



Gram Saksham

Empowering Women
Transforming Lives



Message from the Managing Director SBI Foundation

SBI Foundation, a CSR subsidiary of the State Bank of India, has been undertaking CSR initiatives with a vision to improve the socio-economic well-being of the society, particularly of the less fortunate and underprivileged members, to enable them to live up to the potential that they all possess.

In partnership with Assam Centre for Rural Development (ACRD), the SBI Foundation has successfully implemented the Gram Saksham project in 20 villages in Baska Block, Baksa District, Assam. This initiative, spanning for a period of 20 months from February 2024 to September 2025, has impacted more than 400 inhabitants in these villages.

Focused on creating alternate livelihoods through pig rearing, the project has positively impacted the lives of over 400 beneficiaries. By combining innovative models like the returning piglets to the next set of beneficiaries, robust training programs, comprehensive healthcare of the livestock, and a strong emphasis on community engagement, Gram Saksham has nurtured self-reliance, financial stability, and collective growth among these women.

We take immense pride in witnessing the stories of resilience and success emerging from the project. These inspiring journeys serve as powerful testaments to the far-reaching potential of grassroots empowerment.

Together, we look forward to scaling new heights and creating lasting impact in rural India.



Sanjay Prakash
Managing Director
SBI Foundation

Message from the President, ACRD

It is with immense pride and joy that I present this booklet, a compilation of success stories from the *Gram Saksham* livelihood project supported by the State Bank of India Foundation across 20 villages in Baksa district, Assam. This initiative, dedicated to empowering rural women, stands as a beacon of hope for countless families who have faced the challenges of poverty and limited opportunities.

At the heart of *Gram Saksham* is the belief that every woman, regardless of her circumstances, possesses the potential to transform not only her own life but also the lives of those around her. Through skill development, access to resources, and unwavering support, this project has enabled women to build sustainable livelihoods and achieve financial independence.

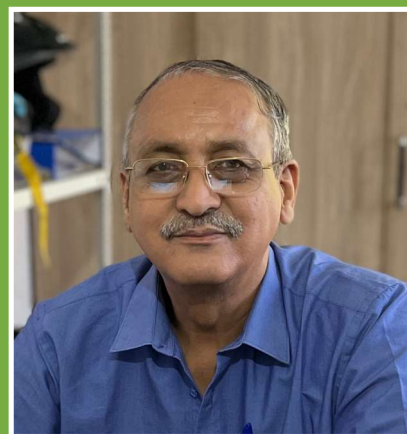
This booklet captures the remarkable journeys of women who have overcome adversity with resilience, courage, and determination. These stories, like that of Bhavani from Naharbari village, remind us of the transformative power of opportunity. From struggling to make ends meet to becoming entrepreneurs, these women have not only improved their own lives but have also become role models within their communities.

It is said that when you empower a woman, you empower a community. This principle is vividly illustrated in the stories featured here. They showcase the multifaceted impact of empowering women: improved family well-being, better education for children, and a ripple effect of hope and progress across the community.

This success would not have been possible without the dedication of our project team, trainers, and community leaders who worked tirelessly to ensure the programme's success. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to SBI Foundation, whose belief in our mission has been instrumental in making *Gram Saksham* a reality.

As you turn the pages of this booklet, I hope you are inspired by the determination and achievements of these incredible women. May their stories encourage us all to continue working towards a world where every individual, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

Together, let us build a future where empowerment, equality, and hope thrive.



Nawajyoti Sharma
President,
Assam Centre for Rural Development

About SBI Gram Saksham

ACRD had partnered with the State Bank of India Foundation to implement the Gram Saksham project covering 10 remote villages of Baska Block in Baksa district of Assam from November 2022 to December 2023. During this 14-month project period, 200 women from below poverty line families acquired skills to rear pigs in a scientific manner and brought income to their families.

Based on the project's success, the Gram Saksham project was extended in February 2024 and is now being expanded to 20 villages in Baksa district. During the 20-month period until September 2025, the project will cover 400 women beneficiaries to empower them.

ACRD has meanwhile identified 200 beneficiaries from below poverty line families with an interest in pig rearing, and have formed them into Self Help Groups (SHG). They have been given pig rearing training in batches of 50. These trainings provided the beneficiaries with the know-how and the knowledge to care for the pigs, including food and other essential mineral supplements that need to be given for healthy growth of the piglets.

