

VOICES OF CHANGE

Tdh India Blogs

Celebrating Child Rights Week: A Step Towards a Brighter Future

In Kultali and Gosaba of South 24 Parganas, Child Rights Week was more than a celebration; it was a movement. For instance, during a rally in Kultali, children marched hand-in-hand with community leaders, chanting slogans against child marriage and advocating for education, symbolizing unity and determination to bring change.

Organized by Barasat Unnayan Prostuti along with Kaikhali Samadhan Samiti and PRAAJAK, with support from Terre des Hommes, this initiative championed child rights, tackling critical issues such as child marriage and trafficking while promoting child-friendly governance.



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"Due to academic and other work pressures, we usually don't get the opportunity to organize awareness programs like this in the school."

TEACHER

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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Eighteen impactful events engaged 1,686 participants, including students, parents, Panchayat members, ICDS staff, and healthcare workers. The events centered around themes of child rights, protection against exploitation, and fostering child-friendly governance. These collaborative efforts aimed to nurture child-friendly environments in schools and communities.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Rallies and Awareness Drives: Raised visibility on child rights and the fight against child exploitation.
- Interactive Competitions: Showcased children's creativity through sit-and-draw contests, speeches, and cultural programs.
- Participatory Discussions: Explored child labor, trafficking, and governance, formalizing child protection committees.
- Community Engagement: Empowered parents and local leaders to support girls' education and inclusive governance.

'More of these types of events can help children to understand about their rights very easily'.

Teacher from Hemantakumar Jr. High School



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STORIES OF CHANGE



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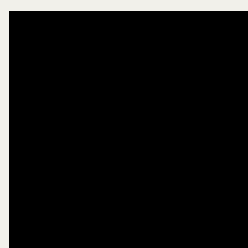


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"Teacher's Day had never been celebrated in our school before. Being part of this program and celebrating it for the first time made us feel really happy."



STUDENT



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THE WAY FORWARD

To sustain and amplify these efforts, the following actions are recommended:

- **Train Facilitators:** Equip them with event management and child protection strategies.
- **Broaden Campaigns:** Include adolescent health, gender sensitivity, and climate education.
- **Expand Infrastructure:** Establish child help desks in more schools for rights-related concerns.
- **Follow-Up Mechanisms:** Conduct regular reviews and maintain community engagement.

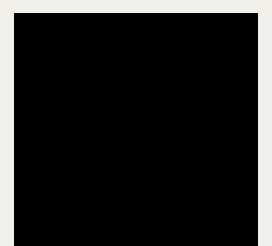
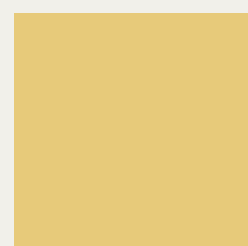
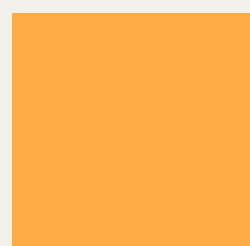
The events left a lasting imprint, evidenced by these outcomes:

- Direct engagement with over 400 girls, bridging gender gaps in education.
- Creation of the "Mener Katha Box," allowing children to voice concerns.
- Strengthened collaboration between schools, Panchayats, and NGOs.

Participants embraced the initiative, requesting expanded topics such as mental health, gender sensitivity, and adolescent health. These requests reflected pressing concerns within the community, such as increasing awareness of mental well-being, addressing gender inequities, and ensuring adolescents are equipped to handle challenges during their formative years. Teachers and community leaders emphasized the value of continued, localized programs.

LEARNINGS

The program provided valuable learnings to guide future initiatives. The effectiveness of visual aids and participatory activities highlighted the importance of creative engagement strategies for sustaining interest and enhancing understanding. Logistical planning emerged as a critical area of focus, with the need for robust backup systems and flexible arrangements to ensure smooth event execution.



CONCLUSION

Child Rights Week in Kultali and Gosaba demonstrated the transformative power of collective action, as it increased awareness of child rights, strengthened collaborations between key stakeholders, and empowered children to actively participate in safeguarding their future. By fostering awareness, collaboration, and participation, the initiative has laid a foundation for safer and more inclusive communities. Moving forward, scaling these efforts and addressing feedback will help secure a brighter future for all children.