



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

ASSAM CENTRE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Content

Objectives

Background

Our focus areas

- **Child Rights and Education**
- **Women Empowerment**
- **Rural Development and Livelihood**
- **Health and Sanitation**







Objectives

To implement poverty alleviation programmes and bring about better living conditions by generating employment and income for poor people living in rural areas.

To start, encourage, assist, and carry out activities deemed necessary for sustainable self-employment of rural people like handloom, handicraft, animal husbandry, pisciculture, horticulture, plantation, etc. To take up various programmes among the rural people on the issues of education, livelihood, rights for children and disabled, women empowerment, health, girl's trafficking, etc.

To conduct research studies on education, art and culture, cultural heritage, and customary rituals and system of the indigenous people of Assam as well as conduct research studies on the role and effectiveness of various programmes of government and non-government organisations for the development of the communities.





Background

Assam Centre for Rural Development (ACRD) is a non-government organization established in 1995. Late Dr. Lily Mazinder Baruah, a well-known social worker of the North East region and the youngest daughter of Bharat Ratna Late Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi, was instrumental in the birth of ACRD. The formation of ACRD began with a group of like-minded people who wanted to bring about socio economic development among the downtrodden rural and tribal people of Assam with the motive of enhancing their living condition by forming voluntary organization.

ACRD has expanded greatly over the years. Today, we work in several areas like women empowerment, child protection, skill and rural development, etc. Our mission and efforts to empower the rural and disadvantaged people and give them a better life have grown stronger with time and we hope to continue transforming the lives of the rural communities in Assam.

Focus in the year gone by

- Child Rights and Education
- Women Empowerment
- Rural Development and Livelihood
- Health and Sanitation



Child Rights and Education



CHILDLINE 1098

CHILDLINE 1098 is an emergency helpline in India that reaches out to every child in distress and ensures their rights are protected. ACRD has been operated two CHILDLINE sub-centres in Rani and Boko development blocks of Kamrup district, Assam till March 2023. The project was supported by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India with CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF) as the nodal agency.

The CHILDLINE sub-centres regularly conduct awareness meetings in several villages, among school children and village communities, to sensitize them about the CHILDLINE 1098 helpline, the harmful consequences of child marriage, child labour, and other child protection issues like child sexual abuse, trafficking, school dropout, etc. Regular outreach programmes, community meetings, and open house programmes were also conducted among general public to address issues related to child safety. CHILDLINE closely worked with government stakeholders like the Police, Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Welfare Committee, Child Protection Unit, etc. and other non-government



agencies to create a child-friendly mechanism so that every child's rights are protected. The CHILDLINE sub centres were operational till March 2023.

Highlights of the year

During the month of April, 2022, the Boko CHILDLINE team conducted multiple outreach programmes in Sonapur, Rangsipara, Kekopara, Jambari, Khatolpara, Jaokatadia, and Tinighariya.

On April 24, 2022, the CHILDLINE team organized an Open House Programme at Sontoli village, where the people of the village engaged in a productive discussion with the CHILDLINE team on how to foster a space where a child's rights are protected. This initiative reflected a proactive approach to community engagement, ensuring that children and their families are equipped with knowledge to protect themselves and seek assistance when needed.

On May 11, 2022, the CHILDLINE Boko team conducted an awareness meeting in Rangsipara with villagers and children. During the session, leaflets containing information about the CHILDLINE 1098 service, child marriage, missing children, child labor, and sexual abuse were distributed among the attendees.



During the month of June, 2022, the CHILDLINE Boko team conducted multiple outreach programmes in Poirenga, Thakurpara, Silipara, Dilinga, Bilhapara, Boko Police Station, Bangticot (Chandra), Garbandha, Nadhiapara, Aunihati, Sashtapur Anchalik Middle English School, Tinigharia, Sichapith (Nowapara), Niz Kathmi, Bar Arikati, Moirachora villages of Kamrup district.





On June 21, 2022, the CHILDLINE Boko team participated in the observance of World Yoga Day at SashtapurAnchalik Middle English School. This special event brought together enthusiastic participation from both school students and teachers, creating a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere. After the event leaflets containing information about the CHILDLINE 1098 service, child marriage, missing children, child labor, and sexual abuse were distributed among the students.



On June 24, 2022, the CHILDLINE team organized an Open House Programme at Tinigharia, Kamrup. The Open House served as a platform for open dialogue and awareness-building within the community. Children were actively involved in the discussions, providing them with essential information about the CHILDLINE service and empowering them with knowledge to safeguard themselves against various challenges.

On July 16, 2022, a community meeting was held with adults and children of Langkonavillage. This gathering aimed to create awareness, promote understanding, and empower both adults and children to actively support and advocate for the rights of the younger members of the community.

Regular outreach programmes were conducted in schools during the month of July, that focused on holding discussions on child rights with students and teachers to perpetuate a



cycle of awareness and understanding, which will help in creating a space where no child's rights are violated.



On August 15, 2022, the CHILDLINE team observed Independence Day with the students, teachers, and school management committee of Jambari Lower Primary School, Kamrup. The celebration was marked by various activities and moments of reflection, symbolizing the significance of India's independence. Throughout the celebration, emphasis was placed on instilling civic values, fostering a sense of patriotism, and encouraging active participation in the nation's progress.