Regular SHG meetings are also being conducted in the villages to discuss feedback regarding pig rearing, pig health, pig breeding, health insurance, etc.

ACRD has also been making efforts to facilitate the SHGs with the local SBI for credit linkage. Each beneficiary of the project has been given a female piglet. 200 female piglets of Hampshire breed have already been distributed among the beneficiaries and twenty (20) male piglets have also been given to the SHGs for breeding purposes.

Pig sheds have been constructed for each beneficiary to house the piglet. Each pig shed is well constructed to accommodate the piglet which will grow into almost 100 kgs.

The beneficiaries have been provided with de-worming medicines and mineral supplements for the piglets for their healthy growth, and each piglet has been vaccinated and insured.

To ensure sustainability and expansion of the Gram Saksham project, each beneficiary will return one piglet back to another beneficiary from their community thereby covering more beneficiaries during the project period.

About Assam Centre For Rural Development (ACRD)

Assam Centre For Rural Development (ACRD) is a registered non-profit organisation established in 1995. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860.

It was founded by Late Dr. Lily Mazinder Baruah, a well-known social worker of the North Eastern Region and youngest daughter of Bharat Ratna Late Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi, First Chief Minister of Assam.

ACRD has been working towards socio - economic development of the poor and tribal communities in Assam through interventions in various thematic areas such as health, education, livelihood and skill development, disabled rights, child rights, human trafficking and women empowerment.



Impact and Inspiration

Bhavani's journey highlights the transformative potential of empowerment programme's like Gram Saksham. By leveraging the opportunity provided to her, she has not only improved her family's quality of life but has also become a beacon of hope for other women in her village. Her story is a testament to the ripple effect of empowering women—when one woman succeeds, her entire community benefits.

Bhavani is now on the path to becoming a successful entrepreneur, proving that resilience and hard work, when combined with the right resources, can create a brighter future for all.

Bhavani's Journey: Empowerment Through Livelihood

Bhavani, a 35-year-old homemaker from Naharbari village, is a shining example of how determination and opportunity can transform lives. Living with her husband, a truck driver, and their two young sons, Bhavani faced daily struggles to make ends meet. To support her family, she worked as a daily wage labourer in the paddy fields during the harvest season. Despite her efforts, the family's financial difficulties persisted.

When the Gram Saksham initiative reached her village, Bhavani was approached by the project team and selected as a beneficiary. This programme, designed to empower women through sustainable livelihood opportunities, introduced her to the world of pig rearing.

Training and First Steps

Bhavani participated enthusiastically in the training sessions provided under *Gram Saksham*. She absorbed knowledge about pig rearing, nutrition, healthcare, and farm management. At the end of the training, she received a piglet and a small pig shed to begin her journey.

With her husband's support, Bhavani applied the skills she had learned. They ensured the pig received proper care, feeding it a balanced diet and maintaining its living environment. Under their diligent care, the pig grew healthy and strong.

Early Success and Growth

Bhavani's hard work bore fruit when her pig gave birth to its first litter of eight piglets—four males and four females. From this batch, one piglet was returned to the community as part of the programme's indirect beneficiary model, and the remaining seven were sold in the local market. The income from this sale amounted to ₹ 35,000, marking a significant milestone in Bhavani's journey.

Building on her initial success, Bhavani prepared for the second breeding cycle. This time, her pig produced an impressive litter of 11 piglets—seven males and four females. Once again, she sold seven piglets, earning another ₹ 35,000. She decided to rear the remaining four for future breeding and meat production, laying the foundation for a sustainable business.

A Vision for the Future

With a total income of ₹ 70,000 from two breeding cycles, Bhavani's confidence and determination has soared. Her immediate goals include expanding her piggery, providing better education for her sons, and securing her family's financial stability. She also dreams of uplifting her community by sharing her knowledge and encouraging others to explore pig farming as a viable livelihood.



Doloni Ramchiary: A Journey of Resilience & Aspiration

Doloni Ramchiary, a 38-year-old woman from Narayanpur village in Baksa district, epitomizes the strength and determination of rural women striving for a better life. Living with her husband, both of whom work as daily wage labourers, Doloni faced a constant battle to provide for her family's needs. Their income was barely enough to sustain them, and the dream of financial stability seemed distant.

Her life took a hopeful turn when she was selected as a beneficiary of the Gram Saksham programme.

