**Project KOUSAL**

**Final Report**

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**Project Narrative**

Project KOUSAL was undertaken with the collaboration of Foundation for Social Transformation: Enabling Northeast India (FST) and the American India Foundation (AIF) Clinton Fellow based in Guwahati. This project came about to address the needs of the urban population of Guwahati, Assam, and subsequently a life-skills program aimed at the female youth of an urban slum was created. After a situational analysis was conducted in the Bhaskar Nagar slum community, two schools in the area, Bhaskar Vidiyapith (BV) and Oja Hemchandra (OH) were chosen to participate in this pilot project. The participants of Bhaskar Vidiyapith School were from Class 7 & 8. The participants of Oja Hemchandra School were from Class 6-10.

The AIF Fellow created and designed the curriculum of this program. Because of language constraints, the lessons needed to be translated and implemented by an FST staff member (Assamese speaker).The program consisted of 10 topics, conducted over a 3-month time period (March-May 2018). Each module (lesson) was scheduled to last one hour each week, and a sports session conducted with a local physical fitness instructor was conducted for an additional hour. In total, 2 hours a week, at each school was scheduled, with an FST staff and/or AIF Fellow present at each session. A pre/post design was employed to measure impact of this program.

The purpose of this is to initiate a pilot project focusing on an urban population that falls within FST’s target population and mission. By focusing on adolescent females (ages 12-21) in an urban slum setting, Project KOUSAL (Knowledge on Utilizing Skills and Leadership) will focus on the development and building of life skills of the participants through non-threatening sports and physical activities. By doing a situational analysis through a survey of at least 100 girls living and/or going to school in the area, modules of life skills lessons will be tailored and implemented to meet the needs of the girls in the area.

**Findings**

Pre-Test

A total of 58 girls participated in taking the pre-test (30 from Bhaskar Vidiyapith, 28 from Oja Hemchandra). This pre-test was administered the first week of March 2018. The pre-test was composed of 10 questions, each covering a life-skills module to be taught in this program. The

respondents were asked to rate their confidence/knowledge about each given statement, with 1- having absolutely no confidence and 5- having absolute or the most confidence in the given statement. See Appendix A for list of the pre-test questions (in English).

***Bhaskar Vidiyapith School***

A pre-test was conducted with 30 students from Bhaskar Vidiyapith School. Unfortunately, the school officials withdrew participation in the program on the week of April 9-13. A total of four life-skills modules were implemented in this school. A post-test was not able to be administered. Some key findings from the pre-test of the girls at this school are as follows:

* The three topics the girls were most confident in were Self-Respect, Leadership, and Responsibility. 22 girls rated themselves a 5 on both Self-Respect and Leadership, and 16 girls rated themselves a 5 on Responsibility.
* The topics that these girls rated themselves least confident in were about Sexual Reproductive Health and Gender, with 23 girls rating themselves a 1 on knowledge about these topics.
* Most of the girls in this school tended to answer with extreme confidence or extreme lack of confidence, as the data skews towards the opposite sides of the answering scale.

***Oja Hemchandra School***

28 girls from this school took the pre-test. All modules were delivered to participants at this school. Some key findings from the pre-test of the students are as follows:

* The girls at this school generally had a more even distribution of responses, for example the most 5-ratings were about Stress Management (9 responses), and the most 1-ratings were about Gender/SRH (10 responses). The even distribution could indicate most girls in this school rated their knowledge and confidence about the life skills topics more moderately compared to the participants of the other school.
* The topics that these girls rated themselves least confident in were about Sexual Reproductive Health and Gender, however this topic as had the most respondents rate themselves at 3 or neutral.

**Some of the relevant outcomes of the program are as follows:**

1. 60 girls have participated fully in the program
2. Adolescent girls had acquired knowledge on financial literacy, reproductive health & hygiene, effective communication skills, self-respect, environment and self-defense.
3. Adolescent girls during the project period are more aware of their own skills and ability to build in greater confidence and resilience.
4. Leadership skills, confidence in communication among the girls are identified and trained to continue this program in the future

The direct beneficiaries of this project are the girls who are willing to participate in this project, mainly in the life-skills modules that will include topics such as financial literacy, sexual reproductive health, effective communication, leadership, and goal setting. Indirect beneficiaries of this project are the participants’ families, girls in the community who are not yet age eligible to participate in the program, and the Bhaskar Nagar community. The adolescent males of this community should also be included as an indirect beneficiary, as males are an important factor in the social change process, and will be included in this project to the greatest extent possible.