On August 24, 2022, the CHILDLINE Boko team had the privilege of meeting with the recently appointed Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, Ms. Keerthi Jhalli. The primary purpose of this meeting was to extend heartfelt congratulations to Ms. Jhalli on her recent appointment and to establish a collaborative and mutually supportive working relationship. During the meeting, the CHILDLINE Boko team took the opportunity to familiarize themselves with Ms. Jhalli, providing an overview of the organization's mission, objectives, and ongoing initiatives in the area. This introductory session aimed to create a platform for open communication and cooperation between CHILDLINE Boko and the Deputy Commissioner's office.





In the month of September, 2022, CHILDLINE Boko conducted outreach programme in Dakhilipara, Berabhanga, Tepchia, Jaypur, Madhusholmari, Jobepara, Kadampara, Habila, Jambari, Hapsapara, Camp (Milanpua), No. 1 Jambari, Kalyanpur, Bekeli, Mouman Anchaluik M.E. School, and Boko P.S.

CHILDLINE Se Dosti Week

The CHILDLINE teams observed CHILDLINE Se Dosti Week from November 14 to November 20, the aim of this weeklong endeavor was to involve and aware ordinary citizens stakeholders in CHILDLINE by pledging that they will be true friends of every child in need of help.

Conceptualised to be in sync with the spirit of CHILDLINE, this special initiative focused on reaching out to people from all sections of the society, sensitising them to the cause of children safety and initiating a plan of action that propels them towards a much-needed change in thoughts and deeds.



On November 14, 2022, the CHILDLINE team orchestrated a vibrant celebration of Children's Day at Garamimura High School, Kamrup, infusing the day with creativity, joy, and awareness. The highlight of the event was an engaging art competition organized among the students, showcasing their artistic talents and providing a platform for self-expression.

In order to symbolize the protection of children against all social evils, the CHILDLINE teams tied the CHILDLINE Se Dosti Suraksha Bandhan Band during the week-long campaign. These stakeholders included government healthcare workers, members of the Social Welfare Committee, Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, Village Defense Party (VDP), Block Development Officers (BDO), Block Elementary Education Officers (BEEO),



Child Development Project Officers (CDPO), Circle Officers, Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and Village Defense Party (VDP).

On December 23, 2022, the Boko CHILDLINE team actively participated in a crucial event, namely the "District Level Training Programme on Child Protection Laws." This insightful training session took place at the office of the Superintendent of Police, Amingaon, which was organized collaboratively by the District Child Protection Unit, Kamrup, Amingaon, in conjunction with the Assam Police Shishu Mitra Programme and the UTSAH Child Rights Organization, Assam.





On March 12, 2022, Rani CHILDLINE team took proactive steps toward community education and child protection by conducting an awareness program at Kokjhar. The focus of this initiative was to engage with a group of children, fostering an open dialogue about CHILDLINE 1098 and addressing various child-related issues. The program prioritized direct engagement with children in the Kokjhar community, recognizing the importance of involving them in discussions related to their well-being and safety.

On March 17, 2022, Rani CHILDLINE team continued its dedicated efforts in community education and child protection by organizing an awareness program at Bahupara village. This initiative was specifically designed to engage with children, providing them with valuable information and fostering discussions on CHILDLINE 1098 and various child-related issues.

On March 29, 2022, Rani CHILDLINE team organized an Open House programme at Rangamati. The open house program was designed to encourage active participation from the community members in Rangamati. This inclusive approach aimed to involve parents, guardians, and other stakeholders in addressing and understanding child-related challenges. It placed a particular emphasis on addressing prevalent issues affecting children, such as child labor, child marriage, and cases of sexual abuse. These topics are crucial for community awareness and action to ensure the safety and well-being of child.





On September 5, the LIC Golden Jubilee Foundation, Mumbai, marked a significant milestone by formally handing over a Bolero vehicle to CHILDLINE Kamrup's Boko sub-centre. This generous contribution aimed to enhance the capabilities of CHILDLINE in conducting rescue operations and facilitating the safe transportation of children from their rescue location to a place of safety. The LIC Golden Jubilee Foundation's generous donation of a Bolero vehicle was a crucial support for CHILDLINE Kamrup's Boko sub-centre. This vehicle was instrumental in ensuring swift and secure transportation during rescue operations involving children in distress.



Boko CHILDLINE Team Rescues Minor Elopement Victim, Facilitates Navajeevan Rehabilitation

On January 4, 2023, the Boko CHILDLINE team received information at CCC (1098), conveyed by a concerned individual. The report indicated that on December 23, 2022, a 17-year-old minor girl named Priya Bora (name changed), daughter of Anjan Bora (name changed) from Village No. 2, Jambari, under Boko Police Station in Kamrup District, had eloped with a 24-year-old young man, Amanul Hoque, son of Azmal Hoque from Village No. 1, Jambari, also under the jurisdiction of Boko Police Station. The parents of the girl had filed an FIR against Amanul Hoque, and the case was registered under Section 365 of the Indian Penal Code on January 2, 2023.

Following the report, the Boko Police Station took action, and on January 30, 2023, they successfully rescued the victim. Despite being taken to Guwahati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) for a medical checkup, the girl declined the examination. Subsequently, Boko Police Station arranged shelter for her at the Sakhi One-Stop Center in Amingaon.