Stepping into a New Opportunity

Doloni underwent extensive training in pig rearing under the programme. The sessions equipped her with valuable knowledge on pig management, healthcare, and business practices. Upon completing the training, she was provided with a piglet and a pig shed to start her venture.

From the very beginning, Doloni dedicated herself wholeheartedly to the care of her pig. Following the guidelines from her training, she ensured a proper diet, clean living conditions, and regular health checkups for the pig. Her hard work began to show results as the pig grew strong and healthy.

First Breeding Cycle

Doloni's efforts bore fruit when her pig gave birth to its first litter of six piglets—four females and two males. This marked a pivotal moment in her journey. Out of this litter, she decided to sell four piglets in the local market, earning an income of ₹ 20,000. This was a significant milestone, as it provided her with funds to support her family and reinvest in her budding piggery business.

The remaining two piglets, a male and a female, were kept for future breeding, showcasing Doloni's strategic vision for expanding her business.

A Vision for Growth

With her initial success, Doloni now dreams of expanding her piggery into a thriving enterprise. She envisions a time when her family no longer has to rely solely on daily wage labor and can enjoy financial stability. Her goal is to rear more pigs, increase her income, and eventually create employment opportunities for others in her community.

As Doloni continues to nurture her piggery farm, she remains a beacon of hope and a symbol of resilience, proving that with determination and the right opportunities, even the most challenging circumstances can be overcome.





Elizabeth Kujur: Struggling Farmer to Successful Pig Farmer

Elizabeth Kujur, a 52-year-old woman belonging to Jyoti SHG from Subansri village in Baksa district, had been struggling to make ends meet for years. With a small plot of land and a few crops, her income was barely enough to support her family of five. Her husband worked odd jobs, but the earnings were unpredictable, and they often found themselves trapped in cycles of debt during the off-season.

One day, Elizabeth heard about the Gram Saksham project where women like herself belonging to BPL families were selected and offered support and training for sustainable pig farming. The Gram Saksham project implemented by the Assam Centre for Rural Development, supported by the SBI Foundation in Baksa district aimed at improving the livelihood of women from below poverty line families by providing them support to create alternate livelihood opportunities through sustainable pig rearing practices.

Elizabeth had no prior experience in pig farming, but she was determined to try something new.

The turning point in Elizabeth's life came when she received a piglet and a pig shed unit under the Gram Saksham project. The pig shed was designed to improve hygiene, reduce disease outbreaks, and ensure the pigs' well-being. She also received training on how to care for the pigs, manage feeding schedules, and recognize common health problems. In addition, her piglet was insured and she received ongoing veterinary support for the piglets. The well-constructed shed not only kept the pig comfortable and healthy but also prevented it from wandering and damaging crops, a problem many farmers face in the villages.

Within a year, Elizabeth's pig farm had grown. The first batch of 8 piglets she raised were sold at a good price – she sold each piglet for Rs 5000 at the local market, allowing her to reinvest in more piglets. The income from pig farming was far more stable and predictable than crop farming, which was dependent on unpredictable weather. She continued to apply the techniques she learned and her small pig farm thrived. With the profits, Elizabeth was able to pay off her debts, pay the tuition fees of her children, and even expand her farm.

Elizabeth's success didn't go unnoticed. Other farmers in her community, inspired by her achievements, began to explore pig farming as well. Elizabeth is now a mentor to many, sharing her knowledge and encouraging others to start raising pigs.

The pig shed that Elizabeth received was more than just a structure; it was the foundation of a better future. Through hard work, education, and the support of ACRD, she transformed her small farm into a thriving business, proving that with the right opportunities, even the smallest farms can succeed.



PIGGERY UNIT গাহৰিৰ ইউনিট

Supported by - SBI Foundation under Project Gram Saksham
Implemented by - Assam Centre for Rural Development

গ্ৰাম সক্ষমৰ অধীনত এছ-বি-আই ফাউণ্ডেশ্যনৰ দ্বাৰা সমৰ্থিত আৰু
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SUBANSHRI **শুবনশ্ৰী**
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Julita Kujur Tigga: A Journey of Learning and Success

Julita Kujur Tigga, a 38-year-old resident of Arnibil village, is an inspiring example of how knowledge and opportunity can transform livelihoods. As a homemaker with experience rearing local pig breeds, Julita often faced challenges due to limited resources and knowledge. Financial constraints meant she couldn't afford modern healthcare for her pigs, leading to losses when diseases struck. Despite these setbacks, her determination to support her family never wavered.

