

Bhabna Association for people's upliftment (BAPU)

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Activity Report-2018



'For the people – With the People'

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About BAPU

It was the dream of the organization to uplift the downtrodden irrespective of religion, caste and creed by providing them livelihood opportunity through Income Generation Program (IGP), Self Help Group (SHG) and Job skill training. The governing body members, employees and the volunteers has been giving the best of their effort in achieving the mile stone and goals set at the early inception. The district of Murshidabad is vulnerable to different issues like trafficking, smuggling, illiteracy, poor reproductive and child health and many more. Our focus though is the women and other excluded group of the society. Trafficking, sexual exploitation and domestic violence are the evils which makes the girl child and the women the victim. We have been working in order to depreciate the sufferings of this group. We have always given priority to deliver services in the field of education (both vocational and traditional), health and human rights. BAPU ensures its presence where and when the women and the down trodden suffers and has got a zero tolerance in approach against violence against women. The organization identified natural resources and easily available stuff like jute and bamboo and is disseminating capacity building training to the group to make the women folk skilled in craftsmanship and entrepreneurship to ensure their economic empowerment.

We are in the need of external aid to provide better education for the socially excluded that are not fortunate enough to further their studies though they have the potential to do so.

We believe *“Education makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.”*

Vission

A Society where backward and vulnerable people (venerable children and women trafficked victim peoples living below poverty line, and other stigmatized group) are empowered and their self – respect, dignity and their rights are ensured.

Mission

To empower and ensure the self respect, dignity and right of the downtrodden, backward and vulnerable people by generation awareness, providing education, life- skill support, job skill trading, right based information, counseling and psycho- social rehabilitation program.

Objectives

- *To fight against exploitation and injustice against any individual, class, community in the society.*
- *To work for uplifting the status of women in the society.*
- *To work against female trafficking and to fight against the victimization of girl/women by anybody in the society on female trafficking or any other related issues.*
- *To help and generate training programme for self employment of women.*
- *To establish library and reading rooms in needy communities.*
- *To improve community health and the knowledge of community on health issues*

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Foreword from the CEO

Social change is constant, continuous, unavoidable and inevitable. Social transformation is the result of positive actions to improve the environment in which marginalized and the vulnerable are provided with holistic assistance to destine to progress. BAPU is a change maker which assures the community with certain benefit of changes.

We have made changes in the children who were otherwise illiterate, dropped out from school, abused, exploited and denied of fundamental rights and transformed them under the light of education. They are now educated, skilled, independently employed and contributing to their families and the communities.

Women in Burkha/Pardha, dependent, restricted, vulnerable to be trafficked and are often subjected to domestic violence have been transformed to better informed, independent, self-reliant and economically and socially empowered to stand against violence and trafficking incidents.

Men, who were marginalized, resource crunched, under employed, indebted have been provided with IGP training and skill development on craftsmanship on Jute and Bamboo based stuff and their potential were diversified to impart on them livelihood program and get them economically strengthened.

The operations of BAPU resulted in bringing about a holistic transformation in the community and in the realms of socio-economic development of poor, marginalized, segregated, discriminated and vulnerable section.

I therefore appreciate the contribution made by all members who govern, workers who produce a positive outcome, and the communities who help us serve them and ensure a change pertaining to all the services provided to depict a model.

Combat trafficking

In the wake of globalization and the resultant marginalization and alienation of large sections of humanity, sex trafficking has become a matter of urgent concern today worldwide. In India alone, over 200 thousand women and children are inducted into the flesh trade every year. The district of Murshidabad is one of the largest suppliers of women and children for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. Economic hardships coupled with the prevailing status of women in society, and changing public attitudes towards sex and morality creates the context for the flourishing of this modern-day form of slavery. A disturbing fact is that the age of the children is progressively declining to meet the male demand for younger prostitutes. There is a widely held belief that sex with children, especially virgins, will cure sexually transmitted diseases and prevent one from contracting HIV/AIDS. One of every four victims rescued from prostitution is a child, and 60% of these children are HIV positive. Sex trafficking not only results in a severe violation of human rights but also causes adverse physical, psychological and moral consequences for the victims. All hopes and dreams of a better life are shattered and over time the girls become penniless, mentally broken and affected with serious or life-threatening illnesses such as HIV/AIDS.