On February 1, 2023, the girl was presented before the Magistrate JMFC (Judicial Magistrate First Class) in Boko by the Boko Police Station. The Magistrate, after due consideration, ordered that the girl be placed in shelter at the Jalukbari shelter home. On February 4, 2023, the Boko CHILDLINE team visited the Jalukbari shelter home to meet the minor girl, took her statement, and provided her with Emotional Support and Guidance (ESG) counseling.

Further proceedings occurred on February 6, 2023, when the Boko CHILDLINE team, along with the victim's parents, presented the girl before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). Following the evaluation, the CWC directed that the girl be placed in the Navajeevan Rehabilitation Centre in Sikarhati. Currently, the victim girl is residing at the Navajeevan Rehabilitation Centre, Sikarhati, as per the CWC's order.

Total cases

Cases rescued by CHILDLINE Rani- 698

Cases rescued by CHILDLINE Boko - 846



National Child Labour Project (NCLP)

ACRD, with support from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, established and managed Special Training Centers (STCs) for children engaged in labor in four villages of Kamrup district. These villages include Ganesh Nagar (Kalitakuchi) and Govardhan (Chandrapur Block of Kamrup(M). The initiative was launched in 2020 and continued until December 2022.

Key achievements of the initiative:

- ACRD successfully established and managed four STCs in targeted villages, providing a dedicated and conducive learning environment for children who were previously engaged in labor.
- The project received essential support from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, highlighting a collaborative effort between the government and non-governmental organizations to address the issue of child labor.
- The initiative specifically targeted Kamrup district, addressing the issue at the grassroots level in villages like Ganesh Nagar and Govardhan. This localized approach allowed for a more impactful intervention within the community.
- The average enrollment of over 47 children in each school demonstrates the successful outreach and engagement efforts carried out by ACRD.
- A significant achievement of the project is the mainstreaming of more than 600 children during the project period.



Women Empowerment



Ujjawala

In the past few years, Assam has become a hub of human trafficking. It has recorded the highest number of women and child trafficking in the Northeast in the last two years. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 1,317 cases of child trafficking were reported from the state in 2015, highest in the country. Since 2009, ACRD has been working on the issue of trafficking of women and girls with focus in two remote districts of Assam where trafficking is rampant- Baksa, Kamrup (Rural) and Udalguri District. Under the Ujjawala Project of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, we are working towards the prevention and rehabilitation of vulnerable and trafficked girls.

ACRD has set up a rehabilitation home Navajeevan in Sikarhati village, Kamrup district. Trafficked girls rescued by the police and local administration are handed over to the organisation for their rehabilitation. They are taken to Navajeevan, where they are counselled, given medical treatment, etc. The home has facilities for yoga, games, sports, library and vocational training, like tailoring, handloom, beauty course, doll making, jute products etc.



Major Activities

From April 8th to April 10th, 2022, residents of Navajeevan brought their artistic flair to the Bohag Bihu Exhibition, hosted by Makers Hub at Srimanta Shankardev Kalakshetra, Guwahati. The exhibition provided a laid-back yet charming setting for the residents to display and sell their handmade products.

At the Navajeevan booth, visitors discovered a variety of handcrafted items, including key rings, dream catchers, coasters, and masks. Each piece was carefully crafted by the residents, showcasing their creativity and skills. The exhibition not only offered a chance for attendees to purchase unique handmade goods but also provided a glimpse into the talents and craftsmanship of the Navajeevan community.



On April 2, 2022, in commemoration of National Girl Child Day, a district-level competition unfolded, inviting the participation of children residing in the Child Care Institution (CCI) of Kamrup. Amidst the participants, two residents from Navajeevan showcased their talents and secured the 2nd and 3rd prizes. Adding to the accolades, Navajeevan Home clinched the Best Runner trophy, along with a certificate and a well-deserved cash prize.



On April 3, 2022, our residents showcased their artistic talents with a captivating solo modern dance performance at the District Day celebration in Amingaon, Kamrup. The event was graced by the presence of the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, along with several other dignitaries from the district.

On April 22, 2022, a heartening achievement unfolded as one of our residents, Rupshikha Kalita, secured admission to the fourth grade at SikarhatiAnchalik High School. This significant milestone not only marks a personal accomplishment for Rupshikha but also reflects the dedication and perseverance fostered within the supportive environment of our community. We celebrate Rupshikha's academic progression and look forward to witnessing her continued growth and success in her educational journey.



On May 21, 2022, Navajeevan received an honored guest, Shri Dhurbojyoti Pathak, the Circle Officer of Palasbari Revenue Circle, who visited for a thorough inspection. Following his interaction with the girls at Navajeevan, he expressed immense satisfaction and joy. Inspired by the positive atmosphere and the commitment to the well-being of the residents, Shri Dhurbojyoti Pathak pledged his unwavering support to Navajeevan. Such was the impact of the visit that, within four days, Shri Dhurbojyoti Pathak demonstrated his support in a tangible way. In a generous gesture, he donated four stand fans to enhance the comfort of the girls residing at Navajeevan.



On June 1, 2022, a significant transition took place for Aliya Begam, a resident of Navajeevan. Following the order of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), she was officially handed over to her cousin brother on a permanent basis. This decision aligns with the CWC's directive and provides Aliya with the opportunity to continue her education in her hometown. The Child Welfare Committee, recognizing the importance of family and education, facilitated Aliya's reunion with her cousin brother. The CWC has further instructed the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) to diligently follow up on the case, ensuring ongoing support and monitoring to guarantee Aliya's well-being and continued progress in her studies.