When the Gram Saksham programme reached her village, Julita saw an opportunity to improve her skills and overcome the challenges she faced.

Training and New Beginnings

Julita was selected as a beneficiary of the Gram Saksham initiative and received specialized training in rearing the Hampshire breed of pigs. Unlike the local breeds she had raised before, Hampshire pigs required different care and management techniques. Through the training sessions and monthly SHG (Self-Help Group) meetings, Julita gained valuable knowledge about pig nutrition, disease prevention, and modern healthcare practices.

At the end of the training, Julita was provided with both male and female Hampshire piglets along with a pig shed, which greatly eased the burden of creating a suitable shelter. She transitioned from relying on traditional homemade remedies to adopting modern veterinary medicines, significantly reducing the risk of pig mortality.

Success with the First Breeding Cycle

Julita's efforts were rewarded when her pigs gave birth to a healthy litter of eight piglets—four females and four males. As part of the program's beneficiary model, one piglet was returned to support a new indirect beneficiary. She sold the remaining seven piglets in the local market, earning ₹ 35,000. This income was a milestone for her, marking the beginning of a more stable financial future.

Scaling Up with the Second Breeding Cycle

Building on her initial success, Julita prepared for the second breeding cycle with renewed confidence. This time, her pigs produced a litter of 12 piglets—eight females and four males. She sold six piglets in the local market, earning ₹ 30,000, while retaining six piglets for future breeding and meat production.





Transforming Her Livelihood

Julita's total income from the two breeding cycles now stands at ₹ 65,000. This financial boost has not only helped her meet her family's needs but has also enabled her to invest in her growing piggery. By rearing additional piglets for breeding and meat, she is laying the foundation for a sustainable and profitable business.

A Brighter Future

Julita now dreams of expanding her piggery into a full-scale enterprise, where she can create a steady income and improve her family's quality of life. She plans to use her knowledge to guide other women in her community who wish to explore pig farming as a livelihood.

Junmoni: Bridging Dreams with Determination

Junmoni, a 24-year-old woman from Bhogpara village in Baksa district, is a young woman with big dreams. Having completed her college degree in arts from a local institution, she envisioned a future filled with opportunities. However, financial constraints forced her to put her aspirations for higher education on hold. Despite the challenges, Junmoni remained hopeful, waiting for an opportunity to chart a new course for herself and her family. That opportunity came through the Gram Saksham initiative, which focuses on empowering women by providing them with sustainable livelihood options.

A New Beginning with Pig Rearing

Selected as a beneficiary under the programme, Junmoni attended training sessions on pig rearing. Her thirst for knowledge and quick grasp of concepts impressed her trainers. She learned about modern techniques for pig care, nutrition, and disease prevention, which prepared her to venture into pig farming with confidence.

After successfully completing the training, she was provided with a piglet and a pig shed. Junmoni devoted herself to caring for the pig, ensuring it received proper nutrition, timely vaccinations, and a clean environment.

First Breeding Cycle

Her diligence paid off when her pig gave birth to its first litter of eight piglets—six females and two males. She decided to rear two female piglets for future breeding and sold the remaining six piglets in the local market. This brought her an income of ₹ 30,000, a significant sum for her family and a promising start to her pig-rearing journey.

Second Breeding Cycle

Encouraged by her initial success, Junmoni prepared for the second breeding cycle with greater confidence. This time, her pig gave birth to nine healthy piglets—five females and four males. She sold all nine piglets in the local market, earning ₹ 45,000. With the proceeds from the two cycles, Junmoni has not only been able to support her family's needs but has also laid the foundation for her pig-rearing business.





Planning for Growth and Education

Junmoni now rears three pigs for breeding, signaling her intent to expand her piggery into a full-fledged farm. Her ultimate goal is to use the income generated from the farm to fund her higher education and fulfill her dream of achieving academic success. Additionally, she plans to support her family and contribute to their financial stability.

Best Practices

Under the Gram Saksham project several best practices have been adopted to maximize impact of the project and empower the rural communities and promote sustainable livelihoods. Here are some of the best practices of the project

1. Beneficiary-Centric Approach

The project places beneficiaries at the core of its operations:

Need-Based Selection

Beneficiaries are carefully selected based on their financial and social needs, ensuring support is directed to the most vulnerable households.

