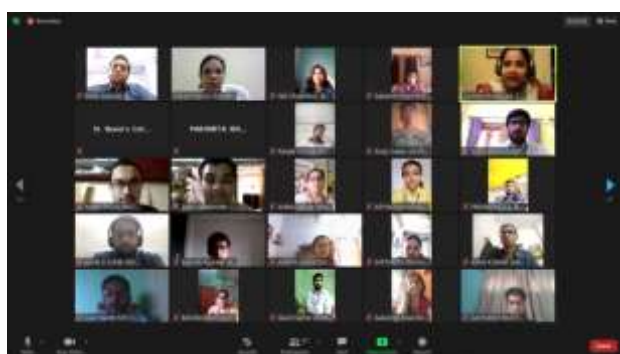
In conclusion Ma'am Cheryl Francis encouraged the students by saying, ***"We all are aware of this war like situation and it is the responsibility of every citizen to play their role in combating this deadly virus. Let us not depend only on doctors, on governments, on NGOs and other individuals and institutions. We all have to come forward and fight this war together and the best way is to begin from oneself. Let's pledge to maintain COVID appropriate behaviour and get vaccinated"***. She also encouraged the students to take leadership in spreading this awareness among all sections of our society beginning from our families and neighbourhood.



The poster



Dr.Maulik addressing the students



Interaction with the students



A student asking a question to the Doctor

‘Where are our Children? – Role of Youth in Child Protection’

The current raging pandemic has been tough on every one across the globe. However, it has been especially tough on the children. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought forth the stark differences between ‘the have’s ‘and ‘the have-not’s’ in our society. With schools closed, and glaring digital divide between various socio-economic strata, have unfortunately put many children out of school education. These children are often most vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and violence, they often run the risk of being ‘invisible’ as well, wherein no-one seems to know what happened to these children.

In this context, a session on **‘Where are our Children? – Role of Youth in Child Protection’** was organised on **11th July 2021** in association with Save the Children, West Bengal. The objective was to create awareness among the College students of this dark reality and their role in safeguarding Child Rights and promoting Child Protection. More than 80 students from both the campuses participated in this session.

The resource speakers for the session were Ms. Susmita Guha, Senior Manager, Ms. Nabina Banerjee & Mr. Ashish Roy, Assistant Managers, Save the Children West Bengal. They were accompanied by young change-makers - Ms. Mamata Sardar (from Sandeshkhali) and Ms. Jayasree Bose (from Kolkata) groomed by Save the Children.

Ms. Susmita Guha, began the discussion by asking the participants, what they understood by the word 'Children'. She then explained the various aspects of child rights which need to be protected and promoted and which would help the children grow and excel. She focussed on the importance of nurturing children and providing them a safe place to explore their abilities. All children irrespective of their background must be protected from all forms of exploitation, violence and neglect. After setting the context of the discussion, two change-makers were invited to share about their journey of helping themselves and others tide over the various impacts of COVID-19 on their lives.

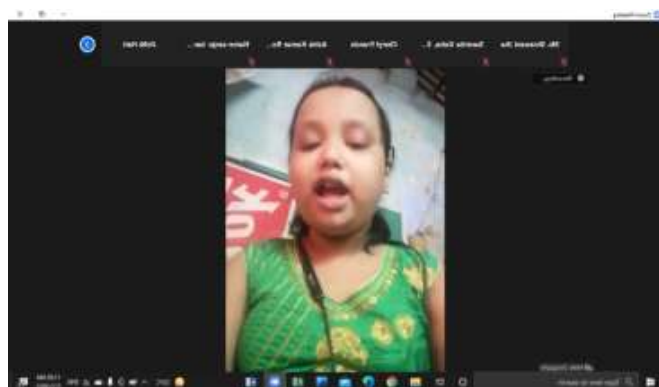
Ms. Jayasree Bose, a child champion from Kolkata shared how she and her peers were coping with the current pandemic. Jayasree, who is the President of the Child Cabinet, shared how she missed going to school, playing with her peers and interacting with her teachers. She further shared how some 'dadas' and 'didis' took online classes for them which helped them in their studies. With a smile on her face and hope in her eyes she concluded by saying, ***"As soon as the pandemic is over, I will be able to go to school every day, for now, maybe my school can be open for at least 2 days in a week. This virus will surely go away soon."***

