



Editor: Dr. Syed S. Kazi

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FOR Social Impact in North East

Celebrating & Recognising Best Practices & Innovations in
Social and Community Development in North East India



RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

(Institution of National Importance by the Act of Parliament No. 35/2012)

Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India
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**Social Innovations for
Social Impact in North East**

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Published by: North East Development Foundation

Co-Published by: Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD),
Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India

For more copies, contact:

North East Development Foundation
168, Saikia Commercial Complex, First Floor, Jayanagar, Near NRL Petrol Pump
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TeleFax: +91-0361-2363204

Price: Rs. 200 : \$ 10

Printed in India by Wings Marketing Communication

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- 2 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT



Social and Development Innovations will Sustain North East India

Greetings!

It has always been a critical issue to adopt and implement sound and sustainable development practices in North East Region (NER) of India. Widely, factors around key development and governance issues has been discussed and debated quite often than late, more in the context of how resources are spent and sustained on the ground benefiting the people and communities at large.

Irrespective of these, the moot point is the prime need in North East today is sound development and governance mechanisms in place based on State specific cultural and ethnographic considerations. The emphasis is and ought to be on how the regional development leadership and stakeholders in NER gives greater emphasis on evolving out workable models of development, advocacy and governance. In the name of development what are observed are adhoc and stop-gap arrangements and measures in most of the cases. What is pointed out is a top-down and 'provided' solutions as innovations to solve the localized development and governance challenges in education, health, livelihood, employment generation and so on.

Thus, there is always the look for sustainable innovations in social and development solution needs that has beginning and end in implementing and sustaining development projects and interventions. Innovations in ideating, implementing and sustaining development oriented measures are being sought after by development stakeholders including the government, Corporate Social Responsibilities' (CSRs), bilateral and multilateral agencies, civil society agencies and others. There is, thus, a felt need for home-grown or home-based innovations which would deliver a sense of pride and boastfulness in taking key



development and governance practices to the next level of sustainability, which could really help to match local natural resources, human resources and local institutional based delivery mechanism capacities within the North Eastern States.

In a way we are also talking about how to develop, built up or scale up a repository of social and community development initiatives in the North East that may sustain each other, the communities and the States at large. Certainly, this kind of a knowledge bank could give a wider scope to share, exchange, learn from each other and possibly see solutions within the own vicinity rather than traversing thousands of miles to 'invite' or 'channelise' a solution.

The fact is, there are good social and development initiatives on ground in North East India Region (NER) impacting focused groups and beneficiaries in critical areas of health, education, livelihood, environment and others to address societal and development challenges. These initiatives by the government, industry CSRs, NGOs, civil society organisations and others are providing sustainable solutions to community development and

societal challenges in the region. There is the need to salute, recognize and document such best practices towards further learning, sharing, knowledge network and policy and programme consolidations. The North East Social Impact Award (NESI) Award is an initiative towards this.

The North East Social Impact Award platform is, thus, a knowledge network of such development practices coming together on the same platform to learn and gain from each other. The platform covering all the eight North Eastern States including Sikkim is an effort to connect the wider development stakeholders in the region. And this has come at a time when the development agencies including civil society organisations, the industry CSRs units are encouraged to contribute in the larger development framework as a development facilitator and service provider.

The Social Impact Award, launched in 2015, is being recognized in 10 categories. The total number of nominations / applications received was 66, and the total nominations internally screened and reviewed for eligible for jury selection is 63. Encouragingly, there have been

nominations from every State of the North East with few nominations of regional and national characters.

Coming August 28, 2015, we shall have all 63 finalists making their presentations in various plenaries, with panel experts taking the final call in selecting the winners and special mentions from each category. The Award felicitation evening will see the final recognition and award giving to the some of the good innovative practices of 2015. Irrespective of the winners and their innovations, what are important to consider is all applications / nominations are having their own value and significance in addressing community and development needs in various contexts and time zones. And our salute goes to each one of them!

Our sincere acknowledgement and thanks to National Foundation for India (NFI) as an organizing partner to support and believe in this initiative.

As a co-organiser, the support and contribution of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, has been tremendous, motivating and encouraging. The role and contribution of RGNIYD in supporting and promoting development initiatives in the North Eastern Region (NER) has been a force accelerator, especially in youth based initiatives.

Without the institutional collaboration and support of Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), with its constant incubation support to North East Development Foundation (NEDF), this programme would not have been possible. The institutional support from Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) under the Ministry of Skill

Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India, and the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India, has gone a long way in strengthening this programme and enhancing its credibility.

The support of Public Interest Registry (PIR) through its .NGO global domain credibility support to civil society agencies worldwide has been stupendous. The support of the .NGO platform to the North East Social Impact Award Programme 2015 has come at a time when the PIR has launched world-wide the .NGO domain for development agencies as a platform to provide credibility, validation and network and resource support to civil society organisations including NGOs to join the national and international development community for greater network and interdependency towards a better world.

The team of Ms. Riju Moni Baishya, Rimi Phukan, Harun Ahmad, Prativa Borah, Sapna Subba, Ravi Kumar Yadav, Jaspreet, Rohit Dhall, Dhiraj Pegu and Asma Kazi deserves a special recognition to make this programme meaningful and significant.

I hope this award initiative in North East India will continue to open new opportunities for knowledge exchange, sharing, collaboration and partnerships in the field of development innovations for sustainable development and good governance.

This award book consists of social and development innovators and practitioners of North East India and their exemplary works, all contributing towards development inclusion in North East India.

I wish all dear readers a happy reading in knowing the innovations and innovators

Readers may excuse any mistakes in this award edition book as human errors.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shazi" with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Syed S. Kazi

Lead Partner: North East Development Foundation

Promoter: The North East Social Impact Award

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The Entrepreneurship Paradox - what it needs for entrepreneurs in the MSME sector to sustain?

What we need for the next decade are thousands of new companies that will focus on developing products and services needed to tap the massive opportunities in India and around the world.

*Dr Sriparna B Baruah**

Creating jobs is one of the biggest challenges facing every country – both developed and developing. India's job challenge is particularly massive because of her numbers. Nearly 700 million Indians live without dignity; creating jobs to pull them out of poverty is challenge enough. On top of this, India's demographic dividend also requires her to create opportunities for about 13 million young people every year. To put this in perspective, even at the peak of her economic growth between 2005 and 2010, India created only about 5.5 million jobs a year.

Entrepreneurship is required to transform innovations into new products or services. In other words, the more individuals are willing to become entrepreneurs, the more ideas and innovations will become a reality. The benefits for society from this are obvious. New enterprises make up for enterprise deaths and particularly innovative ones add to the potential growth of the economy. However, India isn't making the most of its young talent and is instead pushing that talent into large established firms. That's okay as long as the firms flourish but this is not what India needs in the long term. What we need for the next decade are thousands of new companies that will focus on developing products and services needed to tap the massive opportunities in India and around the world. An understanding of how big a role entrepreneurship and self-employment has to play going forward is essential. India must become a nation of job creators, not just job seekers. Becoming an entrepreneur rather than finding a job,



must be the aspiration of young people. Not all ventures need be the size of Flipkart or Ola Cabs; many could be microenterprises employing just a handful of people. But the collective impact of hundreds of thousands of such entrepreneurs will be huge.

A recent study shows that Asians have the highest fear of being entrepreneurs, and Indians are no different. Almost 40 percent of the potential entrepreneurs in India don't set up businesses because they are worried about failure. In Sub-Saharan Africa, only 20% of the people surveyed said that they were afraid to fail. As a nation we pride ourselves on the extraordinary talent pool and the entrepreneurial acumen of our youngsters. Yet, till date, we have very few billion dollar start-ups and even fewer large product companies. This is despite a number of companies being founded and funded in the past two decades. The primary reason for this is the birth characteristics of the start-ups: whether an entrepreneur has given birth to a baby or a dwarf. Some entrepreneurs conceptualise and create strong companies. Others by not taking confident

strides in the formative stage are left with ventures that remain small. Therefore, entrepreneurs must have the right mindset and ensure that their companies do not grow into a dwarf.

Fortunately, there is a rising tide of entrepreneurship in urban India; the best and brightest young minds prefer to join a start-up rather than Google or Microsoft. In the start-up segment, India had an investment of \$3.86 billion through venture capitalists and the number is expected to rise exponentially this year. There are 70 Private Equity and Venture funds, 62 angel investors and 80 incubators and start-up accelerators. There are 3100 start-ups present in India and the projection till 2020 is 11500 employing over 2.5 lakh people.

Along with start-ups, interest in social enterprises that sustainably address urgent societal needs is especially strong. India's entrepreneurial ecosystem is rapidly coalescing in cities like Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi. However, the tide must reach smaller towns and villages where the people, the challenges and the opportunities

are. Several organizations are no doubt focusing on creating such micro entrepreneurs but these efforts have to be scaled up several times over. India must become a nation of entrepreneurs.

Another sector that needs to be looked into is India's traditional artisans. Nearly 250 million of them are organized into 600,000 cooperatives. Sadly, these incredibly skilled people are often amongst the poorest of the poor because they are trapped in inefficient markets and exploitative supply chains without access to capital, design inputs or markets. As a result, they lose out to cheap, mass-produced goods and their children abandon millennia-old traditions and migrate to over-burdened cities. There is a growing demand for sustainably produced goods which are handcrafted with unique and contemporary designs and that comes with an emotional story. This sector can be addressed by focussing on promotion of clusters or reviving the cooperative movement. India has extraordinarily successful models – Amul in dairy and Suguna in poultry – and they need to be emulated. There are a few social entrepreneurs and impact investors who are demonstrating that they can dramatically boost livelihoods by providing design inputs and managerial knowhow and using technology for market access and supply chain efficiencies. They are also defying the assumption that India must inevitably follow the path of getting people off farms to jobs in factories in cities. Addressing opportunities in rural India can promote rural entrepreneurship.

Scaling up entrepreneurship or reviving cooperatives and producer organizations require “ecosystems” in which multiple stakeholders have to come out of their silos and collaborate. Government and its agencies have a profound role to play in creating an enabling environment – ensuring low-cost internet connectivity, favourable

policies, ease of doing business, affordable education and skilling services, low-cost debt for priority sectors. The various elements of the eco-system for commercialisation are coming together, from venture capitalists, government schemes and incubators, academia-industry linkages and emerging clusters and support to the rural economy. There is a need to catalyze scaling up to enrich the eco-system. After all, an eco-system is nothing but a system of interconnected stakeholders – institutions and individuals whose close linkages enable efficient production, diffusion and use of new and economically useful knowledge. We need to create new linkages and strengthen the existing ones, creating a tight mesh. The CSIR labs, for instance, are committed to leadership in science and all of us respect them, but can we think of these labs opening up to partner with entrepreneurs? This is just one example of a different mindset. We need to capitalise on the power of collaboration.

Along with the above, the entrepreneurial eco-system also requires entrepreneurs with a mindset that helps in overcoming hurdles. Some common traits found amongst successful entrepreneurs both at the top and bottom of the pyramid include the following:

- The entrepreneurs are never afraid of setbacks.
- They never let business and commerce come in the way of creativity.
- Are patient and handle situations calmly.
- They listen to their heart and intuitions when they are at crossroads and have the courage to follow through.
- They realize that some things are worth doing even if one fails in doing them, because the efforts challenge to stretch oneself. Failure often brings out

qualities and talents that one had neglected

- Sometimes life is really bad. Entrepreneurs have the courage to put a control X and start again
- They realize that Difficulties and Challenges are a constant. Only those with character and resolve confront them and win.
- At moments of crisis and tough decisions, they realize the need to recalibrate the mind and ask 'what's the worst case scenario' and adjust to that. This leads to clarity of the decision making capability.
- Have self confidence and believe that nothing is impossible

Entrepreneurship is Gita at work. The singularly most remembered 'sloka' from the Gita cajoles us to follow

'Karma'. An entrepreneur is a walking example of this wisdom. An entrepreneur practices Karma. An Entrepreneur has few guarantees for success. Yet, s/he moves on undeterred and creates a world of difference, literally and otherwise.

Promoting entrepreneurship needs to be addressed by targeting three segments – the start-ups, micro and small entrepreneurs and rural cooperatives/clusters. The future holds a lot of challenges and we have to improve in many directions. The digital revolution is an opportunity for anyone who comes up with indigenous innovative solutions that are capable of scaling up, capable of collaborating within the eco-system and enriching it.

**Dr Sriparna B Baruah is Head (Centre for Industrial Extension), Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati. She can be reached at sriparnabbaruah@gmail.com.*



Socio – Economic Development in North East: The Way Forward

The resource-rich North East with its expanses of fertile farmland and a huge talent pool could turn north east into one of India's most prosperous regions.

*Dr. Natalie West Kharkongor**

For ages we have been talking about socio – economic development of the North Eastern Region (NER). Is this a talk of the past or is it still ringing till today? It is sad, that even now we are still canvassing for development, instead of a trajectory growth for the north east. What has gone wrong so far? What has happened during the last forty years? A time to check, re – check, and cross – check.

To be socially, and economically sustainable, an economy's growth story needs to be inclusive. However, north east has been experiencing a comparatively imbalanced growth rate. Among the north eastern states, Assam is the only state which has experienced the highest nominal GDP in 2013 – 14 of Rs. 141, 621 crores, much higher than the NE figure of Rs. 30065.575 crores. Though the Region is blessed with abundant natural resources for socio – economic development, these resources have not been utilized to their full potential.

North East suffers not only from unemployment problem but also from low employability. To solve both, the Region should work on the current demand for jobs and the current supply of jobs. To fix the mismatch, focus should be on industry training, on quality over quantity, on research, and on creating and promoting an entrepreneurial mindset. Prediction of the future demand and supply of jobs is of equally important. The latter can be linked to the richness of the region in terms of minerals, petroleum & natural gas, forests, water,



sericulture, fisheries, tourism, and others.

Currently NER is identified as one of the world's biodiversity hotspots. NER has close to 20% of country's total forest reserve with Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim have more than 60% of state's geographical area covered by forests. The Region should take advantage of its forest resource by investing in bamboo biomass energy, and producing charcoal from pine leaves. The Region has huge hydroelectricity potential and if this potential is properly tapped, north east can even export power to its neighboring countries. Over 85% of potential capacity is yet to be exploited. In addition to power, some other industries can come up based on this resource like mineral water plant in all the north eastern states. The current oil and natural gas reserves stood at 158 million tonnes and 23 billion cubic meters respectively. It is high time for the Region to make full use of its oil and gas reserves.

Tourism industry, an industry for the north east has to pick up and grow at an increasing rate. A multipronged approach should be undertaken to fast track the

infrastructure projects connecting major tourist spots. Incentivize trekking agencies like YHA to include areas of North East, to promote trekking for tourists and promote eco-tourism. Various tourism conferences should be conducted at national level wherein the advantages of NE can be shown to highlight it as a good tourist spot. There is relevance to create an adventure sports hub – associated with professionals to provide training and good experience with the adventure sports, and launching of North East Tourism Connectivity. We can ensure that outside private reinvest their revenue generated back for the preservation of the eco-system and socio – economic development of the Region.

Transportation infrastructure will be vital to strengthen integration within the Region, and with the rest of the country as well as for India's increased integration with the South East in the future. A Trans National Highway Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala will result in better connectivity between north east states and rest of India, and aid commerce. An International Highway Guwahati-Mandalay- Bangkok

will result in acquiring road access to south east and a strong foothold over Bay of Bengal. To connect the region better with railways, the ongoing projects are more than the completed lines and hence it is of utmost importance to fast track them to completion. Terrain makes Air Connectivity not just an option but an absolute necessity. The North East Region being riverine, offers immense scope for development of Inland Water Transport (IWT). IWT has not received its due importance in the scheme of transport planning, fund allocation and policy priority after Independence in spite of the fact that it has immense scope especially with reference to Brahmaputra and Barak.

It has been a well-established fact that financial development stimulates economic growth. However, equally true has been the allegation that banks have not been able to reach the under privileged sections in north east states into the fold of basic banking services. Hence, the financial inclusion of the neglected segment of the population in the Region is the need of the hour. The basic delivery of basic banking services to all sections of the society in all the eight states of the region is felt urgent to take advantage of the abundant natural resources. Due to existing institutional problems, strategy should be evolved to promote community – based collaterals for the effective credit delivery system. Besides, the Region has certain distinct advantages. It is strategically located with access to the traditional domestic market of eastern India, along with proximity to the major states in the east and adjacent countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar. The Region is also a vantage entry point for the South-East

Asian markets; it is for the banking institutions to explore the opportunities.

Adoption of HYVs and agri – inputs in all the north eastern states have to increase substantially. Appropriate watershed programmes with people’s participation need to be encouraged to harness the untapped benefits. The low chemical – inputs used should be converted into an opportunity by promoting the ‘organic products’ for which demand is fast rising in the national and international markets. SEZs may be established within the Region to capture the economic advantage, especially for tea, coffee, aromatic and medicinal plants, and horticulture products. A strong R&D support system is a sine qua non for generating demand – driven technologies which are friendly to small holders. For efficient market system, entrepreneurship development is indispensable, regional organizations can play a significant role in this venture.

In the political front, regional political parties in the North East compete within the Region with very little scope of extending their ideology beyond regional aspirations. Very less representation of North East India in the Lok Sabha with just a little above 4.5% of the total seats and the same is applicable to Rajya Sabha too. Hence, increase in the number of representatives in both Houses is the call for the day. Furthermore, efficient and effective local governance system should be adopted for both inclusive development and grass – root democracy.

State-Wise Opportunities:

Arunachal Pradesh

- One of the oldest plywood manufacturers (Arunachal Plywood Industries Limited)
- Tea, Fruit, Timber, Bamboo, Cane and Medicinal plants
- State has substantial deposits of minerals. The production of petroleum is 44,000 MT (approx.)

Assam

- 70% of the workforce in Assam is in agriculture related activities accounting for a third of the State's income
- Tea followed by Rice, Sugarcane, Potato, Coconut, Rape Seed & Mustard Seed, Wheat and Natural Rubber
- The State accounts for 55% of the national tea produce and 1/6th of the worldwide production, exporting 196 Million bags of tea per annum
- Guwahati Tea Auction Centre is the world's second largest, after Colombo, in terms total tea handled
- Production rate of crude oil is estimated 4.80 mm tons per annum. Assam has potential to tap natural gas @ 5.93% million cubic meters per day

Manipur

- Agriculture has a significant share in the GSDP involving more than 50% of the localities.
- Food processing is one of the thrust areas in the

state

- Fresh Packed Pineapple & Passion Fruit, Pulp, Juice, Toffee and Concentrate, Lemon and Orange Juice, Ginger Oil, Ginger Lime, Canned Mushrooms, Fresh in Brine Canned Bamboo or Bamboo Shoots are renowned products in the State
- Deposits of semi-precious stones like Lapis Lazuli, Serpentine rocks and Jades are also found here

Meghalaya

- Home to 13.9% of the 6,000 medicinal plants in the country with 300 varieties of orchids, and enormous bamboo production
- The Meghalaya Turmeric is considered to be one of the best in the world, providing huge scope for exports
- State has vast deposits of coal, limestone and also uranium

Mizoram

- Mizoram hosts 14% of the Bamboo Cultivation Area in India registering a 99% surplus production
- 12% of the North Eastern Fruits are sourced from Mizoram with an ever rising yield per hectare due to adoption of advanced production technologies.
- Vegetables, Spices, Cotton, Coffee, Tea, Birds eye Chilli, Anthurium and Rose have immense potential in the State

Nagaland

- The 22 species of Bamboo Production account for 5% of the stock of the nation, spread over 448,000 Hectares of Land
- Home to the tallest Rhododendron Tree in the world.
- Nagaland offers immense potential in floriculture

Sikkim

- Aiming to Be a Fully Organic Farming State by 2015- Sikkim has already introduced bio – fertilizer demonstrating in over 3,000 hectares of tract.
- Large cardamom production accounting for 85% of the national stock. Rice, Maize, Buck Wheat, Pulses, Oil-Seeds, Mandarin Orange, and Tea are the other prime agricultural products of the State which make for the 25% of the GSDP.

- 4,500 varieties of Flowering Plants, 550 Orchids, 182 species of Medicinal Plants and 28 Varieties of Bamboo offer ample investment avenues

Tripura

- Rice, Potato, Groundnut, Pineapple, Oranges, Cashew nut, Jackfruit, Coconut, Tea and Natural Rubber – 64% people engaged
- Euro 1.1 Million Food Park being developed with in - built cold storage (1,500Million Tonnes), warehouse, quality control laboratory, sorting, grading and packaging unit, bottle manufacturing unit and test house.
- Tripura is the second largest rubber producer in India after Kerala with a total plantation potential for 1 Million Hectares.
- State has a production potential of 3.5 million cubic meter of gas per day.

Apart from the comparative advantages enjoyed by the States, the Region carries with it unique features. The resource-rich north east with its expanses of fertile farmland and a huge talent pool could turn north east into one of India's most prosperous regions. Data shows that north east can be a developed state like the state of Maharashtra and Gujarat if adequate attention is given by the Government. During 2012 – 2013, the north east

GDP growth rate stood at 5.85% which is above the country's average growth rate of 4.5%. Besides, the literacy rate of north east at 77.76% is much higher than the all – India literacy rate at 74.04% according to 2011 census. This reveals the fact that the North East India is not far behind other states in the country if a proper development mechanism is set in place.

**Dr. Natalie West Kharkongor is Associate Professor & Chairperson, Centre for Development of North Eastern Region (CEDNER), IIM Shillong, Meghalaya. She can be reached at nwk@iimshillong.in.*



Social Innovations and Sustainable Youth Development

Blessed with rich endowments of natural resources, diverse wild life, and multi-ethnic groups, the North Eastern Region (NER) holds a promising future, provided it is able to sustain this bio-wealth to enrich and sustain its people and to look out for processes and alternates that help to build up the skills and capacities of the youth and thereby enhance the strengths of the people.

*Dr. Latha Pillai**

The United Nations defines 'Youth' as persons between 15 - 24 years of age (UN Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly, A/36/215, 1981), while the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014, defines 'Youth' as persons 15-29 years of age and recognises that all young persons within this age-group do not comprise a homogeneous group and that different segments of the youth would have different needs and concerns. NYP endeavours to deliver a lot to the youth of the country and the policy document is supposed to serve as a framework for the states to develop Youth Policies of their own.

By 2025, India is expected to become the 4th largest economy, contributing about 5.5% - 6% to the world GDP, only after the United States, China and Japan (12th Five Year Plan, Vol 1) and NYP 2014 has strategically identified eleven priority areas of concern for youth development in the country. These are:

1. To create a productive workforce
 - a. Education
 - b. Employment and Skill Development
 - c. Entrepreneurship



2. To develop a strong and healthy generation

- a. Health and Healthy Lifestyle
- b. Sports

3. To instil social values and promote community service

- a. Promotion of Social Values
- b. Community Engagement

4. To facilitate participation and civic engagement

- a. Participation in Politics and Governance
- b. Youth Engagement

5. To support youth at risk and create equal opportunity

- a. for all
- b. Inclusion
- c. Social Justice

NYP 2014 falls in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,
- Achieve universal primary education,

- Promote gender equality and empower women,
- Reduce child mortality,
- Improve maternal health,
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases,
- Ensure environmental sustainability, and
- Develop a global partnership for development.

Youth in the age group of 15-29 years comprise 27.5% of the population (Data as per Census 2011, data available for 5 Year cohorts starting age group 0 to 4) and at present, about 34% of India's Gross National Income (GNI) is contributed by the youth, aged 15-29 years (NYP 2014). There exists even a much larger scope to enhance the country's GNP by this section of the population provided there is conducive environment for the youth to flourish and nurture their capacities and potential. Towards this, the Government of India currently invests more than Rs 90,000 crores per annum on youth development programmes or approximately Rs 2,710 per young individual per year, through youth-targeted (higher education, skill

development, healthcare etc.) and non-targeted (food subsidies, employment etc.) programmes (source: Union Budget, 2011-12).