On June 13, 2022, Nabami Boro, a dedicated resident of Navajeevan since 2018 and currently pursuing studies in class IX, showcased remarkable eloquence as she spoke on the rights of children. This impactful presentation unfolded before an esteemed audience, including Shri Biswajit Diamary, the Honorable Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, and other government officials. The occasion was a meeting centered around the concept of a child-friendly panchayat in Paneri, Udalguri district.



On June 12, 2022, the residents of Navajeevan participated in a crucial awareness session on child labor conducted by the dedicated staff members of Navajeevan. This session held special significance as it coincided with the World Against Child Labor Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness and fostering action against child labor practices globally.

On June 4, 2022, a heartening visit took place at Navajeevan, as Mrs. Ranjana Chakraborty and Mrs. Nilakshi Baruah from Kalyani Club, NRL Township, Golaghat, extended their support and goodwill. During their visit, they interacted warmly with the girls and staff at Navajeevan, taking note of the positive working conditions and the commitment to the residents' well-being. Impressed by the efforts and dedication witnessed at Navajeevan, Mrs. Ranjana Chakraborty and Mrs. Nilakshi Baruah generously donated a cheque of 20,000 rupees towards the welfare of the girls.



On July 6, 2022, a warm welcome was extended to the new Child Welfare Committee of Kamrup at Navajeevan Rehabilitation Home. The Honorable Chairperson, Giti Kakati Das, along with committee members Pankaj Narayan, Prem Kanta Saikia, and Kalyani Madam, graced Navajeevan with their presence. The visit also included Munmun Neog, Probation Officer, Institutional Care. During their visit, the committee members had the opportunity to meet the dedicated team at Navajeevan and interact with the residents. They expressed happiness and appreciation upon learning about the various activities and the overall progress of the residents. Such interactions strengthen the collaborative efforts between Child Welfare Committees and institutions like Navajeevan, ensuring the continued welfare and support for the residents under their care.

On July 24, 2022 during the summer break, the girls at Navajeevan enthusiastically engaged in a variety of creative activities. The break provided them with a wonderful opportunity to explore and express their artistic talents. The activities included painting, clay art, and crafting flowers, allowing the girls to channel their creativity and imagination into vibrant and expressive art forms. Such engaging and constructive activities not only contribute to the residents' personal development but also create a positive and enriching environment within Navajeevan.



On July 30, 2022, our organization commemorated World Day Against Trafficking with an impactful awareness meeting held at Sikarhati Anchalik High School, located near Barihatin Kamrup district. The event brought together various stakeholders, including the school headmistress, President of the School Management Committee, teachers, parents, and more than 200 students.



On July 29, 2022, Prerna Changkakati, Executive Director of ACRD, accompanied by ACRD staff, paid a visit to the Deputy Commissioner's Office to extend a warm welcome to the newly appointed Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup district, Ms. Keerthi Jhalli, IAS. This gesture of welcome reflected the spirit of collaboration and community engagement, emphasizing the positive relationship between organizations like ACRD and key administrative figures in the district.

On August 6, 2022, an enriching exposure trip unfolded for the girls of Navajeevan. This excursion marked a significant first as the girls visited the Planetarium for the first time, immersing themselves in the wonders of the cosmos. Following this enlightening experience, they explored the scenic Brahmaputra Valley View, taking in the natural beauty and cultural richness of the region. Exposure trips like these contribute to the holistic development of the girls, offering them new perspectives and memorable experiences beyond their daily routine at Navajeevan.





On August 15, 2022, the 75th Independence Day was celebrated with patriotic fervor at Navajeevan. The girls actively participated in the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign, showcasing their patriotism by creating flags and paying heartfelt respect to the national flag. This symbolic gesture not only honored the spirit of independence but also instilled a sense of pride and unity among the residents of Navajeevan.

On August 23, 2022, the staff of Navajeevan actively participated in a training program focused on the transitional plan of aftercare and caregiver mental health. The training was thoughtfully organized by Aide et Action, emphasizing the crucial aspects of providing support and care to individuals in the transitional phase. The program enhanced the staff's skills and knowledge, ensuring they are well-equipped to address the diverse needs of those under the care of Navajeevan during and after their stay.



On August 21, 2022, a poignant reunion took place as Rebeka Kerketa, a resident of Navajeevan, had the opportunity to meet her mother after a prolonged period. Such reunions hold immense emotional significance, fostering connections and reaffirming the importance of family bonds. This heartwarming event is a testament to the supportive environment at Navajeevan, facilitating moments of joy and togetherness for the residents and their families.





On September 6, 2022, a dental camp was organized at Navajeevan, led by Dr. Akash Jyoti Bordoloi. This initiative reflects a commitment to the health and well-being of the residents, providing them with access to essential dental care. Such camps contribute to preventive healthcare, ensuring that individuals under the care of Navajeevan receive necessary attention and support for their overall health.

On October 15th and 16th, 2022, five residents from Navajeevan actively participated in the Assam Care Leavers Association Foundation Day program held at Laalmati, Guwahati. The event, organized by ACLA in collaboration with SCPS and supported by UNICEF and Aide et Action, provided a platform for care leavers to showcase their talents and celebrate their achievements.

On November 23, 2022, Ms. Gulshan Ara Zannat, Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) of ChhaygaonBardua, accompanied by a team member, conducted an inspection at Navajeevan Home for Ujjawala. This visit was carried out in compliance with the directive from the District Social Welfare Officer. Such inspections play a crucial role in ensuring that the standards and guidelines set for care and support facilities are being adhered to, contributing to the well-being and safety of the residents at Navajeevan Home.