The next youth leader, Ms. Mamata Sardar, from Sandeshkhali block of North 24 Parganas, shared how her village reeled under triple burden of COVID-19, Amphan and Yaas, leaving the children helpless, vulnerable and exposed to various forms of exploitation. Mamata shared how she and her friends from the ***Child Protection group*** have been successful in stopping quite a few child marriages and child trafficking during the current pandemic. However, she added that in spite of everyone's best efforts, they were unable to save many more children from the above atrocities. She urged the participants to, ***"Come forward and raise your voice against various forms of exploitation and safeguard child rights. Don't ever think that you cannot do anything to help children, your small initiative too will save a child from getting married or trafficked."***

Mr. Ashish Roy and Ms. Nabina Banerjee provided some examples on how the college students could contribute to ensure children were nurtured and protected. Mr. Roy encouraged the students to take online classes for underprivileged children; make worksheets for the children, help children recharge their internet packages so that they are able to continue their education, and so on. He reminded all present that even when the pandemic is over, the learning gap which is created among the children would be so large that it would be difficult for children to continue mainstream education. Therefore, the youth should be willing to bridge that gap now through online classes for the children. Ms. Nabina Banerjee made the participants understand how each child, adolescent, youth are vulnerable to trafficking during the current challenging times. With the increase in screen time and boom of social media, the children and adolescents are extremely vulnerable to trafficking. She cited a couple of examples to help the students understand the gravity of the situation. Ms. Nabina further enlightened the students on what they should do if a child was orphaned during the current times. Instead of uploading details of the child on social media for adoption, one should immediately contact CHILDLINE helpline of 1098. She explained the adoption procedure in the country for the clarity of the students. The resource team motivated the participants to create awareness among their peers and family about child protection issues and come forward to help children in distress.

Towards the end of the session, the participants shared what they learnt from the session. Niti Choudhary, a Microbiology student, shared, ***“I had the notion that during this current pandemic, children are safe in their respective homes, but after today’s session I realised how vulnerable the children are to various forms of exploitation during this time.”*** While SaswataGanguly, another Microbiology student, said, ***“I want to gather 4-5 underprivileged children from my locality and teach them. Along with my friends I can even raise some funds to support their phone recharge as well so that they can continue their education.”***

Ma’am Cheryl Francis, in her concluding remarks, applauded the change-makers on their commitment to stand up for the rights of children. She further encouraged and motivated the students to reach out to the marginalised and vulnerable people, beginning from their own employees and bring about positive change in the society.



Jayasree Bose



Ms.SusmitaGuha



Niti Choudhury, MCBA



Saswata Ganguly, MCBA



The Group during the session

‘Human Trafficking amidst pandemic – What is my role in stopping the same?’

Every year 30th July is observed internationally as ‘**World Day against Trafficking**’. Commemorating this day has become even more important and relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has left the already vulnerable population at a heightened risk of being trafficked and has pushed many individuals (as well as families) to the periphery exposing them to various forms of exploitation and violence. With the objectives of – (i) creating awareness among college students on human trafficking and (ii) Motivating them to do their bit to stop human trafficking, the department organised a talk on ‘**Human Trafficking amidst pandemic – What is my role in stopping the same?**’ from 12th to 16th July 2021.

During this week long deliberation, around 500 semester VI students from various departments (from both campuses) participated in the Talk. Each day two sessions were conducted for the convenience of the students.

Snapshot of participants (department wise):

Sl. No	MAIN CAMPUS	
	Department	Number of students participated
1.	CMEA	119
2.	COMA	97
3.	BMS	59
4.	B.Sc	100
5.	B.A	71
	Sub-Total	446
RAGHAPUR CAMPUS		
1.	BAGG	12 (sem IV) + 5 (sem VI)
2.	BNGA	14 (sem IV) + 21 (sem VI)
3.	HIST	4 (sem IV) + 6 (sem VI)
4.	CMEA	11 (sem IV) + 2 (sem VI)
	Sub-Total	75
	Grand total	521

Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee, the coordinator of the department was the resource speaker for this Talk. During the sessions, it was very encouraging to see that all the participants had a clear understanding of the meaning of human trafficking. Paramita Bar, a Bengali honours student from Raghbapur campus, shared about a trafficking case from her neighbourhood. However, most of the students were not aware about – (i) the various forms of human trafficking; and (ii) the modus operandi of trafficking. When asked whether the students thought that they too were vulnerable to trafficking, Ricke Bose of Commerce-Morning answered, ***“Yes, we all are prone but because we have access to information, we are aware about human trafficking so it is less likely that we will fall victim to this. It is our responsibility to create awareness among our peers who are not as privileged as we were and do not have access to information”.***