In addition, the State Governments and a number of other stakeholders also work to support youth development to enable productive youth participation in the development process. Many of the civil society organizations are also concerned to empower the youth of the country with skill development programmes. This genuine concern has thrown up many novel ways and strategies to invest in the 'demographic dividend' of the country towards meaningful engagement of the youth. As such, a number of social innovations have emerged across various sectors to address the needs, concerns, and issues of the youth and communities. With such deep commitment and sense of common responsibility, conscious efforts have been made to make lives better, smarter and sustainable.

Towards this end, if we could strengthen our own institutions we can retain our vast talent pool and check 'brain drain' especially among young minds and practically realise the Government's vision of 'Make in India' which can be made possible through concerted efforts at social innovations and sustainability. We have to look for solutions within our own experiences, our lives, our resources and capacitate ourselves to mature into gaining mastery over our strengths, particularly to invest in our 'demographic dividend'.

If India is to make a mark in the wealth of nations, stay ahead of other countries, and sustain its one billion plus population, finding solutions to its problems through social innovations will not only provide remedies to its many problems but most importantly, create opportunities for the youth to be engaged productively for a social cause. Paving the way for the youth to progress from being job seekers to job creators and social developers should be a top priority. According to UN projections, by 2050, India

will be the largest populated country in the world with 1.7 million people, which stands for serious considerations for India.

Creating an environment encouraging enough for social ideas to flourish also requires the promotion and provision of an effective space for youth volunteerism, motivation towards social entrepreneurship, training for alternative skills, socio-functional skills, value-laden education, etc requiring collective efforts from all the citizens of the country and various stakeholders. This is the key to sustaining the country's development and growth but very importantly to cater to the needs and concerns of the burgeoning human resource of the country, i.e, 'demographic dividend' or youth power. Today, we should look for smart solutions for sustainable development. Now, beyond the MDGs, 'Sustainable Development' is the new post-2015 development agenda by all member states of the United Nations which builds on the Millennium Development Goals with a thrust on Green Development. 'Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs:- Our Common Future, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1989.

India is a country of multiple hues and diversity with a rich biodiversity at the same time and north-eastern India is no exception. Blessed with rich endowments of natural resources, diverse wild life, and multi-ethnic groups, the North Eastern Region (NER) holds a promising future, provided it is able to sustain this bio-wealth to enrich and sustain its people and to look out for processes and alternates that help to build up the skills and capacities of the youth and thereby enhance the strengths of the people. Today, our biodiversity remains deeply threatened due to inconsiderate human activities, and for our own sake, we must work to protect them too. Social Innovations and Youth for Sustainable Development is the way forward

towards a prosperous and secure future. Today, when we are victims of our own-made disasters, it is only when our natural resources, biodiversity, and environment is protected that we can be assured of a safe and prosperous transition into the future. The NER which is not only a treasure house of biodiversity, but also rich in social capital is a boon to the country, and faring as much better than most states in terms of Human Development Indices, and if the endowments of the region coupled with its social capital can be tapped, nurtured, and groomed properly, the region promises much towards sustainable development.

Frederick Douglass, the Civil Rights Activist, once said, 'It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men'. This is very apt in our present lives. Today, much is invested in trying to build and mend brokenness in various aspects - lack of access to basic amenities, broken families, misguided youth, unemployment, dis-empowerment, social-disharmony, lack of capabilities, etc, than building strong women and men. These many challenges confront us today and the answer lies in our hands, which is, to be enterprising for a social cause, and meeting the standards of a sustainable future.

India, at present tops the list among countries in the Global Hunger Index (Global Hunger Index, UN-FAO 2015) with 194 million of its population living in hunger, and occupies a low 135th rank for HDI (Human Development Report 2014, UNDP), and also at 114th rank out of 142 countries in Gender Inequality Index according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2014, World Economic Forum, which reflects a grim picture of the country's development. It is imperative to deliberate how our social innovations can continue to kindle, help, enrich and sustain many more lives, to build stronger generations of young people, conserve the environment and give a promise for the

future. NER can emerge as the best model and example for holistic development in terms of socio-cultural, economic and political development with numerous indigenously built good practices.

Towards a greener and prosperous future, the activities of young learned women and men should no longer take us into the jaws of violence, gender inequality, corruption, disease, pollution, but enrichment and fulfilment in all spheres of life, and most of all healthy people with healthy minds, in a healthy socio-cultural, economic, political, environment.

Towards this endeavour of building and empowering young lives in the country, the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development (RGNIYD) hopes to surge ahead with the support from all stakeholders to deliver its mandate to Enable, Engage and Empower the youth of the country through sustainable development. To all of this, RGNIYD takes pride and humble delight to carry forward and serve as the apex institution to fulfil the aspirations of the Youth of the country.

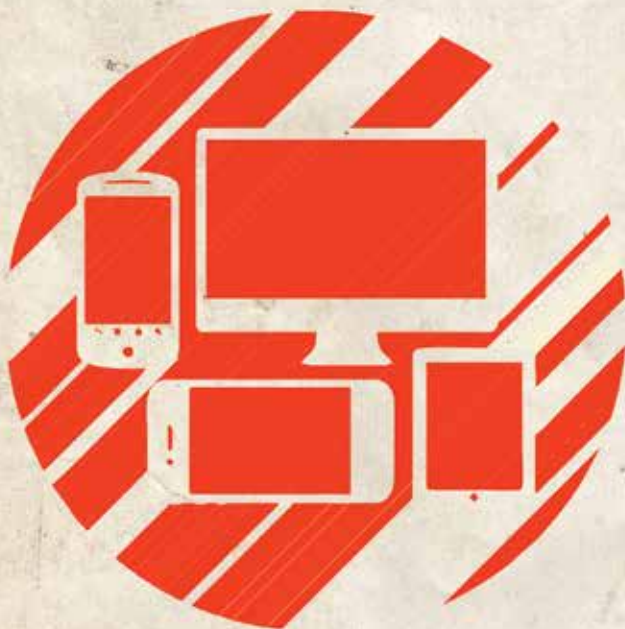
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PEOPLE

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DEF's mission is to use ICT and digital tools to bridge the digital divide and empower underserved and information-dark communities in such a way as to create a digital age, post-industrial global society where all people on Planet Earth have access to information, knowledge and services at all times and at all places.



About DEF

Created out of a deep understanding of the global digital divide, New Delhi based Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) is a not-for-profit that has been tirelessly working for digital inclusion across the world and in particular India, South Asia and the Asia Pacific region since its inception in 2002.

Vision

To make the digital revolution reach the masses so as to create even opportunities for and linkages between the haves and have-nots of society in a way that empowers the poorest of the poor and all marginalised, information-dark communities and there is a two-way flow of knowledge, goods and services between the mainstream economy and the grassroots level urban/rural economy through use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and digital media.



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Elementary Education and Primary Health Care: Major concerns in the North East Region

The general neglect of the entire North East Region by the centre is appalling and whatever extra efforts have been taken, has fallen short of the requirements.

*Dr. Mohammed A. Kalam**

Elementary Education and Primary Health Care should be the basic concerns of a welfare state. The state has to own its responsibility and chalk out proper policies that could be executed at various levels. India, given its vastness and regional differences, going down to the state and union territory level, is a very complex, plural and multicultural whole. Suffice to say planning has to be undertaken carefully; keeping in mind the regional variations, religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity, and implementation should be without any flaws or shortcomings.

Education and Health may appear to be two different and distinct sectors at first glance but there is a strong nexus and interconnectedness between the two. They impact each other in myriad ways. Improvement and development in any one of these sectors has a strong bearing on the other. High literacy has always impacted health practices in a given region/state. High literacy leads to higher levels of education in subsequent age cohorts and this development impacts women's literacy and education, which in turn raises the age at marriage, reduces overall fertility, maternal and infant/child mortality, overall mortality, better health care at the family level, and a host of other positive spinoffs.



These are not just theoretical formulations but are empirical occurrences and are best demonstrated with data from the southern state, Kerala, or other developed regions/countries of the world. With high literacy and better education, the different health parameters show significant positive results. With better health facilities and reduced infant/child mortality combined with late age at marriage, fertility declines. So there are smaller families and hence there is a decline in the average household size across the board. This demographic transition in turn influences wealth flow in the family. When the flow of wealth is from the parents to the children, overall literacy and education rates are at an upswing (see Caldwell's Hypothesis).

Welfare states and democratic societies have to take it upon themselves the onus of seeing to it that Elementary Education and Primary Health Care sectors have to have adequate budget allocations and fool proof implementation for overall development of the societies to take place. Unfortunately in India the last Budget (2015-

16) has not given much importance to these two sectors and the allocation has in fact been reduced for both these sectors. Education sector had a dip of 2.02 percent. And the health budget was slashed by 5.7 percent! The most galling factor has been that the department of school education and literacy saw a decrease of 9.79 percent over 2014-15. Higher education, however, had an increase of 13.31 percent, primarily because of allocation to set up new IITs, IIMs and AIIMSs. This to my mind is a very lopsided way of dealing with the education sector. It is political pandering of the worst kind. What India needs is quality primary education. Not just in the rural areas and the hinterland but even in the urban conglomerates primary education is in an abysmal state. The private sector and quick profit-making racketeers have jumped into this vacuum and are doing a ham-handed job of exploiting the high desirability of the middle and lower middle classes by putting up boards and hoardings proclaiming "English Medium teaching". The state has almost abdicated its responsibility by not paying much heed to this crying need and by showing further neglect by slashing the budget further for

school education! No country has ever progressed much by neglecting its school education sector. A good edifice for higher education can only be built if the foundation of elementary and secondary education has been nurtured and taken care of appropriately. Many branches of our higher education are in the doldrums primarily because our school education has been neglected. If the industry and the market complain that almost 90 percent of our engineers are undereducated and unemployable the fault has to lie somewhere and that has to be in our appalling school education. And instead of identifying the shortcomings and lacunae to reform school education, the state is turning away from these issues and wants to showcase IITs, IIMs and AIIMSs.

Similar neglect and a lackadaisical attitude are demonstrated by the state when it comes to health care. There appears to be a lot of interest and eagerness in establishing super-speciality hospitals and/or helping the private sector do so instead of concentrating on basic health, hygiene and sanitation. One glaring example of this can be seen from the step-motherly attitude displayed as regards Preventive and Social Medicine. This department/section seems to be the most neglected one, even in the medical colleges where the neophyte doctors learn their basics. In a country like India particularly because it has vast stretches of rural areas almost to the extent of 70 percent Preventive and Social Medicine should play a great role. But it does not. Round the clock supply of potable water, clean and hygienic surroundings and good sanitation can drastically reduce the occurrence of communicable diseases. But like neglecting school education in favour of IITs, IIMs and AIIMSs, Preventive and Social Medicine is

similarly ignored due to a penchant for super-speciality hospitals!

In a recent interview, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has been quite critical of the state's attitude with regard to education and health care. It is worth and highly relevant to quote him at length. Sen says

The neglect of the need for the state to get everyone schooled and literate, and getting everyone some kind of health cover began much earlier during the time of [Jawaharlal] Nehru. If you look at the Five-Year Plan, there were statements that education and health were top priorities, but not much was done. The entire tradition of Indian planning, of ignoring education and health care, continued through Indira Gandhi's time, the Janata Party government and, later, through the BJP government and UPA I and II. Now, with Modi, it has got worse, because the government has made further cuts.

You can deliver education and health care to all, even with a very poor economy, because a poor economy is also a low-wage economy, and education and health care are labour-intensive. So, first, it is affordable; and second, it will immediately have an impact on quality of life, infant mortality, etc. And, if you push money towards complete immunisation, it would lead to a better standard of living. Third, it would also improve the productivity of labour, because you can't become an industrial giant with an unhealthy, uneducated labour force. Ultimately, improvement in the quality of labour has an effect on economic growth.

I would say the Modi government has not brought about any change. It has spent far too little on education and health care and hardly any time on organisation of schooling and health care. They have done very little for immunisation; India ranks one of the lowest in the world [in vaccination coverage]. Furthermore, Gujarat is one of the worst performers; in fact, way below Bihar, which shows that the BJP thinking, which is very Gujarat-dominated, has not gone in the direction of immunisation, unlike Bangladesh, which has gone for total immunisation (The Week, July 26, 2015).

Are things different in the North East Region from what is obtained at the national level with regard to education and health care? Hardly. In some states things are worse. Also, unfortunately, there is wide disparity in the eight different states of the North East including Sikkim. The literacy rates vary widely, and the health care facilities are hardly adequate in the different states. As per the 2011 census, while Mizoram with 91.58 percent literacy rate leads in the North East, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam have literacy rates below the All India rate of 74.04 percent. Meghalaya is just about the same as the national literacy rate. The other states are all above the national literacy rate (subsequent to the 2011 census, Tripura has been declared as the highest literate state in the country with a literacy rate of 94.65 percent surpassing Kerala's 93.91 percent).

While Assam has six medical colleges, some states have none. It is difficult to have good health care while medical education in a state has not taken roots. The numbers of doctors in the different states of the North East are:

Arunachal Pradesh 739, Assam 6050, Manipur 1813, Meghalaya 720, Mizoram 356, Nagaland 381, Sikkim 237, and Tripura 1022 (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, November 2014). These figures are neither adequate nor encouraging.

What do the literacy rates and situation with regard to health care tell us? Not much; very little indeed. The general neglect of the entire North East Region by the centre is appalling and whatever extra efforts have been taken, has fallen short of the requirements. But, of course, the centre can well take refuge in the fact that public health is a state subject.

We have a long way to go on both the educational and health fronts but what is necessary to ponder over and discuss is what kind of paths do we want to tread? Will we pay attention to elementary and secondary education or go on in a big way towards funding higher education? Similarly, will we concentrate our efforts on basic health, hygiene and sanitation or go in for building infrastructure geared towards super-speciality hospitals? The centre and states concerned cannot afford to abdicate their responsibility in both these crucial sectors.

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It's Possible to Learn by Doing

Barely 13 or 14, this little boy, tucked away in a village of upper Assam, was all smiles while showing us his fruits of labour – a sack full of vermi-compost ready to be taken to the nearby market for selling it off. Encouraged by his teachers and volunteers from a CSO, this middle school student has been making the organic manure since the last four or five months. He is not alone in this venture. His fellow students are engaged in the same “hobby” that makes them proud ‘entrepreneurs’ as well! And there’s a bigger catch here. Without even their realising, Science and Mathematics as formal subjects seem no longer that difficult for these young children! Now this gives some comfort and solace to the CSO whose objective was to initiate, build and nurture a process of scientific inquiry in the minds of these children. Residing in rural Assam, the children might well be exposed to various farming methods that their parents are primarily occupied with. But what these children acquire by way of tilling sizeable plots of land in their elementary level government schools and growing crops therein is that they get to build a scientific temper too! Whether it pertains to scientifically measuring their plots or learning the benefits of improved farming techniques and finally the economies of their little ‘enterprise’ and the profits it would fetch them – the process is enough to make Physics, Maths and Biology actually happen to them. The children learn by doing!

*Dr Monica Banerjee**



The Process: As someone who is engaged with a philanthropic trust, my travel to Assam in November last year took me to some villages in upper Assam. The visit was meant to look at the work of a fellow, who through his organization systematically penetrated primary/middle schools and colleges had located in the rural areas of Golaghat and Jorhat.

A) The Concern

During the visit and after interacting with some schools, one noticed that schools more often than not lacked teachers who could teach Science or Maths. The new eligibility criterion under TET (Teacher Eligibility Test conducted by the state govt) requires teachers to have passed just Grade XII. I was told that most of the new teachers recruited joined their teaching assignments almost immediately after qualifying grade XII. On further enquiry, all teachers were found to be from humanities stream and therefore seemed to face challenges in teaching Science and Maths to middle school children.

I was told that finding teachers for Science and Maths was indeed difficult as those who pursued science and commerce at plus two levels often did so by going to towns and cities from where they go on to pursue higher (graduation) studies only to get absorbed in more paying jobs. It is perhaps due to lack of adequate number of Science and Maths teachers in rural schools owing to much lenient criterion, children do not seem to have any grounding in these subjects. Once they enter colleges in plus two levels (State education boards in Eastern India have their grades XI and XII only in colleges) they turn away from these subjects while the colleges brush aside the thought of seeding science streams and faculty in colleges citing lack of adequate students. This indeed is a dangerous trend, one feels, and should be taken up at policy levels.

B) The Path Taken

In raising this concern with the CSO, they agreed and said that is why they are trying their level best to build

scientific temper in school children through result and method demonstration of agricultural work in about 40 schools of rural Assam .

One must say that the CSO's investments in making school children learn Science and Maths through practical work amidst which they already live and grow is paying off. In the schools, they engage with grade VIII children who come from villages and families with agriculture as livelihoods; within the school premises and with solidarity from school management, these children have been given specific sizes of plots where they grow vegetables. In so doing these children learn the skills and science behind growing crops. They learn measurements with basic mathematics and biological sciences including nutritive values and scientific names. During visits to two such schools one saw how these children sell these vegetables to their own school for the management to then use these vegetables for children's mid day meals. The income goes to the common bank account that the school has opened for the grade VIII children. In addition, the children are also trained in making vermi-compost. Seeing its tremendous scope, children themselves demanded basic infrastructure so that they could start making vermi-compost in their own homes and thus augment the income of their parents. In their own words, it would motivate their parents too who mostly while their time away. Once the final product is ready, these children then bring sacks full of vermi-compost from their homes in their bicycles and deposit the manure at their schools. As of now the CSO goes around collecting these from the schools and sells them to the state department of agriculture. The incomes are given to the children or deposited in their exclusive bank

accounts that the CSO has helped them open in regional rural banks. Given the bumper harvests and demand for vermi-compost, the children soon will have to think about alternate methods of marketing. It was a sheer delight to visit Mising homesteads where these children work on their vermi-compost after getting back from school. In seeding this kind of a learning process to attract children of rural Assam towards scientific inquiry, the CSO was innovative in its thinking and extremely proactive in seeking the cooperation of school boards and staff.

However, a moot point is even if the CSO is successful in raising interest of young children towards Science, how many of them could afford going to towns and cities to pursue higher education (plus two levels) beyond high school. Most of the children who I talked to said making vermi-compost and the joy associated with the process of growing vegetables scientifically in their schools is one thing, but they can ill-afford the high costs of college level education and therefore do not see themselves going to nearby towns and cities. The only option available is the nearby college and thus the limited courses that it offers.

At another level, the quantum of infrastructure the rural colleges have now acquired is impressive enough! This is because of the generous funding for higher education by the state government. The college I went to has an attractive auditorium and library besides having newly constructed hostels for girls and a well organized sports complex. The CSO's penetration through various psychological sessions and physical lessons has made the usage of these facilities more meaningful and constructive. The faculty too whole heartedly appreciates the CSO's efforts in seeding scientific temper among students by catching them young.

It was then only natural to ask that why this college had only humanities as course of study. The college principal had replied this was because in villages and rural areas students do not opt for science. The reality is students in their formative levels do not get adequate grounding in the subjects and opt out forever!

Moving Ahead

States in the Northeast of India are almost entirely rural in their settings. It is a disturbing trend that education in such areas tend to be lacking in adequate resources, in particular, human and technical. To add to this, recruiting policies tend to overlook the interests of children and the need to inculcate scientific temper. While addressing these policy level issues, it is critical that alternate initiatives and innovations happening on the sidelines be recognised and amplified suitably. One way is to design a formal curriculum that contains the learning by doing processes mentioned in this narrative for seeding the spirit of scientific inquiry among children. Secondly, for wider reach and dissemination, it would help if the curriculum is digitised. Schools throughout Assam and other states of Northeast could be reached better through a digital curriculum. For maximum efficiency and effectiveness, the state government could include the curriculum and even consider putting in some resources for orienting the school management and teachers across Assam.

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Skills Empowerment and ways of promoting Skills Development in North East India

There is a huge opportunity for North East India to bank on the skills demand made possible by the ICT enabled services and also requirements generated by the innovative professional careers.

*Ms. Rimi Phukan**

Necessity of Skills Empowerment

Skills or Abilities are seen as an important 'professional toolkit' for anyone to lead a successful and enriching career, be it an enterprising avenue or a service-oriented endeavor in the context of livelihood generation. Skills are competencies to strive for betterment in an ever demanding highly competitive professional world that provides its workforce an edge over others without necessary skills. The skills domain is a multifarious set of capabilities required to conduct day-to-day business in professional set-ups or personal ventures. This is a much wider networking area with tremendous scope for expansion, facilitation and implementation of ideas on the ground with a concrete and sustainable outcome. The convergence of various Vocational Skills development training providers and other NGOs, working for the empowerment of the community at the grassroots level, can effectively provide tangible solutions to the issue of taking forward their development mandates to the next level of policy-making. Therefore, the need of the hour is to provide these numerous organisations or institutions working for skills development a virtual platform to enhance exchange of communication and expedite the process of knowledge-sharing through the medium of ICT (Information Communication Technology) and at



the same time giving them a country-wide recognition. In the 21st century, connectivity is the buzz word and it can happen only via internet or wireless. In the remote North eastern region of the country, connectivity is still a far cry among all the eight states namely, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Spread over an area of 2,55168sq km as one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse regions in Asia, each state has its distinct cultures and traditions described as a “rainbow country, extraordinarily diverse and colourful, mysterious, when seen through parted clouds”. The persistent challenge of this region is a need for coherent skills set to work for a sustainable economy, which is otherwise strife-torn and infested with extremism. There are pioneering individual and collaborative endeavours to impart knowledge on skills development and capacity-building among the employment-seekers to make the economy of North East India vibrant and thriving.

Apart from the government ITIs/ITCs, there are also other private players working towards skills enhancement and upgradation of infrastructural facilities in the PPP(Private-public) mode in North East India. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is a pioneering Public Private Partnership (PPP), set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance, in July 2008, with a mandate to skill 150 million by 2022, which is working tirelessly to bridge the gap between the Skills providers and the government machineries like DoNER and NEC (North Eastern Council) that disburses funds or grants for the various skills development initiatives of Vocational skills training providers from the North Eastern Region. Therefore, in keeping with the development mandate of VISION-2020, most important task is to identify institutes and organizations for imparting training and building capacities in the North Eastern Region. Last but not the least, to augment the capacity of the existing training

institutes is a must in the North Eastern States by using IT/ITes as a tool to upgrade skills.

Awards Scheme for Skills Empowerment:

There are innumerable skills training providers in the region, who need to be recognized and acknowledged for their relentless services to the communities living in the margins of society, which includes SHGs and CLFs as well. They are rendering a yeoman's service to boost the region's economy by not only facilitating or upgrading the skills of the region's human resource but also by mobilizing a huge chunk of the untrained manpower under the format of vocational training and skills empowerment. There is an urgent need to institute Awards or Recognitions to constitute holistic and inclusive growth of these institutes and scale up their activities further. The confluence of job-seekers as well as job-creators is imperative through a Skills Summit or Festival in the North East region. The recognitions or awards can go a long way in motivating the "best practices" adopted by various people's institutions or organisations to create a sustainable long-term economic plan for the region and bring it at par with the rest of the country. This kind of summit or festival will be the first nimble step, focusing on the larger picture of development in the North Eastern India, through the process of knowledge-sharing and capacity-building by bringing together the policy-makers and their beneficiaries under a single umbrella. The untapped human resource will get a wider platform to join hands with government and non-government agencies to generate more employment opportunities for the region apart from getting exposure for standardizing their practices. To encourage the talents of potential leaders in the field of skills development and training, there has to be concurrent initiatives for recognizing the efforts of the Skills development

pioneers. The Award scheme will encompass not only best practices implemented by the institutions but will also include the evaluation of the development potential and developmental opportunities the initiators are working for, keeping in mind factors of endowments and stakeholders. For collaboration and knowledge-sharing of the "best practices" of individual organisations and skills practitioners, it becomes imperative to identify the specific developmental initiatives/projects, which also have impact on employment generation. Also, Performance Review Appraisal can be done for both formal and informal sector employable skills imparted by the training providers to aid in employment generation. The ability of the institutions to mitigate the employment generation gap that exists in the skills development domain will ultimately qualify for Recognition or Award in a people's platform. Such Skills Awards is certain to attract an overwhelming response.

