

## Annual Report of SHIKHA Project- 2007-08

### **Introduction/ Present Status of DAS-**

**Development Action Society** has been supporting the marginalized women and children since 1995 in the vulnerable communities of South and Southeast Kolkata and part of South 24 pgs. It has been providing educational support both informally and formally to the educational disadvantage children, so far reached out to 5164 children and has mainstreamed 1913 children in local formal schools. Supported with funds from Suas, GOAL, SC-UK, NCLP, Magdalene and Shikshalaya, D.A.S. could work extensively in the field of - education, health and vocational training. It has also extended its reach in functional literacy as well as empowering women and children through innovative strategies and networking with local community people.

### Progress of the 'SHIKHA' Project:

This report is the compilation of 'Half-yearly' and 'End Term Report'. This will reflect the progress of the SHIKHA project so far. **Development Action Society (DAS)** is working towards achieving its mission and vision by executing various programmes, such as Pre School Centers for out of school children in the age group of 3-5 years, Preparatory Centers for out of school children in the age group of 6-14 years, Coaching Centers for first generation learners, Vocational Training Centers for adolescents in the age group of 14- 35 years and Health Clinic in Makaltala for children and adults in this community.

Presently, we have upgraded our **Management Information System (MIS)** from January 2008 to maintain continuous track of attendance and performance of each child in our NFE Centers and Remedial Support Centers. Though MIS system existed since 2007 but there was a deficit in regular intake of data and its upgradation. Since January we have framed and implemented an '**Attendance Format**' and a '**Performance Format**' in all NFE and Coaching centers for synchronizing activities, attendance and performance. **Tracking format** has been introduced to record the regularity of children already mainstreamed in formal schools. Three parameters of MIS are attendance, performance and tracking and from this, analysis can be carried out on an ongoing basis to compare performance in respect to attendance. Required data of attendance of each child from each centre (NFE and Coaching) is upgraded through MIS since **Jan 2008 till April 2008** and the data of performance of each child of all the NFE centers in all the **Three Terminal Examinations** have been updated.

**Suas and Development Action Society (DAS)** initiated from 2001 in achieving the objectives as mentioned in the proposal for ensuring '**Universalization of Elementary Education**' (UEE) for children and making sure that they become self-reliant in this process. The objective of **SHIKHA** Project with support from **SUAS** is to ensure enrollment and mainstreaming of out of school children including drop-out and First Generation Learners, ensuring coaching support to formal school goers because they lack adequate support at home and also sometimes they have to pay tuition fee which is unaffordable by most of the children and are also at the risk to get engaged as child labour. We also provide the children and women with prevocational and vocational training. **DAS's** has intervened in the area of

health through a Health Clinic at Makaltala for betterment of children and the community. Different strategies for programmes were implemented for fulfilling the proposed objectives such as Baseline survey, Tracking followed by enrollment drive for enrolling and retaining students, Assessment of teachers, Review meeting with teachers, Life skill development, Children's Parliament, monitoring and home visits in regular interval for strengthening and up gradation of the capacity of our staff in respective centers are being carried out.

**Programmes at a glance and its progress are:**

**Tracking:** Since 1995 DAS had been contributing towards mainstream education; it has spread its tentacles to tracking and retention programme. The ultimate objective being identifying, tracking and retaining those children in the Primary/High Schools of wards and Panchayat areas who had once been reached out through DAS Alternative Schools/NFE Centers. This initiative of tracking and retention is a unique process to retain children in the mainstream of education through the development of MIS of all those **546 children** who are continuing in the Formal schools owing either to DAS 's initial formalization & Socialization or owing to the back up support provided by the Remediation centers.

Though tracking initiated with **546 children** of 10 Primary Schools in wards 108, 57, and 2 panchayat areas of Ucchepota and Chariswar but among 10 schools 2 denied access i.e. Chowbaga High School and Anandapur F.P. School due to newly modified Government's rules and regulation. These 2 schools have been replaced with Kharamba High school and Bhojerhat Sarada High school from this year. So presently **421 children** will be tracked.

Thus, this tiny but unique approach shall unfold a new era in retaining children in the mainstream of education thereby elucidating their success records.

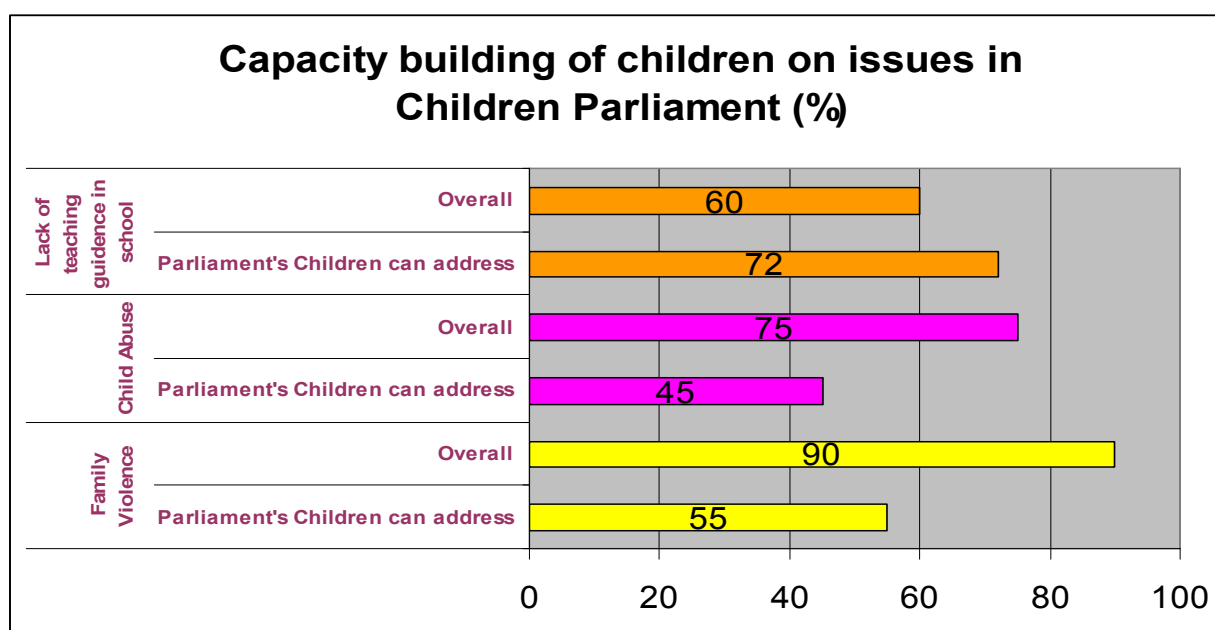
Development Action Society (DAS) will reach out to **421 children of 10 Primary Schools**. The following 10 Government Primary School houses the maximum number of children who have been mainstreamed from DAS's centers.

