

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES FOR ENABLING ENVIRONMENT BY SANCHAR IN 2020-21

Health enabling

COVID 19 safety protocol,

Since May'20 Sanchar has started doing training of persons with disabilities, their families and community on COVID 19 and it's protocol.

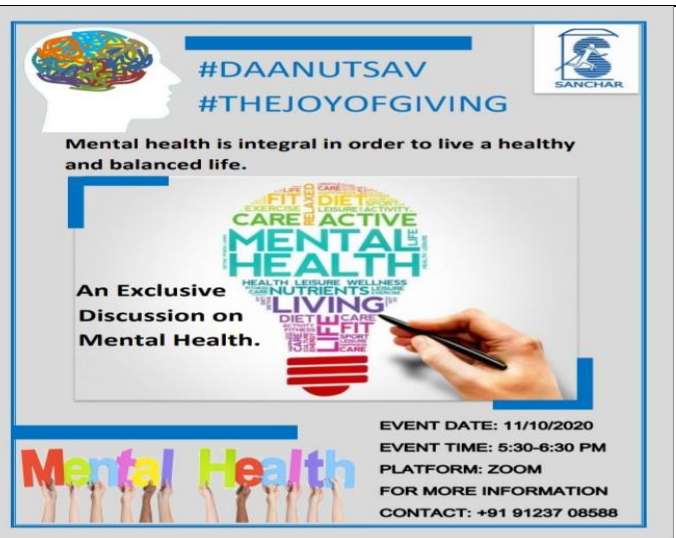
The trainings happened online and offline ,more or less everyday over phone, Whatsapp, video call. We have prepared leaflet, posters, banners and videos for circulation. Beside this, we have distributed relief (groceries, medicine, blanket, mosquito net). When family members came to collect the relief materials, we have organized 2 hours training on the different health issues including COVID 19. We have discussed following points:

- What is COVID 19?
- Symptoms of COVID 19
- Safety protocols
- How to wear a mask, why people should wear a mask?
- When should one get a test of COVID 19?
- How COVID 19 is transmitted? Etc.

We have used WHO awareness materials and translated those in Bengali for making leaflet for distribution. We have also developed information on Indian Sign Language and Braille.

Mental Health and Well being, 11th October

As an event of Daan Utsav (Joy of giving), we have organized a discussion on Mental Health and well being. The discussion was on different Mental health issues of different age groups including mental health problems due to COVID 19 and lockdown. The speakers were the students of Psychology of Loreto College and a few Clinical Psychologists also helped the participants to understand the importance of Mental Health. The participants learned stress management. They also acquire knowledge on the common issues of Mental health, which should not be ignored and addressed immediately for well being of every individual and their family.



World Leprosy Day, 30th January

A Webinar was conducted on 30th of January, 2021. The session was held in observance of World Leprosy Awareness Day, which was on the 31st of January, 2021. The speakers who were invited were Suresh Dhondge, Mangala Dhongde and Nabakumar Das, who are having life experience and also working with Leprosy affected/ cured people. The three speakers discussed their life experience along with the details of the disease, treatment, rehabilitation and the various challenges which people affected with Leprosy/cured still have to face. They also discussed about the negative attitude of the society, which create huge barrier for these people to be included in the mainstream society. The participants gained knowledge about the disease and clarified many myths and wrong information & beliefs about the disease. They have described the process of multi-drug therapy, saying that if the disease was detected early the course could be as short as six months. They also mentioned that the medicines required can be obtained for free, but the course must be prescribed by a doctor. The discussion was very fruitful for all participants. We sincerely hope the Leprosy affected people would be able to live with dignity.

World Hearing Day, 3rd March'21

To commemorate WHD'21, we organized Awareness Campaign on 'Ear Care' with local administration like 16 Panchayat offices, PHCs, Block development offices, ICDS office and villagers. We displayed / distributed banners and leaflets. We have organized 2 trainings on Ear care for the parents and community members with Govt. ENT specialist, Resource teachers. We organized an auto miking campaign in Kolkata City.

