



HaqDisha
Entitlements for All

NEDFI, MARIANI PROJECT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS REPORT

Reporting Period:

December 21 – December 28, 2025

Location:

18 No. Kothalguri Gram Panchayat, Mariani,
Jorhat, Assam

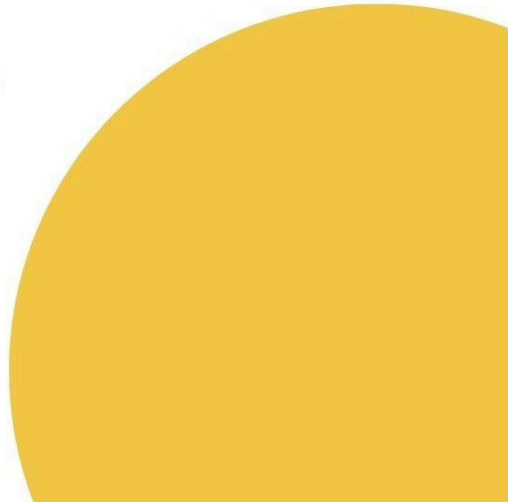
Coverage:

Hoolungooree TE (Ward 2), Dahingepar TE
(Wards 4 & 5), and Kothalguri TE (Ward 8)

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1. Background and Purpose

As part of the *HaqDisha: Entitlements for All* pilot project under the NEDFi-CSR initiative, the Council for Social & Digital Development (CSDD) conducted community engagement activities across four wards under 18 No. Kothalguri Gaon Panchayat, Mariani, Jorhat district in December 2025.

Primary Objectives of the Engagement:

- **Awareness & Trust:** Introduce the HaqDisha project objectives and build a foundation of transparency within the tea garden communities.
- **Stakeholder Convergence:** Actively engage Panchayat representatives, ACMS (Labor Union) members, SHG leaders, and other local stakeholders to ensure a unified approach.
- **Gap Identification:** Document real-time entitlement challenges and procedural hurdles to inform the project's digital-facilitation strategy.
- **Actionable Evidence:** Generate a qualitative baseline to guide the "handholding" support required for successful scheme enrollment in the 2026 pilot phase.

2. Meeting Schedule and Geographic Reach

Date	Location / Tea Estate	Wards Covered	Key Leadership Support
21 Dec 2025	Hoolungooree & Dahingeapar	2, 4, & 5	Mrs. Bharati Bhuyan (GP President)
28 Dec 2025	Kothalguri Tea Estate	8	Mr. Budheswar Nath (Ward Member)

3. Stakeholder Participation and Engagement

To ensure a high degree of transparency and local ownership, the engagements were designed to be inclusive, reaching across the social and administrative hierarchies of the tea gardens. The meetings achieved strong convergence between local governance, labor unions, and community groups, ensuring broad-based participation and representation.

Key Participant Groups: Across all wards, the engagements were attended by a diverse group of stakeholders, including:

- **Tea Garden Workers & Community Members:** The primary beneficiaries of the HaqDisha project.
- **Panchayat Leadership:** Representatives from the 18 No. Kothalguri Gaon Panchayat, including the President, Gaon Pradhan, and Ward Members from the concerned tea estates.

- **Labor Representation:** Office bearers from the Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha (ACMS), representing the rights and interests of the plantation workforce.
- **Grassroots Women Leaders:** Leaders from Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Cluster Level Forums (CLFs).
- **Project Expertise:** The CSDD project team, including Centre Fellows.

Notable Stakeholders & Leadership Support:

- Mrs. Bharati Bhuyan: President and Ward Member, Dahingepar T.E. (Ward No. 4).
- Mr. Jitul Gogoi: Gaon Pradhan, 18 No. Kothalguri Gaon Panchayat.
- Mr. Budheswar Nath: Ward Member, Kothalguri Tea Estate (Ward No. 8).
- ACMS Representatives: Mr. William Vallury (Secretary, Dahingepar TE), Mr. Jon Ekka (President, Dahingepar TE), and Mr. Raju Bauri (Active Member, Titabar ACMS).
- SHG Representation: Ms. Junamoni Gogoi (CLF/SHG President).
- CSDD Lead: Ms. Montu Kharia (Centre Fellow), who shared field-level methodologies and previous intervention successes.

4. Core Agenda

The community engagement sessions followed a uniform, strategic agenda designed to move from project orientation to active problem-solving. By creating a transparent dialogue, the sessions transformed from simple meetings into interactive workshops for social change.

Agenda of the Community Engagements

1. **Introduction to the HaqDisha Project:** Framing the initiative under the NEDFi Mariani Project and defining its role as a digital bridge for the community.
2. **Evidence-Based Learning:** Sharing of prior field experiences and success stories from tea garden areas to build community confidence.
3. **Strategic Roadmap:** Discussion on project implementation strategies specifically tailored to the unique socio-economic context of tea estates.
4. **Participatory Mapping:** Identification of real-time entitlement-related gaps and administrative challenges.
5. **Community Voice:** Open interaction sessions for community members to share their lived experiences and expectations.

5. Key Discussion Highlights

The project team introduced the HaqDisha objectives, focusing on how a community-based approach can bypass systemic barriers. To illustrate this, the team shared implementation experiences from the Titabar subdivision, including Letekujan Tea Estate and Dholi Samagori Tea Estate, demonstrating how similar entitlement facilitation had already successfully unlocked benefits for other garden families.