Customized Interventions

Resources, training, and support are tailored to address the unique challenges and opportunities of each beneficiary, focusing on activities like livestock rearing, farming, or small-scale entrepreneurship.

2. Comprehensive Training Programmes

Training is a cornerstone of the project, equipping beneficiaries with essential skills and knowledge:

Livelihood Training

Practical sessions are conducted on livestock care, such as feeding, breeding, and maintaining animal health.

Financial Literacy

Beneficiaries and SHGs receive training on managing cash books, registers, and savings, promoting better financial management.

Sustainable Practices

Emphasis is placed on eco-friendly farming and livestock management techniques, encouraging beneficiaries to adopt practices that benefit both the environment and their livelihoods.

3. Infrastructure Development

Robust infrastructure support ensures the sustainability of interventions:

Provision of Pig Sheds

Beneficiaries have been given pig shed units. Besides, they have been given guidance and resources to construct durable pig shed roofs to protect their livestock from harsh weather and maintain a healthy environment.



4. Veterinary Support and Health Care

Ensuring the health and well-being of livestock is a top priority:

Health Check-Ups

Regular visits by veterinary professionals to monitor the health of livestock, administer vaccinations, and offer expert advice.

Nutritional Support

Distribution of supplements like mineral mixtures, vitamins, and iron boosters to ensure optimal growth and health of livestock, particularly newborn piglets.

Pig insurance

Pig insurance: In order to ensure the beneficiaries are safeguarded against the economic impact of livestock loss, insurance of the piglets distributed have been done.



Formal Distribution of piglets to indirect beneficiaries of the Gram Saksham project during a programme.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

A robust system of monitoring and evaluation ensures the project remains on track and addresses challenges effectively:

Regular Field Visits

ACRD's senior management and SBI Foundation officials conduct routine visits to beneficiaries' homes and fields.

Feedback Mechanism

Continuous interaction with beneficiaries and SHGs allows the team to adapt and improve strategies based on real-world experiences.

6. Promoting Community Engagement

The project thrives on active participation and ownership by the community:

Village Committees

Committees are involved in decision-making, ensuring the interventions are relevant and effective.

Peer Learning

Beneficiaries are encouraged to share their experiences and best practices, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.

7. Women Empowerment

Empowering women is a central goal of the project:

Providing Resources and Training:

Women are given priority in receiving training and resources to develop independent income streams.

Role Models

Success stories of women beneficiaries are highlighted to inspire others in the community and promote gender equality in economic activities.





Prerna Changkakati, Executive Director of ACRD during a monitoring visit to a village under the Gram Saksham project.



8. Sustainable Livelihood Practices

The project focuses on promoting sustainable and long-term livelihood solutions:

Feeding Practices

Harmful practices, such as feeding livestock fat-rich fermented rice remains, are discouraged. Beneficiaries are trained to adopt healthier feeding techniques that improve livestock productivity.

Eco-Friendly Structures

Bamboo-based pig sheds and other environment-friendly practices are promoted to ensure minimal ecological impact.

These practices collectively ensure the effectiveness of the Gram Saksham Project, empowering rural communities through sustainable development, financial independence, and community-driven growth.



Exposure visit cum training to 20 indirect SHG Beneficiaries of Gram Saksham Project.

Location: Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kahikuchi, Kamrup District.

Date: 30th December 2024.



Arpita Sharma, Assistant Manager, SBI Foundation during a visit to Gram Saksham Villages.





PIGGERY UNIT গাহৰিৰ ইউনিট

This piggy unit has been set up under the SBI Gram Saksham project of the SBI Foundation and has been implemented by Assam Centre for Rural Development (ACRD).

এই গাহৰিৰ ইউনিটটো এচ.বি.আই. গ্ৰাম সক্ষম প্ৰকল্পৰ অধীনত এচ.বি.আই. ফাউণ্ডেচনৰ দ্বাৰা স্থাপন আৰু অসম চেণ্টাৰ ফৰ ৰুৰেল ডেভেলপমেণ্টৰ দ্বাৰা কপায়িত কৰা হৈছে।

BENEFICIARY NAME : DIPA BASUMATARY

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Block - Baska	District - Baksa	২নং কটালীগাঁও
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