Role of Social Media in promoting Skills Empowerment:

The buzzword "digitization" in the present professional context has already hit maximum "likes" of people. The world of social media with maximum cyber intervention and digital penetration across the nook and corners of the globe has acted like a dashboard for too many ideas to evolve fast into processes. Social Media is a great medium to broadcast one's hidden talents and skills to larger audiences on a global scale. Today any place on earth, which is remotest and insular can be connected easily via social networking sites. Skills empowerment has attained a new height with the inclusion of Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools as a means of delivery to the general public. All kinds of skills have found their places under the wings of Social Media platforms. Ever since, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook became popular as social networking forums,

every domain skill and soft skill has graced these online cartels with knowledge, art, intelligence and substance. In these hi-tech times, skills education has flown out from its literal classroom confines to the electronic medium forums creating virtual knowledge resources for one and all. There is an ever-increasing flow of willing students of internet imparted tutorials on almost any skill, such as, online guitar lessons, photography classes, language (Mandarin, Japanese, Spanish, French, German etc.) lessons, culinary practices, fashion designing, animation and graphics designing etc. Because of rapid technology propagation in the 21st century, Skills Empowerment has become possible manifold than its previous century. Every skillset acquired by an individual is an art of dexterity that grows in demand and popularity depending upon its usage and applicability in day-to-day life. Social Media just enhances the craft of using skills professionally and

efficiently and drives its employability by broad publicity strategies in terms of reaching out to wider spectrums of people. To promote, mediate and negotiate one's hard skills Social Media is the right kind of vehicle to disseminate one's ideas or projects. Soft selling of skills always leads to hard sales and deal-clinching of marketable concepts and products. And Social Media just makes Skills Development possible. There is a huge opportunity for North East India to bank on the skills demand made possible by the ICT enabled services and also requirements generated by the innovative professional careers. The time is never so ripe for North East India to acquire more skills and use them to the fullest.

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Guwahati floods: is there a way out?

Rainwater harvesting could be one viable option to mitigate the flood as well as to meet the growing water demands of the rising population of Guwahati.

*Dr. Raza R Hoque**

Urban flood has become quite common today. For the past several years flooding of Guwahati city during the monsoon has become a typical example of urban flood. One moderate to heavy shower is enough to inundate posh areas of the city causing inconvenience and material loss. There have been fair amount of media activism and public anger on this issue. The incessant floods in Guwahati that we witness today can be attributed to several factors.

The bowl-shaped topography of the city facilitates the rainwater to gush out and quickly reach the lower areas. The denuded hills and the concrete built areas allow little water to percolate underground thereby enhancing quicker discharge. The low-lying marshy areas or 'beels' that used to house large volume of rainwater and favour a delayed discharge have been 'encroached' upon and settlements are now flourishing on them. And, the already impaired and inadequate drainage can do little to provide relief even if the rainfall is of small to moderate amount in magnitude. Also, there is additional input of water flow from the hill side of Meghalaya, which has been rightly understood by the authority to divert the water to a large water body. Since the catchment area is large, a huge volume of water accumulates in a short time, which poses a serious management challenge.



There has been observed changes in the rainfall pattern over the past few decades. There are reports of increased extreme events with short and heavy rainfall followed by a long spell of dry periods in many parts of the world, and also in the North Eastern Region (NER) of India. These extreme events add to the woes by adding a large volume of rainwater in a short spell of time.

Therefore, every event of flood not only brings us worries and discomfort but also make us poor with regard to our water resource as a large volume of water actually goes down the drain as wastewater. Guwahati is also a typical example of cities that receive adequate rainfall and yet suffers from severe water scarcity. For about six months of the year, the aquifers of several localities that depend on groundwater go dry. So, a good rainfall is vital for the growing population of Guwahati for the recharge of groundwater. It is a pity that the water table of Guwahati remains under-recharged due to reduction in recharge areas by growing concretization of the city.

Floods are known to carry and spread disease. There are other associated problems with the flooding of Guwahati. Flooding not only jams already impaired traffic flow but also adds to another serious problem of air pollution. The flood waters often carry huge lot of debris. As the water recede the mud and silt debris gets deposited on the street, which dry and get blown in to the air with the moving vehicles. As per reports, the air quality of Guwahati has deteriorated already due to heavy traffic. The post-flood street dust makes the air quality worse. For several days after the floods, dusty atmospheric conditions continue and this impairs visibility and poses human health risks.

Watershed management practice regimes always put emphasis on careful drainage of 'excess' water alone. So, for a large catchment area like that of Guwahati, drainage of such a huge volume of water as a migratory step for flood management may not be taken as a suitable one. Also, draining out the entire volume of water with pump sets is not practical no matter how powerful the pump

sets are. Okay! For an immediate relief, pump set mediated drainage can be a tool; however, responsible authorities must have a future management plan taking a holistic watershed management approach.

Rainwater harvesting could be one viable option to mitigate the flood as well as to meet the growing water demands of the rising population of Guwahati. Rainwater harvesting is an age-old practice in India. There are several success stories of rainwater harvesting in India and even in the NER today. Mizoram is a unique example. 'Catch the water where it falls and drain the excess water' – could prove worthy in a situation like this. All our efforts today by the agencies are now focussed on draining the entire volume of water. This volume is too large to drain down by a narrow and impaired drainage network. So, the efforts bear no fruit and, year after year, it apparently looks that no striking measure has been taken to control the floods of Guwahati.

Two modes of harvesting of rain may be thought of – firstly, rooftop collection from every building and secondly, building check dams at select locations to hold water on the ground facilitating percolation of water to the aquifers (groundwater recharge) and delaying the discharge. The check dams would be appropriate at the hill-sides to stop the down flow of water and help recharge the groundwater.

Rooftop collection from each and every building is not going to be easy. This would necessitate active public participation and every individual's willingness to address the situation. Authorities, therefore, should take the public into confidence and encourage them with easy and subsidized financial support to do necessary constructions and modification in the buildings for rainwater harvesting. Just like the 'self-help groups', the authorities may also encourage 'rain help groups' for decentralized rainwater

harvesting and management at the local levels.

Another easy approach for collection of rooftop water may be thought of. That, there be a rainwater pipeline – just similar to that of water supply pipelines – to collect water from rooftops and the onus of collecting be rendered to the state. A large storage tank may be created somewhere to treat and supply the collected water back to the population. This approach, though looks utopian, can address the water needs of the future with regard to the changing climate.

The excess water after harvesting may be carefully drained out. After a large volume of water that is tapped, there will be only a minor fraction of rainwater that is to be drained. For example, there are localities in Guwahati where over 70 percent of the area is covered with settlement. Therefore, only 30 percent of the rainwater from such localities has to be drained.

For an effective drainage network to function, the entire watershed has to be nurtured. The watershed is to be covered with green, so that much of the water is also held by the soil and remaining water is effectively released without any erosion. Erosion clogs drainage networks thereby ushering in complications in drainage. Restrictions should also be imposed on newer development projects to ensure the health of the drainage network, keeping the natural drainage network free from physical obstructions by constructions.

The entire venture will require a lot of funds, planning and dedicated implementing machinery. The government cannot be expected to come up with some kind of a miracle overnight to deal with the floods of Guwahati. The common people also need to be conscious and enable the government to work out a holistic management plan for

Guwahati. The citizen's bodies must play a pro-active role and put pressure on the government to enact legislations that bind the government with responsibility.

At this juncture looking at the magnitude of the problem and the future water woes in a scenario of changing climate it is imperative for the government to make avenues for taking on board rainwater harvesting and management in future policies. Rainwater harvesting may be taken seriously in planning and implementation of rainwater and flood management projects.

Another important aspect of management of urban flood is post-flood rehabilitation. Disaster Management Authorities often do these exercises. In the urban context this needs to be taken up with a lot more seriousness. The street debris needs to be given a serious attention to avert the ill effects of air pollution like respiratory ailments and allergies.

As Swachh Bharat Mission has been received with hope and aspiration by all, Swachhta activities need to follow after each flood.

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Compromising Education: Sakshaar Bharat or Sanskhaar Bharat ?

Instead of giving in to the barrage of contradictions arising out of individualistic capitalism inherent in modern living in our value system, education for North East India should celebrate the traditionally inherited legacy of the 'commons paradigm' and its embedded values of multiculturalism and diversity, moral code of the community, collective unanimous decision based on consensus, sustainable resource management and distribution, and environmental sensitivity.

*Dr Sujata Dutta Hazarika**

On 14th September 2014, the Prime Minister of a nation addressed its youngest members for the first time not as a politician or national leader but as a mentor, teacher "marg darshak". For a nation thirsting for direction and moral guardianship this is not to be trivialized.

When Baba Ramdev a saffron clad sanyasi drew a large gathering at the Ram Lila ground at New Delhi the emerging, rational, secular, middle class in India was aghast at being unwillingly drawn into the dominant discourse of hindutva, that has so long been seen as the non-secular engagement of our nation, grounded on fundamentalist ideals of divisive forces and irrational sentimentalism rather than what is the need of the hour, modern rationalism and scientific temperament. It was the same fear and indecision that forced the burgeoning middle class to shy away from debating the legitimacy of Mrs Sonia Gandhi's



Prime Minister-ship solely on grounds of her country of birth. We are a country of modern rationalists; we do not indulge in irrational dogmatism of traditional religions or question achievement orientation on any other grounds but merit.

My point here is that India is a country of growing middle class, educated and rational, a powerful force to decide its destiny and this class can no longer shy away from its responsibilities towards Nation building. Professor Amartya Sen's emphasis of the argumentative Indian mind through a systematic and historical documentation was an effort to reinstall and revive the legacy of the Indian identity as a rational thinker. The reality, however is disconcerting, and what appears dominant among the educated is a helpless, desperation as they try to look for meaning in social life but only encounter mechanical and directionless aspirations that can only be achieved through moral corruption and social degradation. We have seen the same desperation in the eyes of the citizens, young and educated, old and experienced, when they came out on the streets of Delhi

to voice their disgust in the Nirbhaya Case, realizing only too well that this was probably one that is documented, there are thousands that go unregistered every day. We have seen the desperate measures adopted by common people, not necessarily always educated, to vent out their frustration and helplessness against the depletion of moral responsibility that is growing at a much faster rate than the depletion of natural resources. We still naively believe that degradation of environment is different from degradation of our values. The question we need to ask is, what is it in our education system that keeps us from taking responsibilities, sharing rights and duties, ensuring tolerance and coexistence and emphasizing the role of balance and moderation inherent in the universal laws as part of our common value consciousness as humanity.

Mr Modi's address to the children has for the first time in decades targeted the very foundation that creates responsible citizenship in a Nation. Education and Teachers are building blocks of any society or civilization. It is only when an individual learns responsibility that

the community flourishes, when the community takes responsibility society flourishes and when society takes responsibility a Nation is born. For the last hundred years of our evolving civilization we have allowed this fundamental block to be misrepresented, misinterpreted and devalued, because individuals were deprived from taking responsibilities, either because of the absence of a role model to emulate in character building or because institutions lacked dynamism in teachers and education system to motivate them, National objectives was bound to be myopic, non-inclusive and for short time gains.

Lord T B McCaulay, Law Member of the Governor General's Educational Council was also appointed as President of the General Committee on Public Instructions. He presented his lengthy Minutes in 1835, wherein he advocated education of the upper classes in India and spread of western learning through the medium of English, through which, he felt it was possible to create a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect. Centuries of colonial domination was successful in wiping

away our traditional foundations that gave primacy to relationships and interconnections rather than isolation and individualism for perpetuating human well being. In our mad rush to emulate the western paradigm of growth and development, we completely overlooked and replaced our Guru Shiksha parampara with a modern teacher whose role can be defined as more of a trainer whose primary focus was to churn out a labour force dedicated to contributing to economic growth. Anything and everything that could not be accommodated within this economic value model was ousted and pushed into the periphery. In our preoccupation to uphold specialized knowledge, cost-benefit ratio and time efficiency we have completely overlooked the role of a guardian and a mentor in the life of a human being and their significance for one aiming to lead a holistic life of balance and well being.

Mr Modi's emphasis on the Role of a teacher as a source of continuous learning for the student not only motivated the spirit of teaching but also tried to revive the lost glory of the "Guru Shiksha Parampara" in our tradition. Teaching is not simply a non-achievers goal in society, a part

Extracts from his speech of Feb 2, 1835 in the British Parliament, are given below:

"I have traveled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such high caliber, that I do not think we could ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native self-culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation"

time engagement for motivated housewives who have time to spare after attending to more urgent household obligations. Beginning from primary to higher education a teacher fulfills multitude of roles in the life of a student. Ensuring the dignity of a teacher and integrity of teaching that need to be supported both as a 'specialized profession' as well as for the spirit of "calling of duty" has to be part of our social ideology. Institutions will then be bound to uphold this ideology. Mr Modi's simple anecdotes on Hygiene, environment, energy conservation, and perspectives of viewing politics as a social obligation for nation-building through simple examples I am sure made a lasting impression in young minds. His observations about possibilities and opportunities that go unheeded simply because we have never been sensitized about fundamental issues of human well being in our education, for example when street lights can be switched off on a full moon night and made into an occasion of celebration and the story of a little girl who tried to climb a mountain carrying her little brother on her back were meant for simple minds of children but clearly communicated how an individual should see his political obligations not as a burden but as a duty of pleasure.

In the International Literacy Day function, the President of India Mr Pranab Mukherji spoke of bringing the literacy rate of India not only at par with the world average but also to levels of leading societies of the world. Lauding the National Literacy missions 'Sakshaar Bharat Programme' he expressed satisfaction that 2.86 crore learners have been certified as literate and awarded certificates by National Institute of Open Schooling. While this literacy drive is significant to improve the numerical statistics of an educated nation, I doubt it can elevate the moral character of its nationhood and along with **sakshaar bharat** we should also aim at sanskaar bharat.

While aiming to design a holistic, inclusive and locally sensitive model of education we have to be first and foremost be aware that our current education plan is founded on a self-proclaimed colonial design which needs to be changed to serve national objectives. In order to do so we have to formulate a comprehensive structure for an education system that is grounded on local and regional ethos. Instead of giving in to the barrage of contradictions arising out of individualistic capitalism inherent in modern living in our value system, education for North East India should celebrate the traditionally inherited legacy of the 'commons paradigm' and its embedded values of multiculturalism and diversity, moral code of the community, collective unanimous decision based on consensus, sustainable resource management and distribution, and environmental sensitivity. The communitarian moral social frame can be adopted as an integral part of entire education right from the nursery to the University. Its rich tradition that is an integral part of the mindset in this region can give an exemplary lead in ushering in a new era of sustainable communities and living to the entire nation and beyond. Since the region can already boast of an abundance of acquired and lived knowledge base, that is experiential, indigenous, authentic, sustainable, local and diverse. A comprehensive education structure will work to enhance, augment, formalise, democratise and globalise its scope.

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Transformations in Education, Health and Quality of Life through Off-grid Electricity Solutions: Project Experiences from TERI's Lighting a Billion Lives initiative in the NER

The experiences bear testament to the fact that there is immense potential for off-grid electricity expansion in the NER region and in relation to the current pace of grid based infrastructure development in the regions, it will be a long time before proper grid based electricity supply will reach the people.

*Dr. Ibrahim Hafeezur Rehman**

The North Eastern Region (NER) of India comprises the contiguous Seven Sister States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur and Sikkim. An otherwise culturally, socially and politically diverse set of areas; these states are similar in their economic and geographical attributes and contain great natural resource abundance. However, in spite of being so naturally well endowed, the seven states have remained largely undeveloped, primarily due to poor infrastructure development and limited connectivity internally, as well as with the rest of the nation.

In the electrification context, the NER has been classified as 'special category states' by the Ministry of Power, Government of India and several budgetary allocations and grid based electricity supply activities have been in progress to make up for the heavy shortfall in electricity in the region. In the recent past,



off-grid electrification has picked up pace due to its highly adaptable and modular nature. It has allowed several regions in the hilly states to transition from expensive and harmful lighting mediums to solar based clean energy solutions. Off-grid rural electrification can provide power for domestic uses (lighting, cooling, TV, radio, communication), productive uses (e.g., water pumping, fencing, cooling, mills, sewing machines, etc.) and public uses (e.g., schools, health stations, police stations). Power may be supplied through two basic distribution options: village minigrids (serving tens or hundreds of users) or isolated systems (serving just one or two users).

The Energy Resource Institute (TERI) has implemented several village level and isolated off-grid solar lighting technologies in the NER as part of its - Lighting a Billion Lives - initiative, and while the primary objective has been to first cater to household level basic lighting needs, there has also been immense focus on developing off-grid electricity infrastructures to support better health and education. This has resulted in visible socio-economic improvements in the communities that received

these clean lighting solutions provided for productive use in addition to consumptive use. TERI has partnered with numerous public and private sector corporations to facilitate the installation and operation of off-grid electricity solutions for schools and primary health centers under its Lighting a Billion Lives initiative, leading to positive societal transformations through better health and education facilities.

Four main solar technology options are provided under the Lighting a Billion Lives initiative:

- **Solar Charging Stations** - Community based lighting solution with mobile lanterns. Minimum 4-5 hours of lighting on a fully charged battery with a recharge time of 6-7 hours of peak sun-shine. Scalable in household units of 10 to serve up to 60 households at a time
- **Solar Micro Grids** - Fixed, centralized installation to

provide basic lighting and mobile charging facility in 50-80 households in a village. Minimum 4-5 hours of lighting per night. Scalable in household units of 10.

- **Solar Home Lighting Systems** - Independent installation customized and configured to serve specific requirements of households and small shops. Provides lighting for 4-5 hours per night. Customizable to suit individual lighting and energy needs.
- **Integrated Domestic Energy System (IDES)** – The IDES comes with a clean cooking solution in addition to a solar panel, two light points and a mobile charging facility. The improved cook stove is adapted to suit user behavior, saves fuel, reduces smoke emissions by 30% and is designed to provide 4 hours of cooking time in a day.

Education

The role of electricity in providing light and in enabling the use of information, communication and technology (ICT) equipment in schools is fairly well established. ICT devices are a key factor that can help improve the standard and delivery of elementary and post elementary education in rural areas, specifically in the case of distance learning, that not only reaches out to larger masses, but also reduces the institution's operating expenses. Recognizing the importance of reliable lighting and improved computer based education for rural students, the Power Finance Corporation sponsored a project to establish Micro Solar PV Power Plants (with battery back-up support) in 20 identified rural and tribal schools in Meghalaya – that

would not only support the recharge of solar individual lighting devices, but also become a power source to run computer systems and other such ICT equipment – supplementing post school study hours and leading to improved academic performance and commitment.

The project was in complete alignment with the government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan initiative and supported the promotion of improved education for all. The installation of solar panels increased the visibility of the schools in the hilly regions and gave them a perception of accessibility and easy reach. Due to the implementation of solar panels in their school, the students developed a keen interest in learning more about solar energy and its benefits – which led to the adoption of solar based clean energy solutions in their respective homes as well. Teachers were able to utilize the installed multimedia and ICT tools for interactive class room sessions with the students who never had access to such teaching methods. School enrolments also witnessed an increase as people from nearby villages now knew that there was power available in the schools and learning will not be tiresome for their children.

Health

At present there are nearly 25,000 Primary Health Centers (PHCs) in India, where each PHC caters to an average rural population of 20,000. These health centers are essentially set up to provide preventive, curative and promotive health care services and are established and maintained by State Governments under the Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)/Basic Minimum Services Programme (BMS). A typical PHC acts as a referral unit for six sub-centers and is mandated to be staffed by a medical officer, supported

by fourteen paramedical and other staff.

However, in the unreliable electricity supply to these health centers has taken a toll on their performance, reflecting negatively on the overall rural health infrastructure. With financial support from the Power Finance Corporation, TERI undertook a project to install micro SPV power plants in 23 PHCs in the districts of Dhemaji and North Lakhimpur, Assam to provide clean and reliable power for improved operational reliability and service quality.

Post implementations, the PHCs are now equipped with a reliable power supply at almost no operational cost and additional savings on diesel. Communities dependent on these PHCs have benefitted immensely through the possibility of safer deliveries and minor surgeries in facilities with better illumination and backup power to run surgical equipment and electronic monitoring devices. This has also encouraged people to come back to seek professional health services, rather than depend on local remedies. Better care is now available and possible for new born babies. Due to continuous power supply, vaccines are more readily available as they can be stored in ice lined refrigerators that run on power supply from the micro SPV power plant.

Economic Up-liftment and Improved Quality of Life

Under its CSR partnership with the Power System Operation Corporation Limited (POSOCO), TERI provided improved lighting and clean cooking solutions (IDES) to households in ten villages in the Ri Bhoi district of Meghalaya. With a primary objective of offering clean alternatives to existing lighting systems like firelights and kerosene lamps, the project also focused on developing and supporting new income generating activities for end users, children's

education and other socio-cultural activities to facilitate the overall development of the region. The project also aimed to draw health and social benefits by enabling clean indoor environments through the provision of Improved Cook Stoves (ICS).

Nearly 75% of the total end user base had shifted to using the solar lighting solutions completely, and did not use kerosene lanterns anymore, bringing down expenditures on fuel, candles and torch batteries drastically. Users also found solar lanterns to be very helpful for commuting during evening hours. The solar lighting intervention was also a boon as it enabled the generation of additional income by extending productive hours in livelihood activities like binding broomsticks and making bamboo carpets. This contributed to additional incomes and resulted in better living standards. Most households had faced problems of health and safety issues with kerosene lamp use, such as, red eyes, headaches, suffocation and blackened nostrils. Some had even had incidents of domestic fires and burns due to kerosene lamps. With solar lights, there is a collective feeling of safety and better indoor environment.

The improved cookstoves were a major factor in improving women's lives and indoor environments. Users acknowledged a considerable reduction in smoke while cooking and also found the cook stoves easy to use, consuming less firewood than the traditional ones.

These experiences bear testament to the fact that there is immense potential for off-grid electricity expansion in the NER region and in relation to the current pace of grid based infrastructure development in the regions, it will be a long time before proper grid based electricity supply will reach the people. As a result, significant implications of energy poverty and the prolonged lack of access to

clean lighting solutions, directly or indirectly, will have an adverse bearing on health, income generation, education, women and the environment. In addition to being a safety hazard, extended periods of exposure to smoke emitted from open fires for cooking and kerosene lamps for lighting will continue to cause a wide range of child and adult diseases and chronic respiratory conditions. Fuels like kerosene, coal and wood are also inefficient and inadequate sources of lighting / heating as they are used sparingly, inhibiting the development of livelihood opportunities beyond daylight hours.

It is therefore not an option to wait for the grid to reach the NER. There is a need to leverage off-grid lighting solutions, which have the potential to address this challenge, as they can not only reach the desired mass sooner than grid connected electricity, but are also geared towards positive environmental implications by running on resources that are renewable and clean.