The Centre Fellow and project team emphasized:

- **The Household Approach:** Detailed methods for identifying specific entitlement gaps through door-to-door interaction.
- **Administrative Handholding:** The step-by-step process of supporting individuals in rectifying documentation and navigating complex welfare portals like SIRISH and eNIDHI.
- **Collaborative Strength:** The necessity of coordination between the community, Panchayat representatives, and government service agencies.

Community members actively participated, sharing specific challenges such as the high cost of traveling to district offices, the frustration of digital rejections due to minor spelling errors, and the long waiting periods for pension approvals. These insights have directly informed the localized strategy for the 2026 pilot phase.

6. Identified Entitlement Gaps

The interactions during the community engagement sessions across all four wards—Hoolungooree (Ward 2), Dahingepar (Wards 4 & 5), and Kothalguri (Ward 8)—consistently validated a tiered pattern of exclusion. These findings, consolidated from direct community feedback, serve as a roadmap for the HaqDisha facilitation strategy.

Level 1: Identity and Foundational Documents (The Entry Barrier)

These documents are the essential "gatekeepers" to all other rights. The meetings highlighted that many households are stalled at this first stage due to:

- **Missing Documents:** Lack of formal Birth Certificates and Caste Certificates, which are mandatory for specialized tea tribe welfare.
- **Administrative Hurdles:** Difficulty in obtaining Permanent Resident Certificates (PRC) and PAN Cards.
- **Data Inconsistencies:** Widespread errors in Aadhaar Cards and Voter IDs, where minor name or DOB mismatches prevent digital verification.

Level 2: Basic and Statutory Entitlements

These represent the community's legal rights to food and work security:

- **Ration Cards:** Beyond basic access, there is a critical need for member inclusion, as many families are unable to add children or new spouses to existing cards.
- **MNREGA Job Cards:** Issues with card activation and the lack of a demand-driven work process.
- **Provident Fund:** A significant lack of transparency regarding PF balances and related statutory benefits.

Level 3: Government Welfare Schemes

Engagement sessions revealed that while families are aware of these schemes, the "last-mile" delivery is broken:

- **Income & Housing:** Low enrollment in Orunodoi, PM-KISAN, and PM Awas Yojana (PMAY).
- **Utility & Life Quality:** Gaps in PM Ujjwala Yojana and the Jibon Scheme.
- **The Education Gap:** A notable lack of successful applications for Sirish Scholarships and other education-linked schemes, leaving students without financial support.

Level 4: Social Security and Protection Schemes

This level remains the most underserved, with very few households currently protected against long-term risks:

- **Insurance:** Minimal coverage under PMJJY (Life Insurance) and PMSBY (Accident Insurance).
- **Pensions:** Extremely low registration for the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) and other elderly or widow-related pension schemes.

7. Key Observations and Strategic Conclusions

The community engagement meetings across the four wards of 18 No. Kothalguri Gram Panchayat have yielded critical qualitative insights that complement the baseline survey data. These observations will serve as the guiding principles for the HaqDisha pilot implementation throughout 2026.

Core Insights:

- **Systemic Nature of Gaps:** Entitlement gaps were found to be remarkably consistent across all surveyed wards. This indicates that the challenges—such as missing birth certificates or failed scholarship applications—are not location-specific but are systemic issues rooted in the administrative and digital distance between the tea gardens and government service centers.
- **Vulnerability of Marginalized Groups:** Women workers and elderly community members emerged as the most excluded demographic groups. They face a "double barrier": a lack of foundational documentation (Level 1) and a significant digital divide, which prevents them from accessing critical pensions and insurance schemes (Level 4).
- **The "Triple Barrier" to Entry:** Across every ward, three common factors were identified as the primary reasons for exclusion:
 1. **Limited Awareness:** Lack of simplified, dialect-friendly information.
 2. **Digital Exclusion:** The shift toward online-only portals (SIRISH, eNIDHI) without local facilitation.
 3. **Procedural Complexity:** The overwhelming nature of multi-step applications that require repeated visits to administrative offices.

- **Strong Institutional Support:** A pivotal observation was the high degree of readiness among local leaders. Panchayat representatives, ACMS members, and community volunteers expressed a strong willingness to act as "Entitlement Champions," providing the necessary social support to ensure the project's success.

8. Conclusion

The ward-wise community engagement activities successfully established initial contact with Tea Tribe and Adivasi communities and key local stakeholders under 18 No. Kothalguri Gaon Panchayat. These engagements helped in building awareness about the HaqDisha project, identifying critical entitlement gaps, and strengthening coordination with Panchayat representatives, ACMS members, and community leaders.

The insights generated through these ward-level interactions will directly inform the implementation of HaqDisha project activities, including entitlement facilitation, digital support services, and stakeholder convergence, ensuring that interventions are responsive to the needs identified at the community level.





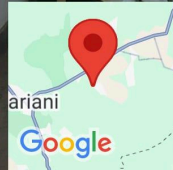
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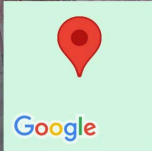


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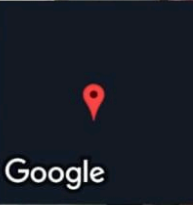
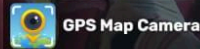





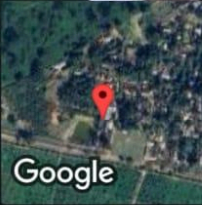
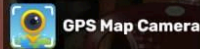
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