<b>Sl</b>	<b>Ward/Panchayat</b>	<b>Name of the School</b>	<b>No. of children to be tracked</b>
1.	108	Bijoy Pramanik Institution	21
2.	Panchayat	Chalk Kalar Khal Abaitanik Parathamik Vidyalaya	31
3.	Panchayat	Kalar Khal Abaitanik Prathamik Vidyalaya	9
4.	Panchayat	Kalarait Adarsha Shiksha Niketan	53
5.	108	Madurdhaya Satyaborti	27
6.	58	Upendranath Vidya Mandir	201
8.	Ucchepota Panchayat	Najirabad Primary School	72
9.	Chariswar Panchayat	Chariswar Prathamik Vidyalaya	2

10.	Chariswar Panchayat	Kharamba High School	2
11.	Chariswar panchayat	Bojerhat Sarada High School	3
			421

Short listing of the schools was done through the parameter of the maximum no. of children mainstreamed from DAS's NFE centers. The process of interaction with all the school authorities, official permission from the education department and identification of the children to be tracked has been completed. Tracking of 209 children has already been initiated in 3 schools namely **Madurdhaya Satyaborti, Upendranath Vidya Mandir, Najirabad Primary School**. Owing to annual examination, summer vacation, various co-curricular activities and frequent monitoring by SI (School Inspectors) tracking is also halted in Najirabad and Upendranath Vidya Mandir. The scenario in rest of the schools is the same and tracking shall resume from mid of June 2008 after the schools reopen.

**Children's Parliament:** It is a platform where DAS's mainstreamed children along with the children from ongoing education programmes (old parliamentarians) enthusiastically participate and help the newcomers (new parliamentarians) to express their views as well as they are able to share their own feelings on different issues (e.g. Family violence, child abuse, lack of teaching guidance in school, results in low self esteem) prevalent in their communities. Children Parliament comprises of 55 children aged between 12 to 18yrs.



As can be seen from the above graph that children are able to address the family violence more as this issue is highly prevalent in the community apart from this child abuse & lack of teaching guidance in schools are also adhered to by making their parents aware to which private tuition is provided to some as well as the interested students attend the coaching centres. The causes of family violence are mainly because of alcoholism among fathers, poverty and huge family size. The child abuse is due to physical torture, neglecting attitude from parents and abusive languages used by the peer groups and also by family members. The teachers in formal schools often

neglect the children and don't listen to their problems. They also express their likes/dislikes. The children had visited Shantiniketan from 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 to 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2008. The children were exposed to a different study environment where classes are being held in open space under the tree. Children shared their views on life skills and how they cope in their daily life. This exposure visit helps in peer learning.

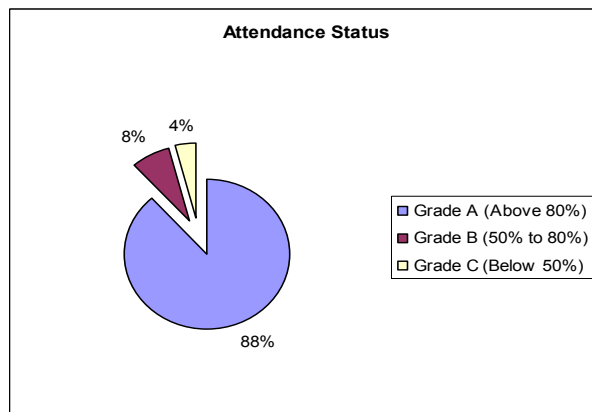
### Progress in Status of Alternative Schools (NFE Centers)

With support from **Suas, Development Action Society (DAS)** is ensuring education through 6 Alternative Schools or Non Formal centers. Presently attendance of each child and their performance of all the three terminal examination are being maintained through MIS. The following are the qualitative analysis of the Alternative Education Centers and Coaching Centers accompanied by graphical representation so far.

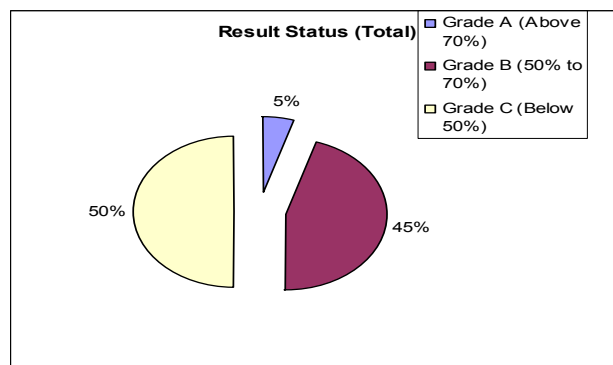
#### **Alternative Education Centers:**

**Mukulbithi:** This school is situated in the Makaltala area i.e. the dumping ground of the entire Kolkata. All the children studying in **Mukulbithi** are **First Generation Learners**. 79 children were enrolled between April and August 2007 out of which 21 children dropped out .Among them 4 students never came back to school while the rest 17 attended intermediately resulting in regularity.

No children were mainstreamed. Total number of children is 75 and among them 11 is irregular wherein 5 are male and 6 are female.