On November 24, 2022, the residents of Navajeevan participated in the celebration of Lachit Day at SikarhatiAnchalik High School. The event was marked by various programs, showcasing the talents and contributions of Navajeevan girls. In the artistic realm, Santi Karmakar, one of the residents, demonstrated her creativity and secured the 3rd prize in the art competition. Additionally, Nabami Boro exhibited her literary prowess, winning the 2nd prize in the essay writing competition.

On December 18, 2022, as part of the pre-Christmas celebration at Navajeevan, Ms. Palabita, the founder of Makers Hub, visited with her family. Their visit was marked by a generous donation of food and clothes for the girls at Navajeevan. This thoughtful gesture



not only contributed to the material well-being of the residents but also added to the joy and warmth of the festive season.

On January 4, 2023, Wednesday, Mr. Nikha Mani Kalita, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) and in-charge District Social Welfare Officer of Kamrup, visited Home Navajeevan for an inspection to ensure the smooth functioning of the facility. After completing the inspection, he expressed words of appreciation to the residents of Navajeevan. This acknowledgment from Mr. Nikha Mani Kalita is a testament to the dedication and commitment of both the residents and the staff at Navajeevan in providing a conducive and well-managed environment.

On January 24, 2023, Tuesday, the Navajeevan family celebrated National Girl Child Day in a vibrant and meaningful manner. The girls, assisted by two interns, added a burst of color to the day by creating posters under the theme "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" (Save the Girl Child). The posters conveyed a powerful message, aiming to raise awareness about the importance of girl children in society. This celebration not only contributed to fostering a sense of unity and creativity within the Navajeevan family but also played a role in advocating for the rights and value of girl children. The involvement of interns and the collaborative effort of the residents added a special touch to the event, making it a wonderful and impactful observance of National Girl Child Day.

On January 24, 2023, members of Kalyanmoyees, the women's association of authority in India, paid a visit to Navajeevan, and their arrival was warmly welcomed by the Navajeevan family. In a gesture of generosity, they extended their helping hands by donating rice, snacks, fruits, sanitary napkins, and clothes to Navajeevan for the children. The benevolent contribution from Kalyanmoyees reflects a compassionate commitment to supporting Navajeevan and its residents.

On March 3, 2023, the Airport Authority of India Regional Office in Guwahati pre-celebrated International Women's Day. As part of the event, they extended an invitation to the residents of Navajeevan to perform a song, and our girls enthusiastically participated in this celebration. This engagement not only provided a platform for the residents to showcase their talents but also contributed to the collective observance of International Women's Day, fostering a sense of empowerment and recognition for women in various spheres of life.





On March 4, 2023, the residents of Navajeevan were given the opportunity to perform at the 13th foundation day of the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, coinciding with Child Protection Day. During this event, our residents showcased their talent through a skit addressing the critical issue of child marriage.

On March 22, 2023, the residents of Navajeevan celebrated World Water Day. As part of the celebration, they creatively expressed their feelings about the importance of water through drawings. This artistic expression not only served as a meaningful way for the residents to engage with the theme of World Water Day but also highlighted their awareness of the vital role water plays in our lives.



Skill and Rural Development



SBI Gram Seva

The SBI Gram Seva is flagship programme of the the State Bank of India Foundation that focuses on the holistic development of the most remote and backward villages of India, ACRD collaborated with the SBI Foundation and implemented the Gram Seva project from October 2017 to September 2020 in the five most backward villages of Baksa district. The Gram Seva programme focuses on integrated development through major intervention areas such as digitization, connectivity, health, hygiene, sanitation, electricity, water conservation, environment, infrastructure, and skill development. It also focuses on convergence of government welfare schemes for the poor and bringing more awareness to the rural communities.

On 30th September, 2020, the programme came to an end after three years. However, the project was formally handed over to the local community on 2nd October, 2020, for the continuation of the activities carried out during the programme period. From October 2020 the Gram Seva programme entered into the sustainability phase, and a sustainability officer and a Gram Sevak were appointed under this programme to monitor the activities of the project for two years till September 2022.

Villages adopted under the Gram Seva programme

- Dekadong
- Doomni
- Arnibil
- Ahopa
- Sonapur

Major Activities

Internet Connectivity

- The installation of a total of 33 wireless devices has been successfully completed across the five villages.
- The youth in the village have embraced the availability of internet connectivity by actively recharging their internet routers.



Community Information Centre (CIC)

- A Community Information Centre (CIC) has been set-up in each of the five Gram Seva villages, with adequate infrastructure facilities such as a flat screen TV, internet connectivity, furniture, sanitation facilities, drinking water and a community kitchen.
- All the CICs are fully functioning, and are being used by the local communities for meetings, accessing internet connectivity, applying for various govt. jobs and schemes.
- A total of 270 beneficiaries from all the five villages were benefited.



Digital Classroom

The sustainability officer conducts regular visits to all the schools to assess the status and condition of the digital classrooms that have been provided. In instances where issues are identified, the school management committee is promptly notified and urged to take necessary measures for maintenance. This proactive approach ensures that the digital classrooms remain in optimal condition, promoting a sustainable and effective learning environment for students. Regular inspections and collaboration with the school management committee contribute to the ongoing success and durability of the digital infrastructure in the schools.



