

Annual Report 2015-16

Organization background -Shikshamitra was set up in 2005 in Kolkata as an education resource centre of Swanirvar a rural NGO set up in 1990. Shikshamitra was registered as an independent organization but continued to be the resource body of Swanirvar.

Objectives - In 2005, SKM began its journey to create an alternative school or an open learning centre for the 8-15 years old, first generation school goers. They form the majority of the student population, chiefly going to the Govt. Schools. SKM focused on creating appropriate curriculum and pedagogy (introducing new books, teaching methods materials and assessment tools), so that the children could discover their strengths and grow as confident learners and in the long run they would emerge as creative responsible and active individuals able to respect both human and the natural environment.

Simultaneously an Education Resource Centre was begun. It was to collect process and disseminate the relevant teaching learning methods, materials and knowledge (from the school and in general) through training, workshops, production and publication, library, networking and meets and studies.

Shikshamitra actively began its Teacher Education program since 2007. Post school closure in 2011, the organization shifted its focus to a) teacher education b) material development and publishing c) library for the local children d) documentation and e) consultations.

Plan 2015-16

1. Teacher Training, Networking and Creating resource people

a) Continue to ensure basic reading and writing skills in Bangla and English and basic maths in children of Government and Non govt. organization through teachers' orientation on a long term basis (6 months – 2 years)

Updates and Outcomes

- 1 year intervention in 4 government child care institutes (in collaborations with Terres des Homes and Praajak) appropriate educational orientation for the teachers working with the children along with assessments and follows ups.
Out of 4, 2 CCIs worked very well and teachers showed great motivation and improvement.
- Developing capacities in Maths and English of teachers and students (chiefly girl) of NGO South Kolkata Hamari Muskaan working in the red light area, once a week for one year.
Both teachers and students feel empowered and able.
- Orienting DRCSC teachers to take remedial classes in Bangla, English and Maths for the weak students of govt. primary schools in backward pockets of Kolkata.
Out of all the 10 schools results have been positive in 4.
- 5 days elective program in clarification of maths concepts (primary and middle school level) through materials was conducted for the pre-service teachers at Modern Academy of Continuing Education (MACE), a prestigious teacher education institute.

The classes were a roaring success and has been recommended to be included in the course.

b) Offer central courses in languages and maths. Reading and writing basic Bangla and English and basic maths for organization teachers and interested individuals in general.

Updates and Outcomes

- Central courses in teaching basic Bangla, English and Maths (3 days each) were offered in January 2015 for interested teachers from organization and also individual candidates. Besides the skill training the candidates were oriented in the bases of Languages and maths learning and teaching (using NCERT position papers)
The courses were founded to be very useful leading to a spontaneous demand for more and willingness to meet at intervals for more interactions, discussions and training.

c) Develop a regular meeting space for interested teachers.

Updates and Outcomes

- Development above could be the beginning of a network that SKM had been keen about.

d) Create trainer of trainers who have consistently implemented the SKM methods in their school and found it effective

Updates and Outcomes

- A network of resource teachers, already trained by SKM, is on hold as the organization had a set back in time focusing all its energy in fund search.

Trainings – 2010 - 2016

Year	Total number of Training	Total number of Days	Total number of Teachers	Total number of Beneficiaries
2010-11	11	13	166	4980
2011-12	13	21	173	5190
2012-13	15	32	223	6690
2013-14	22	40	224	7020
2014-15	44	90	277	4910
2015-16	31	47	115	4365

2) Consultation –

a) Consultation visit to Bangladesh in May by Sudeshna Sinha was a wonderful educative experience. Sudeshna was invited by an alternative school Nalonda

The seven days visit included orientation for the Nalonda teachers in

- Child development
- Curriculum development
- Class management
- Observation of classes and
- Question answer sessions