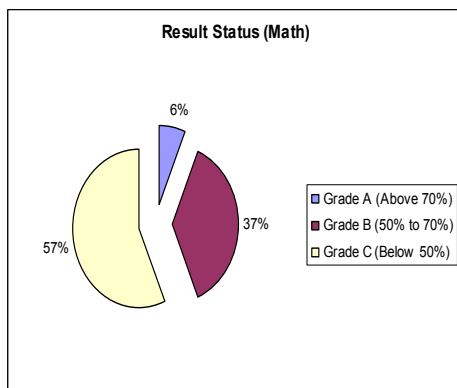
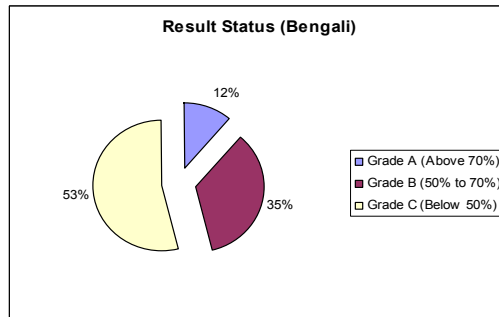
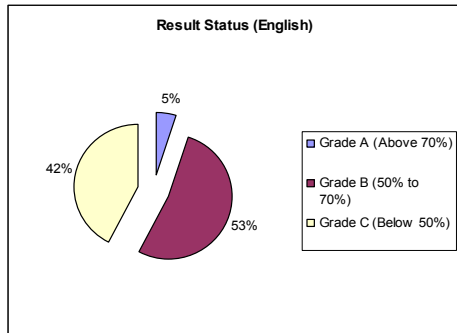
The 'Attendance' has been divided into 3 Grades as shown above. The above graph shows 88% of children falling under A grade i.e. above 80%. Thus 88% of children are regular. 8% of children are in grade B i.e. between 50% to 80% and 4% of children are below 50%.



This graph shows the performance rate of children in all the 3 examinations. Here 5% of children have secured more than 70% of marks. 45 % of children have secured between 50% to 70% and about 50% of children have secured less than 50%.

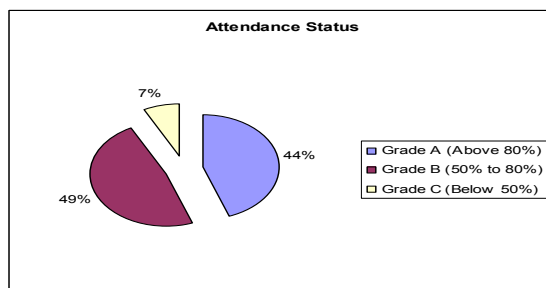
The total **success rate** of Mukulbithi is **94%**.

The graphs below show the performance of children in three subjects for e.g. in English, Bengali and Mathematics.

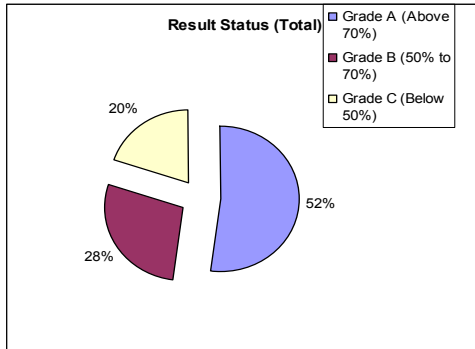


**Kishalaya:** This school is in the Ucchepota area. All the children come from Ucchepota and adjacent areas. 25 children were enrolled in Kishalaya out of which none dropped out. Among them 3 students were irregular paving towards regularity. Later 2 more children were enrolled. Among 27 children 6 were mainstreamed wherein 1 is male and 5 are female. None dropped out.

The graph below depicts the **attendance** of children in Kishalaya center. Here 44% of children attendance is above 80%. 49% of children are between 50% to 80% and 7% of children attendance is below 50%.



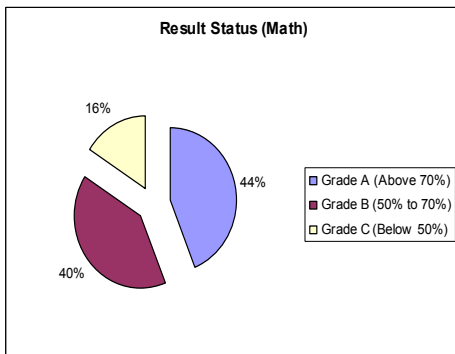
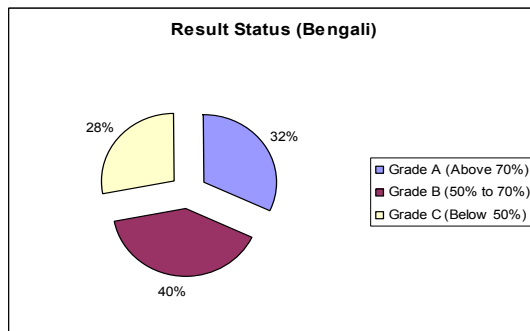
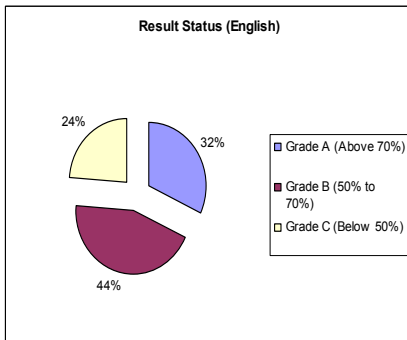
The graph below depicts the performance rate of the children.



In accordance to the above graph the overall performance of the children in this centre is good. 52% of children have scored more than 70% marks. 28% of children have scored between 50% to 70% marks and 20% of children have scored marks below 20%.

The **total success rate** of the children of Kishalaya is **78%**.

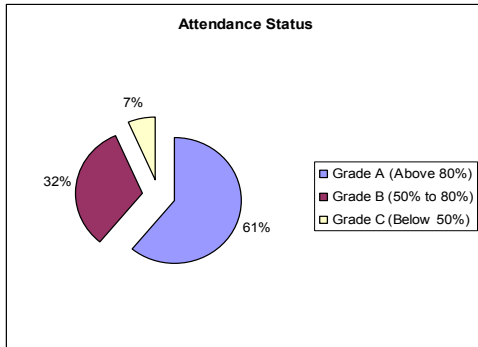
Below graphically the performance percentage of children in three subjects has been given.



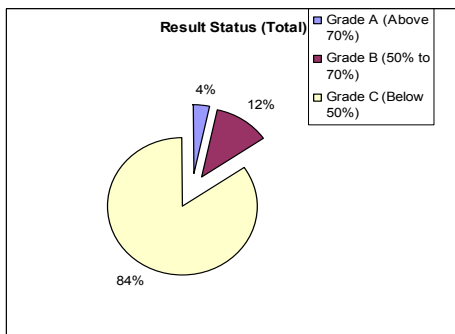
**Nabaujjal:** Paschim Chariswar is our recent intervention area, where Nabaujjal mobilizes the community inspite of scarcity of communication, shortage of space etc. At present 134 children are enrolled among which none dropped out but 11 are irregular. The population of this area is Muslim by religion.