Prevention

Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is the most dehumanizing trade. A victim in flesh trade is subjected to innumerable physical, sexual and psychological tortures, which leaves irreversible scars in the mind. No human person deserves to be forced into a situation that destroys dignity and damages the self for a lifetime. All efforts therefore need to be taken to prevent such a situation. Preventive interventions largely focus on second generation and the community at large. BAPU has initiated programs to target both the groups.

There are women and young girls who due to economic compulsions and socio-cultural factors are rendered option-less, making them vulnerable to deception or fraudulent means of traffickers. Lack of education makes them more vulnerable than others. Involving the communities in prevention is the most sustainable option to combat a problem. Sensitization and ownership of the communities ensures that intervention continues irrespective of the presence or absence of a civil society organization. In view of the magnitude of the problem of trafficking, a need was felt to mobilize communities to combat the crime. This was done through the formation of Community Based Prevention Programs. The team takes up sensitization of communities as part of anti-trafficking campaigns. By targeting adolescent girls, men and women from all walks of life the team creates awareness. In this process, stakeholders such as police, government officials, students, and many others are educated about the prevalence and dangers of the sex trade.

Rescue, Rehabilitation and Integration

Victims of sex trafficking are sold and resold over and over again in a continuous cycle of exploitation. Once a trafficked girl eventually succumbs to her circumstances within prostitution, she is closely watched and her movements and interactions are monitored and restricted. A constant struggle for existence in an exploitative structure of pimps, goondas and brothel-madams makes any escape attempt virtually impossible. Tricked into a hellish nightmare all because of their naive hopes and faith in humanity, these young girls become trapped in prostitution with no option of breaking free.

Proper rescue and restoration of a victim is paramount to effectively fighting against human trafficking. After extensive analysis and understanding of the problem, BAPU developed an intervention to break the

cycle of exploitation and end the torment faced by victims of trafficking: the Rescue and Restoration Program (RRP).

In addition to conducting rescues, there is a home investigation team which collects statements from family members and relatives to ensure that there is adequate safety and security in the home of the rescued victim if she chooses to return and live with them. Finally, the legal team is responsible for assisting judicial recourse through preparing the victim to appear in court and applying for state benefits such as housing and ration cards. The primary forms of legal support provided by the RRP team include helping the victim (and in some cases her family) to prepare statements in court, appear in court to present the case against the traffickers in front of the magistrate, and apply for government welfare benefits.

Victims of sex trafficking, subjected to sexual violence, go through irreversible psychological damage and are vulnerable to be infected by a range of sexually transmitted infections. Most often the issue of reintegration with the family becomes a distant reality as families are reluctant to accept responsibility for the child's upbringing fearing negative societal impact or many a times it is difficult to reunite the victim with the family as they might be the traffickers themselves. This aspect combined with HIV/AIDS completes the cycle of rejection. Therefore in the process of rehabilitation there is also a need for temporary and institutional care as a primary means of protection of the victim. Over a period of time with adequate mental health intervention and economic empowerment the victim as a rehabilitated young adult could be prepared for reintegration.

Regardless of the age of a victim, healing has to be looked at from a holistic perspective. The psychological impact of sex trafficking on the victims needs a mental health intervention which involves counseling in an ambience of healing and building capacities of the team to support the healing process. This has to be translated to tangible evidence based processes which validate self esteem & self confidence. Therefore rehabilitation is essentially a blend of psychological, economic & civic identity.

For a victim, psychological recovery is not just about healing through pain and trauma but is influenced by various other factors such as sexually transmitted infections, reproductive tract infections, addiction and HIV/AIDS. Hence psychological rehabilitation comprises of a combination of trauma counseling, peer counseling, group counseling and barefoot counseling. Hence the routine chamber-based forms of mental health intervention are not appropriate. It has to be a very flexible model customized to suit the unique individual needs

A key aspect for any survivor in terms of preparedness for social reintegration is the employability factor. After a period of stay in the shelter, when the resident is discharged from the home she needs to be confident about her employability potential. This is the most dangerous grey area in all anti-trafficking programs, given that victims who feel they are unemployable in any sector are much more vulnerable to being re-trafficked. Hence it is necessary to select the kind of livelihood training based on interest and aptitude by assessing the victim as well as market viability of the trade.

