

BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES,
LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY



INTERNET ROSHNI (LIGHT) FOR THE VULNERABLE TEA TRIBE & ADIVASIS IN ASSAM IN INDIA

DECEMBER, 2023



The project '**Internet Roshni**' (**Light**) is implemented to provide last mile internet and digital access for the vulnerable tea tribe & Adivasi community in Assam across 5 districts and 50 remote tea gardens, since 2022. The project with the project design and knowledge support from the Council for Social and Digital Development (CSDD), is implemented by the Digital empowerment Foundation (DEF), with the support of the Internet Society Foundation.

During April - October 2023, the project, through the Community Internet Libraries (CILs) continued with the existing activities and implemented a few other activities among the communities. From April to October around **11629** beneficiaries benefitted from the CIL centres in the 5 districts of Assam including 6536 benefitted from the eye camps. These beneficiaries were enrolled under the above-listed schemes.

The activity of providing digital services continued along with govt schemes and linkages of entitlements was carried out. The project has leveraged the aspirations and capacities of the local entrepreneurial youths as SoochnaPreneurs (Information Entrepreneurs). They have been running internet access points in the CILs boosted by mobile data networks and creating WI-FI zones serving the local needs for access, information, linkages, opportunities, and internet skills. The CILs also serve as internet service points for the community to connect to information, opportunities, linkages, and critical entitlements and rights. The mobile data network-enabled CILs are providing low-cost digital and internet access to the remotely located community.

Below are the various services offered during the reporting period.

1. DIGITAL SERVICES:

The SoochnaPreneurs (Sp) through the CILs continue to support the community by providing digital services. By now the SPs have fully gained the trust of their respective communities and the community too have become dependent on the SPs for any digital service-related support. The flow of the

community can be seen to have increased and the purpose of setting up the CILs inside the vicinity of the gardens seems to be served.

2. PAN & AADHAR SERVICES:

The importance of holding a PAN Card (Permanent Account Number) and AADHAR Card has increased distinctly since the government made it mandatory to avail of various schemes and entitlements. The SochnaPreneurs have been mobilizing the community and organizing camps so that the community becomes aware of the importance and also comes forward to avail them. The Sochnapreneurs have been facilitating the process of availing PAN and AADHAR cards as well as linking them to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

3. BANK RELATED SERVICES:

The community engaged in various paid works in the garden has been receiving their wages in terms of cash mostly. But since the government has made it mandatory for one to have a bank account the Sochnapreneurs have been facilitating this process too. Most of the adult community members do not have a bank account in their name yet, and even if they possess one there are many mistakes regarding their name and other details. Since the banks are located in the main city or town areas mostly, it becomes very difficult for the community to go every time as it becomes a hectic process for them. They sometimes even neglect the process as they have to take leave from their work resulting in pay cuts. But, through the initiative of the SochnaPreneurs the community now seems to be serious about this and has been availing this service from the CILs too.

4. PMJAY- AYUSHMAN BHARAT:

National Health Authority (NHA) is the apex body responsible for implementing India's flagship public health insurance/assurance scheme called "Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana" & has been entrusted with the role of designing strategy, building technological infrastructure, and implementing of "Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission" to create a National

Digital Health Eco-system. Under this scheme, all beneficiaries who hold the Ayushman Bharat Health Card will be entitled to Rs. 5,00,000/- worth of medical assistance annually, which can be availed in any impaneled hospital in terms of reimbursement or all cost covered. The Sochnapreneurs in collaboration with the agencies have been facilitating this process too from the CILs and the community has benefitted from it.

5. DIGITAL LITERACY CLASS:

The SochnaPreneur's one of the major activities in the community is to provide digital literacy for all the interested beneficiaries right from the school-going children to the working adults. They have been providing short-term digital classes through START toll kits. The school and college-going children after their formal classes avail this literacy in the CILs. The CILs have become a hub for their practical learning as the parents are unable to provide the required tools and equipment. Even the other institutions such as the Aganwadi workers SHG groups, and youth groups avail this facility from the CIL. The students approach the CIL to complete their projects, gather online resources for their study, and even participate in online classes.