A Zoom Webinar on 'Hearing care for All' was held and streamed on Facebook and awareness messages were sent through Whats App.

Hearing screening camp was held for 50 individuals from the villages, among them 10 were children with disabilities, with whom Sanchar works with the support of JVS-LF. After the Audiometry 8 children with disabilities received Hearing aids, battery and ear mold. Below the photo is on Awareness campaign at BPHC and the Certificate received from WHO.



Education Enabling

National Education Policy and CWDs , 10th August

On 10th and 12th July, Sanchar organized a training (online) on National Education Policy and children with disabilities for the staff, adult persons with disabilities, parents, CSOs and interested people. Mr. Gautam Chaudhury and Tulika Das was speakers . Around 74 participants attended the discussion in two days. Mr. Chaudhury explained NEP 2020 and also Right to Education. He also clarified Education part of RPWD Act 2016 in relation to NEP. Tulika Das discussed NEP in connection of CWDs, early intervention. The participants asked few questions and both the speakers replied to the participants. All the participants received the soft copy of NEP 2020. Tulika Das said that the policy will be available in Bengali translated by SANCHAR..

Teachers day , 5th September

Teachers' Day is a special day for the appreciation of teachers, which is marked by celebrations to honor teachers for their special contributions in a particular field area, or the community in general. Sanchar has organized online discussion on Children with disabilities and the role of teachers in their overall development. The parents, children with disabilities, staff, and representatives were present. The discussion was in detail on the needs of CWDs and the education system in general. Various topics like the importance of learning Indian sign Language, Braille, mobility etc. were discussed. The participants shared their views. The resource person Suryanil Sengupta discussed on RTE Act .



Literacy Day, 8th September

On 8th Sep, Literacy day, we organized a small group discussion on the importance of Education with the parents, community people, youngsters and staff. We launched a campaign on donating school stationery for All children. Many of our friends, well-wishers and volunteers donated school stationeries to children with disabilities and others. We also discussed on NEP 2020 and about the Global education development agenda-SDG 4. We have also discussed about Adult education and motivated parents to join local AE centres. We have distributed leaflets and posters. We have also done mass awareness in social media.



International Day of Sign Languages, 23rd September.

Sanchar had organized a workshop (online,offline) on Indian Sign Language on 23 September on the occasion of International day of Sign language. Tulika Das discussed about the importance of Sign Language in the communication of deaf people. The Sign Language trainer Priyanka Ghosh started with her own experience of learning ISL and how ISL is helping in her day to day communication and education. Then she helped the participants to learn few basic communication words through ISL and informed that Sanchar will soon start a ISL learning session for those who are willing to learn ISL.



World Braille Day, 4th January

A webinar in honour of World Braille Day was held on the 4th of January, 2021. Tulika Das introduced the subject of the webinar, and spoke briefly about the challenges faced by persons with visual impairments, and how Braille is an essential tool for their education. She then asked Mr. Sujit Karmakar, a person with Visual disability and a Braille trainer to speak.

Mr. Karmakar began by talking about the creator of Braille, Louis Braille. He gave a detailed account of his life and how he created Braille. He then spoke about how Braille was slowly adopted in various countries long after his death, and how it was adapted to languages apart from the original, French. He spoke about applications that have made computers accessible to persons with visual impairments such as Microsoft Narrator, JAWS and Non Visual Desktop Application (NVDA). He talked about the various devices used by persons with visual impairments in daily life. He spoke briefly about the Braille Printing program at Sanchar. Ms. Tulika Das shared a leaflet on Eye care which was prepared by Sanchar and printed for wide circulation, supported by JVS-LF.

Ms. Tulika Das then announced that Sanchar would be organizing Braille and Indian Sign Language classes for the interested learners that would be conducted online. She answered a few questions related to Eye care and then concluded the webinar with a vote of thanks.

Training on Indian Sign Language and Braille

Throughout the year, we have organized several trainings on ISL and Braille online and offline. Not only the CWDs and their family members, many staff of CSOs and Corporates like Cognizant had attended the sessions and given very good feedback. They have requested for more sessions. We

have also made many videos for social media promotion so that general people know about deafness and ISL.

