



**UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), KOLKATA**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

**April – June 2021**

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| Sl. No | ADOPTED VILLAGES | TALUKA (BLOCK) | DISTRICT          |
|--------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1.     | Bakeswar         | Bishnupur I    | South 24 Parganas |
| 2.     | Magurkhali       |                |                   |
| 3.     | Raghabpur        |                |                   |
| 4.     | Shalpukur        |                |                   |
| 5.     | Debipur          |                |                   |

**LIST OF ACTIVITIES**

**Title of the Activity 1: FOLLOW UP OF VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN – TRAINING IN ORGANIC KITCHEN/NUTRITION GARDEN AT SHALPUKUR VILLAGE WITH SHG WOMEN MEMBERS.**

**Need of the Activity:** Intervention to formulate alternative livelihood opportunities for women members of the adopted village by training women in organic farming.

**Brief Description:**

1. On 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021, an in-depth training about the various steps involved in nurturing a nutritious organic kitchen garden along with organic compost making was conducted for around 25 women members of Shalpukur village in collaboration with Development Research Communication and Service Centre (DRCSC), Kolkata.
2. On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021, a virtual Follow up session was undertaken through WhatsApp video call, wherein expert from DRCSC instructed and guided the women on the steps to be followed with regard to rotating the compost pit, identification and designing organic kitchen garden etc. An interactive session with the expert also ensured that trainees get an opportunity to clear all their doubts about the same.

3. On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the trainees themselves undertook the routine rotation and mixing of organic compost and shared about the same with the department.
4. On 18<sup>th</sup> June a similar virtual follow up session was organized through WhatsApp video call. Experts from DRCSC Kolkata explained and guided the women trainees on actions to be taken before sowing season begins, e. g. designing garden bed and planting of various seasonal vegetables and fruits. The trainees were also guided on safely storing the already prepared organic compost as well as to use the same in sowing new seeds and also to mix them with previously growing vegetables.



**Virtual Follow- up training session with trainees**



**Trainees rotating the compost pit as guided by expert**

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**Title of the Activity 2: NETWORKING WITH WEST BENGAL FISHERIES DEPARTMENT.**

**Need of the Activity: Intervention to formulate alternative livelihood opportunities for women members of the adopted village by training women in pisciculture and poultry farming.**

**Brief Description:**

1. On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021, the PI was able to contact and network with Assistant Director of Fisheries, Mr. Sabyasachi Bandhopadhyay and had a discussion on how SHG members from the adopted villages can be trained to undertake pisciculture and poultry farming. The need for such training was expressed by the SHG members during evaluation of the training on organic kitchen garden. The ADF assured the PI of full support but suggested to conduct the said training once the pandemic situation improved.

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**Title of the Activity 3: PARTICIPATION IN UNNAT BHARAT GRAM AAROGYA SERIES.**

**Need of the Activity:** Response to the invitation from the RCA.

**Brief Description:**

1. On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021, the PI attended the Unnat Bharat Gram Aarogya Series - A virtual learning initiative on COVID-19 focusing on rural awareness, physical and mental well-being, habits and goals throughout the pandemic. The PI has also been following the sessions conducted under the above mentioned series very closely.

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**Title of the Activity 4: AWARENESS SESSION ON OUR ENVIRONMENT – OUR RESPONSIBILITY - Role of youth in safeguarding and nurturing the environment.**

**Need of the Activity:** To motivate and encourage young students to take responsibility in nurturing the environment, even during the current pandemic and with limited mobility.

**Brief Report:**

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021, an awareness session was organized in line with the theme of World Environment Day 2021 i.e. ‘Ecosystem Restoration’. The objective of the session was to motivate and encourage the college youth to play their part in safeguarding and nurturing the environment, even during the current raging pandemic. Around 70 students from across departments participated in this session.

Mr. Yusuf Kabir, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) specialist, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate & Emergency Focal Point and Dr. Swati Mohapatra, the Communication and Advocacy Specialist in UNICEF Maharashtra office were the resource speakers along with Young climate warriors from Maharashtra, Bodhisatva G. Khanderao and Varad Kubal.

Mr. Yusuf Kabir, in his address spoke at length as to how, during the current pandemic, many stakeholders were coming together and raising their concern about the environment. He cautioned the youngsters to be aware about what was happening to our eco system and to be committed and passionate about the environment. He stressed that, ***“Action for environment protection lies at the local level. One does not have to travel large distance to take up responsibility to protect and nurture the environment”. It is very important to decide for oneself, whether we want to be part of the problem or be part of the solution”***.

Further to this, Dr. Swati Mohapatra reiterated how each one could take up action at the individual level and contribute towards safeguarding and nurturing our environment. She touched upon how YUWAAH - a flagship programme of UNICEF, engaged children and youth by giving them guidance and platform to raise their voices for pertinent contemporary issues. She added, ***“It is important to amplify the voices of young climate warriors so that others are motivated to follow their footsteps and bring about change”***.