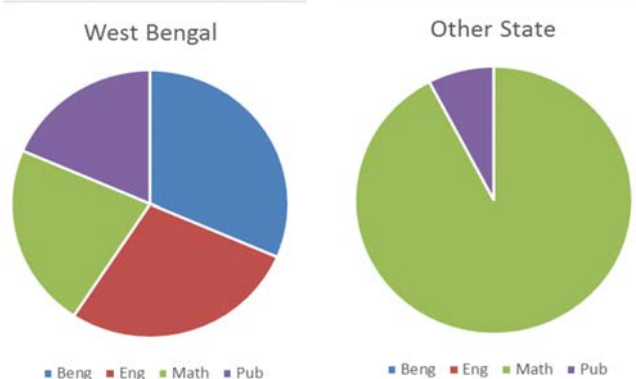
b) On invitation by APU, Sudeshna took two classes on the pedagogy of disadvantaged children for MA Education students in August, 2015.

3) Material Production and Publication

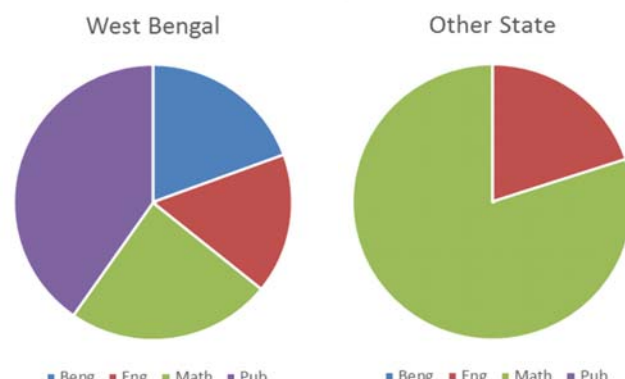
Materials in Maths, Bangla and English have reached people and organization within the state of West Bengal and outside. Starting in 2011 till date, circulation and demand has increased considerably. Feedbacks and training experience have helped us to improve and upgrade the materials.

The distribution at a glance -

2013 – 2014



2014 – 2015



Babai Das our ex-student has been a rewarding inclusion to team Shikshamitra.

Recent additions have been

- Games to improve vocab in Bangla
- Reading activities around 4 books from NBT

SKM has been officially enlisted by APU to supply Maths materials, as and when required.

English books, that have been found to be repeatedly enjoyed by children, have been translated in Bangla adding to our Reading series. The books are in the process of printing. Our art teacher Maura and her children have done the illustrations.

The books are –

- Are you My Mother?
- Umbrella (Originally Japanese)
- Crow Boy do (in the process)
- William's Doll

Coordination and inputs by Dr. Deb (Since April) has added much needed energy to the project

4) Documentation - A study on the impact and effect of the training program of Shikshamitra is ready and is attached with this report. Much discussion has been generated by the findings and will help SKM to improve and make future plan.

5) Self Development - a) Visit to the WATIS forum (April 2015) by Biswajit Chitrakar left a deep impact on him, enlarging his horizon.

b) Visit to Digantar (June 2015) to attend a 3 day workshop in Pedagogy of Maths by Rohit Dhankar, left the two Shikshamitra participants Gopal Mondal and Biswajit Chitrakar energized and exuberant with the learning experience.

Challenges – In November 2015, SKM was intimated of change in funding policy of Wipro Applying Thoughts in Schools leading to the termination of finding after March 2016. However the decision being sudden, an ad hoc grant was promised by WATIS for 2016-17.

A senior consultant was promptly employed for funds search. However the regular program and plans received a jolt leading to delays and postponement.

- Moreover SKM went on a work path in the lookout for a new premise at a lower rent. The organization will be shifting in May 2016 to a different address, quite far from the present one.
- To continue the Library service for the present community children, SKM is trying to rent a room in this area.
- Sriparna Tamhane could not be retained due to fund crunch.
- Publishing and distribution of books is a tough job and will need more calculated strategy planning.

Steps and Plans 2016-17

- Shift to the new premises end of May 2016
- To introduce a new work mode from June 2016, optimizing the organization's potentials.
- Continue to search for funds
- Continue the efforts in teacher education
- Create a space for the motivated teachers.
- More resource persons to spread the work.
- Working closely with other compatible organizations and resource persons.
- Serious effort in material creation and distribution along with publishing.