5 children have been mainstreamed among which 2 are male and 3 are female.

The graph below depicts the **attendance** scenario of Nabaujjal center. Here the attendance of 61% of children is more than 80% and 32% of children attendance is between 50% to 80% and 7% of children are below 50%.



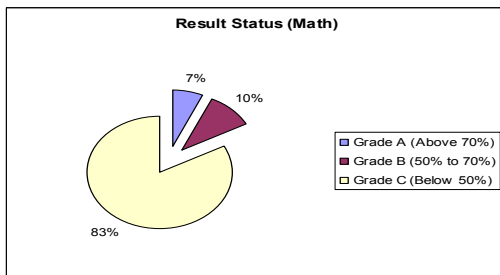
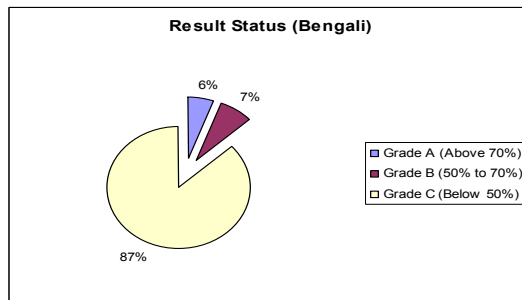
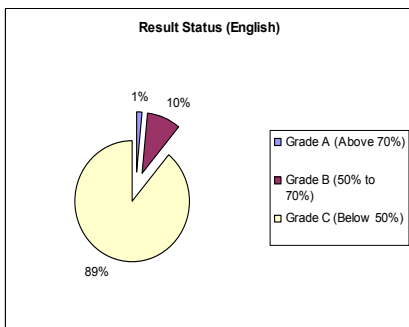
The performance rate of the children is represented through graph below:



The graph above depicts that only 4 % of children performed well i.e. scored more than 70%. About 12% of children secured between 50% to 70% and 84% of children have scored below 50%.

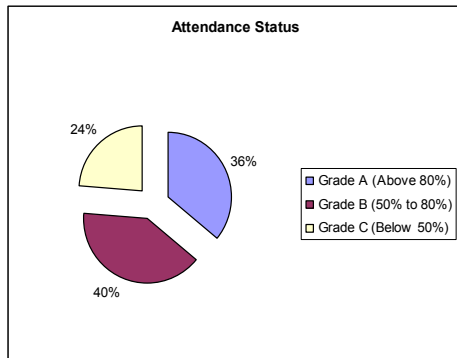
The **total success rate** of the children of Nabaujjal School is **78%**.

Below graphically the performance percentage of children in three subjects has been given.



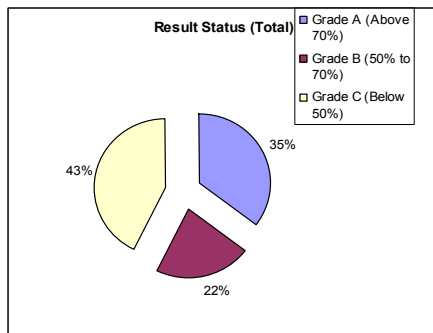
**Nabadeep:** This school is in Arupota area, where child marriage, alcoholism, scarcity of drinking water is more prevalent. But after our intervention, child marriage cases reduced. Mothers became more aware regarding importance of education. The attendance of the children in all the classes increased in Nabadeep. 154 children were enrolled out of which 8 children dropped out and about 13 are irregular.

49 children are mainstreamed wherein 26 are male and 23 are female. The **attendance** of the children has been represented graphically below:



In accordance to the above graph 36% of children attendance is above 80% and attendance of 40% of children is between 50% to 80% and 24% of children are below 50%.

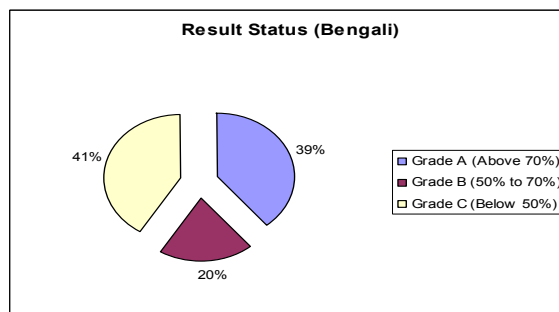
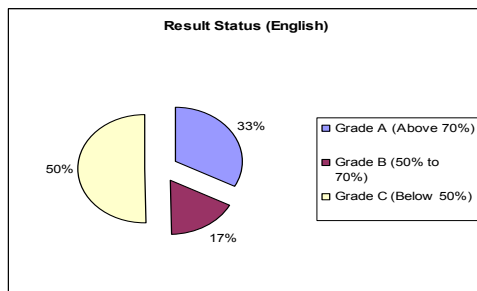
Below the graph represent the performance rate of the children:

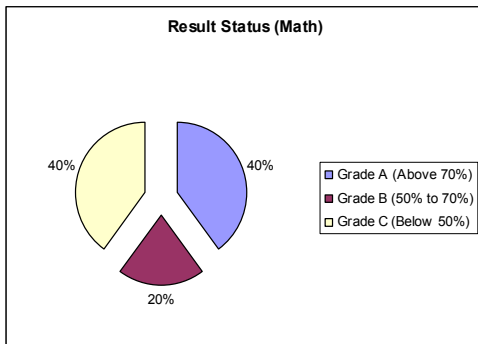


39% of children have scored more than 70% of marks and 22% of children have scored from 50% to 70% and 43% have scored below 50%.

The **total success rate** of the children in Nabadeep School is **70%**.

