

Site Visit Report for Trinita Society for Social Education and Health

Research: *January 23rd 2010 by Virupaksha Kanjilal, Asha UFlorida Chapter*

After Asha Atlanta chapter had supported this project for around three years, Asha UFlorida has taken up partial support of the project. The project is based mostly in the slums in the eastern part of Kolkata. There are 9 centers situated at Maruti Bagan, Topsia, Tangra, Tiljala, and Ultadanga. The people in these slums earn their lively hood by working as daily wage earners, labours, rag-pickers, rickshaw pullers and tannery workers. As a result of the acute economic conditions, literacy in these areas is low, sanitary conditions are bad too. The women and children in these areas are physically, socially and economically vulnerable. Trinita is focusing on children in order to improve their condition and provide them with an opportunity for a better life. Trinita provides basic education for the children, and also creates awareness among the parents to encourage sending their children to the centers. Trinita also provides basic medical facilities in the way of medical camps. They have two doctors working with them

I visited their site on 23rd Jan, 2010. I was accompanied by Mrs. Shampa Roy, Trinita Secretary. The first center I visited was at Tangra. The slum had a population of around 400 families. The conditions were very appalling. The people here mostly worked as van pullers and at the leather factories nearby. The kids help their parents in the job of breaking batteries to extract metal from them. This work exposes the kids to hazardous chemicals. After that, I visited all the centers at Maruti Bagan, Topsia and Tiljala. Conditions at all these centers are the same.

I talked with the teachers at the centers I visited. The children were very enthusiastic about coming to the centers. In all the centers I went, the children performed songs and dances. I interacted with them and they seemed to be enjoying the activities at the centers. I learnt that the attendance is mostly full at all the centers. The children also love the vocational training provided by Trinita. These include stitching, making handicrafts, and computer skills. The atmosphere was friendly and the centers enjoy the support of the locals. Often volunteers from the local people help in running the centers. The teachers regularly meet with the parents twice in a month.

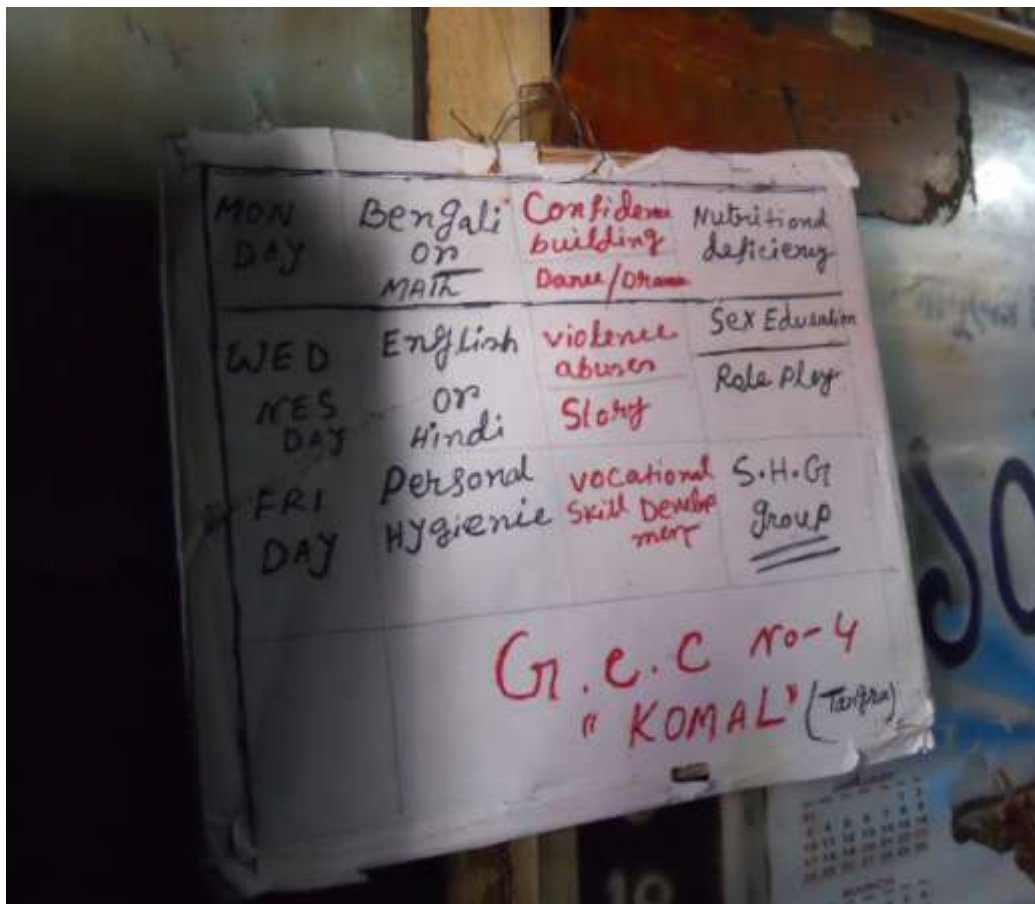
I could visit all the centers except for 2 centers at Ultadanga area. It was evident to me that Trinita has been a huge positive influence in the communities it has been working. They are providing basic education to the children in the slums. Their effort in training the children in vocational skill like stitching and handicraft would go a long way in helping the students to earn a living once they are out of the centers.

Later that day, I discussed with Mrs. Shampa Roy about the future of the project. She is of the opinion that getting better teachers is very important for supporting the children. The government schools, which claim to be free, do have hidden charges, which makes it impossible for the children to go. Trinita does provide them with uniform and books, but they are not enough for all the students. Getting better teachers and educational material would require more funding. Also, most of the centers operate out of crammed rooms. This situation would need some improvement.

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These are some clips of the centers I had taken during my visit.



Tangra center schedule. All the Trinita centers operate on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 3:00pm to 6:00 pm. The activities are similar in all the centers.

G.C.C.A. Tiffin-Bites			
MON DAY	BANANAS	OR MILK	MASALA MUFFIN
WEDNES DAY	SWEET	OR	GUAVA
FRI DAY	ORANGE	OR CHOLA EGG	Teacher Name SIMA BAIYA

The tiffin schedule at one of the center. The Topsia center is very spacious, and has a separate kitchen. Sometimes, the mothers of students help in preparing the tiffin.



Class taking place at a government school at a Tiljala center. The school gets over at 2pm, and Trinita's classes start at 3:00 pm.



Right outside the Tiljala Center.





The MarutiBagan center. It operates out of a club house. The room is pretty small. Most of the centers work out of really small club rooms.