



World Social Work Day Celebration
Workshop on
‘Inspiring Inclusion’: Role of Social Work in Women's Empowerment
Organized by
Department of Social Work, School of Professional Studies, NSOU
REPORT

Date: 19/3/2024

Venue: NSOU Headquarters

No. of Participants: 62

Department of Social Work, in collaboration with “Uddami India Foundation” celebrated the World Social Work Day (#WSWD24), by organizing a Workshop on **‘Inspiring Inclusion’ Role of Social Work in Women's Empowerment**. Uddami India Foundation (UIF), located at Prince Anwar Shah Road in South Kolkata, an organization which works with the mission - “Empowering the disadvantaged for sustainable livelihoods”.

The first official observance of World Social Work Day took place in 2007, but the day has roots that go back much further. The goal for celebrating this day is to give the social workers a forum to work together on various humanitarian problems. While looking for an appropriate theme for the workshop, it was felt that the month of March is associated with women’s day, so it was thought that it shall be apt to discuss on this issue and link it with Social Work practice. The idea to organize this workshop was to identify and prescribe ways for promoting the participation of women and to address and challenge the barriers, inequalities and injustices that exist in society in the path of women’s Empowerment by adopting Social Work techniques.

The participants who attended the workshop were the learners of MSW programmes, academicians and professionals. Smt Tulika Das, Chairperson West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights and Prof. Niladri Ranjan Chatterjee Dept. of English Kalyani University gave their consent to deliver their speech in the workshop. Besides the invited dignitaries, Harshomanjuri Nanda, Executive Director UIF, Smt Ananya Mitra, Registrar (Add'l Charges) NSOU, and Prof Anirban Ghosh, Director SPS (i/c) were also present for the Workshop. Simultaneously there was a poster making Workshop, where participants were trained to make posters on various social issues. The program was organised in the Subhas Chandra Sabha ghar (7th floor), NSOU from 2:00pm to 4:00 pm.



The programme began by watering the plant sapling, were not only the dignitaries but even some of the participants were also invited for the ritual. After the felicitation of all the dignitaries in dyas, Smt Kasturi Sinha Ghosh, Asst Prof in Social Work, NSOU while setting the tone for the workshop said, Social Work promotes social justice by ensuring Rights for all, thus it focuses on the principle of “Inclusion” as well. The profession of Social Work is well-known for fighting against exploitation of the weak, and for standing up against anti-oppressive practices, and most importantly for making sure that the voiceless are given a voice. “Thus social workers play a crucial role in promoting and preserving a just society while defending the rights and interests of vulnerable persons”. Social workers as an enablers, facilitators, experts and Resource persons must take the responsibility to aware the society especially the women to know about their rights and entitlements and pave the way for sustainable women’s empowerment.

Prof Anirban Ghosh, Director SPS (i/c) in his welcome address said that NSOU works with the motive to reach the maximum number of learners, from all the section of the society.NSOU through its vocational courses has made it possible for not only men but also women to acquire skilled based professional training and are becoming economically independent. He extended his warm welcome to Smt Tulika Das and Prof Niladri Ranjan Chatterjee and thanked them for accepting our invitation. He further appreciated the excellent endeavorance taken by UIF, in the field of social development of the communities.



Smt Harshamanjuri Nanda, Executive Director UIF, took the participants to the ground reality by sharing her field experiences while working with the women folk of the different communities. She said that Social Work needs to be applied in the field of Women’s Empowerment as this academic discipline is much scientific and works for the Rights for all and working for women does not mean anti men. Social work thus adopts an inclusive approach which is based on Humanitarianism. She concluded her speech by reciting a poem which depicted the position of women in our society, which left the entire audience with lot of emotions as well as questions in their mind.

Smt Tulika Das, Chairperson West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights, was then invited to deliver her lecture. Smt Das expressed that she was glad to be a part of workshop. While delivering her talk the Chairperson, said that girl children must be given all kind of protection and must be made aware of their rights and entitlement from their very childhood. She emphasized on the term “Equity”, and shared that each and every individual in this society irrespective of their caste, creed and gender must be given ample choice and opportunities to decide for themselves and opt for the best according to their requirements.

Prof Niladri Ranjan Chatterjee, Dept. of English Kalyani University who was the next speaker,said that has been teaching a course in gender studies at his university since 2009.He shared that Bengali masculinity is often viewed as predominantly heterosexual, leading to a

specific presentation of this concept and there is a kind of complexity to our understanding of Bengali homosexual. We need to be clear about various terms in use like- Trans men, Trans women, Transgender etc. The question of empowerment for all is only possible by serious discussion.

Both the speakers gave stimulating and thought provoking speech, which engaged the participants and then there was a question answer session.



Smt Ananya Mitra, Registrar, NSOU (Add'l charge) said that University is overwhelmed to have such eloquent speakers, which completely mesmerized the audience. She said that NSOU is playing its role in Women's Empowerment, by enabling the women learners to acquire education according to their own choice and pace. Thus today ODL education is becoming an important tool for women's education.

Dr Monojit Garai finally proposed the vote of thanks. He extended special thanks to Uddami India Foundation for their support and collaboration.

--Report prepared by Smt. K. Sinha Ghosh & Dr. M. Garai