Aanchal
A Project for Empowering Adolescent Girls for Better Maternal & Child Health Outcomes in CBM Raniganj (Durgapur), West Bengal
Genesis:
West Bengal’s Burdwan district is the seventh most populous district in India and an important economic hub of the State, both industrially and agriculturally. However, it has fared discouragingly in social development indicators, especially in the rural areas, with fairly high incidence of maternal mortality, and infanticide. Besides, occurrence of malnutrition among children, anemia among women, low birth weight and low child survival rates in the district are alarming.

Considering these indicators, Essar Foundation with the consent of the local Project Facilitation Committee (formed in partnership with district administration), initiated concerted action towards improving the status of maternal and child health, centering on adolescent girls. ‘Aanchal’ project was conceptualized after conducting a pilot awareness drive in 22 villages of four Gram Panchayats in Durgapur – Faridpur and Kanksa administrative blocks. About 2,250 participants including pregnant women, nursing, expecting women, adolescent girls, and village health functionaries like ANM, ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers participated. Child in Need Institute (CINI) has joined hands as technical support agency to execute the project for its duration of two years.

What the figures say
- Nationally, 55.8% of adolescent girls in the 15-19 age group are anemic [NFHS 3]
- West Bengal is among top 5 states in India with highest number of out-of-school children [6-14 years]
- About 40% of the girls in Burdwan marry before they attain marriageable age of 18 years. In rural Burdwan it is even higher, i.e. 44.7%*
- 22.7%* women who give child birth are in the age group of 15-19 years
- Only 49.5%* women heard about HIV and AIDS
- Only 42.7%* children received breast milk within 1 hour of birth
- More than 60%* women have not heard about RTI/STI

*Source: District Level Household Survey (DLHS) 3, Burdwan district.

Goal: To improve reproductive and child health status in selected areas of West Bengal through adolescents and women leaders.
Objectives:

- Improve maternal health through promotion of care during pregnancy, delivery and post natal phases
- Advance child survival through promotion of infant care and feeding practices
- Enhance adolescent knowledge and practice regarding reproductive and sexual health
- Improve vital registration system on birth and death statistics
- Foster community involvement, especially self help groups on the issues of maternal, child, adolescent health and sanitation

Implementation Strategy

- Life Cycle Approach [LCA] to emphasize on ‘First 1000 Days of Life’. All interventions will focus on the critical phases of human growth and development, i.e., pregnancy, childhood (0-2 years of age) and adolescence (10-19 years of age)
- Development of ‘Child and Woman Friendly Communities’ [CWFC]; communities, panchayats and the service providers will be the driving force in development
- Strengthening Self Help Groups (SHGs) as vehicles of change.

Expected outcomes

- Increase in registration of pregnant women in AWC or Sub Centre within 16 weeks of pregnancy
- Pregnant women receiving minimum four sessions of antenatal care (ANC)
- Lactating women getting post-natal care (PNC)
- Increased in number of institutional deliveries
- Behavior change in breast feeding of children with exclusive breast feeding up to 6 months
- Increased number of children with timely initiation of complimentary feeding
- Primary immunization of the children is widely practiced
- Adolescents with correct and complete knowledge on SRH issues increased
- Leadership development of adolescents to address reproductive and child health development issues.
- Reduction or complete end to open defecation with increase in sanitary toilets
- SHG members monitoring the services related to maternal and child health
- Improved enabling environment at the community level for promotion of mother, adolescent and child health

Geographical coverage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District: Burdwan</th>
<th>Sub-Division: Durgapur</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Gram Panchayat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanksa</td>
<td>Bidbehar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Molandighi</td>
<td>Rupganj, Hariki, Akandara, Molandighi, Rakhipur, Lohaguri, Kuldiha, Saraswatiganj, Pathardiha, Ghatakadanga &amp; Moldiha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gopalpur</td>
<td>Sarenga, Dhoadanga, Karamdanga (Charipara), Gopalpur (Chataldanga), Bhalukonda &amp; Monerkonda</td>
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<td>Durgapur-Faridpur</td>
<td>Pratappur</td>
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About us:

Essar Foundation

Essar Foundation is the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of the Essar conglomerate. At Raniganj area of Burdwan, West Bengal the Foundation has engaged actively in the development of the communities around CBM operations of Essar Oil, and has its sustained presence in more than 25 villages of Durgapur–Faridpur and Kanksa blocks. The interventions here primarily focus on three core areas -- Health, Education and Livelihood, and base upon robust partnerships with the local administration and civil society.

Child in Need Institute (CINI)

Child In Need Institute is a well-recognized NGO founded in 1974 with its focus on sustainable development in Health, Nutrition, Education and Protection for children, adolescents and women in need. CINI has made its mark as a leader in the field of community health, reaching approximately five million marginalized people across eastern India.