In spite of being healed psychologically and emotionally and despite being economically independent, the battle of a survivor of sex trafficking is not won unless she has a social identity. Another crucially important step in the process of rehabilitation is thus civic empowerment, which implicates retrieval of her social identity and a societal form of acceptance through the form of electoral cards, ration cards, subsidized housing, etc. The domain of civic identity is principally a government directive. Some states in India have special schemes and benefits from the government for the welfare of sex trafficked victims. Efforts are continuously made to create channels for the victim to get access to civic benefits which are rightfully hers, which involve submitting applications for the allocation of a wide range of benefits.

Social reintegration is the ultimate aim of all rehabilitation programs. This reintegration consists of the survivor being able to live in the mainstream world with dignity and pride. Most victims who have come to BAPU for support are survivors today living and adjusting in the normal mainstream society. Many girls have found partners for themselves, many are living on their own and some of them have been effectively reunited to their families. The process of reintegration is a long and tedious one and filled with a lot of difficulties. Sometimes in spite of all the efforts there have been instances of re-trafficking. Although strategies for reintegration are ever-evolving, BAPU has explored three primary forms of reintegration: family reunion, marriage and independent living.

When a girl expresses that she wishes to be reunited with her family, a home investigation is taken up on court request and also for restoration purposes most often with the support of a local partner NGO. If the investigation reveals that the family is not a safe place for the girl, family reunion is avoided and she is counseled to stay back in the organization. But if the home investigation reports are positive, showing no correlation between the families and trafficking as well as an adequate level of economic stability, then immediate efforts are taken to arrange a home visit for counseling and restoration of the survivor.

Supported by-

- Group Development
- SANLAAP
- West Bengal Police
- NALSA

Major Accomplishment

- Dealt with 175 trafficking cases throughout the nation where we rescued and restored the victims.
- We work with the district police and administration and we are the members of the district and state level committees formed by UNODC to combat trafficking.
- We have our networking and linkages with the NGO's and GO's of Bangladesh and Nepal.
- Facilitated the International rally on trafficking.
- Research work on safe migration



Livelihood

It was started as a pilot project since BAPU strongly advocates financial independence as an ideal way to empower women. Thus far, the project has primarily depended on fabric donations from well wishers coupled with creative inputs from the Project Director. It involves educating the women in the basics of stitching and use of sewing machines. The flagship products are Jute and cotton and have been diversified to bags, table linen, cushion covers, curtains etc in order to use all the material optimally. The patchwork quilts are in unique designs such that no two quilts are similar. The patchwork also symbolizes what BAPU stands for i.e. weaving together of lives and communities in the areas we serve. The products are sold from the site as well as through sales at corporate houses.

BAPU have been providing training on Jori and Patch Work, Jute based product and have recently started disseminating training on Bamboo based product too. The trainings are imparted to members of the self help groups, trafficked victims and socially excluded women in order to ensure their economical empowerment. BAPU also provide in sharpening entrepreneurship skills among them, and branded their product and popularize it in national and international forum, and form linkages with interstate and intrastate fairs and exhibitions where these women folk participate and sell their own product in justified price.

Education

Supported by

- NABARD
- Ministry of Textile (GOI)

Major Accomplishment

- BAPU has a registered branded logo
- Import and export license
- Association with international organization (International Jute study group)
- Linkages formed with customer and beneficiaries
- Almost 700 people trained on jute based work
- Developed capacity building of DRDC on livelihood



Women folk busy in "Charkha"



Jute product promoted in a trade fair

Adolescent Groups

Girls in rural India are given little information about the physical, emotional, and social changes that go along with puberty and adolescence. Proper education and guidance during this developmental phase has critical implications that affect individuals, families and entire communities. About 50% of girls in India get married before 18 years and have to prove their fertility soon after marriage. Among married adolescent girls, 40.2% of all deaths are due to maternal causes. Mothers under 15 years old are 5 times more likely to experience maternal deaths and have higher neonatal and infant mortality rates than their 20-29 year old counterparts. Implementing an integrated intervention to change these social norms is the challenge. Providing adolescent girls with a safe place to ask questions, find their voice, and understand their feelings empowers them to reach their full potential and become strong leaders and contributors to their families and communities.

1. We empower unmarried adolescent girls through life skills education.
2. We promote and support formal education of adolescent girls.
3. We promote attitudinal change in unmarried and young married men, thereby demonstrating a measurable change in the prevalence of gender based violence and gender inequitable behaviours.
4. We protect young married women from the adverse consequences of early marriage, from sexual and domestic violence and avert maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality.
5. We empower adolescent girls through Life Skills Education resulting in a measurable improvement in their knowledge, skills, self esteem and self efficacy, and delay in age at marriage.
6. We improve the education of adolescent girls and amongst married adolescent girls we will reduce pre-term and low birth weight babies, sexual and domestic violence and maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality.