The graph below depicts the percentage of marks obtained in three subjects:

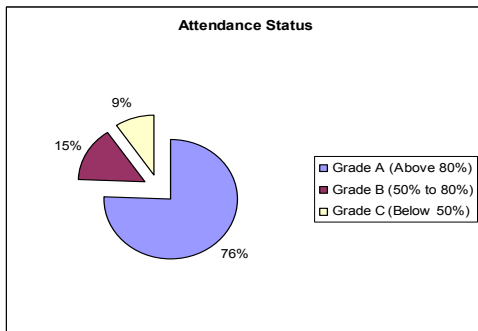




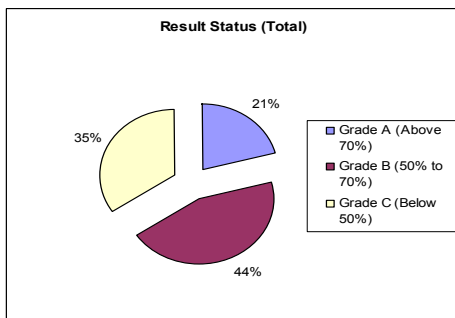
**Anandalok:** This center is in Anandapur. Total children enrolled are 118 out of which 8 dropped out and about 62% are irregular mainly due to monsoon.

32 children are mainstreamed out of which 15 are male and 16 are female.

The attendance of the children is graphically represented below. Here 76% of children attendance is above 80% and attendance of 15% of children is between 50% to 80% and 15% of children attendance is below 50%.



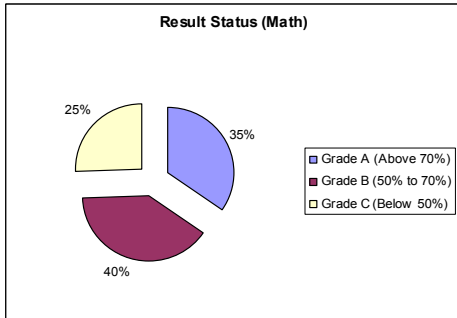
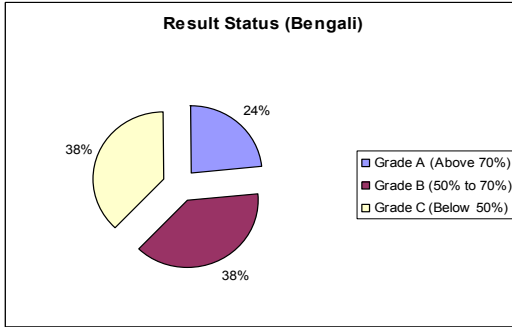
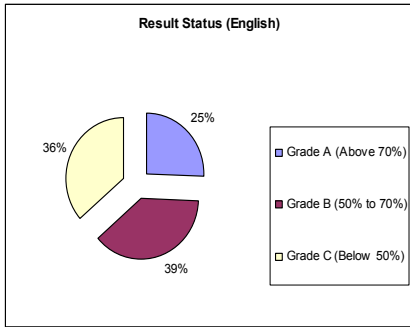
The performance of the children in this center is given below:



In the above graph 21% of children have scored above 70% and 44% of children have scored from 50% to 70% and 35% of children have scored below 50%.

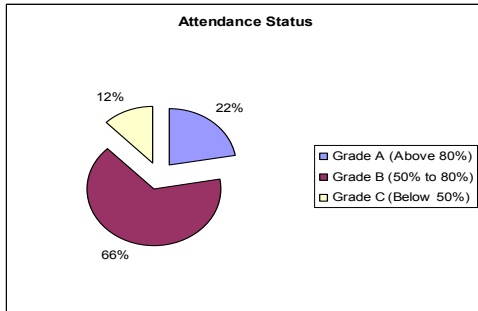
The **total success rate** of children in Anandalok School is **87%**.

Below graphically the performance of children in 3 subjects have been depicted:

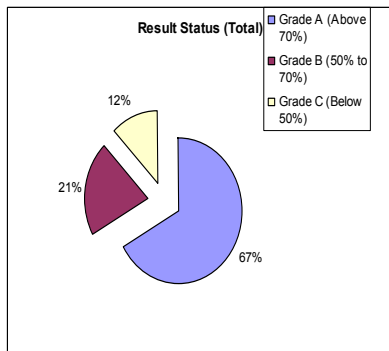


**Nabanir:** This center is in the Chowbaga area. 81 children enrolled out of which 14 drop out and about 19 are irregular. 37 children are mainstreamed out of which 16 are male and 21 are female.

The **attendance** of the children is graphically represented below. Here the attendance of 22% of children is above 80% and wherein attendance of 66% of children is between 50% to 80%. 12% of children attendance is below 50%.



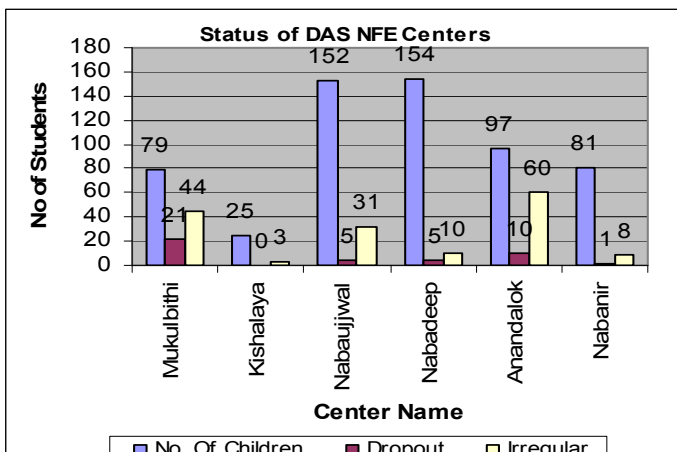
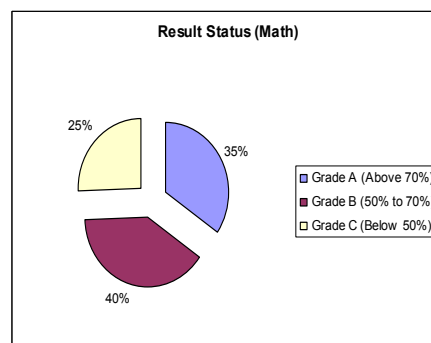
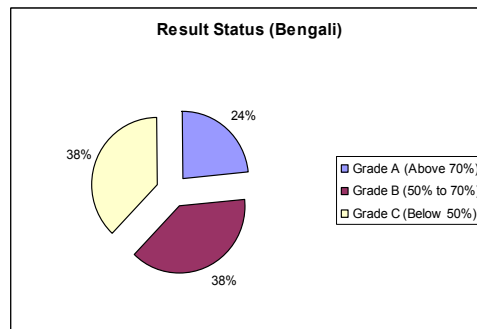
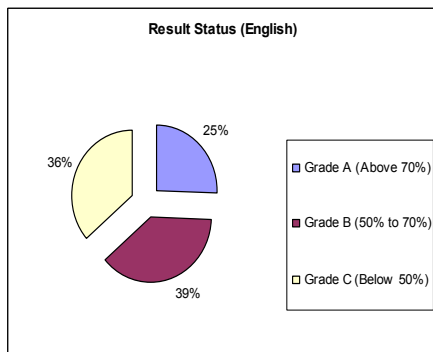
The performance rate of children is represented below graphically:



In the above graph it is shown that 67% of children have secured more than 70% marks in all the 3 terminal examinations. 21 % of them have secured marks between 50% to 70% and wherein 12% have secured below 50% marks.