Scholarship

On August 15, 2021, five commendable students were honored with the Ojas Rural Talent Scholarship, each receiving a cheque amounting to Rs 5,000. The recipients of this scholarship are Anamika Gari from Dekadong, Rebestina Ekka from Doomni, PrecilaBiha from Sonapur, Hayensha Boro from Ahopa, and Pelantus Ekka from Arnibil. This recognition and financial support are a testament to their academic achievements and serve as an encouragement for their continued dedication to education.



Melani Kujur, an 18-year-old from Dekadong in Baksa district, Assam, was recognized for her outstanding skills in athletics and honored with the SBI Ojas Rural Talent Scholarship. This prestigious scholarship, presented on August 15, includes a monetary award of Rs 5,000 in the form of a cheque.



Linking Government Schemes

In the month of April, 2022, the team successfully reached out to a total of 50 beneficiaries as part of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Act (MGNREGA) Scheme. This scheme is designed to bolster livelihood security in rural areas by offering a minimum of 100 days of wage employment in a financial year. It is



directed towards individuals who willingly engage in unskilled manual work, contributing not only to their economic well-being but also to the overall development of rural communities. The team's efforts in identifying and assisting these beneficiaries underscore the commitment to promoting sustainable livelihoods in the targeted areas.

In the month of May, 2022, the team successfully identified and assisted a total of 44 Below Poverty Line (BPL) beneficiaries for cataract surgery.

In the month of June, 2022, the team converged a total of 42 beneficiaries under the MGNREGA Scheme and also facilitated support for a total of 8 beneficiaries seeking assistance for health treatment and education under the MLA Area Development Fund (SUHRID), a government initiative by the Government of Assam. This scheme, operating under the MLA-LAD program, empowers Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to provide aid to economically disadvantaged citizens within their constituencies.

In the month of July, 2022, the team successfully reached out to and covered a total of 50 beneficiaries under the SWANIRBHAR NAARI Scheme. This initiative, launched by the Government of Assam, is dedicated to empowering indigenous weavers within the state and extending financial support to their families. Administered through the Directorate of Handloom & Textiles, Assam, the scheme aims to streamline the procurement of traditional hand-woven items directly from indigenous weavers, eliminating middlemen from the process.

Safe Drinking Water

A total of 61 hand pumps have been installed across the five villages, providing a reliable source of safe drinking water for the local communities. The Gram Sevak ensures their regular maintenance, promptly addressing any repairs needed by involving the village committee. Approximately 400-500 people are benefiting from these hand pumps, leading to a notable reduction in waterborne diseases such as diarrhea and jaundice in the villages.



Infrastructure (Repair and Maintenance)

A comprehensive initiative has resulted in the repair and renovation of 22 vital community infrastructures, including urinals, community halls, passenger rest houses, schools, bicycle stands, and more. The Gram Seva team, in collaboration with the village committee, played a pivotal role in ensuring the ongoing maintenance of these



structures. Additionally, funds collected and managed by the local community are strategically utilized for repair work whenever necessary.

Sanitation

Under the SBI Gram Seva program, 10 community toilets have been successfully erected across the five villages, providing essential sanitation facilities for the local populace. These toilets are in active use, promoting improved hygiene practices within the communities. The village committee takes on the responsibility of periodic cleanliness maintenance, ensuring the ongoing functionality of these facilities and fostering a healthier living environment for residents.



Electricity

130 solar street lights have been successfully installed across all five villages, providing enhanced illumination for the communities. All the solar street lights are currently fully functional. In the event of any repair or non-functionality issues, the Gram Seva team collaborates with the village committees to promptly liaise with the vendor for necessary repairs, ensuring the continued effectiveness of the solar street lights.



Livelihood and Skill Development

The operational SBI Prerna Stitching Centre in Sonapur has become a hub for skill development, currently accommodating 24 beneficiaries undergoing training. The Gram Seva team conducts regular monitoring visits and follow-ups to ensure the effectiveness of the training. Notably, several beneficiaries have successfully established their own tailoring units, attaining financial independence and contributing to the economic upliftment of the community. This initiative reflects a commitment to empowering individuals through skill acquisition and fostering entrepreneurship for sustainable livelihoods.



In a proactive effort to diversify skill sets and promote alternative livelihoods, the Gram Seva team organized a three-day piggery training in Sonapur village. A knowledgeable resource person from the Veterinary Department, Government of Assam, provided valuable training to 30 interested beneficiaries. The training aimed to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills for successful pig farming. In recognition of their participation, certificates will soon be distributed to the trainees, emphasizing the commitment to skill development and creating opportunities for sustainable economic growth in the community.



Milestones

- BPL families benefitted - 3000
- Digital classroom - 5
- Computer set up - 20
- Hand-pumps installed - 63
- Infrastructure repair - 22
- Community Toilets - 10
- Solar street lights -130
- Community Information Centre(CIC) - 5

Stories of Impact

Empowering Dreams through Education

Anamika Gari, a bright resident of Dekadong village, belongs to a Below Poverty Line (BPL) family. Despite her family's financial struggles as tea garden laborers, they have consistently prioritized Anamika's education. Anamika is currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree in English Literature at Gyanpeeth Degree College, Nikashi.