Over the past year, BAPU has developed a successful format for implementing an adolescent education programme through a close working partnership with community leaders. BAPU is working in the the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal , achieving remarkable success combating malnutrition by **empowering local women as educators and leaders.**

This project helps empower adolescent girls in rural India through an interactive workshop that reinforces the normalcy of puberty and helps create a positive cycle of education from generation to generation, helping transform young women into community health leaders.





Meeting with CBOs

Non-Formal education program

BAPU believes that there is no instant solution for children who have been denied their right to education. However, we are charged with the imperative that there is no higher priority, no mission more important, than that of education. Education of children at BAPU has to be need-based and demand-driven. To fulfill these criteria, the organization employs various schemes of educational intervention, both formal and non-formal. Wherever possible, the objective is to bring children into mainstream education. The overriding goal, though, is to help children develop into informed, capable, and responsible citizens of our nation and the world. To these ends we variously engage with formal and non-formal education.

Formal Education

Ideally, BAPU would like to channel every child into mainstream education. Formal education enables children to interact with their peers from diverse backgrounds. It also helps instill a sense of accountability, positive competition and the desire to excel. BAPU children are admitted into both, private and government schools of repute. So far, the organization has been able to mainstream approximately 500 children in various classes.

Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education at BAPU takes care of children's individual educational needs. The primary goal of this program is to motivate and prepare children to gain admission into formal school. Also it imparts life skills to cope-up with their circumstances. The non-formal education focuses on interesting and interactive learning through a participatory approach. A wide range of techniques are employed under the program, including painting, games, story, telling, songs, quizzes, dancing etc.

Vocational training

BAPU imparts vocational training for employable skill development and capacity building of growing children. Children above 16 years of age, or those who clear their 10 board exam, qualify for vocational training. Choice of vocational training course for a child is made keeping in mind the child's interest and realistic assessment of his/her abilities by a career counsellor and staff members. A measured attempt is made to match the child's skill and ability with the training course he/she opts for. The BAPU team makes concerted efforts to enroll children in quality training courses in reputed institutes.

Job placement and rehabilitation

BAPU has conceptualized an effective job placement and rehabilitation programme for reintegration into mainstream society of children who have grown up. The programme not only has a definite goal to develop dreams and visions, but also looks at dream modification and correction. Often, children develop unrealistic expectations which may not correspond to the skill sets they possess. It is common to hear children say, 'I want to become an actor, or a film director, or a cricketer'. Though achievable, these aspirations require inherent talent that all children may not have; instead, they may have abilities to excel in other professions. To address this aspect, as soon as a child turns 16, staff members strike up a conversation with the child around his/her career, regular meetings with the career counsellors are organized and a rehabilitation plan is drawn up to prepare the child to step out of the protective auspices of residential centres. The implementation of rehabilitation plans includes interaction with the child steered by the career counsellor and the centre coordinator on a monthly basis. The focal points of these interactions are strengthening a child's resolve towards the career path he/she has chosen, and whether the rehabilitation steps are panning out as per the plan or not. Preparation for rehabilitation of a child may be fraught with challenges for him/her as children are sceptical and scared about leading an independent life outside the centre; they may also become angry and hostile or may distance themselves from the staff members. These negative emotions and insecurity of young boys and girls at the threshold of maturity are understandable, and staff members help them overcome these emotions by recurrent talks and assurances that the BAPU team would be a 'call away'. Role model interaction is another important aspect BAPU rehabilitation programme. Role models are young adults rehabilitated by BAPU, who have established themselves as successful professionals.

