

Community Internet Library (CIL)



As in December 2023, with the project design and technical support of the Council for Social and Digital Development (CSDD) and the North East Development Foundation (NEDF), 50 new Community Internet Libraries (CILs) are coming up in 10 districts of Assam and West Bengal, serving the rural and remote tea tribe and Adivasi communities, with access to last mile internet, information, services and opportunities, implemented by the Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), with the support of the Internet Society Foundation. The first phase saw 50 CILs being set up in 5 tea Tribe & Adivasi majority districts of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Jorhat and Cachar and Hailakandi districts of Assam, during 2022-2023.

The Community Internet Library (CIL) initiative is a beacon of hope for bridging the digital divide in rural and remote areas of Assam, India. It's an effort by the Council for Social and Digital Development (CSDD) and the North East Development Foundation (NEDF) that empowers communities with crucial access to the internet and information.

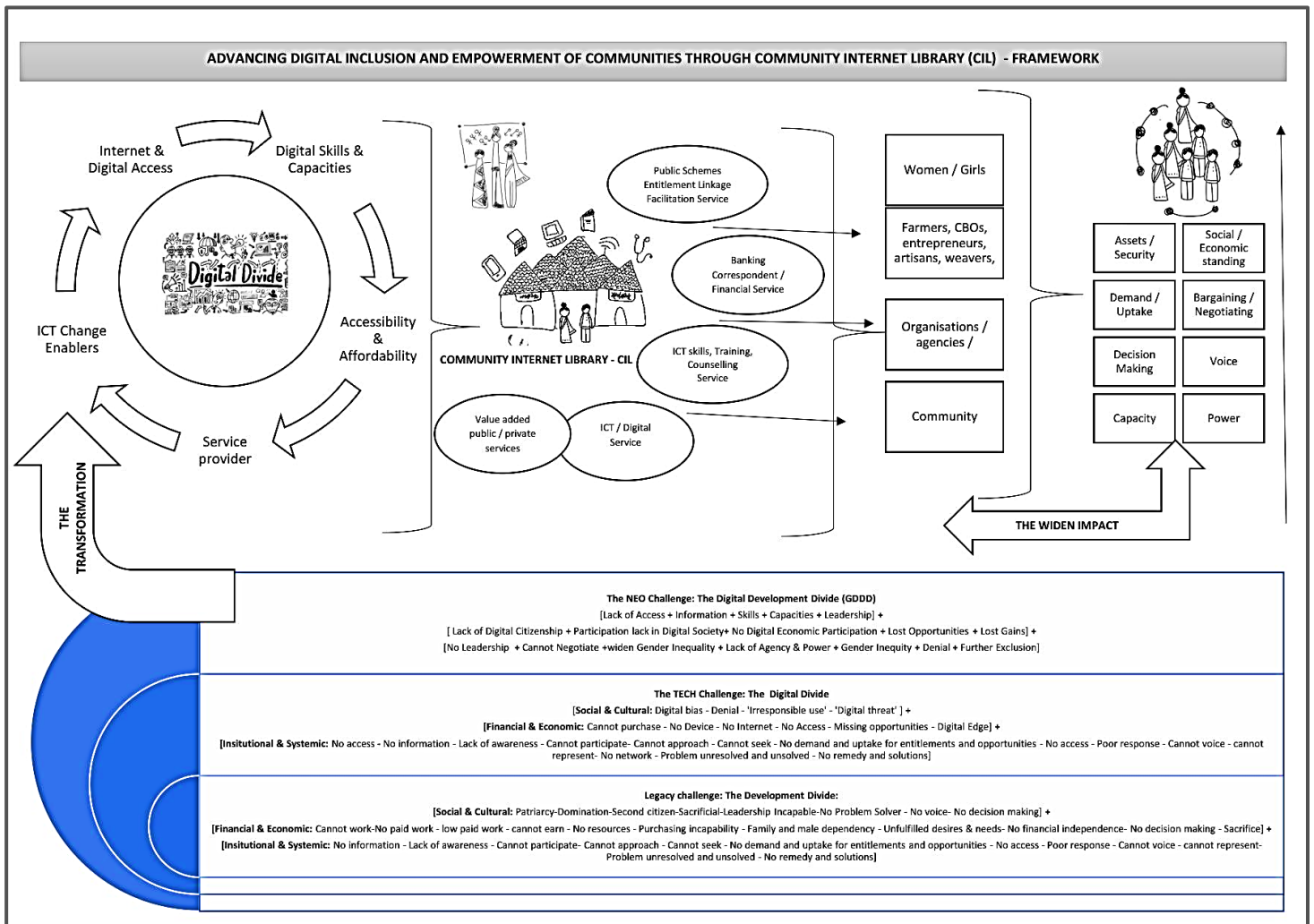
Imagine:

- Children in remote villages huddled around a computer screen, eyes wide with wonder as they explore the world beyond their rice fields.
- Farmers accessing real-time market prices and weather updates, making informed decisions for their crops.
- Women entrepreneurs connecting with customers and suppliers across the globe, expanding their reach and income.

Transformative power of CILs.

These are not just physical libraries; they are hubs for digital literacy, knowledge sharing, and community development. Each CIL is equipped with:

- Computers and internet access: Providing a gateway to the vast online world, from education and healthcare resources to government services and entertainment.
- Trained community facilitators: Acting as digital navigators, guiding residents on how to use the internet effectively and safely.
- Solar power systems: Ensuring sustainable operation even in areas with limited electricity infrastructure.



The impact of CILs is far-reaching:

- Improved access to education: Students can access online learning materials, connect with virtual classrooms, and prepare for competitive exams.
- Enhanced livelihood opportunities: Farmers can find better markets for their produce, artisans can showcase their handicrafts globally, and micro-entrepreneurs can access business development resources.
- Bridging the gender gap: Women gain access to information and opportunities that were previously unavailable, empowering them to participate more actively in the community.

- Strengthening social fabric: CILs become community centers, fostering communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among residents.

The CIL initiative is a testament to the power of collaborative action in addressing digital inequity. By working together, CSDD and NEDF are transforming lives and communities in rural Assam, one click at a time.