Financial constraints posed a significant challenge for Anamika's educational journey. Her parents, while valuing education, found it challenging to meet the expenses associated with Anamika's academic pursuits. When Anamika learned about the SBI Ojas Rural Talent Scholarship, she saw a ray of hope. This scholarship, amounting to Rs 5000, aimed to support students like Anamika in overcoming financial barriers and pursuing their educational aspirations.

Anamika promptly submitted her documents to the Gram Seva team, demonstrating her commitment to academic excellence. The Gram Seva team, as facilitators of the SBI Ojas program, played a crucial role in processing Anamika's application. Receiving the SBI Ojas Rural Talent Scholarship brought significant relief to Anamika and her family. The scholarship funds were utilized to purchase essential books, cover examination fees, and support Anamika's educational needs. This financial support not only eased the immediate burden but also empowered Anamika to focus on her academic goals without compromising due to financial constraints.

Anamika harbors dreams of becoming a college professor and contributing to academia. Her dedication, coupled with the support of the SBI Gram Seva team, has set her on a path towards realizing these aspirations. Anamika expresses heartfelt gratitude for the encouragement and financial assistance provided, acknowledging the transformative impact of the scholarship on her educational journey.



Empowering Livelihoods Through Animal Husbandry

Marriyam Ekka, a 38-year-old resident of Sonapur village in Baksa district, faced economic challenges as her husband worked as a small farmer, struggling to sustain the family. Belonging to a Below Poverty Line (BPL) family, Marriyam's financial constraints hindered her ability to explore alternative sources of income. In 2020, Marriyam became a beneficiary of the local livelihood component of the SBI Gram Seva programme. Recognizing her need and potential, she was provided with a piglet, opening avenues for pig rearing as a sustainable livelihood option.

Receiving the piglet alleviated Marriyam's financial worries, allowing her to focus on proper pig rearing without the burden of purchasing piglets. The pig, in turn, delivered six piglets, which Marriyam successfully sold in the market, each fetching around Rs 5000. Additionally, she returned one piglet to the community, contributing to the sustainability of the program.

Marriyam expresses gratitude to the SBI Foundation for its support, acknowledging the positive impact on her economic well-being. The intervention not only addressed immediate financial challenges but also paved the way for sustained growth in her livelihood.



SBI Gram Saksham

ACRD in partnership with SBI Foundation started implementing a livelihood project from November 2022 named “SBI Gram Saksham”. This project is aimed at empowering rural disadvantaged women by providing them with piglets, constructing pig sheds, and giving them technical training and knowledge to rear pigs in a scientific and sustainable manner. The project aims to reach out to 100 beneficiaries in the first phase, and 100 more beneficiaries in the second phase. Villages adopted under this programme:

1. Palashguri
2. No.1 Bhogpara
3. No.2 Bhogpara
4. Naharbari



5. Subanshri
6. Ahopa
7. Sonapur
8. Dekadong
9. Doomni
10. Arnibil

Major Activities

The SBI Gram Saksham team embarked on a transformative journey by orchestrating 10 impactful Self-Help Group (SHG) meetings across identified villages. These gatherings served as dynamic forums for engaging community members in dialogues that ranged from the essence of the Gram Saksham programme to the intricacies of SHG formation.

The team meticulously navigated participants through the contours of the Gram Saksham initiative. Themes spanned from the fundamental concepts of SHG formation to the critical steps of opening bank accounts and registering SHGs in the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM).

The team shed light on the broader canvas of opportunities awaiting SHGs through registration in the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM). This step was positioned as a gateway to a spectrum of resources, support mechanisms, and networks that could further amplify the impact of their collective efforts.

As of March 2023, significant strides have been made in the Gram Saksham initiative, marking a milestone in the pursuit of sustainable livelihoods for the community. The diligent efforts of the beneficiaries and collaborative spirit have resulted in the successful completion of 44 pig sheds across five Self-Help Groups (SHGs) during the reporting period.





Health and Sanitation





SBI Sanjeevani Clinic on Wheels

ACRD with the support of the State Bank of India Foundation (SBIF) and co-funded by National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) and SBI Mutual Funds is implementing "SBI Sanjeevani Clinic on Wheels" covering 40 remote villages of Baksa and Tamulpur. The project began in March 2023 and is aimed at providing preliminary healthcare services through a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) or Outpatient Department (OPD) vans to people living in remote areas. Under this project, the SBIFoundation has provided two OPD vans so that access to remote areas becomes easier. The MMU or the OPD vans are equipped with basic medical facilities, and a medical team comprising of doctor, lab technician, pharmacist and a health assistant –cum-driver for providing both preventive and curative health services along with diagnostic and referrals.

Villages adopted under this programme:

Tamulpur	Baksa
Chandanpur	Ahopa
Narayanpur	Narayanpur
Sidhinathpur	Sonapur
Motigaon	Domni
Sahpur	Dekadong
No. 1 Kuchungjuli	Arnibil
Daimabari	Bhogpara
Ekrajuli	Naharbari
Lawpara	Palashguri
Tarungaon	Subonsiri
Bishnupur	Madhupur
No. 2 Kawlipara	Bhutankhuti
NonkeAngarkata	Dihira RF
Belkhuti	DIhira
Garoghutu	Dugapur
Ambari Sarubhera	Subankhata
Sarubhera	Dhansiripur
Darrangapar	Block - A
Simalubari	Block - B
Bherak	Block - C

Major Activities

The month of March witnessed the successful execution of health camps in 40 (forty) villages spanning Tamulpur and Baksa districts of Assam. The health camps offered a spectrum of comprehensive health services, including medical check-ups, consultations, and distribution of essential medications. Health professionals and medical practitioners were present to address a variety of health concerns raised by the community members. The camps operated with a responsive approach, addressing prevalent health issues within the communities.