Supported by

- Community contribution

Major Accomplishment

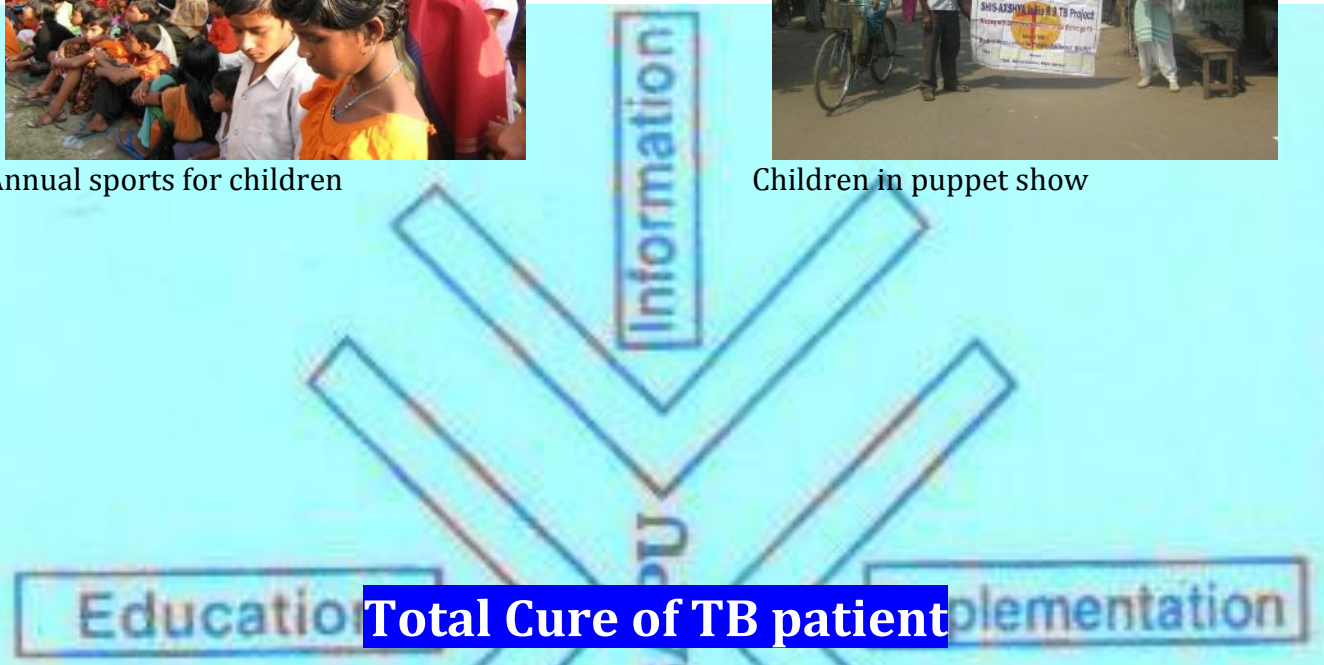
- Children were mainstreamed to school.
- Family applied for scholarship programme
- Parents initiated to send their children to school



Annual sports for children



Children in puppet show



Tuberculosis, or TB, caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* is an infectious disease that commonly affects the lungs. However, TB can occur in any anatomical site of human body including neck glands, spine, bone and joints, meningitis, kidney and genitor urinary system. The infection is transmitted from person to person by droplet infection from active lung TB patients. Symptoms of active TB include coughing, sometimes with sputum or blood, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats. Left untreated, each person with active TB disease will infect on average between 10 and 15 people every year which continues the transmission. Overall, one-third of the world's population is currently infected with the TB bacillus. 5-10% of people who are infected with TB bacilli (but who are not infected with HIV) become sick or infectious at some time during their life. Among people living with HIV, the chances of developing TB are 55-60% during their life. The risk for developing TB disease is also higher in persons with diabetes, other chronic debilitating disease leading to immune-compromise, poor living conditions, tobacco smokers etc.

Supported by

WORLD VISION & SHIS

Target group

- TB patient (suspected) referred in the hospital

Activities

- Help to recovers through various treatment
- Relief oriented activities for helping them lead a normal life.

- Counseling to the TB patient.
- Counseling for the family of the TB patient.
- Identification of TB and initiation of Medicine

Geographical Area

- Lalgola- TU-Murshidabad
- Beldanga -TU- Murshidabad
- Anupnagar TU- Murshidabad
-

Major Accomplishment

- We have helped TB patient to get back to their home and lead a normal life. We have successfully speeded up the recovery of the Effected TB patient with the help of Govt. system.

Gender Equity

Self Help Group and Microfinance

BAPU started SHG project in selective blocks of the district of Murshidabad viz. Berhampore, Kandi, Jiaganj, Bhagawangola and Lalgola block. The objective was to use micro-finance as a mean to empower the local women to set up micro-enterprises, thereby making them independent and respectable members of their communities.