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Media and Social Impact

The situation around us today has very high stakes for everyone and media is critical in bringing home the story.

*Kishalay Bhattacharjee**

In October 2010, an activist and educator, Philip Neri De Souza walked into my office (NDTV) in Guwahati with a bunch of RTI papers requesting our help in his efforts to support a community fighting for right to education not very far from the capital city. Philip had come from Goa after fighting the mining mafia in his home state.

Students at Ulukunchiin Assam's Karbi Anglong district travelled for a hundred kilometres to write examinations, only because the examination board refused to set up a Centre for them, and of these only three percent would pass the examinations.

Students made representations to all concerned including the then Union Minister Mr. Kapil Sibal. Nobody responded.

The NDTV crew travelled about forty minutes on a dirt track uphill from Nellie to reach a village where once electricity poles were set up but where power never arrived. At first look, it appeared like a picture-perfect village with the horizon not disrupted by overhead wires.



Students of Amri High School had gathered waiting for us (the crew) . They had tried everything including going to the court only to be allowed by the Board of Secondary Education to permit them write their examination from their own school. They had fulfilled all provisions except that they did not have a concrete boundary wall. The result was they had to travel to the nearest town, rent accommodation before the examination and a majority of them would fail. Living in darkness had not prepared them for the distractions of electricity and communication. Many girls complained of harassment and molestations. Many boys would go missing over the years. All because the school didn't have funds to build a concrete wall.

We carried Ulukunchi's story headlined as Assam's Heart of Darkness (<http://www.ndtv.com/video/player/news/assam-s-heart-of-darkness/176866>)

I was then the resident editor of NDTV and had personally telephoned the chief minister Tarun Gogoi to explain to him the situation and sought his help in the matter. He

promised to take up the issue with the Board. I am not sure of how sincerely he pursued it. The Board had been fighting the case in the court and wouldn't give up. Philip and the students wouldn't give up either. We stepped up the pressure on the state.

We started carrying news of trafficking of children from these villages because of high drop out rate from schools to get the judiciary and the state to take note.

It is a fact that trafficking of children from the two development blocks of Amri & Chinthong has been going on for a long time. We found that transport vehicle owners, drivers, as well as traders in the weekly village markets doubled as agents, talking illiterate parents into sending their children for better education outside the district. They are told that the children will be kept in homes and will have to give a helping hand with the household chores in exchange for education. Children as young as 5 years were being taken away. They were made to do all the household work, keep watch over the family and even the

livestock. Some were sent to school once or twice a week.

Many children are not allowed to visit their parents at all. Many children were said to have gone missing.

On October 17, 2010, 15-year-old Rupsing Bey's body was found hanging and the family informed by the employer that he died after having committed suicide because he had lost his mobile phone. The boy was working in the house for about four years, cooking, looking after the cattle etc. The family suspected Rupsing was beaten to death and his body hung. Even a post mortem report was denied to the family. This was only a case in point.

Eventually a year later with the Chief Justice intervening, students of Amri were allowed to write their examinations in Ulukunchi with several students successfully passing the examination.

In the same year, the apex court had passed a landmark judgement that the security forces could no longer be accommodated in educational institutions. Apparently this was because of one of our stories on ethnic riots in N.C. Hills and Karbi Anglong districts in Assam where children were forced to drop out of schools leading to massive waves of trafficking. We had tracked a group of 75 boys in an enclosure in Tamil Nadu. Over 100 girls by then had already been trafficked and could not be traced. This, the court concluded was because of schools being taken over by security forces that are brought in by the state governments during disruption of law and order.

The point being made here is the impact that media as a force multiplier has on critical issues. No agency can create impact in isolation and that is why a coalition of forces is imperative for sustained growth and development.

Why did we go to Ulukunchi? Is it possible to put an end to repression and violence through stories? The proposition seems remote but we know that even a single photograph has helped stop wars and changed the course of history.

The strength of media lies in its ability to evoke a sense of humanity. It is almost anti-war and war to me is not just guns and bullets; the daily fighting against the odds by teeming millions is an ongoing war and we have taken sides in that by our choice to report, chronicle and bring home the truth.

By placing ourselves in the middle of that war to communicate with the rest of the world we are negotiating for peace. What media does is to interpret events from the point of view of ordinary citizens. It gives a voice to those who otherwise have been rendered powerless to speak. Thus it stimulates public opinion, drives public debate, preventing vested interests from controlling the agenda. The situation around us today has very high stakes for everyone and media is critical in bringing home the story. If issues on the ground have to be addressed, it cannot be achieved without an independent media.

Times have changed as they always do; in so many ways the revolution in news media echoes what's happening on the streets: a fight for control, people refusing to be just passive onlookers, they want to participate.

Social media engagement with the increasing use of mobile technology is putting the audience in charge. We are forced to listen. Change is inevitable.

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IICA Transforming the CSR-NGO Working Landscape in India through the CSR Implementation Agencies Hub

With the passage of the Companies Act 2013 in Parliament and with its new provisions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) there is a big paradigm shift in the development initiatives of the Corporate Sector.

*Gayatri Subramaniam**

The emergence as one of the fastest growing economies has changed the way the world perceives India. The irony, however, is that India is not a poor country but has one of the largest concentrations of poor in the world. While India can be proud of what it has been able to achieve, it cannot remain impervious to this often indigestible reality.

As a result, the ever-dynamic development sector in India has been witness to a far more than usual degree of changes in the past few years. One unforeseen but obvious consequence of the rise in India's fortunes has been the decline in funding from traditional donor and government-supported international agencies. Fortunately or unfortunately, it has highlighted the need for Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) to shift from their traditional grant-based approach to open market-based sources that are service and/or product oriented and contribute to sustainable development in the long term.

With the passage of the Companies Act 2013 in Parliament and with its new provisions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) there is a big paradigm shift



in the development initiatives of the Corporate Sector. If the recent developments in India's legislative and policy landscapes are anything to go by, companies are being expected to take responsibility for the impacts they are making on society and the environment. The rules on Section 135 that have been notified on the Ministry's website underscore the importance of implementing agencies and also make it clear that corporates are not required to conduct CSR programmes by themselves. They are free to take the help of implementing agencies thus generating a win-win situation.

In this context, it is essential that implementing agencies like NGOs, CSOs, VOs, Foundations, Trusts or Section 8 Companies understand the CSR landscape in India. The contours of what can be called a new age relationship need to be shaped and carved. A partnership that is based on factors as diverse as historical records, thematic priorities, geographic preferences, resource utilization, management information systems, financial management

and convergence of economic benefits with social returns in the long run, requires deep understanding of either party's vision and values.

Although in general, the majority of businesses are still in the early stages of developing collaborations with NGOs/Implementing Agencies (IAs), a wave of companies, both new and longstanding, are taking the lead in adopting a systems approach to the job of bridging India's wide gap between rich and poor. NGOs/IAs need to improve transparency to counter negative stereotypes and professionalize management processes, but they need help to do this.

The scene is set for corporates that need to comply with the new legislation to take advantage of the opportunity, to use their unique status and capabilities and to lead a collaborative effort with NGOs/IAs and government. This would help capitalize the growth potential of India and create a lasting legacy of equity and prosperity for all.

At present there is certainly a lack of recognition of NGOs as drivers of CSR, concerns about their legitimacy in relation to CSR, difficulties in the mutual understanding between NGOs and corporates and a lack of self-confidence among NGOs as important players in CSR. The role of NGOs is often regarded as controversial and their integrity is contested. This deep-seated misunderstandings and mistrust among different stakeholder groups (particularly between NGOs and corporates) can be a possible impediment for concrete CSR initiatives.

It has to be acknowledged that over the years, a fairly large trust deficit has developed between NGOs and corporates. Corporations, for their part find it difficult at times to place their faith in NGOs. Their hesitation relates largely to issues of ethics and implementation capabilities.

A synergistic partnership between corporations, NGOs and the government would also allow for greater transparency in the operations of all three agencies. Government data can help guide CSR agendas into areas it is most needed, corporations have experience making sure the projects are streamlined and cost-conservative, and NGOs have experience and knowledge of marginalized and underserved areas of society as well as experience in operational transparency (some NGOs, in fact, directly target transparency as a goal). As such, if a symbiotic relationship can develop between corporations, NGOs and the government, socially responsible programs have a measurable impact faster and more efficiently than if there is less transparency and no trust.

As per the size of the CSR space around 16,000 companies fall within the purview the Section 135. Around 20,000 crores in total will be spent by corporates each year on CSR. Currently there are 3.3 million (33 lakhs) registered NGO's in India. Probably around 10 lakh are fully functional

– ready to face implementation challenges. Back of the envelope calculations place the average absorptive capacity of NGOs at around 20 lakhs annually. Hence around 1, 00,000 implementing agencies of good track record are required at the very least to carry forward the national CSR Agenda.

The vision for Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) envisages a holistic think tank, capacity building and service delivery institution, operating through effective partnerships with corporates, professionals and institutions, and focusing on problem solving through action research. Creating synergy between the various elements of the implementing agencies and corporates to take the CSR journey ahead would be a crucial step. In this context, IICA has set up and CSR Implementing Agency Hub that would create an extensive database of the implementing agencies.

The CSR Implementing Agency Hub is generating a database of implementation partners with information about their geographical presence, area of work, previous projects executed. Hub will also take concerted steps for the training and development of comprehensive skill enhancement of Trusts/Society/Section 8 Company/Foundation/CSOs operating within India and will organize regular meets of NGOs/Implementing agencies and Corporates on national and international levels. It also gives the Implementing agencies an opportunity to showcase their work and projects on its website and thus adding value to their services.

On 29th April 2015, Asia's oldest Exchange – BSE Ltd , has come together with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) to launch an initiative called 'Sammaan', which will be a platform for Corporate Social Responsibility. The new

platform will enable corporates to access Implementing Agencies whose credentials have been verified to generate funds and enhance their transparency and visibility.

This collaborated platform by BSE, CII and IICA will create the much needed enabling environment to undertake effective CSR. As per recent analysis done by BSE, there are 1294 companies listed on the BSE that are required to spend on CSR by the law.

'Sammaan' aims to provide this assistance in the role of trusted intermediary between corporate and IAs. It will provide access to credible IAs from across India, working in all the sectors mentioned in Schedule VII, Section 135 of Companies Act 2013.

IAs listed on 'Sammaan' will provide clear and defined programs, objectives, expected outcomes and budgets. 'Sammaan' will provide corporates with Program dashboard to monitor funding and progress of the CSR programs initiated by them. All the listed implementation agencies of IICA's IA hub would find its place in the list of accredited NGOs of 'Sammaan' and would enjoy the privileges of special NGOs.

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Information, Entitlement & Empowerment



With an aim to disseminate information about public schemes and services Soochna Seva project enables deserving groups from benefitting from the schemes.

Strengthening the RTI act and addressing larger issues of poverty, rural development, social exclusion and inequity of marginalized groups through information empowerment are some of the core responsibilities of Soochna Seva project.

It focuses on capacity building of the local communities, groups and citizens and advance cooperation between the stakeholders and local administration to develop an operative framework for public scheme information dissemination and entitlement.

The program deploys and run an integrated information services delivery and citizen entitlement framework in 5 backward districts of India in 6 key areas of - Education, Health, Livelihood, Employment, Financial Inclusion and Social Security.



FINALISTS



ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT

Project / Application Title

Community Development Initiative

Organisation

Grassroots, Shillong, Meghalaya

Project Period

2015 - 2016

Project location

Shella and Bholaganj Block, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya

Community Development Initiative” is a developmental project, to facilitate advocacy programmes on relevant policies and schemes in the villages through awareness, capacity building, and training of local community leaders, women and youth. The communities are to reap the benefits of the advocacy efforts through their sole engagement in the processes thereof. Its main objectives are: To empower the Local community to protect local resources and sustain their livelihood; To involve the Youth actively in advocacy through the use of media tools; and to involve Women actively in creating a more aware community.

The implementation method is this. Firstly, there is a generation of awareness on development trends and relevant topics. This is followed by a group discussion and individual interview. The next output developed was a common message for affected people. Consequently, community training programmes on Community Development educated the youths on ‘use of media and digital advocacy’. PRI, Women and Youth Groups from the targeted villages are the participating members who implement the activity at the community level.

The program was launched in March 2015 and expected to continue till March 2016. The project runs in Shella in Bholaganj Block situated in East Khasi Hills District covering Mawsmal village, Maw-ki-Syiem Village, Mawblang Village, and Nongthymmai Village. This

program is propagated in the entire villages. Community Development initiative is a program which is profitable for the people as it provides opportunity to the people in getting knowledge and information, through awareness, discussion, fact finding and training

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Project / Application Title

LIS Links

Organisation /Applicant

Dr. Badan Barman

Project Period

2008

Project location

Pan-India, It's an online portal.

Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals have long felt the need for an information and networking portal that would be a one-stop online mall for all relevant and related information on the field while enabling professionals to share and collaborate on a real time basis. In February 2008 Dr Badan Burman launched LIS Links to meet this need. LIS Links is a web-based portal that has brought together LIS professionals, bestowed them with recent information, provides first hand solutions of their problems on all professional, technical and other issues and most importantly, provides them an opportunity to voice their opinions on matters related to library and information science as a social networking site of a specific professional group. The interface has a provision of customizing searching, browsing and subscription options through Email, RSS, etc.

LIS Links (<http://lislinks.com/>) is a moderated membership site. When an Indian LIS professional wants to sign up to the site s/he has to answer certain predefined questions. Moderators then approve the membership. Approved members can communicate with other members through chatting, scrap message and Email. They can also take part in group chat, discussion forums, groups for problem solving and can share the information available with him/

her with the entire community through group messaging, blogs, events, photos, music, videos, etc. Only approved contents are distributed through Email, RSS, Official Google Plus, Twitter, Facebook Page to other interested members as well as non-members who have already agreed to receive such information.

As of June, 2015 the professional social networking platform has 17,881 members and on average receives 254,138 Page views a month. The portal's main sources of income are online advertisements, sponsorships and voluntary donations. The portal is planning to develop mobile apps to make available all information through SMS, voice calls etc to achieve wider reach.

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Project / Application Title

Avataran

Organisation

TD Studio

Project Period

2012

Project location

Guwahati, Kamrup District

“Avataran, a sci-fi feature film, which looks into a bleak future and danger of extinction, an ancient power brought by aliens, that resurfaces in present times, might hold the key. It is found by an urban family and the children have to make responsible choices to save their home, family and the world. 100 years into the future: earth is destroyed, mankind endangered. An ancient power bought by a highly intelligent Alien race might hold the key to saving mankind. A recap to more recent times (Year 2009); the ancient power resurfaces, closely pursued by sinister forces. A small girl Panchi and her family get entangled in the power struggle. However, there is still hope as long as there is goodness and belief. This is truly shown by the children with their honest and innocent outlook, and it's up to them to save their home and family, and restores peace. This film raises concerns regarding serious issues such as harmful effects of scientific developments, global warming, mass extinction, conservation of our environment and so on.”

Film is probably the best medium to create awareness and reach out universally to people of all caste, creed, religion and races, through a very interactive audio visual medium. Through this film, the production intends to create positive and constructive opinions and consciousness amongst viewers/audience by broadcasting the film and related contents through T.V., internet, cinema hall and mobile theater screenings, poster ad campaigns and resourceful

presentations and workshops in schools, colleges and universities.

Issues such as Global Warming, Nature's conservation, harmful effects of technological advancement and so on are common to one and all irrespective of caste, creed, religion, race or country. The values of home and family, relationship and bonding can be understood through the universal message of love and peace that is being portrayed through the film, while at the same time condemning hatred and violence. It is also encouraging youths belonging to the new generation to come forward and embrace film-related training as viable career opportunities and at the same time generating hopes for a secure future. It has also provided a concrete and commercial platform for many upcoming performing artists and actors, to showcase their talents through a universally connecting commercial narrative film.

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CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Project / Application Title

www.amazingarunachal.com

Organisation/Applicant:

Arif Siddiqui

Project Period

2007

Project location

It's a web portal

India's Land of the Rising Sun Arunachal Pradesh boasts of not only having one of the most picturesque landscapes in the country but also a wide variety of colourful tribes with their exotic culture and heritage. Inspired by the difficulties faced in promoting and publicizing the first Pangsau Pass Winter Festival held in 2007, Arif Siddiqui launched in the same year an information portal on the state www.amazingarunachal.com to provide people across the world up to date information about Arunachal Pradesh and its people together.

The information is put across in simple yet precise manner which has proved to be a boon in planning holidays to Arunachal Pradesh. The Holiday idea section (Tour Planning Guide) of the site is the first of its kind for Arunachal Pradesh online. The information on the site is very well complimented with vast and breathtaking range of photographs covering both nature as well as the people of this amazing state.

The website is an altruistic endeavor to promote tourism and information about the hidden glories of Arunachal Pradesh. The portal disseminates an exhaustive range of information related to places and festivals of tourist interest, Hotels, Travel itineraries, literature and pictorial references about tribes and cultures etc. It is serving as a vehicle for creating and spreading awareness

for conservation of forests and is propelling love for Nature among its cyber clientele through mind-blowing photographs of prime tourist spots.

The website offers considerable promise for both government and the private sector as it can be leveraged to promote tourism and related industries in the state and thereby generate jobs and bring about economic development.

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Project / Application Title

Traditional folk culture uplift, digitization & improvisation of folk database among new generation through (ICT) applications

Organisation/Applicant:

Dr. Dolly Das

Project Period

2009

Project location

Villages in the rural blocks of North East India (an ICT initiative)

Many lovers of folk culture in India and around the world, especially the younger generation, have only a minimal exposure to the rich folk culture and heritage of Assam and the North East. After a lot of research and hard work, Dr Dolly Das, a lover of traditional culture and folklore from Dibrugarh in upper Assam and a PhD scholar in cultural studies from Dibrugarh University launched a project in October, 2009, to popularise folk culture and the rich language and ethnicity of the North East using digital tools. Dr Das has authored several books in English and other regional languages to enable people around the world to read and access folk lore and lyrics of the North East. These publications can be downloaded from her website or on request through e-mail. She also provides transcripts of folk songs like Dehvisar geet, Lokogeet, Borgeet etc. to those interested free of cost and also takes smart classes free of cost on the techniques of Assamese folk culture and songs with digital demonstrations through MLT (Mobile Learning Technique). Since 2014 onwards, she has been using social media tools like Whatsapp and Instagram for broadcasting and promoting the study materials and videos. Many of her Assamese folk song lessons or songs with demonstrative videos are already available on YouTube.

Another objective of her digital initiative is to promote traditional folk culture among the new generation and

providing them with an alternative source of livelihood by creating traditional folk performers or folk entertainers.

Dr Das has digitised folk culture data with songs transcript using the Roman script. The project is still a work in progress although it has already been showcased International Folk Culture Festivals in Bulgaria in 2011, Nepal in 2012 and Vietnam in 2014. She is now in the process of offering her folk music teaching online or offline through SMS, internet or via mobile phones.

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Project / Application Title

Assamese cuisine

Organisation/Applicant:

Jyoti Das

Project Period

2000

Project location

Assam and the Assamese diaspora

How can you do without home food even if you are living thousands of miles away from home? For the large diaspora from Assam and the North East, this had always been a major issue. Not anymore. Thanks to Ms Jyoti Das, an expert in Assamese and North East cuisine with several cook books to her credit, you can now cook in your own kitchen your own favourites - Aadar Mmaachor Jhol (Ginger fish curry) of Barpeta, Banana Flower Soup of the Singpho tribe, Meat with Sesame of the Karbi people and so on. In 2014 she launched a website www.assamesecuisine.com to meet this crying need.

She started her documentation process as far back as 2000 when she started collecting recipes from her immediate family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances and neighbours. Then she started collecting more recipes from the ethnic tribes. The most interesting and authentic ones are collected from the local Sunday market. She even extracted information on recipes from vendors she used to deal with.

The Assamese Cuisine website was just born out of Jyoti Das' love for her culture, people and food. Her recipes are accurate, true to their traditions and are stories of innovations that have made her work highly valued and popular among food lovers of the region and abroad as well. She has also contributed in stopping the phenomenon of "vanishing" of traditional crafts, cuisines and recipes.

Assamese people living away from home crave for Assamese food. They follow Jyoti Das' recipes and are happy with the final result. The feedback she receives from them suggests that their non-Assamese friends too are delighted with Assamese delicacies and want to try preparing those themselves. Her work has also motivated the young generation and she has begun to share her blog experience to guide other Assamese food bloggers.

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Project / Application Title

Xondhan.com

Organisation/Applicant:

Xondhan.com

Project Period

2012

Project location

An online initiative from Assam

In this digital age print magazines are passé. They are also far too costly to produce and have limited reach. In 2012, Nayan Jyoti Kalita decided to launch an e-magazine Xondhan to provide a platform for the younger generation of Assamese to express their creative selves. The magazine publishes articles, poems, stories, interviews, letters, cultural news, movie reports, tourism, career related articles etc. The magazine showcases Assamese language, culture and its myriad ethos.

The creators of Xondhan believe in the intellectual power of youth. They banked upon the creative prowess of the youths and launched “Xondhan- ek natun digantar” (Search - for a New Horizon). The magazine is published as a project under the domain name www.xondhan.com to educate Assamese youngsters on Assamese language, literature, culture and heritage.

For the current year (January- 7th March), Xondhan has 19,493 page visits and 462,569 page hits. During the year 2014 (January-December), Xondhan had 2,214,826 page hits and 151,542 page visits. During the year 2013 (January - December), it got approximately 413,167 page hits and 202,899 page visits.

It has visitors from more than 25 countries. The official Facebook page for Xondhan has more than 1512 page likes.

It is an online initiative to take Assamese society ahead in all spheres of social and cultural development. In the near future Xondhan has the potential to transform itself into a knowledge archive on Assamese art, culture and heritage with rare literary contributions from renowned intellectuals of Assam.

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EDUCATION

Project / Application Title

Ajmal National Talent Search Examination (ANTSE)

Organisation/Applicant:

Ajmal Foundation

Project Period

2001

Project location

All the North Eastern states, West Bengal and Jharkhand

Did you know that only 1% of successful IAS candidates each year came from Assam or that the percentage share of candidates from Assam and the North East states who successfully pass national level competitive examinations for recruitment in high skilled jobs is one of the lowest in the country?

In 2001, the CSR wing of the Ajmal Group of Companies, Ajmal Foundation, decided to do something about this by launching the Ajmal National Talent Search Examination (ANTSE). The Foundation identified three key problems behind the lack of success of students from the North East: (a) lack of institutionalized environment for competitiveness, (b) lack of external award linked examination system for student motivation and (c) lack of a formal mechanism to link students to intellectuals and academicians for regular and systematic improvement of their skills.

ANTSE addresses these issues by increasing awareness at the grassroots level among students for the need to be competitive, by imbibing in them a competitive temperament and by enhancing their skills. Initially, ANTSE covered only Assam but in 2011-12 it was extended to other North East states, West Bengal and Jharkhand. The examination identifies brilliant students and offers winners a cash award to increase their motivation to become more competitive.

The question paper has the following modules: General Knowledge, Logical Skills, Numerical Skills, Spatial Arrangement Skills, Latest Developments in Various Areas. The evaluation process is automated. Every year a team of coordinators mobilise students from various sourcing points such as schools, student forums, etc. through advertising as well as direct connect. There is also a reward model for coordinators to ensure effective student mobilization.

Student enrollment for the ANTSE has been growing 36.15% year on year basis. So far 35539 students have been rewarded in different categories out of total enrolment of 281257 students. The future plan is to go for industry tie ups to make the rewards more attractive and also improve the quality of the examination.