The **total success rate** of the children of Nabanir is **94%**.

The graphical representation of marks secured in 3 subjects is given below:



### Reasons for drop out in all the Centers

- Poor economic condition

- Lack of awareness among parents regarding education
- Early marriage among children (i.e. child marriage)
- Most of the children engaged themselves in different works including hazardous jobs (i.e. child labour)
- Frequent migration
- Eviction of slums
- Conflicts in family
- Demise of either parents

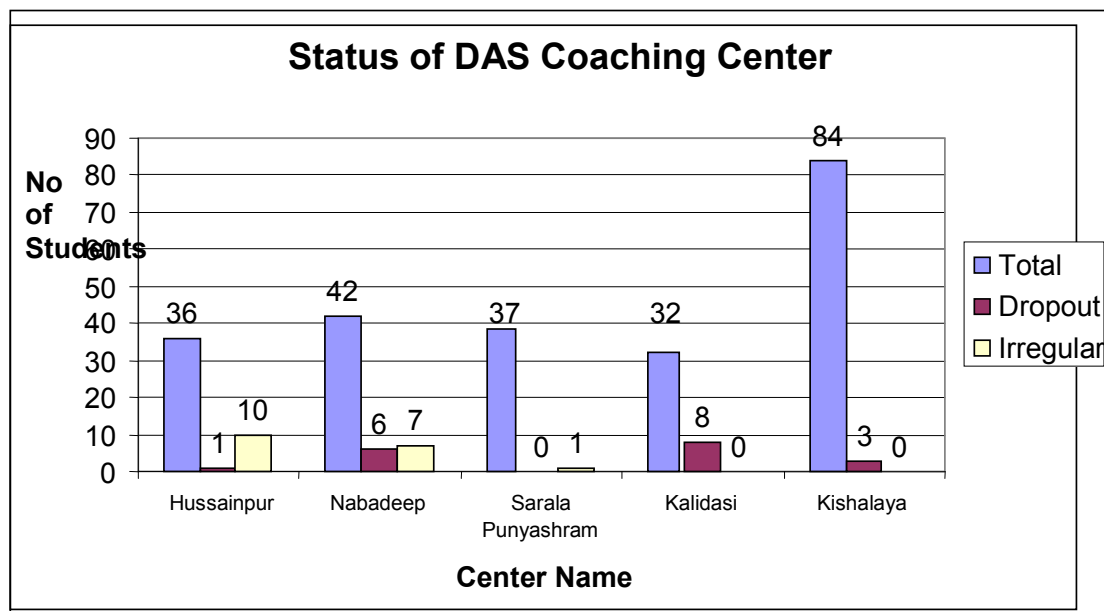
### Reasons for Irregularity:

- They engage themselves in household work due to their parents' long hours of work.
- Seasonal works (e.g. Cleaning of canal, farming, working as vegetable vendors, working in dumping ground)
- Health problems
- Due to long distance the % of children are less in the centers and this is more prevalent in monsoons.
- Frequent visits to relative's houses.
- For attending fair, wedding etc.

### Home Visits:

Alternative school teachers and community volunteers conduct home visits as required.

### WELCOME TO REMEDIAL CENTRES:



**Kishalaya Coaching:** Among 84 children 3 dropped out due to exam fear. Attendance and performance of each child is maintained regularly. Children celebrated Republic Day by

participating in Quiz competition and also sang patriotic songs. Some times the same classes have to be repeated and even extra classes taken due to high rate of absenteeism. The Performance rate is about 95%, one student failed in class VIII and four students failed in class X.

**Nabadeep Coaching:** Among 42 children 7 are irregular. Events have been celebrated at this center for e.g. 23<sup>rd</sup> of January, Netaji's Birthday; 26<sup>th</sup> of January, Republic Day; Saraswati Puja and Meeting with stakeholders. Club members of this centre have stopped providing the club space after 4:00 pm due to their internal problems hence the coaching support has been shifted to a place close by from this centre from April onwards. The Performance rate is about 87%.as five students failed in high class.

**Sarala Coaching:** Total children attending coaching classes are 36 but 2 are newly enrolled.1 child is irregular because of mental illness. Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) are not used because class is conducted in one hall. This is a Residential Hostel [Govt Home] for girls wherein lesson plan and lesson design cannot be followed due to school routine and curriculum. The performance rate of children in exam is about 99% as all children have passed.

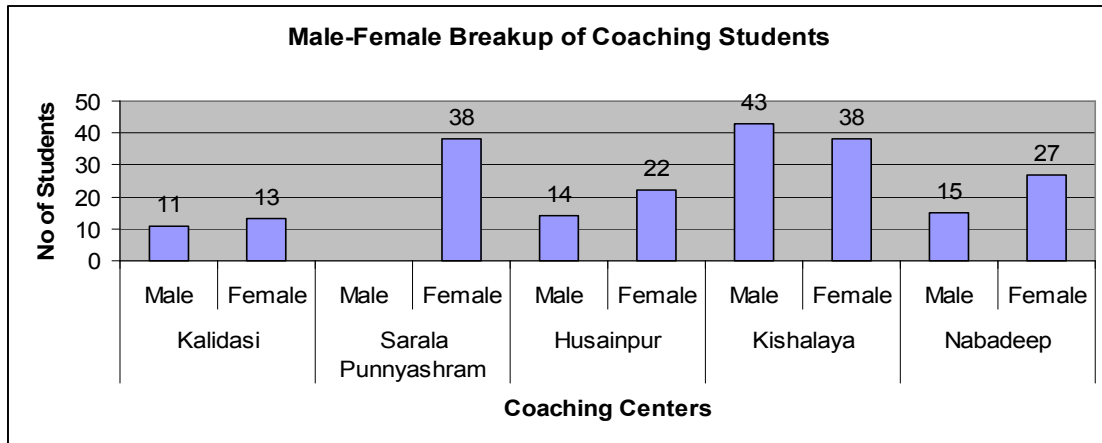
**Hussainpur Coaching:** Total children getting coaching support are 36 among which 10 are irregular and 1 dropped out. There is irregularity in the attendance of the children due to final examination. The performance rate is 99% as all children have passed the final exam and promoted to next class.

