



Highlights in this Quarter

- Our latest Annual Report 2013-2014 can be downloaded at www.theant.org
- Floods in Goalpara – relief & support
- Women's Kabbadi Tournament
- Completed MPTC Building
- Nutrition Project in the Tea Gardens
- Peace Team & their Peace Building Work
- Trustees meeting & Change of Guard



Floods in Goalpara District

Flash floods hit many districts of Assam in the middle of September. Of the many districts affected, flood waters displaced thousands of families in our neighboring Goalpara District. Many had not got relief. With support from Caring friends, we were able to work through partner NGOs in Goalpara and feed over 10,000 people with khichdi as they had no firewood to cook with; we also helped over 1000 families with blankets + mosquito nets and 6000 families with bleaching powder and candle packets.



Women's Kabbadi Tournament

Women's right to play, games and sports is not often spoken about. Once married, these small pleasures seem of a long, forgotten girlhood past! Inspired by the high-glamour Indian kabbadi league on T.V, some of our women too decided to learn to play kabbadi "properly". On 27th September, 12 teams gathered in Rowmari from our various village clusters for a day of kabbadi tournament. With much giggling, shyness but also excitement, they changed into their "uniforms" (football jerseys borrowed from the football teams) and salwars (which some of federations were inspired to stitch!). We even had official referees from the District Sports Association and the women found it a real challenge to stick to the strict rules! The women are now demanding that we organize a kabbadi coaching camp next year so they play even better but we are even more ambitious, we are dreaming of holding a full-fledged sports meet exclusively for women!



Our New Youth Programme Strategy

Most of the youth we work with are first generation learners and as they grow and rapidly expand their horizons, we have been growing and evolving our programme along with them. After a strategy review exercise, for the next 5 years, we plan to focus our youth work both at the institutional and also village level:

1. **Institutional Level :**
 - a. **Be The Change Programme with College Youth:** Sessions are held in colleges which aim at personal development of youth along with sensitization to social issues.
2. **Village Level:**
 - a. **Adolescent Girls Empowerment:** We are forming adolescent groups in villages and training and working with them to become truly confident and empowered.
 - b. **Supporting Vulnerable Youth in Villages:** School drop-outs, physically and mentally challenged youth, youth affected by violence etc... These youth have not been in the ambit of our youth work and we will be focusing on their needs.



Improving Nutrition When You Can

Along with 2 small NGO partners whom we have trained, we are running a project in tea gardens in Upper Assam to prevent lifelong stunting and chronic malnutrition of children. By teaching them low-cost, healthy ways of improving their child's nutrition, we are bettering feeding practices of mothers of 6 to 11 month old babies at the best window period we have – during weaning. The action project is supported by NFI, New Delhi.



Youth Skills Building Centre
The Multi-Purpose Centre Building is ready. We thank each and every donor for the immense support they have given to get this done. We are partnering with Unnati (Bangalore) to run a youth skills building centre here and we look forward to welcoming the first batch of students on 1 December 2014.



Saving Commons for the Future Generation



Common land, water, forest resources are getting privatized and fast disappearing. Many communities are already facing a crisis as grazing land has become scarce, there are few common ponds left for water, and getting firewood is a huge daily struggle. Unfortunately, not enough attention is given to the issue which is threatening the existence of communities. Seva Mandir, Udaipur has been working on the issues of protecting commons for many decades now. Using their experience in the issue, they carried out

a multi-centric study across 15 districts in India to measure the extent of loss of common land and also study best practices by which communities are managing their common property resources. In Assam, **the ant** was one of the partners in this study. Apart from opening our eyes to the severity of the problem and the need to do something about it, it has given us an entry point to start interventions with forest communities in the Kuklung Forest range.

We invite partnerships from other organisations and support from donors for some of our village based initiatives in Chirang as well as in other parts of Assam:

- a. **Promoting Community Health** – focus on Mental Health & women's health
- b. **Women & Girls Empowerment** – especially women's leadership building; adolescent girls health & development
- c. **Child & Youth development** – partnering in school based programmes for enrichment of education of children in government schools
- d. **Building Sustainable Livelihoods** – especially protecting natural resources for sustainable livelihoods
- e. **Remote Areas Development programme** – strengthening education and promoting rain water harvesting
- f. **Peace & Justice Programme** – building a strong paralegal programme which helps communities access justice and builds democracy

Governance Matters
Our Board of Trustees met on the 30th August 2014 in Guwahati. They approved the search and selection of a new Executive Director to take care of the day to day management of **the ant**. We hope that this will leave the founders with more time and energy to devote to other pressing issues of the northeast region. This leadership transition will mark an important phase of growing up for **the ant** and we ask for your blessings and good wishes as we move into this critical but needed period of transitioning.



We welcome any feedback. Please do get in touch. Our contact is : the ant, Rowmari, P.O Khagrabari, Dist Chirang via Bongaigaon, Assam - 783380; Ph: 9859978991 email: jenny@theant.org ; www.theant.org (Donations to the ant are exempt from Income Tax as per rules under Sec 80G of the Income Tax Act)