6. PM- KISHAN SCHEME:

PM Kisan is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India. It has become operational from 1.12.2018. Under the scheme an income support of 6,000/- per year in three equal instalments will be provided to all land-holding farmer families. The definition of family for the scheme is husband, wife, and minor children. The State Government and UT administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines. The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries. The Sochnapreneurs have been facilitating directly through the CILs and the community have been greatly benefitted from it.

7. ESHRAM ENROLLMENT:

ESHRAM is the creation of a centralized database of all unorganized workers (UWs) including Construction Workers, Migrant Workers, Gig and Platform workers, Street Vendors, Domestic Workers, Agriculture Workers, etc., to be seeded with Aadhaar. To improve the implementation efficiency of the social security services for the unorganized workers. Integration of Social Security Schemes meant for UWs being administered by MoLE and subsequently those run by other ministries as well. Sharing of information in respect of registered unorganized workers with various stakeholders such as Ministries/ Departments/ Boards/ Agencies/ Organisations of the Central and State Governments through APIs for delivery of various social security and welfare schemes being administered by them. Portability of the social security and welfare benefits to the migrant and construction workers. Providing a comprehensive database to Central and State Governments for tackling any National Crises like COVID-19 in the future.

The temporary workers of the gardens and the self-employed individuals and groups of the community greatly benefit from this.

8. PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJNA:

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is a credit-linked subsidy scheme by the Government of India to facilitate access to affordable housing for the low and moderate-income residents of the country. The community though was aware of this scheme but was seldom misguided and due to interference of the middle man they were not getting the full monetary benefit. But through the Sochnapreneur's intervention and support the community benefitted and can receive the full monetary benefit.

9. DIGITAL SKILLING AND UPSKILLING:

The Sochnapreneurs are engaged daily in providing digital services to the community and they need to remain updated. The organization in collaboration with the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India has made an effort to provide digital skills and upskill the existing digital knowledge of the Sochnapreneurs. The student's mobilisation work has been started from Oct 2023 and enrolment started in November 2023.

10. SPECIAL EYE CAMP:

The Foundation in collaboration with Vision Spring Foundation conducted eye screening and cataract detection camps in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, and Jorhat districts. The working class of the community is seldom exposed to chemicals and pesticides while working in the gardens and is rarely provided with any protective gear and equipment. Hence, they are very much prone to getting eye infections which if not taken care of at the earliest can result in major eye infections and also blindness. The foundation took the initiative and conducted camps where the working class especially the women were mobilized to get their eyes screened and take precautionary measures to reduce and prevent any mishappenings.

BENEFICIARY DATA:

From April to October around 5093 beneficiaries benefitted from the CIL centres in the 5 districts of Assam and 6536 benefitted from the eye camp. These beneficiaries were enrolled under the above-listed schemes. The below table shows the bifurcation of the schemes along with numbers:

SL NO	ACTIVITY	BENEFICIARIES
1	AADHAR SERVICES	600
2	ABHA HEALTH CARD SERVICES	20
3	ONLINE SERVICES	2900
4	PM AYUSHMAN CARD SERVICES	300
5	BANKING SERVICES	95
6	DIGITAL LITERACY CLASS	367
7	PAN CARD SERVICES	160
8	E-SHRAM SERVICES	185
9	PM KISHAN SERVICES	333
10	PMAY SERVICES	68
11	PM FASAL BIMA YOJNA	10
12	PM JIWAN BIMA YOJNA	7
13	SIRISH PORTAL SCHOLARSHIP	35
14	VOTER ID SERVICES	13
15	HEALTH CHECK-UP	6536
16	TOTAL	11629

PHOTO GALLERY