**Kalidashi Coaching:** Coaching support is provided to 36 children. Among which 8 children dropped out wherein 3 were male and 6 were female. The performance rate is 99% as all children passed and promoted to next class.

**Reasons for Drop out:** The reasons for drop out vary from centre to centre. Drop out is frequent because they visit their relatives residing outside of Kolkata. In Sarala coaching children dropped out because of distance from home. Coaching teachers have introduced different co-curricular activities for increasing regularity in attendance.

**Home Visit:** Home visits are conducted for irregular students. In the parents meeting it was communicated that leave application to be submitted citing the reason for being absent. It was seen that during the month of March the % of children attending coaching was low due to annual examination.

The following graph depicts that the ratio of male and female is 83:138 in five remedial centres. It reflects that the gender divide is low in case of males.

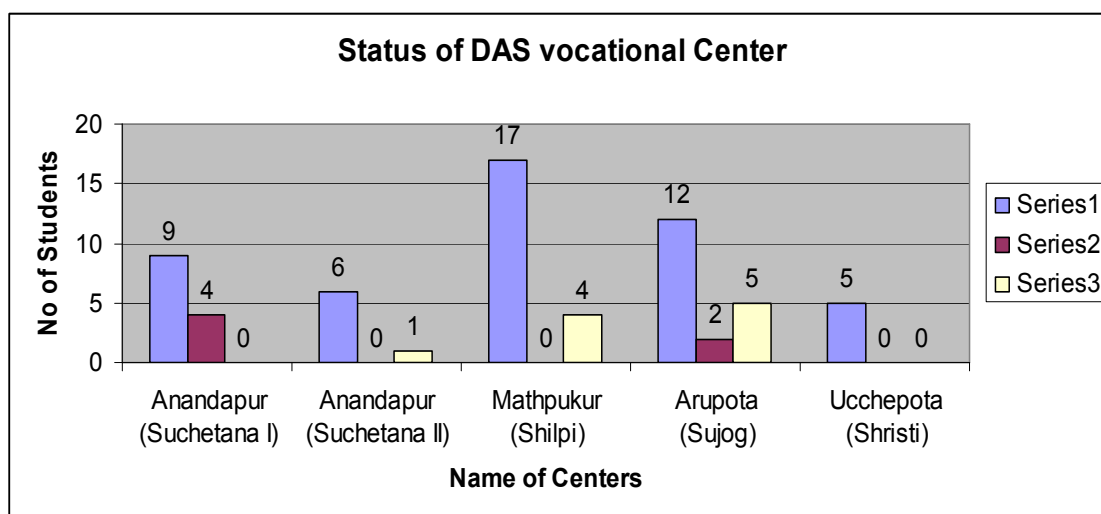


### Case Study

**Baisakhi** is a sincere student of 13yrs and is good in studies. She stood first in annual examination. Her family's condition is vulnerable. After her parents death her elder sister takes care of her siblings. Baisakhi's brother in law is a nice person and always provides support to them. As she has no one to look after her she got admitted to Sarala Girls' Home (Government) for her future studies and guidance too. We give coaching support to the primary school children over there. Presently she is studying in class V.

Minati is her classmate and a new student. She is also good in studies. But with each passing day Baisakhi's behavior is changing and a few negative behavioral traits were observed such as she is becoming jealous of Minati because she is being more appreciated. The coaching teachers of Sarala Punnyashram are conscious about her and giving support to her in building her confidence level. That is really a challenge for the teachers to give moral support and guidance in studies as she is now in high class.

### Status of Vocational Training Centers



The **vocational training centers** equip the trainees with different skills of handicrafts for e.g. in **Suchetana I** trainee learns cutting, stitching and tailoring of petticoats, blouses, jute bags and table mats.

**Suchetana II** teaches the trainees different stitching skills like embroidery work, tailoring of school dresses, kitchen doll, night gown, various bathroom accessories.

In **Shilpi** trainees learn jute handicrafts (especially different kinds of table mats, bags, show pieces, key rings etc.)

In **Sujog** trainees learn different kind of bags in jute, bags with crystal beads, and ornaments with beads, jute and soft toys.

In **Shristi** trainees learn chalk making and door mats.

At present a new programme had been initiated i.e. formation of **Self help Group (SHG)**. Till March, one SHG group was formed. The members of the group are those who are already earning from our vocational centres. They are now influencing other females in the areas as they are aware of saving money for generating more income as well as for consumption.

**Market linkages with the following shops/ persons for selling of vocational items:**

S. No	Name	Address
1.	Ankur Kala	9 A, Meher Ali Road, Kolkata
2.	Mrs. Das	105 Jodhpur Park, Kolkata
3.	Mrs. Malkani	Kolkata
4.	Batanagar Girls High School	Batanagar, Budge Budge
5.	Saranga High Madrasa School	Saranga, Budge Budge
6.	Barabazar Shop	Barabazar, Kolkata
7.	Gariahat Street Market	Gariahat, Kolkata
8.	Flats in Anandapur	Anandapur, Kolkata

### Reasons for irregularity

- Personal illness
- Domestic problems
- Due to children's examination

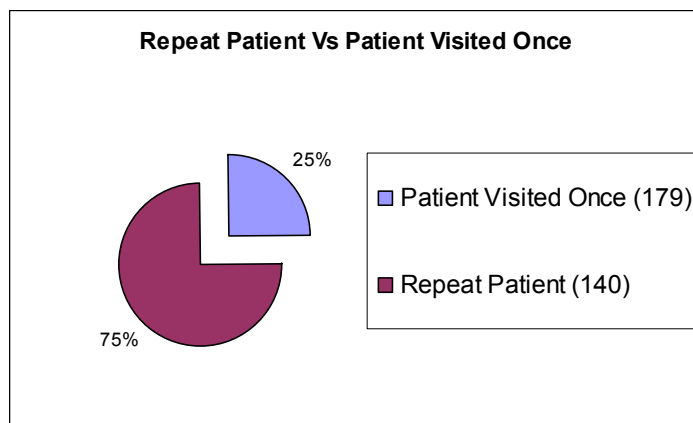
- Pressure of household work
- Due to petty work (such as farming, vegetable vending)

### Health Clinic :

Mukulbithi health clinic is run at a community space in Makaltala near the dumping ground area. This clinic runs once a week for 2 hours. Location wise it lacks basic facilities of public transport, piped water and sanitation. Lack of health facilities and nearest hospital is 10 Kms away.