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Project / Application Title

Assam Rajiv Gandhi University Of Cooperative Management

Organisation/Applicant:

Assam Rajiv Gandhi University Of Cooperative Management

Project Period

2010

Project location

Sivsagar, Assam

In this era of globalization and free markets, the only way poor and marginalized people, especially those living in rural areas, can survive and progress is by adopting a group approach to the problems of production, distribution and marketing. Forming and running cooperatives of their own is a key solution. The biggest hurdle to such successful cooperatives, however, is lack of education and requisite skills.

For the first time in the country, a state government has decided to catch the bull by the horns. In 2010, the Assam government in collaboration with IIM, Ahmedabad launched the Assam Rajiv Gandhi University of Cooperative Management to address the problems of (a) lack of education and lack of trained management professionals who had the requisite skills to manage cooperatives, (b) lack of skills among farmers and other marginalized groups to organize themselves into cooperatives, and (c) providing motivation, training and skill development to poor and marginalized groups so that can set up cooperatives which can compete in the era of globalization and open economy.

To implement the project, the state government has passed necessary legislation and granted funding and land to the University. The University got UGC recognition to

award degrees In February 2012. The first undergraduate course on Cooperative Management to award degree of BBA (Coop) started on July 1, 2013 with 32 students (22 boys and 10 girls).

Since July 2104 the University started training for farmers in Cooperative Management, Accounts & Financial Literacy and Information Technology under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana(RKVY). Around 3000 farmers are being trained during 2014-2015 under RKVY. The University has collaborated with major institutions like IIM-Ahmedabad, Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal, National Law University(NLU), Delhi, Rajarambapu Institute of Technology(RIT) Maharashtra & National Skill Development Corporation(NSDC), Delhi.

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Project / Application Title

North East India International Model United Nations (NEIMUN)

Organisation/Applicant:

North East India International Model United Nations (NEIMUN)

Project Period

January 2013

Project location

North East India

More than any other region in India, the North East states need skilled young people to come forward and play a leading role in development. The Model United Nations (MUN) is a forum for training young students to become ethical, responsible, socially aware leaders who are also aware of global issues and committed to solving them. While students in many parts of the world have access to MUNs there was no such opportunity in North-East India.

To meet this need, NEIMUN was launched as a non-profit in 2013 by a group of young graduates with the vision to train young leaders and instill in them a good understanding of the United Nations, international organizations and contemporary problems through experience-based learning opportunities.

Cooperative, hands-on learning is the guiding principle. Through academic simulation of the UN, culminating in UN General Assembly plenary sessions at NEIMUN Conferences, students develop an appreciation of the perspectives of other peoples, the frustration of negotiations, the rewards of cooperation, and a broader view of the human side of international relations and diplomacy.

So far, the organizations activities have benefited over

500 students in the 18-26 year age group from across India, 20 faculty Advisors at the NEIMUN 2014 and 2013 Conferences, and over 3000 young people in North East India who attended the various NEIMUN programs, workshops, seminars and other UN Related celebrations in 2013-2015.

It is now trying to set up Model UN Clubs in Schools and Colleges across the country.

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Project / Application Title

Samsung Smart Class

Organisation/Applicant:

Samsung India Electronics Pvt Ltd

Project Period

September 2013

Project location

All the North Eastern states

In today's digital age, children must have access and exposure to modern technology. While many children in urban India are benefitting from the use of technology in education, most schools in rural India are poorly equipped with basic technological infrastructure such as computer labs, power backup, or teachers qualified to teach creatively using the computers. This is more so in the North Eastern states.

The Samsung Smart Class solution seeks to address this problem. The Smart Class is a digital classroom that allows students to use digital technologies to go online and learn concepts in a fun, interactive manner.

Samsung partnered with Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), a system of alternate schools under the Ministry of Human Resource Development to set up Samsung Smart Classes in JNVs identified by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti.

Every Smart Class is equipped with an interactive Samsung whiteboard, Samsung laptops for the students and the teacher, a printer, Wi-Fi and a power backup. At least one class of selected subjects for secondary schools is taught in a Smart Class every week. Teachers can load lessons from the lesson package devised by Samsung in line with the NCERT syllabus, screen slideshows, videos from the Internet, play games or "draw" to explain concepts on the whiteboard in an engaging manner.

So far, Smart Classes have been set up in 22 schools

since 2013 across Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

The initiative has benefitted thousands of secondary school students from over 22 schools where Smart Classes are in operation. Some noteworthy results are - increased student attention in classrooms, reduced rates of student absenteeism, and higher student familiarity and comfort with using technology such as tablets, laptops, printers, etc. Samsung is planning to implement more Smart Classes in JNV schools in the North East in 2015.

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Project / Application Title

Plant Virology in the new era: Breeding for resistance (BRAVE)

Organisation/Applicant:

Assam Agricultural University (Dr. Basanta Kumar Borah, Dr. Palash Debnath)

Project Period

June-July 2013

Project location

Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat

For the first time in India, students and academicians of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) working in the field of plant virology will get an opportunity to study and work in Universities of the European Union thanks to a project called BRAVE (Breeding for plant resistance to Viruses). It is an educational partnership involving six European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and five Indian HEIs. People from the North East will be one of the major beneficiaries of the project as the Assam Agricultural University (AAU) is one of the five Indian HEI partners.

BRAVE is a four-year (2013-2017) scholarship program that financially supports Indian nationals (undergraduates, MSc, PhD, post doctorate and staff [academic and administrative]) to study or work at one of the six European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of BRAVE in the thematic areas related to BRAVE. Through this project, Indian partner universities would be able to send a limited number of selected candidates to the partnering European Universities for different levels of study (starting from undergraduate to postdoctoral to staff) for different periods of time with fellowships from European Union.

Online applications are invited once a year and the information is distributed to different educational institutes. The applications are gathered centrally, and evaluated by all the Indian and European partners separately. Thereafter, depending on the consensus of the evaluators, candidates are selected for different

programmes. However, target group-1 is the most benefited group with highest number of grantees that includes the Indian partner universities (one of them is AAU), and evaluations are done group-wise. Target group-2 includes institutions in India other than the five specified Indian HEI partners, and target group-3 includes those candidates coming from the recognized backward districts of the country.

The categorization of the aspirants into these three categories is aimed at a wholesome inclusion irrespective of background of the candidate.

The BRAVE project has so far awarded 13 students and three teachers for their undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), PhD and postdoctoral (PD) research, and faculty exposure in various European countries. Of the 16 grantees, 13 are women.

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Project / Application Title

Sahaj e-Sikhsha

Organisation/Applicant:

Sahaj e-Village Ltd.

Project Period

June-July 2013

Project location

Across 18 districts of Assam

Rural youth in Assam are now getting an opportunity to acquire job-oriented skills right at their doorsteps thanks to a project called Sahaj-e-Sikhsha. Sahaj e-Village Ltd is the company which has the mandate to set up Community Service Centres (CSCs) in the state under the National e-Governance Plan. To make the CSCs sustainable, the company, among other things, introduced the Sahaj eSikhsha scheme under which VLEs are able to offer various computer-based skill development courses to rural youth to help them get suitable employment. The scheme brings quality e-learning courses at the doorstep of the rural population. The courses are designed in self learning mode so that the student can learn at his/her own pace.

The Sahaj eSikhsha courses are available through the Sahaj ekiosks which are the Community Service Centres (CSCs). The courses are offered at the centres via technology.

In March, 2011, the company completed roll out of all the mandated 2833 numbers of CSCs in the 18 districts of Assam. Now Sahaj e-learning courses are available through all these centers catering to 7500 villages in 18 districts of Assam covering a population of 18 million. So far more than 29693 students have benefited from the courses.

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Project / Application Title

Children's Home of Learning

Organisation/Applicant:

SPARK-Bringing Light to Lives

Project Period

Since 2010

Project location

East Khasi Hills District (29-Cantonment and Myllem Block) and Ri-Bhoi District (Rangmen, Nongsder Block IV), Meghalaya

Children living in slum areas are hesitant to attend government schools due to several reasons. Parents too do not want to send them to school as they have to pay a minimum fee and spend some money on teaching – learning materials which they cannot afford. Realising this, a committed and enterprising lady Shima Modak came up with an excellent idea. She thought if children cannot go to school why not bring school to their doorsteps?

Thus was born a project called 'Children's Home of Learning' where children have access to a "home" in their immediate locality where they can learn and get education. They do not have to put on a uniform nor do the parents have to spend a rupee on this. The project provides for education as well as for other basic requirements for the development of the children. The children are trained to enable them to get admission to any formal school and all their school expenditure is provided through some support. The children learn multiple things under one shed, from reading–writing to film making. It is a child-friendly approach and involves the family as a whole.

The project has expanded from one to five other areas from East Khasi Hills to Ri-Bhoi District and has covered more than 1000 underprivileged children in the last five years providing them education and working for their welfare.

Apart from getting basic education, the health and hygiene of the children have improved along with physical fitness through sports and physical exercises. Most importantly, the beneficiaries are now able to decide between what is right and what is wrong.

The community too is benefiting in terms of awareness and sensitization programmes, health camps, nutrition programmes and from other networking activities.

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Project / Application Title

Career CliniQ Smart School TutoR

Organisation/Applicant:

Career CliniQ

Project Period

July 28, 2015

Project location

NAGALAND

A new 3D Digital Courseware is rapidly solving the problem of scarcity of high quality science and mathematics teachers in Nagaland. The state's Department of School Education (DoSE) has a vacancy of more than 3200 teachers in government schools. A company called Career CliniQ has developed a 3D Digital Courseware named Smart School TutoR which enables students to learn science and maths on their own. The courseware can be accessed through Smart phones, Tablets or Computers/Laptops. Entire course curriculum of all the classes from Nursery to Class12 has been made in the form of Digital Lessons which can be accessed by a student on any of his or her favorite electronic device.

The Project has been introduced by the Directorate of School Education (DoSE), Government of Nagaland under the guidance of the state Minister for School Education Mr Yitachu. The content has been approved by the academic team of State Council of Education Research & Training (SCERT) to ensure that it matches the local state curriculum. The project is being implemented in the Government Higher Secondary Schools under the ICT@ School Scheme of the Ministry of HRD.

So far the project has covered more than 100 schools across 3 districts of Nagaland.

Smart TutoR encourages learning by understanding rather than cramming. Virtual labs have been made possible through the use of the Smart TutoR enabling students to understand the physical experiments of Chemistry and

Physics much better. It has a feature that enables parents to monitor the progress of their wards in all the different subjects chapter-wise. Students can study and learn at the comfort and safety of their home and at a time that is convenient to them. There is a flexibility of 24x7 hours of learning. Another feature enables students to access career information and as per their stream of interest. The project will be introduced in all other government high schools across all districts in Nagaland.

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Project / Application Title

Farmpreneur

Organisation/Applicant:

FARM2FOOD Foundation

Project Period

2012

Project location

Jorhat and Golaghat

How about students coming from marginalized rural communities getting a chance to earn while they learn even as they produce their own fresh vegetables for a hearty Mid-day Meal? Sounds good, doesn't it? In 2012, an enterprising young entrepreneur Deep Jyoti Sonu Brahma launched just such a project for school students in government schools of Jorhat and Golaghat districts of Assam.

The project named Farmpreneur trains students of class VI, VII, and VIII on low cost organic farming so that they can establish their own School Nutrition Gardens. Students sell their products to the Mid Day Meal authority in the school. The money thus earned is put into the students' bank account. Students also earn money by selling their vermicomposts. The entire activities of the School Nutrition Garden are linked with the Science and Maths textbook chapters. Students are also given Life Skills training as per the Axom Sarba Shiksha recommended co-scholastic part of the CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation).

The project is being conducted in government run upper primary schools, especially in rural areas.

A parents' orientation is conducted at the start of the project. Parents and communities are encouraged to do 'Shramdaan' at the School Nutrition Garden and also donate seeds and saplings of vegetables and fruits. A person from the community, especially a parent, is nominated as 'Krishak Mitra' for the school students.

Krishak Mitra mentors and provides local support to the School Nutrition Garden.

So far, the total number of schools covered has increased to 104 across the two districts of Assam and has already established 90 gardens which have provided 5000 Kg of fresh nutritious vegetables and herbs to the Mid Day Meals. This has enabled more than 2000 students to undergo Life Skills workshop and open more than 2000 zero balance bank accounts. The students have also produced 40000 Kg of vermicompost. More and more schools are now warming up to the idea.

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Project / Application Title

Xomidhan

Organisation/Applicant:

Xomidhan

Project Period

January, 2010

Project location

Nagaon and Guwahati, Assam

Are you a successful NRI from Assam or any of the other North East states and feeling nostalgic about doing something good for people back home? You now have an option: join Xomidhan and apply your knowledge and expertise to bring about development in your home region. Xomidhan is a platform to bring together the North East diaspora under one platform so that they can contribute to overall development. Xomidhan has started with a counseling and mentoring service for students from the North East. It provides free cloud based online career counseling to students by leveraging the knowledge, experience and expertise of the North East diaspora in their respective fields.

The project has so far garnered 300 counselors across the globe who answers career queries related to their respective areas. Xomidhan is also collaborating with other print media of the region to answer career related queries from students. It is also working on a scholarship program. It will identify academically bright but economically underprivileged students and provide them with scholarships and mentorship for a year.

Whenever anybody has any doubt or concerns relating to their educational careers they can approach Xomidhan. Log in to: www.xomidhan.org, visit "Ask a Question" and fill in the form. In the next 15 days Xomidhan counselors will reply back. This ICT solution has Xomidhan to provide counseling to students coming from the remotest places.

So far, Xomidhan has replied to close to 1200 questions

and helped students to take informed decisions. Of these 800 questions were from students in Assam while the rest were from students in other North East states, predominantly Meghalaya.

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NFI is a national fund raising and grant making organization working to help disadvantaged communities improve their lives. It was established in 1992 at the initiative of Late Shri C. Subramaniam, Late Dr. Kamla Chowdhury and Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.

National Foundation for India believes in accelerating the social and economic development of India by supporting private voluntary initiatives which awaken and release the energies of the Indian people.

You can make a difference by strengthening our ability to work with disempowered and disadvantaged communities across the country. Support our work and become a partner in working towards reducing poverty and creating a just and equitable society.

Contributions made will be used to strengthen our programs and help us work more effectively with disadvantaged communities across the country. It is you, who can make the difference. Your generous financial support will help build a humane society. Please make your cheque/demand drafts in favor of National Foundation for India, payable in New Delhi.

All donations to NFI are eligible for tax relief under Section 80G of the income Tax Act. We are happy to provide any information or assistance that will help you plan your contribution.

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ENVIRONMENT

Project / Application Title

Release of fish seedling where there is water

Organisation/Applicant:

Aaranya Surksha Samiti

Project Period

2008

Project location

Hakama, Bilasipara, Dhubri District, Assam

The population of local fish is decreasing very fast due to pollution and overfishing. This project was launched in order to increase the fish population diversity and productivity. Under this, so far, 25000 fish seedlings have been released in open stable water bodies. The project has helped to increase awareness about fish diversity and addressing the endangered situation of fish population. It is also protecting and sustaining local natural ecosystem. The local population including farmers, teachers, students and others are participating in the project. This phase of the project is intended to complete by 2015. The beneficiaries in the project are the fishermen and the local community. The project is unique as no such initiative was taken before to cultivate fish in open natural water bodies to maintain the local natural ecosystem. Earlier the people used to release fish seedlings in their own ponds and tanks but not in natural water bodies at community levels. It is cost effective model to promote sustainable environment as the cost to buy 1, 00,000 fish seedlings is approx. Rs.13000.

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Project / Application Title

River Bank Protection by using Plastic net and Bio system

Organisation/Applicant:

Polygon Foundation

Project Period

2007

Project location

Lakhimpur District, Assam

River bank erosion is an age old common and complex problems of various rivers and tributaries of North East Region. Vulnerability of river bank erosion depends on various factors such as hydrology of the region, hydrometrics of the flow, type of bank material and progressive change of transverse slop of the river bed in the vicinity, meandering state of the channel and sub channel near the bank. Since 1950s Assam has lost an area of 4.27 lakh hectares of land in erosion amounting to 7.40 % of the state's total land mass. Around 8000 hectares of land is lost annually displacing families.

Although several measures are adopted by government and other agencies to control erosion, however no fruitful result is in sight. The River Bank Protection Project using plastic net and bio system was thus experimented by the Polygon Foundation as a low cost and new concept for controlling river bank erosion of small and medium structured rivers.

Already introduced under the guidance of IIT guwahati, this project aims to control and protect erosions along the right bank of the river Dikrong in the area of Moricha pathar and Boraikhasa village in Lakhimpur District. An experimental pilot project was completed in 2011 at Boraikhasa and Moricha pathar Bihpuria, Lakhimpur, right bank of the river Dikrong to save guard the Bezbaruah H E

School and other areas with the financial help of NEDFi Ltd Guwahati and technical help of IIT Guwhati, Dept of Civil Engineering. The result so far has been very encouraging. Follow up studies of 8 years have shown that the project is satisfactory and preventing erosion completely. It is now proposed to extend the method in few other erosion prone sites so as to standardize and popularize the technology. It has immense scope in small and medium rivers of Assam.

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Project / Application Title

Ensuring Ecological Viability and Livelihood Security through Community Conserved Areas – Garo Hills Meghalaya

Organisation/Applicant:

The India Foundation – North East Programme

Project Period

2014-15

Project location

Baghmara and Rongara Blocks under South Garo Hills District, Meghalaya.

The Rongara and Bagmara blocks still harbour large patches of biodiversity rich community forests which provide village communities invaluable benefits like drinking water, firewood, timber and bamboo, medicinal plants, wild vegetables, and soil conservation. However, these forests are threatened by unscientific mining, illegal logging and hunting, and monoculture plantations. The project worked with the project villages, concerned line departments, the District Council, schools and local NGOs to spread environmental awareness and facilitate the formation and strengthening of community institutions, systems, plans and strategies for the improved protection and management of ecologically vital community forests and biodiversity. The project aimed to build on and strengthen traditional forest management systems, by empowering the local community to establish Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) to effectively protect and manage community forest resources. The project undertook participatory research of community forest resources and issues pertaining to their management, in order to enhance community knowledge of their forest resources and enable them to develop appropriate long term management strategies. The project has enabled to create and strengthen 15 CCAs with community appointed CCA management committees, community endorsed resolutions with rules and regulations for CCAs, detailed land use maps and plans, signboards with rules and regulations, demarcation of CCA boundaries with tin

sheet by CCA management committee. Two clusters of neighbouring CCAs formed in Rongara Block comprising 13 villages to further inter village cooperation for forest management. The project is ensuring the protection and improved management of ecologically vital contiguous community forest between Baghmara Reserve forest and Balpakram National Park in Rongara block and forests between Sibbari and Baghmara in Baghmara block. A trained task force of 187 CCA and cluster management committee members are jointly improving forest management and expanding the initiative. Over 500 school children and 50 teachers are being given hands on environmental education focusing on issues of their area. 7 integrated village development plans have been drawn up and the development of a district level forest management strategy has been initiated.

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Project / Application Title

Community-based conservation in Western Arunachal Landscape

Organisation/Applicant:

World Wide Fund for Nature, India

Project Period

2007

Project location

East and West Kameng districts, Arunachal Pradesh.

Most of the potential Red Panda habitats fall in Unclassed State Forest or USF that cover two-thirds of Arunachal Pradesh and have been traditionally under control of the local communities and governed by customary laws. Legally or traditionally, there prevails no specific management mechanism for the USF, therefore, making it more susceptible to developmental projects and encroachments. As the local communities have traditionally controlled these forests for extraction of resources to meet their basic food and energy requirements, it is necessary to plan a conservation strategy in collaboration with them for long-term conservation of wildlife and forests.

The community-based forest conservation approach aims to secure 1000 square km of forest in a span of ten years in Western Arunachal. The approach aims to incentivize communities to create community reserves to secure wildlife habitats and promote sustainable natural resource management. Through continuous efforts of the organization (WWF India), these Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) have been recognized and notified by the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh

This approach with the Monpa community in Thembang village of West Kameng district to keep aside certain proportion of the forests surrounding their village as CCA has expanded by now. More than 1,000 sq. km of forests

covered under the 3 CCAs in two districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Most of these forests are potential red panda habitat covering an altitude of above 2,500 m altitude. More than 150 families residing in CCAs have been using timber and non-timber forest products to fulfill household demands. While there is substantial conservation action underway, WWF-India has also implemented potential livelihood activities to further boost community efforts. The assessment on potential livelihood options revealed that community-based tourism (CBT) was a promising option which in turn would encourage conservation action.

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North East Development Foundation

Towards sustainable development in North East India



Research, platform creation, field programmes, skill enhancement, technology solutions and policy & citizen consultations

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North East Development Foundation, a not-for-profit entity, since 2006, is working towards finding sustainable solutions to bridge development and digital divide in North East India. Since 2006 the efforts have been towards developing capacities among youths and women to address immediate and long term sustainable needs.

www.nedfindia.org, www.enortheast.in,
www.eassam.in, www.schollresearch.in,
www.nesi-award.org



HEALTH

Project / Application Title

108 Emergency Response Services

Organisation/Applicant:

GVK Emergency Management and Research Institute

Project Period

Assam, 6th November 2008 & Meghalaya, 2nd February 2009

Project location

Whole of Meghalaya and Assam

India is yet to have a 911 kind of nation-wide emergency service that US citizens can avail of. This leads to loss of human lives. GVK EMRI pioneered the concept of integrated emergency response service under PPP mode with the government of Andhra Pradesh in 2005, through a single toll free number 1-0-8. The service is totally free to the end user and is most beneficial to those at the bottom of the pyramid. The service has since grown across 16 states including 2 Union Territories serving more than 750 million people.

When 108 is called for help in case of any emergency, be it medical, police or fire, professional pre-hospital care is provided to the victim in distress and then handed over to appropriate emergency care at a hospital. Every citizen in the state where 108 is operational is entitled to receive free pre-hospital care. Till date, 108 have served 34.7 million emergencies. The Emergency Response System is a complex software that integrates with many critical third-party systems for managing emergencies. It automates all the activities of the call centre and support activities of emergency handling, such as medical assistance to critical patients, ambulance management and equipment management.

In the North East, the project at present covers the states of Assam and Meghalaya.

GVK EMRI Assam 108 started on 30th October, 2008, a week before the planned ceremonial launch on 6th November, 2008 to serve the bomb blast victims of Guwahati. Till date, GVK EMRI has served 21.24 lakhs beneficiaries through 380 "Mrityunjoy" 108 surface ambulances plus 5 boat ambulances and 5.78 lakhs beneficiaries by 235 vehicles of "Adarani" (Drop back project).

GVK EMRI Meghalaya 108 has so far attended more than 18 lakhs calls, received 117750 emergency requests and attended to 105430 emergencies. It has plans to expand and cover all 6 North Eastern states in the near future.

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Project / Application Title

Bordoisila Foundation Patient Shelter

Organisation/Applicant:

Bordoisila Foundation

Project Period

April 18, 2015

Project location

Lane 4, Westend Marg, Near Saket Metro Station,
New Delhi-110030

Cancer and cardiac patients from Assam and the North East, especially those coming from relatively economically weaker sections and even those from the middle class find it extremely difficult to find affordable shelter in the national capital to get treatment at AIIMS and other super-speciality hospitals that are not available yet in the North East. The Bordoisila Foundation is a New Delhi based non-profit socio-cultural organization working for the welfare of people from Assam and North east. The Foundation has been actively working since 2012. In April this year the Foundation has launched a shelter for such patients in New Delhi. Besides providing lodging and homely food, the shelter also provides free visits by super-specialist doctors for any kind of emergency consultation. The shelter has the facility to provide routine medicines and also basic laboratory services at a discounted rate. All kinds of food depending on the patient's requirement are provided, e.g. soft diet, blended food, and diet for chemotherapy patients etc. There is facility for nursing care as well. Patients also get transportation facility for hospital visits as and when required. The facility is located in south Delhi, which is also close to the Delhi airport and the Railway station.