Project at a Glance

Particulars	Total
Number of SHGs	220
Number of members	2530
Number of members trained (entrepreneurship skills)	360
Number of members trained (Jute & bamboo based product)	120
Number of member trained (Patch and Jori work)	50
Number of fairs and exhibition (the SHG group participated)	35

The Impact

Social Changes

- With the women now actively contributing to their family's income, they have become respected and celebrated members of their family and community.
- It remarkably declined domestic violence and there is a significant increase in their dignity.
- Fewer incidents of child marriage and increased literacy rate of the girl child.

- Women are taking up leaderships roles within their communities.
- Trafficking incident has significantly declined.

Financial and health related changes

- The habit of saving has been inculcated and loan availing capacity increased.
- Increase in the overall income of the household.
- Members are more aware about family planning and awareness regarding menstrual hygiene and reproductive health has witnessed a significant improvement among the members.



Communication and Resource Management

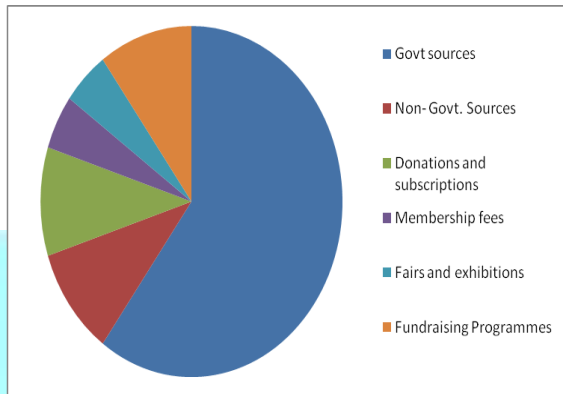
The communication and resource mobilization group headed by the director takes the responsibility of providing financial aid to the organization to bear the expenses of the benevolent work carried out by the organization. The financial aids come in the shape of Govt. & Non- Govt. grants, donations, subscriptions and membership fees. The organization also takes up fund raising measures through charity show and by participating in fairs and exhibitions.

Funds collected from in the fiscal year 2014-15 (in %)

1. Government sources - 60
2. Non-Government sources- 10
3. Donations and Subscriptions- 10
4. Membership fees- 5
5. Fundraising programmes- 10
6. Fairs and exhibitions- 5

Notable Donor of the year 2014-15

GFR-9 (Axshya India Project)	9,28,760
ISDS	45,16,995
SHIS	85,000
DIC	7,50,000



Graph representing the source of funds

Our Initiatives

BAPU has planned lot of initiatives for the days to come and most of them are focused on the sustainability of the organization and a few to encompass more social issues which are now major hurdles in the way of societal development. BAPU is one organization which is keenly working as brick layer pertinent to development against all stereotype and prejudice philosophy of the society. The highlighted innovations are:

1. BAPU planned of few permanent outlets which will exhibit the products of the SHG groups and adolescent groups in few popular destination of the state and in the days to come we wish to scatter more such outlets in other states of the nation as well.
2. BAPU have plan to appoint designers to develop world class products after reinstating designer courses in order to improve the quality of the products and ensure that the same products earn international demand and popularity.
3. BAPU have plan to impart IT skill development among all the SHG groups and adolescents to ensure that they get connected and handle android and Windows software and get connected with the world.

Human Resources

The 2014 – 15 financial years was dedicated to a new beginning. Active efforts were undertaken to fill the vacant positions with qualified and devoted individuals. Though BAPU has given consideration to the fact that the organization should ensure minimal turnover and hence a wide range of Human Resource Policy in place which declares lot of comprehensive ease in performing duty and dozens of privileges declared. BAPU is also ensuring that the adolescents and the rescued victim find a place in BAPU's staff list and serve for the society and share their testimonies in order to ensure that they may fight back perils from their life. BAPU also ensure the educational and technical knowledge enhancement of the staffs and have helped staffs to acquire further studies and the expenses were borne by the organization.

More over BAPU ensure that the staffs get enough exposure in the field of social development and hence a large scale exposure visits organized in different organizations in the state. BAPU also

conduct annual staff appraisal and guarantees promotion or other rewarding system in order to appreciate the good work done by the individuals in the specified year.

SOME NOTABLE STAFFS, TRAINERS, CONSULTANTS AND VOLUNTEERS

1. Pratik Choudhury –Director
2. Tushar Kanti Dey- Consultant
3. Daisy Begum- Volunteer
4. Anup roy- Asst. Director
5. Durga sharma- Trainer
6. Mallika Dala- Trainer
7. Sushanti Mondol- Trainer