The clinic reaches out to the children and adults of the area. They are treated in the health center by a registered medical practitioner named Dr. Sikha Mitra for general ailments and infection such as skin disease, minor respiratory problems, cold, cough, fever, flu, aches and pains.

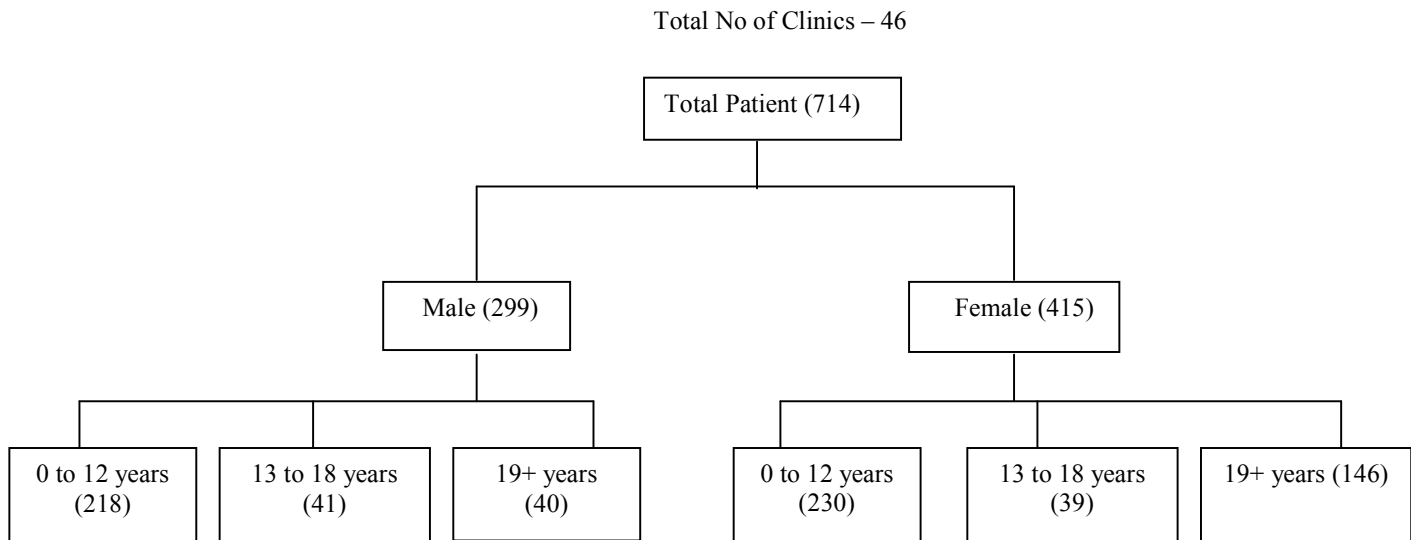
The pregnant women are referred to the nearest hospital to ensure institutionalized delivery of child and also to access government facilities for pregnancy. The clinic facility resulted in improving individual, family and community health.



**This graph indicates the recurrence of repeat patients that stand at 75% as they are exposed to waste picking in the dumping ground , here they suffer cuts, bruises, infections and internal ailments from the toxic waste, 80 per cent of hospitals dump their refuse straight into municipal tips and further dumped in Dhapa.**

## Health Intervention (April 2007 to March 2008)

### Makaltala Clinic



This graph reflects the patients per clinic as well as the vulnerability of females in comparison to males in different age groups. Among 299 males, 0-12 years are more susceptible to common ailments whereas 13-18 years usually suffer from skin disease, cuts and bruises, infection and internal ailments. 19 years and above age group females in comparison to males suffer more from mixed ailments due to exposure in the dumping ground and cultivation in polluted land and environment.

#### Training on Health

The training imparted to five Makaltala women along with the women of other areas in pre-natal care, family planning, immunization, consumption of low cost nutritious food, prevention and protection of seasonal diseases and worm infestation way back in June resulted in some knowledge gain and has been following some of the methods in protecting themselves.

#### Training and Workshops :

##### Learning Classroom Series

Learning Classroom Series Workshop helped the teachers to enhance their knowledge and also to learn and unlearn different threads of classroom transaction and etiquette. The workshop modules that covered knowledge on the difference between lesson design and lesson plan, classroom management, learning styles, Action for teachers and parent, means of teaching different subjects through one topic. This workshop resulted in

practically applying the module that has been acceptable to both the teachers as well as the students.

### **Organisation Development Process**

#### **The first training focused on-**

- Brief introduction of OD process for understanding its strengths & challenges. Opportunity to look back & plan ahead with a critical eye.
- Up gradation of MIS that focused on designing of thematic area, data collection, record keeping, data cleaning, data analysis & report generation
- Up gradation of reporting formats focused on field data – supervisor- programme coordinator

#### **Outcome-**

- Emergence of a short comprehensive format
- Soft ware development-Centre based program have been developed for all the projects that will be linked to a master program reflecting outputs on indicators of progress of the organization as a whole

### **Challenges in education, health, advocacy and women empowerment-**

- DAS's challenge is to increase utilization of Govt health services
- Our ability to focus on pre-primary enrolment and transition to primary education with retention in formal secondary education
- Challenge on raising awareness across the organization/communities on the problem of child abuse. Ensure to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.
- Challenge in mobilizing functional skill development of women in generating economic sustainability in peri-urban areas.