The deep impact of the pandemic and the subsequent steep rise of human trafficking were discussed in details. The following impacts were discussed at length (i) impact on education with the closure of schools; (ii) rise in cybercrimes with increased online exposure; and (iii) impact on livelihood which deeply affected the unorganised sector. A short video was screened during the session, and the students got to hear from a trafficked survivor, on how she was trafficked and later rescued by the police. Pragati Prasad a B.A. General student opined after watching the video, ***“I knew what human trafficking is, but this video has***

jolted me out of inertia, it is my duty to raise voice against human trafficking, and I am going to fulfil my promise.”Jonty Naskar, a B.A General student of Raghampur campus shared at the end of the session that, ***“I should not forward messages related to children who are in need of adoption, rather I must immediately report about it to Childline and Police”.***

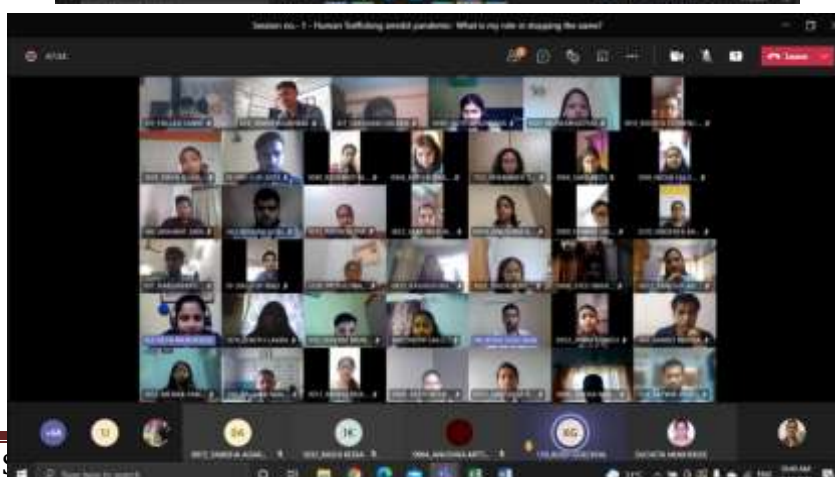
The concluding session focussed on the simple steps the students could undertake to stop trafficking. Various helpline numbers were shared and students were encouraged to report suspicious cases to the competent authorities. After the session, the students were asked to reflect and prepare an action plan as to how they could contribute to stop trafficking.

In the concluding remarks, Ms. Cheryl Francis, while thanking the students and the department staff – Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee and Ms. Shrawani Jha, for their active participation, gave practical tips to the students which they could try and that might contribute towards arrest of human trafficking. They were as follows:

- a) Students could ensure full payment of their domestic workers and other service providers even if they missed work for few months
- b) Convince their parents to give an increment in the wages of their service providers
- c) Help in recharge of mobile phones with internet facilities for children of service providers so that they could attend online classes
- d) Collect old smart phone and donate the same to those in need
- e) Help their service providers to avail of government schemes

These small initiatives could ensure that the unorganised sector have funds in their banks and that they do not have to send their children for work or get their young daughters married off thereby increasing the risk of being trafficked.

It was encouraging to see all the participants expressed their desire to make a plan. They wanted to make awareness posters on human trafficking along with the helpline numbers and have them displayed at appropriate place in their residential complexes/residences for wider dissemination of information. This was appreciated a good beginning. The session came to a close with an appeal to the students to be instrumental in stopping human trafficking.



‘COVID-19 does not discriminate, but its impact does – Role of Youth in bridging the gap’

COVID-19 the dreaded virus has wreaked havoc across the world. It has infected almost everyone, transcending border, gender, creed, and race. The virus has not been discriminatory towards its potential host, but the IMPACT of COVID-19 on various sectors such as education, health, livelihood etc. has been extremely discriminatory. The divide between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’; the ‘privileged’ and ‘underprivileged’; ‘the rich’ and the ‘poor’ has widened and become more pronounced due to this pandemic. The pandemic has highlighted and exposed underlying structural inequalities and aggravated disparities between various socio-economic groups. To create awareness among the youth about the various forms of discriminations and to help the students identify areas around which they can volunteer their services to bridge the gap. The department organised a virtual talk on **‘COVID-19 does not discriminate, but its impact does – Role of Youth in bridging the gap’** from 19th to 23rd July 2021 in which around 400 semester IV students from across departments (from both the campuses) attended.