This shelter has been so far used by 6 cancer patients and two cardiac patients. Out of 6 cancer patients two came after major surgeries requiring wound care and one

required 24 hours nursing services for tube feeding, wound care etc., which were provided by the shelter. One post cardiac surgery patient was twice given free emergency doctor services at night for breathing difficulties. Presently, the Foundation has patients, who are undergoing radiation therapy and chemotherapy requiring special diet. The project has started with a 4 room shelter and more such shelters in other areas of Delhi are on the anvil.

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Project / Application Title

Daily Hand-washing for an Ailment-free Life (DHaAL)

Organisation/Applicant:

Centre for Environment Education, North East Regional Cell (CEE North East)

Project Period

01 July, 2013

Project location

Three Education Blocks in Kamrup District, Assam, namely – Rani, Rampur and Kamalpur

Ensuring proper Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools is a key component of the Sarva Shikshya Abhiyan (SSA) of the government of India. Daily Hand-washing for an Ailment-free Life (DHaAL) is a project aimed at creating a disease-free environment in elementary schools in Assam and the North East through strengthening SSA's WASH Cell, facilitating roll-out of Nirmal Vidyalaya Puraskar in Assam and developing WASH model schools by training key stakeholders, augmenting WASH facilities and setting up operation and maintenance systems, especially focusing on group hand-washing. DHaAL project is being implemented by CEE in partnership with UNICEF and Axom SSA Mission.

This project is strengthening operation and maintenance systems developed for WASH such as focusing on toilet use, drinking water safety, and hand-washing with soap, personal hygiene, campus cleanliness, waste management, classroom cleanliness, dustbin use, and menstrual hygiene management. So far, Group Hand-washing Stations (GHS) have been installed in over 300 schools. By the end of November 2015, GHS will be installed in 421 project schools. The DHaAL project seeks to strengthen WASH by training children, their parents and key stakeholders for developing understanding of the science of WASH in all these 421 schools. So far the project has been implemented at Rani, Rampur and Kamalpur villages of Kamrup district.

In terms of target beneficiaries, teachers (850 approx.), student (20,000 approx.), mothers (4,200 approx.), and SMC members (2,000 approx.) have been reached out.

As a consequence, the disease rate, especially of water borne diseases, has come down in most schools. Enrolment and attendance rates of children in schools have improved. Parents have understood the importance of hand-washing with soap. They donate soap to the school on their child's birthday. Mothers' Group members in many schools now participate in activities like cleaning toilets, cleaning the pulses for the mid-day meal, etc. After the project intervention some communities constructed sanitary toilets at home. Communities have taken the WASH messages to the villages. UNICEF's Facebook page is publishing success stories.

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Project / Application Title

Enabling Communities to fight epidemics and promoting a sense of hygiene and healthy lifestyles

Organisation/Applicant:

Development of Society's Foundation India

Project Period

April 2009

Project location

Imphal East & Imphal West Districts of Manipur

The North East states suffer from a lack of adequate health workers, hospitals and other health care facilities. There is also an acute lack of awareness of health, hygiene and sanitation issues. The non-profit Development of Society's Foundation India (DSFI) launched a project in 2009 to address these issues. Recognising that outreach is a critical problem in the North East, the project conducts health awareness programs, which have benefitted 5000 students studying in schools and colleges. It has started a TB-DOT centre that has covered more than 12 persons. The project also runs five Medical Camps that cover more than 6000 people along with free distribution of medicines through the camps. The initiative has also covered 25 localities and 15 schools and colleges benefitting more than 10000 people, apart from conducting cleanliness drives.

The project is being implemented in coordination with the authorities in government hospitals, especially their malaria departments. The MASTEC TB department has also been playing a great role in helping DSFI in its health mission. Government authorities have also supplied a great deal of chemicals, medicines and materials. Local authorities have provided support by roping in local social workers and clubs. They help implement the schemes and series of programs initiated by DSFI. They provide logistics and manpower.

The project now covers the Imphal East & Imphal West Districts of Manipur.

The project has impacted all the communities in Imphal East and Imphal West and also other parts of the region up to some extent. Awareness camps held in consultation with local people have yielded fruitful results. The people have become thoroughly aware of sanitation & hygiene. The intern nurses volunteering and working for the communities through the programs of DSFI have inculcated a deep-seated faith in the hearts of the grassroots communities in matters of health and hygiene.

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Project / Application Title

“Children’s Health: Let’s protect, preserve & promote”

Organisation/Applicant:

Makon Bala Dutta Memorial Children’s Cancer Trust

Project Period

21st April, 2005

Project location

Department of Pediatric Surgery, Assam Medical College & Hospital, Dibrugarh, Assam.

Children are precious not only to their parents but to the nation as well. MB Dutta Children’s Cancer Trust was launched in 2005 with the aim of providing financial support to poor children suffering from cancer. The Trust has a 5 bedded air conditioned room attached to the pediatric surgery ward of the Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh, where patients are admitted for chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy. Cost of investigations, medicines, chemotherapy and operation medicine are entirely borne by the Trust. Counselling of parents is done regularly to prevent any treatment drop out. Children’s nutritional support during treatment are taken care of and toys, games, story books and a TV and VCD player have been made available, so that children can enjoy their stay at the hospital. After completion of treatment, children are encouraged to join back their studies and steps are taken for their rehabilitation. Awareness campaigns are organized in various public forums on childhood cancer from time to time. Currently, activities of the Trust have been expanded to include awareness campaigns on prevention of birth defects and training programs on first aid care in pediatric trauma victims in accidents and disasters to doctors, paramedics and general public.

So far 85 pediatric cancer patients have benefitted from the Trust. As many as 10 patients have completed minimum 4 years of disease free survival and have been

declared cured of disease. More patients are now willing to continue treatment than earlier. Birth defects prevention campaign has so far covered 7 institutions with more than 500 participants with the target group being high school and college girls, nurses and paramedics. Pediatric trauma awareness and training programmes have been conducted in 7 districts of Assam and 1 in Nagaland with more than 1500 health personnel and over 2000 general public participation.

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Project / Application Title

SAMADHAN - Toilet for the Girl Child & Needy

Organisation/Applicant:

JCI India Zone XXV (North Eastern Chapter)

Project Period

2015

Project location

All needy schools and other places in villages and cities in the North East region.

Girl child illiteracy is a major issue in areas where schools do not have proper hygienic female toilets. The Samadhan project is aimed at constructing hygienic toilets for girl students in various schools in the rural and semi-urban areas in the North East. The project has been launched in 2015 by the Junior Chamber International (JCI) India's North East chapter. JCI India is a leading international organisation of young active citizens and the international network connects nearly 200000 active citizens in more than 100 countries with millions of Jaycees alumni across the world. JCI is a non-profit NGO registered under the Indian Societies Act.

The project has so far set up 11 toilets in schools around Guwahati benefitting 1000 students and teachers. Altogether, 29 toilets will be set up within the next two months to benefit approximately 2890 girl students.

The implementation takes place in 3 phases. In the 1st phase, there is a need for identifying a place for intervention to obtain permission for the project's execution so that the numbers of toilets to be constructed are decided. There is a call for tender, whereby, tenders are obtained from at least 3 builders. The tenders are shortlisted to choose the builder based on their price, performance and professional experience. In the 2nd phase, partnering with willing donors takes place. There can be at least three different

groups to be involved with for partnership - a corporate body school, college, company, factory (any proper business set up), an individual and a group of individuals. In the 3rd phase, execution happens. A resolution is passed in CGB to properly execute this project. The partners have ownership in this project. Supervision by members makes them willing to take up leadership in the future.

The project aims to cover the entire North East region, especially rural belts of Assam and Meghalaya.

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Project / Application Title

Deployment of Health Care Knowledge System in the North-East States for Promoting Public Health Awareness and Education.

Organisation/Applicant:

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Kolkata, Directorate of Health Services, DHS, of North East States.

Project Period

April, 2011

Project location

North East India

Lack of adequate health workers and health facilities in the North East is a major stumbling block towards ensuring health for all. The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Kolkata has come up with a web-based ICT solution to overcome this problem. It has developed a web enabled Concept Maps-based Health Care Knowledge System based on the needs and advice of Medical College & Hospitals and Directorate of Health Services of the North East states. The Semantic Network-enabled health care knowledge system provides organized healthcare knowledge towards quick understanding of disease symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, diets and prevention. Thousands of pages of medical, healthcare information have been transformed into about 350 pages of semantic networks and concept maps showing important health objects and their inter relationships. Health Care Knowledge System has been deployed in more than 42 places across all the eight North – East states.

The project has promoted a holistic Health Awareness & IT-enabled Health Education in all the eight North-East states of India having less health awareness resources.

The project now covers Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and other parts of India.

The eHealth solution has been made widely available to

most of the citizens across all the eight North Eastern states of India through fifteen official websites of governments Health Departments, Family Welfare Directorate, National Rural Health Mission, Medical Colleges & Hospitals, Community Health Centres, apart from Kiosks, TV, Mobiles, Tablets, Newspapers, Printed Books etc. The solution is made available to Doctors, Students, Nurses, Health Workers and Common people free of cost.

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Project / Application Title

Cleft free Assam

Organisation/Applicant:

Operation Smile India

Project Period

January 2009

Project location

Headquartered in the Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre, MMC Hospital, Panbazar, Guwahati the project initially spread to 27 districts and 149 health blocks of Assam and gradually expanded to all districts of Meghalaya and Tripura. Having heard of the quality of care, patients had also come from non-project areas like Mumbai, Nepal, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.

Cleft deformities deprive children of a healthy life of dignity and opportunity. Though Cleft is a correctable deformity, yet access to quality care and treatment is very low. Without adequate treatment children suffering from the deformity struggle to speak, eat and participate in society and lose out on education and livelihood opportunities and are deprived of basic human dignity. On the positive side, this deformity has a proven solution which can take as little as a 45 minutes surgical procedure at the right facility with trained medical personnel. To address this problem Operation Smile India started its work in Assam in 2009 to provide free-of-cost corrective surgeries to patients suffering from cleft deformities. The project also oversees a special programme for children who cannot be given surgery because of their low nutritional status. Such patients are given special treatment to make them medically fit to receive surgery. Patients are entitled to free treatment, which includes surgery, medicines, radiological diagnostics and pathological tests.

Patients are identified and motivated for surgery by the Recruitment Team which works through existing government networks of community workers. The Team then arranges for the travel and logistics of the patients coming to Guwahati or the camp site. A medical screening

of the patient is done and on medical fitness being established, patients are scheduled for surgery. Post-anesthetic recovery care and discharge of the patient after 1 day of hospital stay is taken care of by the team. Also, post-operative care at 1 week, 2 months and 6 months is given intensively to each patient. Speech therapy and Orthodontic care are also provided as and when necessary.

The project now covers 27 districts in Assam and is expanding to all districts of Meghalaya and Tripura. So far 13707 surgeries have been conducted for patients from Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and other states including Nepal.

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Project / Application Title

Assam Mother and Child Tracking System(MCTS)
Call Centre

Organisation/Applicant:

Piramal Swasthya Management and Research
Institute

Project Period

31st March'13

Project location

MCTS Call Centre is located at Guwahati covering
all Districts of Assam.

Assam suffers from higher than national average infant and maternal mortality ratios. The Piramal Swasthya Management and Research Institute (PSMRI) has developed a mobile phone based Mother & Child Tracking System (MCTS) to monitor each and every pregnant woman and child to avoid drop out and to ensure complete service delivery in order to reduce Maternal Mortality and Infant Mortality. The objective is to undertake case-specific monitoring ensuring complete Antenatal Care (ANC) Services, Delivery Services and Postnatal Care (PNC) Services and monitoring of full Immunization Services to each and every pregnant woman and child.

The target group for the program are all pregnant women and parents of children having self-phone numbers. Every mother and child registered in an institution is recorded and they are kept under track to make sure that they are administered with the required immunization and health check-ups. Calls are made to beneficiaries and if need be, patients are provided Specialist Doctor's consultation over phone. A total of 8 calls to each pregnant woman from pregnancy till the immunization of the child are made from the MCTS Call Centre.

MCTS directly engages with beneficiaries in the project area. For instance in Assam, Piramal Swasthya's staff

interacted with beneficiaries through calls – 2,78,344 to pregnant women, 13,810 to Paramedic workers, 80073 to ASHA workers for effective implementation and execution of Mother and Child Tracking System. Mobile Medical Units (MMU) closely work with existing government health functionaries to execute community screening. The model engages last mile health workers like ASHAs, ANMs and Village Panchayats to mobilize and educate the communities.

At present the project covers all the districts of Assam. Since the launch of the project in March 2013, over 2,50,000 pregnant women and parents of children have been benefited though this service in terms of ANC and PNC care, health education and counselling services.

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Project / Application Title

Community Mental Health Programme

Organisation/Applicant:

SATRA

Project Period

June 2013

Project location

14 Gram Panchayats under Sipajhar Development Block in Darrang District of Assam

SATRA is a non-profit that has been working to improve the lives of people living in rural areas by initiating needed social and economic changes. Based on the experience of working in rural areas SATRA identified mental health as a problem area. Mental health patients have always depended on government-aided treatment for any kind of illness and end up in the hands of those who practice superstitious methods to ward off evil. The Community Mental health Programme is a health initiative that addresses the problem of mental health in Assam.

SATRA volunteers are trained by Ashadeep as caregivers and motivators to make the common masses aware of mental illness. SATRA is working in 14 village panchayats under Sipajhar Development Block in Darrang District of Assam. As of now, 634 (male-247, female-387) patients are getting free treatment and free medicine under the project, and 70 very poor patients are also getting livelihood support after recovery. The volunteers identify patients and then motivate them to join for free the psychiatric review camp held every month attended by specialist psychiatrists and counselors. Special training for the local Doctors of PHC and CHC are organized so that they are able to diagnose and prescribed medicines to the patients to begin with. To bridge the gap between MI patients and healthcare institutes SATRA trains ASHA, ANM and MPW workers. Every patient is followed up by a volunteer.

History of the patients indicates that the number of people who resort to superstitious methods to ward off evil are decreasing as a consequence of the project. As a qualitative impact, a family of eight members suffering from severe schizophrenia is now undergoing treatment at Mangaldai Civil Hospital. SATRA approached the Deputy Commissioner of Darrang district and advocated for government intervention to rehabilitate this family.

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Project / Application Title

Saving Lives and Eyesight of Children with Vitamin A

Organisation/Applicant:

Socio Economic Development Association-SEDA

Project Period

2013

Project location

Manipur State

A high percentage of children in Manipur suffer from Vitamin A deficiency which leads to poor eyesight and high incidence of soil-transmitted helminthes (STHs) or “intestinal worms”, which in turn contributes to child under-nutrition. Providing deworming tablets to children together with vitamin A is a simple, effective way to improve a child’s vitamin A status and overall health. In countries experiencing vitamin A deficiency, providing supplemental nutrition in the form of a vitamin A capsule every 6 months is vital for infant and child health, growth, and development and is accepted as an essential part of child survival programs. One capsule of vitamin A given every 6 months to children between 6 to 59 months of age can reduce under-5 child mortality by 24%.

The non-profit Socio Economic Development Foundation SEDA is implementing this project to provide Vitamin A tablets and Albendazole 400 mg free of cost to disadvantaged children in Manipur with the help of donations from Vitamin Angels India. Vitamin Angels has been donating the required products twice a year since 2011. SEDA launched this micro-nutrient supplementation project for sick children or vitamin deficiency children with the support of NGOs/state government/community etc. SEDA seeks and connects with local NGOs/ state government in Manipur. More than **20 lakhs vitamin A deficiency children are benefited through the state**

national rural health mission, Manipur. SEDA donated in free of cost for the distribution of Vitamin A tablets.

The project covers the whole state of Manipur. The project has increased the chances of child survival, has supported a healthy immune system, have reduced new cases or incidence of diarrhea and measles apart from protecting eyesight and preventing anemia. Lastly, the initiative has helped promote physical growth among the beneficiary children.

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Project / Application Title

ICT Solutions including real time monitoring using mobile phones to address health systems gaps in Assam, India

Organisation/Applicant:

UNICEF, Assam Office

Project Period

Jan 2014

Project location

Entire state of Assam – All health institutions in the 27 districts.

Assam, with a population of 31.2 million, has the worst maternal and child health indicators in India. UNICEF in collaboration with the Assam government has introduced a mobile phone-cum-web based monitoring system to ensure effective implementation of the Reproductive Maternal Newborn Child Health & Adolescent (RMNCH+A) strategy in six high priority districts in the state. UNICEF has also digitized the district gap assessment data collected from the six HPDs and Assam is now the only state in India that has developed a dashboard for the district gap analysis (DGA) including gaps in water sanitation, hygiene and nutrition.

Most states use a paper-based system for monitoring / supervision, which is cumbersome, time consuming and lengthy. Over a period of time the supervisors tend to get fatigued and start filling the checklist sitting in their homes/ offices without visiting the actual site. There was a need to develop a system which would ensure that the planned visits to health institutions and session sites actually take place. Site supervision using mobile phones enables capture of photographs and data with GPS tagging. This has minimised the errors involved in paper-based data collection and the TAT (turnaround time) has come down from 1 month to a few days.

Two/ three member teams visit the allocated district once every month and visit the health institutions and the session site and collect the data using the mobile phone. They capture the GPS location, take photographs and

complete the data collection. They also provide support to the health workers and encourage best practices. The filled forms are then pushed to the server once there is net connectivity. The analysis is done in the background and findings displayed on a dashboard for visualization and taking action.

As an outcome, effective vaccine management has been implemented in two states. RIPAS scaled up to nine states including Assam. RI and RMNCHA supportive supervision has covered approximately 800 health institutions, more than 653 session sites reaching all districts of Assam. The data analysis has enabled program managers and policy makers at all levels (State/ district and block) to take evidence-based actions for improving services.

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To tap the power of user driven publishing through the internet and social media, DEF launched the Citizen Media Network (CMN) which aims at nurturing Citizen Journalism in India and South Asia.



www.citizenmedianetwork.org





**LIVELIHOOD, SKILL
DEVELOPMENT,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
& EMPLOYABILITY**

Project / Application Title

Gender intensive Pisciculture in Baksa district of Assam

Organisation/Applicant:

Dhan Foundation

Project Period

2013

Project location

The project covers 44 villages under Barama Block, Baksa District, Assam

It is observed that almost every household in rural Assam owns a pond which can be utilized as an alternate source of livelihood mainly for the tribal women. This project has utilized the neglected ponds of tribal women and increased their livelihood. Based on experiences, the organization proposed to establish ponds for fishery as an alternate source of livelihood among the women of Barama Block under Baksa District. The proposed idea covers 66.72 ha of water area in 378 ponds. Dhan Foundation is helping such households in Barama District of Baksa District to utilize ponds for fishery activities.

400 women SHG members are trained and exposed to new techniques in improved fish farming and their involvement in inland fishery is considerably increased. This is highly appreciable as earlier they have not fully involved due to lack of knowledge and finance. This project has encouraged women & tribal SHG members' contribution and participation in fish farming.

It has organized 378 women fish farmers into 17 Fishery Producer Groups (FPGs) and Savings Bank Account is opened for each FPG. Regular meetings are conducting regularly with 90% of participation and the members are ready to intensify this activity further.

The project is highly cost effective as the input cost is not very high and gains are good with low risk involvement in fishery activity. The input cost is also used as revolving fund every year which makes the project sustainable. The project has delivered the thinking among the womens to utilize their ponds and consider ponds as a source of livelihood which are otherwise neglected by them.

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Project / Application Title

East Lungdar Block Office Citizen Services
Delivery, Mizoram

Organisation/Applicant:

Block Development Office, E.Lungdar, Serchhip
District, Mizoram

Project launch

As per implemented by State Government from
time to time.

Project location

The project location is E.Lungdar, Serchhip District,
Mizoram

Rural Development Department, East Lungdar Block is providing citizen services for rural poor through various schemes being implemented in the Block. The schemes implemented in the Block are Border Area Development Programme (BADP), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), Indira Awaaz Yojana (IAY), and National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). Rural People are benefitting from the above stated Schemes and their livelihood is being uplifted. Among these Schemes, Wage employment under MGNREGS is truly beneficial for the rural poor.

The block level initiative intends to improve the socio economic conditions of the rural community and to uplift the people living below the poverty by providing wage employment, self employment through income generating activities and also to create permanent assets for strengthening the rural infrastructure. Most of the programmes implemented by the Block office with the support of the State Rural Development Department are meant for poverty alleviation, capacity building, and reduction of unemployment or to give additional employment to people living in rural areas in order to enhance their livelihood security. Various villages under this RD Block are either connected by all weather roads or fair weather roads. Many Agricultural lands are connected by Road construction under Border Area Development Programme. Land development works like Construction of dry Terraces, Half Moon Terraces, Construction of pits

for Coffee plantation etc are also undertaken under the Integrated watershed Management Programme (IWMP) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). More than 10,000 households have been covered with relevant citizen services in recent years in East Lungdar Block.

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Project / Application Title

Promotion of Division Based Irrigation in Nalbari, Kamrup (Rural District) and Baksa districts of Assam

Organisation/Applicant:

Gramya Vikash Mancha

Project Period

2009-10, 2011-12 (Phase-I), 2012-2015 (Phase – II)

Project location

400 villages under Nalbari, Baksa and Kamrup (Rural) district of Assam

Under this project, Gramya Vikash Mancha has restored numbers of natural water bodies like canals, creeks, dongs etc and constructed several diversion based structures to use natural water for irrigation in agricultural land. Besides, thousands of Farmers have been empowered through capacity enhancement initiative to enhance production and income, thereby to improve their quality of life. The entire area of Nalbari, Kamrup (Rural) and Baksa (under Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District) district is situated at the north plains of the Brahmaputra Valley. Numbers of tributaries of mighty river Brahmaputra are passing through the area. Besides these main tributaries, there are large networks of natural canal, creeks and wetlands. These networks of water bodies can be truly termed as lifeline of the people of the region. But unfortunately, the entire system has been obliterated due to several causes. Life and livelihood of people from the excluded section have been victimized and under threats. The project “Promotion of Diversion Based Irrigation in Baska and Nalbari district of Assam” project has been implemented with the support of Jamshedji Tata Trust, to address these issues and to improve the quality of life of the people. Through this project, GVM has effectively able to use issues of natural water bodies for organizing disorganized community in common platform for common goal, use natural water for irrigation without using any power/ fuel, actively engage community in restoring ecological balance, reviving land and livelihood among farmers and fisherman. All these initiatives have been

leading towards creating a peaceful and prosperous society in every village.

The Promotion of Diversion Based Irrigation project has directly benefitted more than 60,000 farmer families by effective use of diversion based irrigation system, strengthening community level institutions, building network and initiating convergence with govt. departments and administration and through capacity enhancement of the targeted community in agriculture and allied activities. More than 265.77 kms of natural water bodies restored through cleaning and dredging work by the community since 2009 to 2014. More than 48495.62 acre of land got irrigation and more than 69582 farmer families directly benefitted by this work.

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Project / Application Title

Promotion of Entrepreneurship in Mizoram

Organisation/Applicant:

Mizoram Entrepreneurship Network

Project Period

August 15th 2008

Project location

All 8 districts of Mizoram

The Mizoram Entrepreneurship Network has taken up the challenge of a difficult task in promoting entrepreneurship since 2008. The main motto of the intervention is “Entrepreneurship: Challenge for sustainable economic growth.” The vision and mission of the project is to promote prospective would-be entrepreneurs by providing them necessary skills training.