This ‘Talk’ became meaningful when the two young climate worriers, Bodhisatva G Khanderao and VaradKubal shared about their journey in safeguarding the environment. Bodhisatva hails from Yavatmal district in Maharashtra. He started working for social plantation awareness programs at different places at the age of six. He had been relentless in his pursuit of telling people about the importance of the environment and educating them how to make the best out of waste. Bodhisatva during the discourse shared about his innovation of ‘Seed ball’. He used the smart technique of reutilizing old cotton socks by putting some

seeds in it, along with whatever he could find handy- leaves, soil, cow dung etc. He asked people to simply throw these Magic socks into the valleys, either side of the road, on plains or in forests areas. The socks would stick to the soil and the seeds would germinate after rain. Other than Magic socks, Multigrain- sieving machine to clean various grains is another brilliant innovation for which he was awarded Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Ignited Mind Children Creativity and Innovation Award last year. He was also awarded an International Young Eco-Hero Award for his environmental work.

Varad, who hails from Kankavli, Konkanhad already made a mark when he was just 12 years old as he had rescued sea birds called Bridled Tern during a storm. It is not just birds but Varad is keenly interested in protecting the coastal and marine biodiversity. He is full of innovative ideas for the growth and protection of flora and fauna. Varad shared about his initiative '**seed egg**' wherein he paints eggshells with bright colours and puts a variety of seeds, which he then gifts to friends and relatives. Once the egg shell is discarded (thrown on soil) the seed germinates and grows into trees. He also shared how he used coconut shells as lanterns and made Rakhis from seeds, coir and discarded paper.

Both the teens, shared how during the current raging pandemic, they utilised their time to read about various types of saplings, trees and utilized this time to reach out to their peers to take action towards conserving nature. They also made videos on various methods of afforestation and nature conservations and shared on various social media platforms for wider dissemination of knowledge. Before the close of the session, when asked what message the young children wanted to give to our students, Bodhi vehemently said, "***Earn your oxygen by planting a tree***". On the other hand Varad urged our students not to just think about their careers but "***spare a thought for nature, we have to save nature to save our future***".

The college students were deeply impressed and motivated by these young champions. Subham Dokania, a Commerce-Morning student expressed, "***After hearing Bodhi and Varad share about their journey, I am encouraged to plant trees, write blogs on environment issues and create some awareness***". Ruchi Marda a Commerce-Evening student who wants to be a social entrepreneur said, "***I learnt how even I can make a difference to the society through my initiatives and got many ideas from today's Talk, I will definitely build on them.***"



PI Principal Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S. J.  
addressing the participants



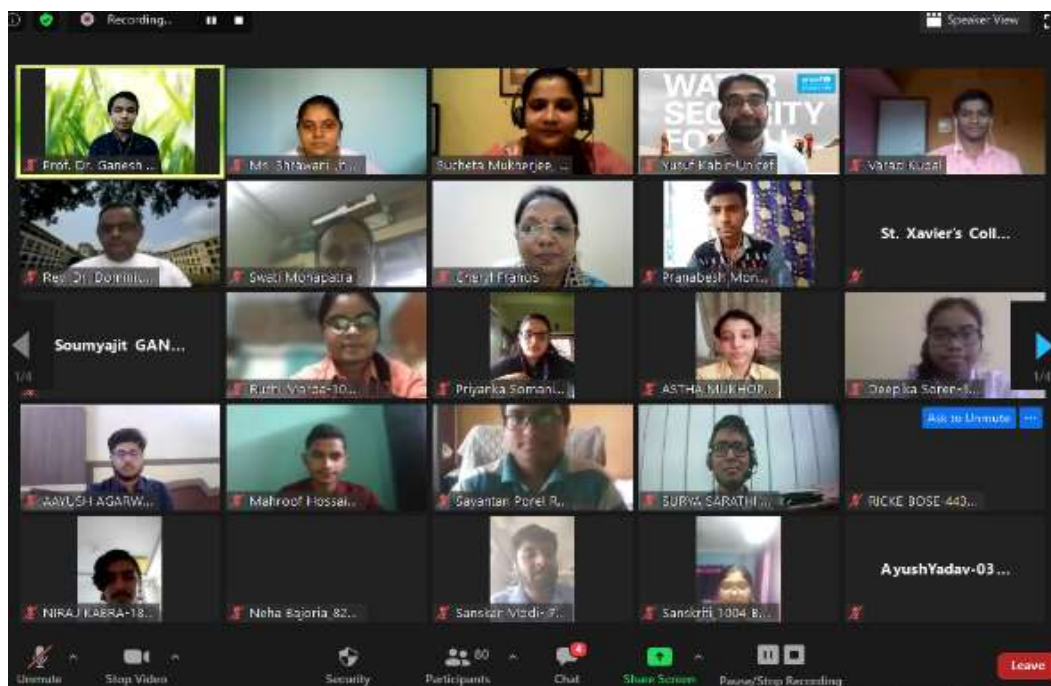
Mr. Yusuf Kabir sharing his thoughts



Bodhisatva G. Khanderao



Varad Kubal



**Group Photo – PI Principal, UBA Coordinator, Dept staff, Resource persons and participants**

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### **Next Action Plan**

| <b>Sl. no.</b> | <b>Activity to be conducted</b>   |
|----------------|---|
| 1.             | Follow-up with the SHGs of the training programme on organic kitchen garden conducted in Shalpokur village.   |
| 2.             | Identifying potential SHGs members of Shalpokur village who would become trainers for SHGs in other adopted villages on organic kitchen garden and compost making.  |
| 3.             | Networking with stakeholders of Bakeswar, Magurkhali & Raghampur villages to be continued to initiate VDP on Village Education Programme and organic kitchen garden. All activities will be implemented based on the COVID situation. |
| 4.             | Training in Pisciculture and Poultry farming will be initiated in the adopted villages once COVID situation improves.   |

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