Snapshot of participants (department wise):

Sl. No	MAIN CAMPUS	
	Department	Number of students participated
6.	CMEA	74
7.	COMA	60
8.	BMS	29
9.	B.Sc	173
10.	B.A	12
	Sub-Total	348
RAGHAPUR CAMPUS		
5.	BAGG	2
6.	BNGA	36
7.	HIST	8
	Sub-Total	46
	Grand total	394

Dr. Udit Ghosh Sarkar was the resource speaker for this Talk. Dr. Sarkar is the Research Director at Ipsos Research Pvt Ltd and looking after Eastern & North-eastern part of India and South Asia. In the last 26 years, she has worked extensively in social research, programme management and strategic development. Dr Sarkar’s core competency areas are – gender equality, women empowerment, child rights, rural development, trafficking, poverty studies, and strategic development.

During the session, the students got an in-depth understanding on the various levels of disparity that was fuelled by the pandemic. Dr. Sarkar focussed on – (i) Gender based violence; (ii) Employment and its impact; (iii) Understanding disparity in the field of education during the session and explained to the students the obvious disparity and the subtle discriminations that needed immediate action.

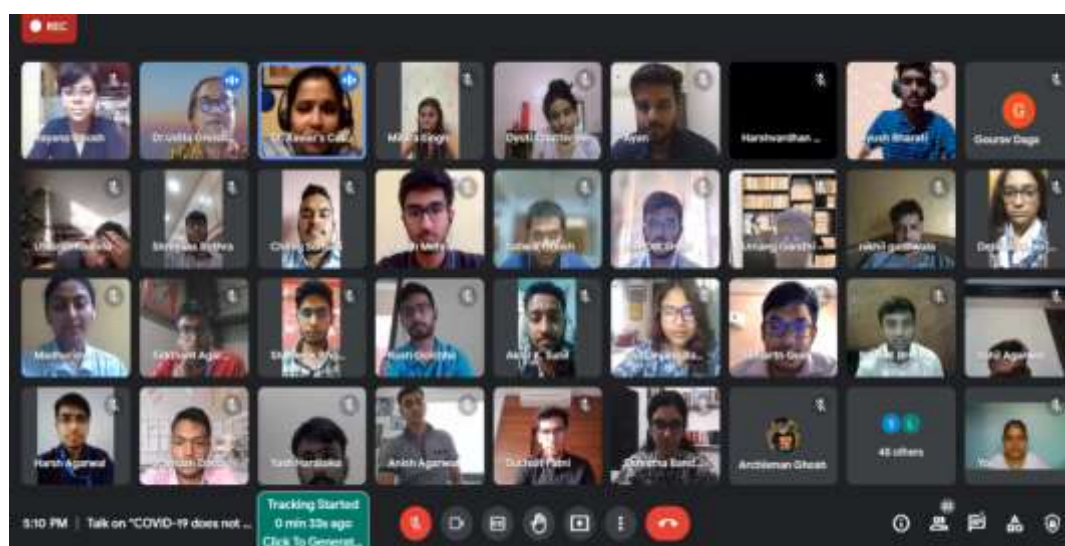
As a way forward, the resource speaker then through various examples explained in detail what the students could do to bridge the existing gap. Some of the examples and suggestions were - (i) create awareness on COVID appropriate behaviour; (ii) facilitation of vaccination

for the elderly and marginalised sections of the society; **(iii)** assist underprivileged children, adolescents and youth complete their education and address learning gaps which they might be facing; **(iv)** report cases of trafficking, gender based violence, domestic violence, any form of discrimination to competent authorities.

During interaction with the students, Rakhi Sardar a History honours student from Raghobpur campus shared how she urged her neighbours and peers to mask up. In her sharing she said, ***“I cannot do what doctors and other frontline workers are doing, but I can still help in stopping the pandemic by telling everyone to wear masks while going out”***. While Srijita Dutta of Chemistry department opined, ***“While I was aware about the blatant discriminations that are the fallout of the pandemic, from today’s session I became conscious of the subtle discriminations that exists which I can actually stop.”***

It was very encouraging to see that some of the students have already helped their domestic service providers in registering in the COWIN portal and getting them vaccinated. All the participants were further motivated to reach out to the marginalised sections of the society who were at the risk of being further isolated.