Advocay on NEP 2020 and reopening of school

Sanchar is a core committee member of WBRTE Forum, a state level forum for implementation of Right to Education Act. Last year we have attended all the online and offline meetings of the Forum. We have collectively organized several online discussions and webinars on NEP 2020. We have also done continuous advocacy with the Govt. for reopening of the School after lockdown period. As a Core committee member we had a series of meetings and state level workshop at West Bengal State Commission for protection of Child Rights. We had developed a list of recommendations and submitted them to the Govt. jointly from WBRTE Forum and WBSCPCR. After that, within seven days Govt. had opened the schools (Higher classes). We have also started Bengali translation of NEP 2020 from The Forum.

Social Enablement

Reclaiming Civility:

As a part of our initiative of social enablement, we have started a series of Webinar on different social issues of different socio economically marginalized groups.

Sanchar began ‘Reclaiming Civility’ as an initiative to sensitize and educate general people on the constant abuse faced by different groups of persons on a daily basis. The purpose of this was to bring different groups of people together to better understand the intersectional issues of language and attitude that permit the propagation of these negative mindsets in society. The speakers were invited to share their personal stories of discrimination, and how they are dealing with their struggles.

Sanchar has held six webinars under this banner, with 25 guests so far. Four of these sessions were streamed on Facebook via Facebook Live. The discussion was on Disability etiquette, Transgender etiquette, the discrimination faced by different speakers and marginalized sections due to different sexual orientation, Criminal Justice system, religion, gender, cast, age and disability. We have also developed leaflets and posters on every issue for continuous mass awareness in the community and social media. The sessions were held on 7th, 21st of November, 5th, 19th December in 2020 and 2nd January, 13th February in 2021.

UNCRPD, RPWD Act’2016

We have organized many meetings, workshops and advocacy campaign with the people with disabilities, their families, Govt. Department /organization, CSOs, corporates for wide promotion of UNCRPD and RPWD Act,2016. We have also translated both the documents in Bengali for reaching out to the grass root level and to many people of our State. We have received a lot of

positive feedback from different support agencies and CSOs. We have also received request from several disability and other development organizations for more discussion on the rights of PWDs. In continuation of ensuring rights of PWDs, we have started the awareness campaign on Election and related accessibility issues.

3rd December, International Day of persons with disabilities

This year, we have organized huge campaign to promote RPWD Act 2016 on 3rd December. We have organize several meetings and discussion with the different community stakeholders in our field area with the help young adults with disabilities and parents. We have joined the awareness rally of State level Disability Activists Forum. We have done advocacy with the All India Radio and Doordarshan and organized 2 programmes where Sanchar’s Director was the main speaker for



raising awareness on rights of PWDs, early identification, Entitlements –how to avail those etc.

The photos above are from our Radio and TV programme, participation in State level Rally. We have organized Webinar on 4th December named Towards inclusion –the voices of persons with disabilities. In the Webinar, persons with disabilities shared their life experience and encouraged others to go ahead and to live a dignified life. Also We have organized a programme on drawings,

art and craft item made by the children with disabilities in our field area for exhibition online and offline both. The children enjoyed a lot to be engaged in drawing, painting and other creative work.

Livelihood enablement

This year, after COVID 19 and lockdown, the issues of livelihood got prime attention. Protecting Mother Earth, waste management, use of solar energy, rain water harvesting - all these issues are now our prime concern. So we started to discuss and analyse with the families and community on the different options for livelihood. We started Save earth campaign in the community. As an initial step we started training on Kitchen gardening and composting in Sanchar with the staff and parents with the guidance of Resource persons. We have also organized training on entrepreneurship, marketing of products, branding and digital marketing for young adults and parents. As the group was interested to do something, we trained them on detergent making, hand wash making, liquid floor cleaner and Phenyl making. As the next step we will be helping the group in packaging and marketing.



The handmade detergent powder is ready