On March 29, 2023, a specialized health camp was held in collaboration with the Guwahati Eye Center

in Chandanpur village, Tamulpur. In the

health camps conducted during the month, it was observed that people in Chandanpur and its nearby villages between the ages of 40 and 70 have severe visibility problems, but due to the unavailability of ophthalmologists in the nearest primary healthcare centers (PHC), the objective of the camp was to make eye testing accessible to the underserved people of the remote villages. A total of 85 people got their eyes tested, out of which twelve (12) patients were diagnosed with severe cataracts and were referred for urgent eye surgery at Guwahati Eye Centre free of charge.

The specialized health camp had a notable impact on the community in Chandanpur village. By providing free eye tests and medicines, ACRD contributed to the well-being and overall health of the local residents. It also raised awareness about the importance of eye care and encouraged individuals to take proactive steps toward maintaining their visual health.





Project Nirmal

Project Nirmal is a sanitation project, a CSR initiative of the State Bank of India Foundation, SBI Card and SBI Green Fund. The CSR project was launched in November 2020 in partnership with ACRD in two villages of Assam's Baksa district, namely Doomni and Dekadong to ensure better sanitation facilities for the tea garden communities. The project aims to address sanitation issues faced by these communities in the villages by 2023.

Major Highlights

Under the project Nirmal, 42 community toilets have been constructed and 15 existing toilets have been renovated for use by the communities in two villages to improve their sanitation, health, and nutrition status.

Door-to-door visits are conducted by SwachhSewaks in the villages.

The Programme Officer regularly monitors the project activities and makes regular visits to the field.

Impact story

A Transformative Tale of Sanitation Impact

Sabina Ekka, a resident of Dekadong village benefiting from the community toilet constructed under Project Nirmal by ACRD, shares a transformative journey towards improved sanitation and enhanced well-being.

Sabina's experience highlights the positive impact of accessible and well-maintained sanitation facilities on the lives of community members. Before the implementation of



Project Nirmal, Sabina faced challenges in accessing safe and hygienic toilet facilities, particularly during the night. This not only posed security concerns but also impacted her overall well-being. The introduction of the community toilet, a key intervention under Project Nirmal, marked a significant shift. Sabina now feels empowered to relieve herself safely, even during nighttime hours. The enhanced security and accessibility provided by the community toilet have not only alleviated concerns but have also contributed to a sense of dignity and safety for Sabina and others in the community. Moreover, Sabina notes a visible improvement in her skin health. Proper sanitation practices facilitated by the community toilet have played a crucial role in reducing skin-related issues, emphasizing the direct link between sanitation and individual health outcomes.



Other Activities

State Level Exhibition for Persons with Disabilities

From February 1st to 2nd, 2023, ACRD orchestrated a two-day state-level exhibition at Swahid Bhawan, Mirza, Assam, dedicated to showcasing the talents and skills of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Supported by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Government of India, under the National Fund for PwDs, the event provided a remarkable platform for participants from Baksa, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Kamrup, Kamrup Metro, and Nalbari districts.

The exhibition witnessed the enthusiastic participation of 263 individuals, including PwDs, Children with Disabilities (CwDs), college students, and local community members. Dhrubojyoti Pathak, Circle Officer, Palasbari Revenue Circle, Kamrup, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, formally inaugurating the exhibition. Esteemed dignitaries, including Dr. Sunita Changkakati, Chairperson, Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights; Edward N Sangma, Assistant Professor, DK College, Mirza; Bolin Bordoloi, retired Corporate Officer of Tata Tea and former President, ACRD; Nawajyoti Sharma, President, ACRD; Dr. Krishna Sharma, Member and Co-founder, ACRD; and PP Changkakati, Founding Member, ACRD, added significance to the event.

The exhibition showcased a rich array of handcrafted items skillfully crafted by PwDs. Bamboo toys, earrings, key chains, masks, Assamese gamusas, bangles, necklaces, handkerchiefs, table-clothes, purses, hand fans, bird cages, shawls, traditional waistcoats, and various other handicrafts adorned the display, reflecting the creativity and talent within the PwD community. Cultural programs tailored for the enjoyment of PwDs and CwDs graced both days of the exhibition, creating an inclusive and celebratory atmosphere.

ACRD's Aids and Appliances Distribution Program

In an effort to enhance accessibility and improve the lives of persons with disabilities, ACRD organized an aids and appliances distribution program at Tridhara Anchalik Kala Sangha on October 28, 2022. The event saw the distribution of various aids and appliances, catering to the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.

Distinguished guests graced the occasion, including Dr. Sunita Changkakati, former Executive Director and Chairperson of Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights; Tapan Kumar Das, Teacher, Fulguri High School; Bharat Das, President Tridhara Anchalik Kala Sangha, and other local social activists.

The aids and appliances distributed during the program included:

- Tricycles: 17
- Wheelchairs: 14
- Smart Canes: 4
- Smartphones: 2
- Crutches: 12
- Elbow Crutches: 18



- Sticks: 21
- Rollators: 4

This initiative not only provided essential assistive devices but also underscored ACRD's commitment to fostering inclusivity and improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