Ms. Cheryl Francis in her concluding remark thanked Dr. Udit Ghosh Sarkar for addressing the students for the entire week and helping them identify areas in which they can contribute in bridging the gap between disparity and dignity. She further encouraged the students to do justice towards the people who are on the periphery by giving them some practical tips which they could easily follow.



Group picture during one of the session



Youth from other states engaged in bridging gap



SoumajitGanguly of BMBT sharing his thoughts

‘Send-off NSS Board

On 10th July, a virtual send-off programme was organised for the 2019-2020 student board members of NSS. Around 8 students were felicitated for their dedication, commitment and hard work with which they served their term. Father Principal graced the occasion and encouraged the students to continue to be ‘*men and women for others*’. Father Principal further acknowledged the passion with which Ms. Cheryl Francis drives the department and trains the board members to truly live the motto of NSS, *Not Me, But You*. The hour long programme was emotional for both the students as well as the staff as they shared their journey of re-discovering themselves while serving the others. All the students unanimously agreed that NSS helped them to be confident, responsible and ever eager to take lead in any given situation.

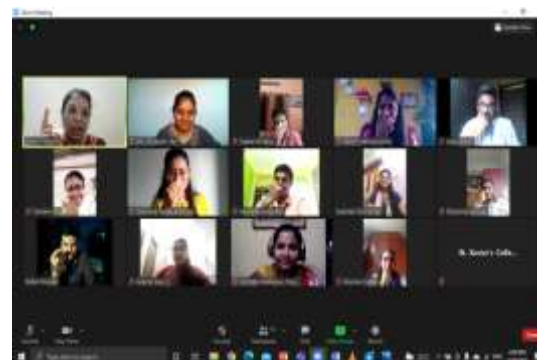
Fr. Principal addressing the Board members



Group picture during the programme



Rahul Mondal of CMEA (RGP campus) sharing about his journey



Ms. Cheryl Francis addressing the students

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan – Progress Report

- i. **Upload of UBA sheets:** This month 70 survey sheets of Raghampur village were uploaded on the UBA portal.
- ii. **Meeting with Additional Director of Fisheries, Govt. of West Bengal:** On 16th July, a virtual meeting was held with the Additional Director of Fisheries – Mr. Sabyasachi Bandhopadhyay, wherein possible collaboration for imparting training to SHG members was discussed. Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., Ms. Cheryl Francis, Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee, Ms. Shrawani Jha were present for the meeting. During the meeting, Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J. briefed the ADF about the various outreach activities undertaken by the college around the rural campus. Mr. Bandhopadhyay expressed keen interest to collaborate with the college to impart training on pisciculture to SHG women. It was decided that on 5th August, an orientation on pisciculture will be conducted to the SHG

women of Shalpur and Debipur villages. Ms. Cheryl Francis met the ADF personally to sharing about the objectives of the training and to discuss the future course of action.

iii. Pre-orientation meeting at Debipur & Shalpur villages:

On 23rd and 27th July 2021, Ms. Cheryl Francis held a Pre - Orientation meeting with the SHG members of Shalpur and Debipur villages respectively, to mobilize and motivate them to participate in the orientation programme on Pisciculture scheduled to be held on 5th August 2021 in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries, Govt. of West Bengal. About 10 members of Mother NRLM group of Shalpur and 11 members of SafaloMohila Dal & Matongini Mohila Dal of Debipur attended the said meeting. Ms. Cheryl Francis initiated the meeting with sharing of objectives of the training programme of Pisciculture. She emphasized on how the training will not only contribute towards skill development but will also ensure better health of their family members and provide an alternative livelihood opportunity in future.

Some of the other leadership activities that could be taken up by the SHGs during the pandemic which would benefit other members of the village community were also discussed. For example, the SHG members could become a task force in their village to monitor that the community followed all COVID 19 protocols, got themselves vaccinated etc. They could also act as a liaison between the PHC and the village in reporting COVID related issues. They could provide all support to families with COVID patients. Though some members said they would need to discuss the same with their husbands, others were positive and said it could be done but needed some training and guidance.

Ms. Cheryl along with Ms. Shrawani Jha shared with Debipur SHG, the successful training on Organic Kitchen garden and compost making done at Shalpur village. The Debipur group showed keen interest in undergoing the same but it was decided that it would be taken up sometime later in the year.

In conclusion each participant was requested to share their thoughts and suggestions regarding the points discussed in the meeting, to which Mrs. Mousumi Dolui of Debipur said that they should try to equip themselves with skills and knowledge and only then would they be able to do something good for their family. Mrs. Deepika Singh of Shalpur, who underwent the training on organic kitchen garden, was confident that any kind of training would help them in future.