The Mizoram Entrepreneurship Network, since its inception, has conceived and launched entrepreneurship development and skill building activities in our limited capacities. The objective is to generate sustainable employment among the youths of Mizoram. MEN have organized, conducted and hosted as many as 52 capability development programmes where in more than 1800 youths participated during the past five years. As a part of MEN's initiatives for providing handholding support to the prospective entrepreneurs, they have registered as many as 136 would-be-entrepreneurs till date. However, due to various constraints, success rate in terms of actual enterprise creation or placement under wage-employment is dismally low. The rising unemployment rate has resulted in growing frustration among the youth. MEN believes that promotion, development and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit is the only solace. Furthermore, there is no simpler and easier way to create new jobs, increase GDP and rising standard of living than supporting entrepreneurship and encouraging people who dare to start their own business set up.

MEN has been organizing awareness programmes in colleges and voluntary associations, EDP, SDP, Sensitization, Awareness workshops, Awareness Camps, face-to-face consultation meetings with prospective entrepreneurs. MEN have also conducted International Business Conclave (Mizoram Trade & Investment Conclave 2009) in association with Govt of Mizoram and ICC - Kolkata at Aizawl where delegates from Myanmar and Bangladesh attended. MEN have conducted training programmes on Credit Guarantee Scheme and Priority Sector Lending to MSMSE with CGTMSE – Mumbai and RBI – Guwahati at Aizawl. MEN has also conducted workshop on “Export Potential of Mizoram” with Exim Bank – Mumbai at Aizawl.

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Project / Application Title

IT Based Computer Aided Design Center for Empowerment of Rural Weavers / Artisans of Assam, Tripura & Arunachal Pradesh.

Organisation/Applicant:

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Kolkata & Handloom & Textile Department, Mushalpur, Office of the Director of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), Govt. of Assam.

Project Period

July, 2010

Project location

The project covers the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) territory covering Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa & Udalguri Districts in Assam; Tawang, Papumpare, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, West Siang, East Siang and Changlang Districts in Arunachal Pradesh; and West Tripura, Shipahijala, Khowai & Gomati District in Tripura.

Computer Aided Design (CAD) Centre has been established with an aim to create innovative IT Based Design Development and deployment for Carpet, Handloom and Handicraft products with up-gradation of Skills of the Weavers/Artisans with state-of-the art IT-based Tools and Techniques using simplest methodology. This is to enable the artisans to respond to fast changing Global needs. The aim of the project is to reach out to the craftsmen and women, who had the skills but lacked ICT tools training to perform using PC, help them expertise their innovative sense of design and link with the ICT modern tools, create a pool of master trainers so that they imbibe the same to others in the community and enhance their earning potential and develop a Motif Bank of Carpet & Handloom Designs.

The program to train master trainers is innovative as the educational qualification and background of the creative designers was not a priority while choosing them. The innovation was using simple application on complicated

machines (Plotters, Card Punching machine) to create designs play with colors and take a plot on normal paper, graphical paper (to make the weavers job easy) and also to create a pool of motif bank for fusion of any art form with another.

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Project / Application Title

Project Swabalamban

Organisation/Applicant:

OIL INDIA

Project Period

December 2, 2013

Project location

The project covers Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar and Jorhat districts of Assam

The Project is designed to address the growing unemployment in Upper Assam districts with special reference to Oil India Limited (OIL)'s operational areas. The focus of the project is to provide placement linked skill-based training to youths in various sectors in areas like service, construction industry, health, retail sectors, etc. and entrepreneurship education to teachers and students of schools and colleges.

OIL's main producing areas are located in the three districts of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and parts of Sivasagar in Upper Assam. One of the main reasons of growing social unrest in the primary agrarian region is the lack of employment avenues. More and more unemployed youths expect OIL as the only source of direct/indirect employment. With numerous villages under its extended operational areas, it becomes increasingly difficult for OIL to meet the expectations of the people. In order to help the large number of unemployed youths of the society and strengthen rural economy, OIL decided to take up placement linked skill-based training of the youths. The project therefore, was launched in these three districts.

OIL's CSR focus in recent years has been on developing avenues for sustainable employment through skill and capacity building of the unemployed youths from its operational areas. In this regard, it has been observed that there are huge opportunities to train local youth in areas like service sector, construction industry, health sector, retail sector, etc. Keeping this in view, Oil India Limited has

signed an MoU with Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (Guwahati), IL&FS Education & Technology Services (New Delhi) and Construction Industry Development Council (New Delhi) in December 2013 for capacity building and placement linked skill training of youths from OIL's operational areas within a five year horizon under Project OIL Swabalamban.

Project Swabalamban came as a beacon of hope in their lives of those students who have not been able to complete their education for various reasons. Since 2nd Dec 2013, 3412 candidates have been trained in varied trades out of which 2547 candidates have been placed in various sectors and industries across the country. Under project Swabalamban, OIL has successfully launched an artistic jewellery brand named 'RASMI...heart made jewellery' for the students of the trade of Jewellery Making & Designing in January 2014.

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Project / Application Title

Organic Majuli

Organisation/Applicant:

Organic Majuli

Project Period

January 2014 onwards

Project location

The project covers Majuli Subdivision of Jorhat district, Assam

Organic Majuli was founded in 2014 for organic farming practices and promotion through training and information sharing for food, nutrition, income security, community sustainable development and women empowerment. Under this project interested farmers are trained on organic farming techniques and practices in order to reclaim the ecological status of the project area and achieve sustainability in food production. Thorough monitoring and follow up with trained farmers are practiced to ensure compliance with the newly learnt organic farming skills and practices. Farmers are also assisted by creating awareness towards the dangers of conventional farming based on synthetic external inputs. Organic Majuli is also promoting traditional handlooms/crafts locally as well as globally under the guidance of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Shillong centre.

For Organic Farming the soil is first tested before the land is prepared for plantation. After that, organic manure and necessary pest control steps are taken to ensure maximum harvest and then product certification is done before being marketed. For handloom, 10-15 women are selected to create a Weavers' Society and then are provided with basic training for 10-15 days under the guidance of industry expert and designers. Organic Majuli is trying to address some of the major issues along with their solutions in the field of rural Economic development, Unemployment, unskilled Resources, Food security and Environment degradation.

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Project / Application Title

Swarna Jayanti Gram Sarojghar Yojana (SGSY)

Organisation/Applicant:

Society for Advancement and Recreation in Rural Areas, (SARRA), Arunachal Pradesh

Project Period

2001

Project location

The project location is Papum Pare District, Arunachal Pradesh

This project was initiated under the banner of Society for Advancement & Recreation in Rural Areas, (SARRA) in the year 2001 for the first time in the project area on experimental basis with the launch of the SGSY Scheme by the Government of India, with an intention to uplift rural economy through SHG as a medium of economic development, social change and leadership development, especially amongst the poor women of rural villages like Chimpu. The main objective of the project was to coordinate with various development agents of both state and Central government for effective implementation of the scheme in the area. The main goal of SARRA is to bring sustainable economic development through SHG. Chimpu is located in the out skirt of Itanagar-Capital City where poor rural people from different districts of State have migrated from their locality on grounds of poor medical and low economic conditions. Socio-Economic conditions of these people are far cry from a sustainable livelihood. SGSY is trying to provide certain direction, tips, guidance for their livelihood.

The collective efforts of groups with the voluntary participation of the village elders, Panchayat body, agencies and adaptation of group methodology by every family are the uniqueness of the project implementation. The project has promoted more than 70 SHGs out of which few groups are working effectively by realizing the group work as a channel of socio & economic change. It is still promoting more numbers of SHGs and imparting group leadership/accounting and entrepreneurship programs conducted in time to time.

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Project / Application Title

Creating Pathways out of Poverty using Multi-dimensional Convergence Approaches in Sikkim

Organisation/Applicant:

Rural Management and Development Department, Sikkim

Project Period

2013

Project location

All the 176 Gram Panchayats of Sikkim

There was a need to restructure rural planning in the Himalayan State of Sikkim by repositioning the developmental programmes which functioned as a safety net (preventing households from falling deeper into poverty) and in a stand-alone manner. Under a new convergent approach, the Rural Management and Development Department (RMDD) of Sikkim has been now proactively providing a “ladder of opportunity” to create pathways out of poverty for 20% of the poorest rural households in the State by creating sustainable livelihood assets in their lands, while simultaneously preventing them from falling deeper into poverty by provisioning a safety net. New approaches like pro-poor perspective planning (G5P), participatory identification of the poor (PIP), SWOT analysis at household level, convergence approaches and effective social audits were adopted.

The project was implemented in convergence with various schemes. Substantial funds and functions were devolved by decentralizing programs like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Chief Minister’s Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM), Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and others into this new cluster office. An integrated village development plan approach has been adopted at the gram panchayat level, targeting the creation of income generating assets in the lands of the poorest households. Along with funds and functions, adequate functionaries were also deputed to enhance the last mile delivery of public programs by creating a unique convergence office (Gram Vikas Kendra) to provide administrative, accounts and technical support to a cluster of 5-6 Gram Panchayats.

The policy approval was obtained in May 2013, and the project has now completed two years of implementation with

a total investment of 96 crores directly benefitting 9,688 poor households (of the total 93,000 rural households in the state). The planning process involved capacity building of 500 functionaries comprising the village facilitation team, preparing the plan jointly with the gram panchayats, presentation and harmonizing under the Gram Planning Forum at gram panchayat (GP) level, Gram Sabha approval, Technical and financial feasibility, estimation by Block and finally approval by the Zilla Panchayat.

As per the Planning Commission (2012) estimates, the percentage of BPL households has come down significantly in Sikkim from 30.9% to 8.19% during the period 2004-05 to 2011-12. This rapid decline in poverty can be largely attributed to the rise in the annual income levels of 68% of the rural households of the State by about Rs 10,000/- every year over the last 5 years. An average 18% increase in crop yields is reported by the beneficiary households from all the study villages. Further, household incomes have increased by an average of 30% due to employment provided under MGNREGS. Migration of landless or unskilled laborers has decreased by 100% in all the study villages. With this, to optimize public delivery efforts and effectively address the issue of poverty alleviation, inter-sectoral convergence of development programme is grounded successfully.

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Project / Application Title

Self Sustainable Integrated Farming

Organisation/Applicant:

State Institute of Rural Development, Kohima,
Nagaland

Project Period

2004-2007

Project location

The project location is in Kohima district.

Self Sustainable Integrated Farming (SSIF) is a practical farm research which was actually conducted on participatory and farm system mode. It is an action research to study an alternative farming system, which is technically feasible to the hilly region and akin to the prevailing farming practices. It is a farm unit wherein the enterprises integrated are compatible to each other to produce all the needs of the farm within the farming unit itself on sustained basis and to promote at least 2-3 products for commercial purpose.

Agriculture is a way of life for the people of Nagaland. Out of 3, 12,770 hectares of net area sown during 2002-03 only 20.62 percent were irrigated and only 16.19 percent were sown more than once. Cultivators were tilling their land with crude and simple tools and implements. Consequently, productions per unit area of almost all crops were very low. Add to this the annual growth rate of population of the state from 1991 to 2001 at 6.4 percent, was the highest in the country. If this is not checked the man to land ratio would be drastically reduced and pressure on land would be alarming. As such, it was felt necessary to study an alternative form of sustainable farming which would be acceptable to the tradition bound farmers while being environment friendly as well. The SSIF is a new farming system evolved by the Nagaland SIRD and offers alternatives to the advantages enjoyed by the farmers in shifting cultivation.

The SIRD being primarily a training institute and not an implementing agency has conducted several training programmes both in-house and in the field sharing, the findings of the SSIF with rural functionaries and farmers. During the years of the action research farmers were taken

to the demonstration farms to get a firsthand experience of this particular exercise. The miniature SSIF developed on land of 0.20 hectare area became almost sustainable in itself in terms of manure requirements and sustainable to average rural farming family of six persons in terms of just the basic economic requirements in three years. Thus by engaging the family labours on a SSIF farm of 0.20 hectare the farming family could generate an annual income of Rs.26,400/- during 2006.

The SSIF is a new farming system evolved by the Nagaland SIRD and offers alternatives to the advantages enjoyed by the farmers in shifting cultivation. It is a highly diversified mixed farming wherein almost all the needs of the farm and the farming family is expected to be generated within the farm itself on sustainable basis by integrating farming enterprises which are compatible and beneficial to each other in a unit farm. It is based on traditional farming system but much more scientific and productive. The department has not evaluated the impact of its project but it is hoped that it would have made qualitative changes in the lives of the farmers within the ambit of its experiment and trainings.

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Project / Application Title

Naga Weavers of Manipur

Organisation/Applicant:

READ India / Tazei Community Library and Resource Center

Project Period

2012

Project location

The project location is in Kohima district Imphal West, Manipur

The TAZEI Handloom Training and Production Centre started in 2012 at Sangaiprou Kabui , Imphal West, Manipur with the support of READ India. The Center has been producing different kind of cloths for selling such as tribal Shawls, Garment, Towel, curtain clothe, Table cloth etc and other demand essential item. In 2015 with the support of Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology the center has been developing a new range of products by collaborating with weavers using the traditional weaving technique, for new urban and local markets would be the thrust of the project. By combining value addition through design and creating market demand for the new products we aim to create a sustainable business model for these women weavers.

The TAZEI Community Library Resource Centre (Tazei READ India Center) is situated in Sangaiprou Kabui Village, South West of Imphal West district. TAZEI Community Library Resource Centre covers the whole Lamjaotongba Gram Panchayat. Tazei CLRC is covering Sangaiprou Paite Veng in the East, Lukram Leirak and Sapam Leirak in the north, Sadokpam and Khamnam Leirak in the west and Sangaiprou Meitei in the south with about 12000 – 15000 population. The TAZEI CLRC is surrounded by people of various ethnic groups. This Centre has taken up various awareness programmes related to various issues and topic in time to time in the locality. Apart from supporting traditional way of trade and business such as Piggery, Dairy, Poultry, Carpentry and Brewing local dew (wine), TAZEI center has started a handloom production

and training center at library premises. The traditional looming and weaving products are on high demand in the local market. The project aims to create a sustainable business model for the women weavers.

The Tazei Local library members started this training um production unit with 20 women and after three months training they had started their production and has been selling their products in local village and Ema market.

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Project / Application Title

Tripura Bamboo Mission

Organisation/Applicant:

Tripura Bamboo Mission

Project Period

2007 - 2017

Project location

The project covers state of Tripura and all the 8 districts.

Tripura Bamboo Mission (TBM) is an initiative of the Government of Tripura to strengthen bamboo based industries in the state, towards livelihood, entrepreneurship and employment generation. Implemented in public-private partnership mode, TBM has adopted an integrated cluster approach in creating and strengthening bamboo based livelihoods along with promoting and supporting existing and upcoming industries. The state is first to adopt a 'State Bamboo Policy' in the year 2001. In spite of huge potential, as envisaged by the state government, the bamboo sector in Tripura was dwindling as the skill levels and the institutional capacity in the clusters were grossly inadequate to mobilize optimal scales of operations in synchronization with the requirements of the mainstream markets. This coupled with limited access to markets, market information, latest technology developments in the sector and infrastructure requirements have resulted in a "low productivity, low volume and low value scenario". In order to boost the bamboo sector, the State Government of Tripura launched the Bamboo Mission.

TBM focuses on Integrated Development of bamboo based clusters and socio-economic empowerment of the community. The focus bamboo sub-sectors, as strategized by TBM, are a) Incense or Agarbatti, b) Handicraft & Furniture, c) Industrial Application and d) Resource Generation.

The project output is defined in terms of sector turnover and livelihood generated in the state over a specific project period. The sectorial turnover increased from Rs. 28 crore to Rs. 121 Crore between the period of 2007 and 2014.

A total 43 thousand people in the sector were trained on different aspects of bamboo and a total 16 nos. cluster level CFC established. More than 60 grassroots institutions are formed with artisans at the community level which has also seen the income of artisan increased up to Rs. 9000 per month. TBM is now a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. It is an ISO 9001:2008 certified organization.

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Project / Application Title

Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission

Organisation/Applicant:

Department of Fisheries, Government of Meghalaya

Project Period

2012 - 2017

Project location

The project covers the state of Meghalaya..

The Government of Meghalaya has identified fisheries as a key focus sector for the 12th plan period and decided to construct one lakh fish ponds of 0.1 hectare to create an additional water body of area 10000 hectares. In view of the fact that the conventional schematic mode is fraught with inherent delays, was decided to approach it in a mission mode by launching the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission (MSAM) as a people's movement, co-terminus with the Twelfth Five Year Plan period (2012-13 to 2016-17).

Fishery sector occupies an important place in the socio-economic development. The contribution of fisheries to the agricultural GDP as well as overall GDP has been showing a rising trend. Meghalaya with its vast inland fishery resources in the form of rivers, reservoirs, lakes and ponds and an average rainfall of 1200m offers tremendous scope for developing the fishery sector, but has lagged behind in harnessing the potential of these natural resources for a variety of reasons such as uneven terrains. The local production of fish was grossly inadequate to meet the growing demand. There is a sufficient skill base in the region among the rural population which required to be channeled towards the commercial front. Creating large water bodies for fish culture in a Mission mode would lead to transformation in the rural areas according to MSAM.

The MSAM aimed to develop fish ponds through a credit linkage with the banks, with a reasonable back-end subsidy and a modest own contribution of 15% from the farmers. The entire Mission was divided into 6 Mini Missions – Area and Productivity Expansion, Critical Infrastructure Development, Establishing Fish Sanctuaries, Capacity Building, Mass Media-Campaigns-Documentation-Outreach, and Emerging Opportunities in the Fisheries Sector.

The Fish Farmers Development Agency was notified as the Nodal Agency for implementing the Mission. District Aquaculture Mission Committees headed by the Deputy Commissioner and Block level Aquaculture Mission Committees headed by the BDO has been constituted. The principal secretary (Fisheries) and the Director (Fisheries) provided the support and direction at the State level. The methodology covered mobilization campaigns, advertisements, preparation of technical manuals, establishment of a website and capacity building of farmers and officers. Most intervention of the MSAM was in PPP mode, leading to wide public participation in the Mission.

Under MSAM, the Fisheries Department has released financial grants and subsidy loans to fish entrepreneurs. More than 25,000 partners created under various components for individual ponds expansion. The Department has assisted 12 private eco-hatcheries, 14 FRP hatcheries with a targeted production of 4.28 crore fingerlings. More than 1300 potential farmers trained since 2013. The first fish Brood Bank in the whole of North East has been inaugurated in May 2015. Once Phase I is completed, the plan is to launch MSAM 2.0 in the 13th plan period.

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Project / Application Title

Unlocking Value Chain in Bamboo Incense Sticks Sector in Tripura

Organisation/Applicant:

Tripura Bamboo and Cane Development Centre (TRIBAC)

Project Period

2006 - 2011

Project location

The project covers Gandhigram and Bamutia Rural Development Blocks in Tripura West.

Bamboo is a natural resource and having ample potential to create rural livelihood through providing skill development, micro enterprise development. Tripura Bamboo and Cane Development Centre did value chain mapping and strategize intervention through capacity building of chain actors and linked them into domestic market. Tripura has rich bamboo resource, unemployed youth and women in rural pocket and having potential bamboo incense stick market in national level. It is a consumable product and having potential of scale-up. The project is cost-effective and market-driven, providing space for rural poor and particularly women for creating livelihood and finally utilization of natural resources bamboo. A participatory value chain up-gradation centric approach was adopted for the empowerment of rural women & youth to ensure sustainable business livelihood promotion and corresponding market development. It had three pronged approach viz. intensive community mobilization for SHGs/Artisans, capacity building for entrepreneurship development, partnership and linkages with market and financial institutions for viable enterprise development.

The project initiated with six rural women has been gradually scaled up to another three hundred rural women including the youths. Most of the participants are from the rural background, tribal and poorest of the poor. The base line date on their income was Rs.300/-per month but with the project support, the income has surmounted to Rs. 2000/- to Rs. 2500/- per month.

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North East Development Foundation & Digital Empowerment Foundation *Presents*



Theme: 'Digital North East for Digital India'
November 27, 2015

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SOCIAL, GENDER AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Project / Application Title

Financial Inclusion (Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana)

Organisation/Applicant:

Gram Tarang Inclusive Development Services Pvt. Ltd.

Project Period

April 2010

Project location

Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya & Tripura

Branchless Banking is the concept of providing banking services outside the conventional bank branches either by using information and communication technology services or third party organization (commonly known as Business correspondent). GTIDS is currently working in 12 states of India in over 25,000 Villages as business correspondent for Technology Service Provider (TSP) on behalf of 10 Banks. This project started in the North East in 2010 and expanded further along with the introduction of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana in the year 2014. This project runs with hi-technology equipment and customers are getting their banking facility without any barrier. In North-East, Gram Tarang is engaging above 1000 Bank Mitras under different Nationalized and Private banks. Above 16 lacks A/c opened through Bio-Matric devices. 10 Lacks Smart Cards & 2.5 lacks RuPay cards distributed among enrolled customers and Rs. 145 crore mobilized through customers A/c. As a service,

Gram Tarang is providing banking services to all villagers as well as urban people through using advance biometric devices. Customers/beneficiary can open Zero balance bank account at BCA (Business Correspondence Agent) points. Customers can get all basic bank facility at their allocated CSP points. All govt. beneficiaries can get their benefit through this No-Frill A/c authenticating their biometric finger print. The product and services offered makes it

different from the traditional banking system. Poorer or illiterate citizen can be easily included in banking system through using biometric devices without risks. Even opening one bank A/c for any individual has become easy at BCA points with less documentation exercise.

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Project / Application Title

Micro Credit

Organisation/Applicant:

Nightingale Finvest

Project Period

2004

Project location

Seven districts of Assam and in one district each in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram

The Micro-Credit provided by Nightingale Finvest has been utilized by clients in their income generating activities and is being provided in unserved, underserved, hilly and backward areas. Most of the clients are successful in earning more income from their business/activities. The change in living standards and economic conditions of many clients became better than earlier in many cases. Nightingale has been able to make a difference to the lives of countless poor women. Micro credit is provided to poor and low income group of the society whose annual income should not be more than the amount fixed for rural and urban areas by RBI. As on 31.03.2015, number of active clients (borrowers) was 23,278 and loan outstanding with them was Rs.22,78,79,897/-. The capital required for the project is raised by borrowings from banks and financial institutions in addition to own capital contributed by the promoters and shareholders of the company and also contributed by financial institutions and banks towards equity. The fund available with the company is provided to Joint Liability Group consisting five women belonging to poor and low income group of the society within the age group of 18-58 years and engaged in income generating activities. The agency is carrying out its micro-finance activities throughout its 14 branch offices of which 11 branches are in seven districts of Assam State and one each at Pashighat district of Arunachal Pradesh, at Shillong in East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya and at Aizawl in Aizawl district of Mizoram.

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eHeritage

DIGITALLY ENHANCING
INDIA'S HERITAGE

Digital Empowerment Foundation, along with UNESCO and IHCN initiated a project called eHeritage -Digitally Enhancing India's Heritage. It is a capacity building programme, which empowers municipalities to create a digital presence of their heritage. At present four heritage entities are being worked upon-Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi), Chanderi, Shekhawati and Jahanpana. Over 400 monuments across three cities - Shekhawati, Delhi and Chanderi - now have a digital presence.

www.olddelhiheritage.in



Technology for Development

Project / Application Title

Cellfisher – Location Based service

Organisation/Applicant:

Redlemon Communications

Project Period

December, 2014

Project location

Assam

Cellfisher provides customers, access to cabs, auto and travel agents, throughout a city, through calls made to short code, '59211' and works in collaboration with Cellular Operators. Customer's calls are directly routed to the nearest service provider from amongst thousands of available options based on customer's location, providing him or her, the fastest real-time solution. In short, Cellfisher provides transport service that is reliable and available 24/7. Conventional voice calls make it easy to use, convenient and fast to deliver.