The meeting concluded with the SHGs members of both villages agreeing to send few representatives to attend the orientation to be held on 5th August at the Raghampur campus. Following all COVID 19 protocols, only 25 to 30 members of the SHGs from both these villages would be allowed to attend the orientation.



SHG members of Debipur



SHG members of Shalpur

**iv) Online Training Programme on ‘Strengthening Rural Community Governance’
26th – 30th July 2021, Organized by
National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad
Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India**

- A Report

Ms. Cheryl Francis and Ms. ShrawaniJha attended an Online Training Programme on ‘***Strengthening Rural Community Governance***’ conducted by the National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis held from **26th to 30th July 2021**. The objective of the training was to gain innovative ideas and skills for effective management of UBA projects with added knowledge about the rural community governance, supportive techniques and technologies such as PRA and geospatial applications. The five - day long training programme was focused on following aspects:

1. Community Governance in rural areas
2. Framework of UBA – trends and challenges
3. Effective management of UBA projects
4. Engaging youth and women in rural development
5. Rural Development schemes
6. Participatory Rural Appraisal and Geospatial Applications for project planning.

Dr. S. K. Sathyaprabha- Assistant Professor, Centre for Panchayati Raj, Decentralized Planning and Social Service Delivery, NIRDPR, was the host for the training. She began by self introduction of all the participants and sharing of objectives and expectations.

The first day’s session was conducted by Dr. R. Ramesh - Associate Professor and Head, Centre for Rural Infrastructure, NIRDPR who explained about the objectives of UBA with special emphasis on the scope of interventions by the UBA PIs. He gave tips on how to write Project Proposals to apply for funds under UBA.

The 2nd day was a session on Geospatial Applications for project planning by Dr. M.V. Ravibabu. Associate Professor, Centre for Geoinformatics Application in Rural Development, NIRDPR. On day 3, topics like Governance with special emphasis on Rural Governance and Panchayati Raj and Participatory Rural Appraisal was conducted by Dr. S. K. Sathyaprabha and R. Ao, Assistant Professor, NIRDPR Guwahati respectively.

On Day 4 and 5, discussions on problem identification, prioritization, resource identification, engaging youth and women for rural development, project formulation etc. was discussed through a video presentation on a model village named Gangadevipalli of Telangana. Participants brainstormed together guided by the moderator to understand the strategies applied by the community members of the said village to bring about development and change in their village. As part of the training programme, participants were also given assignments to prepare basic profile of one adopted village along with SWOT analysis of the same. They were also asked to prepare SWOT analysis of their respective institutions and connect the same with the SWOT analysis of the village. Discussions on the same were held in small breakout rooms wherein participants were able to interact with each resulting in peer learning.

As expressed by majority of the participants who were new to UBA, that the online training programme added value to their understanding about the rural development and has also provided a platform for cross learning and interaction with the various institutions undertaking rural development activities under the banner of UBA and otherwise.

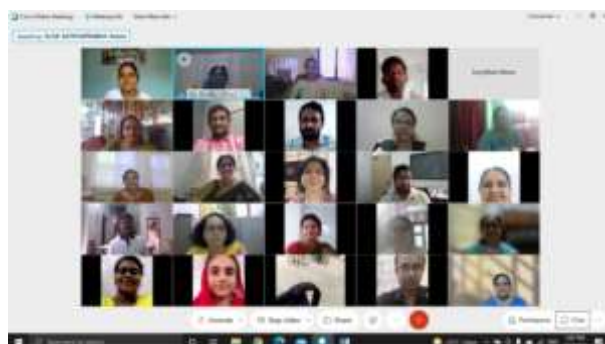
To conclude, Dr. Sathyaprabha summed up the training programme spread over various sessions, interactions and discussions. She also emphasized on the role of PIs in rural development encouraging them to become more innovative with their ideas and intervention strategies using the PRA tools and other such techniques and technologies to ensure holistic development of their adopted village communities keeping in mind the vision and mission of their respective Higher Educational Institutions.

Key Learning:

1. Got a thorough knowledge about National Rural Livelihood Mission projects
2. Got a chance to see model villages
3. Learnt strategies to be applied to take UBA project ahead.
4. Got to understand our own progress through SWOT analysis



PRESENTATIONS



Group discussion



Small group discussion