Cellfisher is a location-based service (LBS) provider, which will work in conjunction with a cellular operator to provide taxi or Auto service to a client. This will later be extended to provide any service (like Doctors, restaurants etc.) for which there is a demand in the market. The product will connect the customer seeking the service directly to the nearest vendor offering the service, without any intermediary. Cellfisher does not need a smart phone to operate, like any of the other taxi service providers like Meru or Uber where you either call a help desk or download an app. A simple mobile phone is all that is needed to use this service.

Its market is not the users of Meru or Ola cabs. The service providers will cater to the other segments of population, which want to use regular taxi or an auto service from their doorstep, rather than walking outside on the road to look for one. This could either be a minimum distance travel where it does not make sense to book a Meru/Ola cab or long distance one where one needs to travel from one end of the city to another, but don't want to pay

the price of an air conditioned taxi. Cellfisher revenue model is subscription fees from the auto/taxi drivers for enrolling into its service and sharing of the call revenue with the cellular operator.

The first customer base is already lined up - the Vodafone Guwahati employees. Vodafone has agreed to internally promote the Cellfisher service. The basic product is ready to be launched. There is a need to carry out a round of testing to ensure that the product is working under all scenarios (estimated time: 1.5 months). Concurrently, there will be an enrolling of the taxi /auto drivers into the Cellfisher platform.

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Project / Application Title

E-BOZAR (Your Online Shopping Mall)

Organisation/Applicant:

E-BOZAR

Project Period

25th December 2012

Project location

Guwahati, Assam

E-BOZAR is an online store from Assam. It basically deals about Genuine Assam Silk, Muga Silk, Bamboo Ornaments, Handloom Collections, Designers' Collection etc. After a deep research, E-BOZAR started developing indigenous weaving and other craftsmanship and also showcasing the traditional products of Assam in different parts of India and rest of the world.

The best medium to showcase the ethnic products of a region is always the electronic medium as it requires very less investment and provides a very broader space of business. With the improvement of internet facility the chances of selling as well as displaying the products to the world has grown immensely and so finally the website was built on 25th December on 2012. Since then E-BOZAR has never looked behind and is working day in and day out to move ahead. As a part of culture, when team of E-BOZAR started to research about Assamese culture and its related things, the by-products were found to be in a good state at the regional level but on being compared to others they were just small token of appreciation amongst others. After a hard research one thing was clear that every culture is based on some traditional rules of practice, which is covered by traditional sectors like dresses, food etc. When it came to dealing in ethnic products of Assam in the market, various kinds of issues cropped up, like low quality products, high price etc. Therefore, the team e-BOZAR planned up a strategic e-commerce by

which people from any corner of this world can reach out and learn about Assamese community. To augment the process, a team was formed and started to develop a production house dealing in the ethnic products. Finally, when everything was done, the formal launching of and E-BOZAR took place and was established as a single window shoppers' portal providing online services. Now-a-days, due to profitable pricing compared to other branded stores, many local designers and manufacturers have started profiting from E-BOZAR as well as many buyers of genuine indigenous products.

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Project / Application Title

Arunachal m-Seva: Citizen Centric Services through Mobile Governance in Arunachal Pradesh

Organisation/Applicant:

State Council for IT and e-Governance, Deptt. Of Information Technology, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh

Project Period

September 2014 (Implemented since August 2014)

Project location

Throughout the state of Arunachal Pradesh across all 22 districts.

As an extension of the National e-Gov Plan (NeGP) vision, and in cognizance of vast mobile phone subscriber base in the state, it is prudent to provision for access to public services through mobile devices, thereby establishing Mobile Governance (m-Governance) in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The project involves development of solutions for mobile-enablement of 21 high transaction volume citizen services (G2C) with localization across 12 service categories under 7 departments of Government of Arunachal Pradesh through use of mobile networks, systems and channels viz. PUSH/PULL SMS, and Mobile Apps. Arunachal Pradesh's biggest challenge is its difficult terrain. Consequently, internet penetration across the state is relatively poor. Although, a number of Government-to-Citizen services have been made available online, a large number of citizens in this mostly rural region continue to travel long distances and personally visit Government offices or Departments to avail of various services. This results in increased administrative burden and service fulfilment cost. Recognizing the comparatively higher mobile phone subscriber base in Arunachal Pradesh, State Government resolved to provide the state's citizens with access to a range of public services through mobile devices. The state's Department of IT was tasked with setting up a flexible, scalable and robust mobile-based delivery system by leveraging existing national Mobile Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG) infrastructure developed

under Government of India's National e-Governance Plan (NeGP).

The Department of IT sought to hire an external vendor with proven credentials of implementing successful m-Governance projects in India, strong domain knowledge and experience of working on digital initiatives in the region and in the process selected M/s. Accenture as Program Partner for this project. Funding for this project was provided to State by the Department of Electronics & IT (DeitY), Government of India, with financial support from World Bank under the India: e-Delivery of Public Services Development Policy.

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Project / Application Title

Centralized e-Auction System for North Eastern States (Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland)

Organisation/Applicant:

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Kolkata & NERAMAC, Ministry of DoNER, Guwahati, Assam

Project Period

May, 2014

Project location

The project covers the following states-Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland.

The e-Auction system consists of web-portal where registered users can propose new auction, place bids in order to buy the items an auction, send messages to other users and receive automatically news via e-mail.

Registration of users is preceded by a “pre-registration”: to check whether users insert their real e-mail address, they receive an e-mail with an auto-generated secret code that they will be asked to type in a second moment to confirm the data (name, address, phone number etc.) they entered. Without this confirmation, a user cannot access the functionality of the portal. The system is realized with the 3-tier architecture: a relational database that stores the information regarding items, users, auctions, and categories of auction; an application server that cares about the business logic of the system and the presentation layer that consists of the web browser where user can interact with the system. The objective of this project is to develop and deploy an “on-line auction management system”, for buyers and sellers to come together and trade Fruits, Crops or agriculture produces etc. without the need for physical presence in the eight North-East States. The centralised e-Auction system will be developed/ customised as per eight NE states requirements and it is being deployed and the NE people are being trained.

The project aims to support farmers/producers of North East getting remunerative prices for their produces and thereby bridge the gap between the farmers and the

market and also to enhance the agricultural, procurement, processing and marketing infrastructure of the North-eastern Region of India.

The e-Auction system consists of web-portal where registered users can propose new auction, place bids in order to buy the items an auction, send messages to other users and receive automatically news via e-mail. Registration of users is preceded by a “pre-registration”: to check whether users insert their real e-mail address, they receive an e-mail with an auto-generated secret code that they will be asked to type in a second moment to confirm the data (name, address, phone number etc.) they entered. Without this confirmation, a user cannot access the functionality of the portal. The system is realized with the 3-tier architecture: a relational database that stores the information regarding items, users, auctions, and categories of auction; an application server cares about the business logic of the system and the presentation layer that consists of the web browser where user can interact with the system.

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Project / Application Title

Project E-Tendering/e-Procurement system for Govt. of Assam/Arunachal Pradesh/Mizoram and Meghalaya- Nexprocure/NPX, Nextenders.

Organisation/Applicant:

Nextender India Pvt. Ltd

Project Period

2004

Project location

G2C (Government to Citizen Service-All the locations)

This application provides end-to-end procurement solution to government, PSU's. Implemented application has the patented secure bid module, which is temper proof system, fully customizable and easy to use. This system is browser independent and Operating system independent can run on any browser without help of any third party tool. Based on Hibernate technology, hence can run on any operating system. This application is built in java/PHP and hence it's scalable and open. And because of its secure bid process, this application is temper evident.

This application is web based and hence accessible on web from anywhere. This system is very easy to use and can be operated through minimum training. Any users (buyers / vendors) in order to access eTendering portal must have user id and password to login. Digital Signature (Signing and Encryption) is mandatory for both buyers and vendors in order to process eTendering through our system. Our system is an online portal requiring decent system hardware with broadband or internet connectivity. Java installation is required in to order to execute few system features. Our system is browser and OS independent supporting Windows XP and above having internet browsers (Internet Explorer / Google Chrome / Morzilla Firefox). Our system also supports eToken devices for digital signature access. It's very easy for user with any of the browser and operating system available in the market.

North east India has not been fully adopted of ICT, So good opportunity for development in North East India. Nextenders vision to implement e-Procurement solution to entire North east India to maintain Transparency as well as support in north east region development.

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Project / Application Title:

Clean Mizoram Movement

Organisation/Applicant:

School Education Department, Govt. of Mizoram

Project Period

14th November, 2014

Project location

Whole State of Mizoram

Mizoram, a beautiful hill station, surrounded by green and healthy environment need to be protected by present generation so as to make living more rewarding for the next generation to come. Cleanliness and its processes like waste management obviously would become an important input in protecting, preserving and conserving the environment. In order to ensure cleanliness in the State and as per the needs and reasons, the State has established administrative structure at the State level and the district level. The project is being implemented in all the 8 districts of Mizoram. It is a programme in which all the citizens of the State even from the top level like the Chief Minister to the lowest/grassroots level are actively involved.

The project is actively supported by modern technology and social media sites by using hashtag. A hashtag is a type of label or metadata tag used on social network and microblogging services, which makes it easier for users to find messages with a specific theme or content. Users create and use hashtags by placing the hash character (or number sign) # in front of a word or unspaced phrase, either in the main text of a message or at the end. Searching for that hashtag will then present each message that has been tagged with it. The Clean Mizoram website i.e. <http://cleanmizoram.com> is integrated with three popular social networking sites: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Any person by using the above social networking sites and hashtagging about #cleanmizoram will be integrated together and displayed on the official clean Mizoram website (<http://cleanmizoram.com>).

'Cleanliness is next to godliness' is a saying that resonates well with the Mizo community that is nearly hundred per cent Christian and have long been associated good hygiene with moral and spiritual purity. In spite of this, Mizoram had never occupied any position even in the top ten ranking with regard to cleanliness among the states of the country. Therefore, full efforts need to be given by all individuals, households and communities to take charge of their own cleanliness. Moreover, every year some 3.4 million people, mostly children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation, and hygiene. Over half of the hospital beds in the world are filled with people suffering from water and sanitation related diseases. Thus, cleanliness is very essential for healthy environment and it is also essential for beautification of Mizoram in order to attract more tourists so as to generate more revenues for the State. To ensure the cleanliness, the young generation from the elementary school children to college students and community could play a vital role.

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Project / Application Title

Sahaj Arunoday Kendra (Sahaj Centre)

Organisation/Applicant:

Sahaj e-Village Ltd.

Project Period

September 2008

Project location

Across 18 districts of Assam

Sahaj Arunoday Kendras are envisioned as the front-end delivery points for Government, private and social sector services to rural citizens of India. The idea is to develop a platform that can enable Government, private and social sector organizations to integrate their social and commercial goals for the benefit of rural population in the remotest corners of the country through a combination of IT as well as non-IT services. The aim of the Scheme is not merely to roll out IT infrastructure but to build a network of 2833 nos. of rural businesses centers across 18 districts of Assam. The National e-Governance Plan of Government of India seeks to lay the foundation and provide the impetus for long-term growth of e-Governance within the country. The plan seeks to create the right governance and institutional mechanisms, set up the core infrastructure and policies and implement, a number of Mission Mode Projects at the center, state and integrated service levels to create a citizen-centric and business-centric environment for governance.

The project strives to make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realise the basic needs of the common man. The Centres are manned by Sahaj entrepreneurs also known as Rural Digital Entrepreneur or Village Level Entrepreneurs. Each of these centers is equipped with IT accessories and furniture. Each center at least has one laptop, printer, scanner, VSATs, Generator, Inverter, head phone and others. Sahaj has created a data centre and a Portal as a back-end of Common Service Center, through which the transaction

are carried out. The payment part is managed through a secure closed wallet payment gateway known as SKASH. The Company has a Skash balance which is received on a periodic basis from the Rural Digital Entrepreneurs as advance. As on-line transaction takes place the Skash balance gets reduced by the Company as a revenue sharing mechanism. The Sahaj centres are bringing about a change in rural areas in the most phenomenal manner and the change is being noted every day. IT-enabled kiosks have enabled more and more number of citizens to come under the ambit of the formal banking system through the financial inclusion project. Sahaj facilitated account opening of over 85000 Central Bank of India bank accounts in Assam. Another 47000 (approx.) accounts were opened through kiosk banking solution in Assam. Sahaj believes that it is only through entrepreneurship, by giving the rural populace complete rights to bring themselves within the development fold that the Rural can be empowered to play an active part in the process of national development. Sahaj today boasts of the largest network of entrepreneurs – as on 30th April 2015, 26688 entrepreneurs are associated with Sahaj, out of which 2833 are from Assam alone.

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Project / Application Title

Rickshaw Bank

Organisation/Applicant:

CENTRE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CRD)

Project Period

20th November, 2004

Project location

Guwahati, and now operating in the districts of Kamrup, Kamrup (M), Marigaon, Nalbari, Nowgaon, Barpeta in Assam.

Rickshaw Bank is the flagship program of Centre for Rural Development (CRD). It offers an opportunity to the rickshaw pullers of India to own their rickshaw. Based on the principle of micro-leasing, pullers are able to pay daily installments on “rent-to-own” plan, which lasts between 12-18 months. Rickshaw Bank provides a newly designed rickshaw that is lighter in weight, has an improved center of gravity, contains more luggage space, and has a canopy to cover both puller and passengers. In addition, provide a comprehensive package of insurance, licenses, uniform, solar light and photo ID cards, to add dignity to their profession. Full and timely repayment leads to ownership of the rickshaw being handed over to pullers. This concept is in contrary to existing practices in which an equivalent amount of a daily rental fee is paid to rent the vehicle, possibly for the lifetime of activity, with no scope for ownership.

The Rickshaw Bank pilot project was launched in the city of Guwahati, Assam in November 2004 with a fleet of 300 Rickshaws through corporate advertisements availed from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL).

As one of the largest rickshaw puller service providers in India, Rickshaw Bank has developed and honed its expertise in delivering high-quality designed rickshaw, low-cost financial solutions to the rickshaw pullers sector.

The impact of Rickshaw Bank is best illustrated by the overwhelming demand from drivers for more rickshaws and financial services. In Guwahati, the first city addressed by Rickshaw Bank, the demand for new rickshaws is now greater than supply. To date, Rickshaw Bank has 8 offices up and running and several new branches starting. Each year for the past four years, the Rickshaw Bank's customers' base has grown significantly. Currently in its tenth year of operation, Rickshaw Bank delivered ownership to over 8500 clients and has a membership of over 10000 pullers.

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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Project / Application Title

Golden Weavers' Project (Sunali Shipinir Prokolpo)

Organisation/Applicant:

Grameen Sahara

Project Period

2007

Project location

Chhaygaon Development Block, Rampur Development Block, Boko Development Block, Goroimari Development Block and Chayani Barduar Development Block under Kamrup District of Assam.

The main aim of this project is to improve the pace and quality of life of the families associated with Eri Silk spinning and weaving activities who are generally poor or economically weaker, through a structured and systematic intervention in Eri related activities that will support livelihood and other development needs. While working with these families' efforts includes linking the women with insurance, market, and technology.

The primary beneficiaries of the project consist of the poor tribal and non-tribal rural women. The women beneficiaries mainly take Eri and its related works. 80 % of the works is off farm households activities; naturally it would be the women group to be benefited. The women from the Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe, OBC and Minority communities receives the maximum benefits, as they have been the traditionally skilled workers in this sub-sector activity.

Though this project has several core objects, the main object is to organize the Eri yarn producers, enhance the rate of production and to facilitate the marketing of the produces, thereby enhance the income level of the producers belonging to tribal, non-tribal and Muslim minority groups. Subsequently, mechanization of spinning activities has become an important project element by way of introduction of CSTR machines.

This project is directly related to the generation of productive employment and seeks to address issues pertaining to sectorial strengthening of productive enterprises leading to generation of additional employment and income in the sub-sector taken up under the program. Till date the project, since 2007, has covered 5000 number of women spinners who are also the members. The project will be completed by the year 2016.

During the second phase of the project in the year 2012, this project was transformed into a community owned institution which was registered under Part IXA of the Companies Act, 1956 (Producers' Company) by the name of Grameen Silk Producer Co. Ltd. Currently the project is also running simultaneously with the company. The project is now taking care of the capacity building part and the business part is taken care of by the company.

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Project / Application Title

Socio-Economic Development at Grassroots level in Golaghat District of Assam through Scientific Cultivation of Edible Mushroom

Organisation/Applicant:

Dr. R. K. Adhikary, Retd. Sr. Scientist, CSIR-NEIST Jorhat, Assam

Project Period

2012 - 2014

Project location

The project covers the villages under Morongi, Kothalguri, Khumtai, Podumoni, Numaligarh, Kakodanga and Bokakhat Development Blocks in Golaghat District, Assam.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has laid considerable stress on scientific cultivation of edible mushroom for compensating protein deficiencies especially in countries depending primarily on cereal diet. Since mushroom represents one of the world's greatest resources of nutrient and palatable food, its cultivation is receiving special attention to make the rural population aware of protein malnutrition and to motivate them for protein rich mushroom cultivation in order to meet the protein demand. At the same time, it has discouraged jungle collection by the layman. Scientific cultivation has generated self-employment and income amongst unemployed youth, women folk and weaker group of rural farmers.

This initiative in Golaghat District has engaged the rural farmers including women farmers to cultivate edible species of mushroom for protein rich food and economic return. It has formation of Self Help Group (SHG) to undertake the venture involving women folk and under privileged section of the society. Motivation camps for introduction of awareness, training and demonstration of the technology were organised at grass root level so that the farmers can easily take up scientific cultivation on their own. This has generated great enthusiasm among the rural farmers for taking up scientific cultivation, resulting in successful production of fresh and dry mushroom for their livelihood and also to fight malnutrition. The project is unique because of its real Lab to Land success effort with the support of the Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) – NEIST, Jorhat

campus. Through this project, it has been demonstrated that the new development in mushroom technology can really reach to needy rural poor people. This venture has made significant impact for the rural farmers in project intervention areas. Presently more than 20 successful beneficiaries including women farmer beneficiaries have adopted the culture of growing edible mushroom in the district. They have harvested bumper crop @ 1 kg/ fresh mushroom per bag within 20 days. Now beneficiaries are getting Rs 80 – Rs 100 per kg of fresh mushroom in the Local market. Their average income is around Rs 10,000/-pm from this agro based bio technological programme.

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Project / Application Title

South Australians Supporting Children and Women in Assam (SASCWA) Community Project

Organisation/Applicant:

SASCWA

Project Period

2005

Project location

Although most of the project work is located in Gorbhanga village under Kamrup Metro district, SASCWA has been assisting the local communities in Assam in different locations.

SASCWA is a small grass roots charitable organization inaugurated in 2005 by a group of individuals from South Australia working in Public Health. The purpose of the initiative was to support and expand the opportunities available to the local community of Assam in the area of child education, women empowerment, health and sanitation. SASCWA collects educational toys donated by organisations, schools and individuals in Australia and transports them in collaboration with Malaysian Airlines to Assam. Various toy libraries are than set up in remote and disadvantage communities. For example in SASCWA's first toy library project, around 400 pieces of educational toys were transported to village Dhemai. SASCWA has re-established a primary school in a very remote community in Garbhanga (Kamrup), which is almost detached from the mainstream community due to extremely poor infrastructure. The primary school was closed down due to lack of funds to pay salaries to the local teachers. The children in the community were deprived of any formal primary education for many years. With the initiative taken by SASCWA, the school restarted in 2009 and since then SACWA is providing regular salaries for three teachers. SASCWA has also provided funds to build a hostel for children from distant villages to study in that school. SASCWA has identified the extreme difficulty in having regular access to drinking water in Grabhanga

and its nearby villages. With the excellent support from the community, SASCWA has successfully implemented a drinking water project. SASCWA has helped women and girls in Garbhanga gain access to quality sustainable feminine hygiene and awareness, by direct distribution of sustainable feminine hygiene kits in collaboration with an international organisation called Days for Girls <http://www.daysforgirls.org/>.

The birth of SASCWA was inspired by Peoples Health Movement (PHM) – a global movement where “community empowerment” through basic health and education right is the centre of focus. It was identified that the exceptionally high infant and child mortality in Assam may not have a solution only through medical intervention, but beyond that, there is an urgent need for overall wellbeing of mothers and children. This led to an initiative by an NRI Assamese couple living in Australia to mobilize interest and goodwill among local Australians involved in PHM to start SASCWA.

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YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

Project / Application Title
World Youth Summit 2015

Organisation/Applicant:
Club25 International Manipur

Project Period
May 2014

Project location
Imphal, Manipur

World Youth Summit 2015 was held from 29th March – 2nd April, 2015 at City Convention Centre, Imphal, India under the Cross-cutting theme ‘Youth for Global Empowerment’. The Summit brought together more than 100 participants from marginalized backgrounds, making the summit one of the most well represented youth events at the global level organized by North –East India. It was focused on seven thematic areas:

- Conservation of Biodiversity for Sustainability, Disaster Risk Reductions and Youth Centered Urbanization
- Eco –Tourism Development in North-East India and it’s linkage to ASEAN Countries
- Youth against Hunger - Poverty Eradication, Food and Nutrition Security
- Realizing Equal Access to Quality Education and Health
- Ensuring Inclusive Recreation, Sport and Culture
- Preservation of Indigenous People and Our Heritage
- Social Justice- Realizing

The Summit has a unique aim of producing a joint outcome document between states and youth, the “Imphal Action Plan”. The Cross-cutting theme of WYS 2015 was “Youth for Global Empowerment”. WYS 2015 has facilitated a process that strengthens effective youth participation in

the planning, implementation and evaluation of various global issues of the world which refers to the process of defining the future global development framework that will succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s) of the United Nation Organization (UNO).

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Project / Application Title

IMPACT 5000 BY 18

Organisation/Applicant:

YouthNet

Project Period

2013

Project location

Nagaland

YouthNet in partnership with Government of Nagaland has initiated a five-year program called Impact 5000 By 18 which aims to positively impact 5000 young people by getting them involved in the private sector by the year 2018, and, thereby work towards socio-economic prosperity of the young people in the state. Those impacted would have enhanced their business skills, employability skills, self-employment skills and developed entrepreneurial mindsets.

The Impact 5000 constituting 18 programmes is composed of different projects that aims to contribute towards creating an entrepreneurship ecosystem in Nagaland. Thus, each project aims to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- i. To help equip existing young entrepreneurs with business skills and knowledge.
- ii. To enhance the employability skills of the workforce who can be employed in the private sector.
- iii. To shape entrepreneurial mindsets among young people.
- iv. To identify and mould role models who can become not only key job creators in the economy but who can create value with available resources.
- v. To create market linkages for businesses

The program identifies sectors with potential for growth. It then identifies sectors where there are skill gaps or market linkage gaps. While there have been innumerable training programs in the past, many have not focused on market linkages leaving trainees unable to help themselves on the next step. Impact 5000 by 18 not only provides skill development but also market linkages, financial assistance and operational assistance to its participants.

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66

**TOTAL
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RECEIVED**

63

**TOTAL
SCREENED
FOR REVIEW**



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978-81-927717-2-4

₹200 : \$10