

the ant

Quarterly Newsletter
(October - December 2022)



Walk for Peace and Equality

In solidarity with 16 days campaign against gender-based violence, *the ant* organised a 11 days Walkathon for Peace & Equality in collaboration with VDCs and community-based organisations. The walkathon commenced from Deosiri (bordering Bhutan) on the 25th November, 2022 and culminated at Rowmari on 5th December, 2022. The yatris covered 175 kms, 15 Village Council Development Committees and more than 100 villages in Chirang District with the message - "Let us unite to end violence against women and girls." The yatris engaged in dialogues on domestic violence and child abuse with more than 1000 community members including children during those 11 days. [READ MORE](#)



Ramdhenu/Jaikhlong Cultural Mela

Friends Across Barriers organised Ramdhenu (Rainbow) cultural mela was organised by *the ant* on 14th and 15th November 2022 to create a space for different ethnic communities to come together and engage in cultural knowledge exchange. The exchange was facilitated through dialogue sessions between the communities where they presented and discussed on the similarities in their cultures, through display and exhibition of traditional food and crafts, etc. [READ MORE](#)

World Mental Health Day Observed:

On 10th October 2022, MITA (Mental Illness Treatment Alliance) organised an awareness camp at Amguri Primary Health Centre in Chirang district to observe the World Mental Health Day. Focusing on this year's theme 'Make Mental Health and Well-being for All a Global Priority', the message of the camp to the local community was to prioritise mental health. The team discussed the connection between mental health and physical health emphasising that maintaining both is important for people from all ages to lead a life free from mental health issues. The team also discussed the importance of strengthening interpersonal and social relationships in order to ensure mental well-being of all.

Advocating for Children's Environmental Rights in Bengtol



The youth working with Friends Across Barriers participated in the Global Action Month on child rights from 28th November 2022. As a part of this campaign and campaign, children and youth of Bengtol raised awareness on the environmental rights of children through activities such as street play, biodiversity exhibition, session on recycling, etc. [READ MORE](#)

International Child Rights Day

International Child Rights Day was observed on 20th November 2022 with the children, parents/guardians and community members of Kuklung at Brindaban L.P. School, Kuklung. Arjun Narzari, the guest of the programme from the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), highlighted various ways in which child rights are violated in society - by sending or employing them as child labour, trafficking them for labour or commercial sex or not allowing them education or play. He also emphasised the importance of protecting the rights of children with special needs too. The children also participated in a signature campaign to raise slogans for the protection of child rights.



the ant organised a seed preservation workshop at Kuklung on 6th December 2022 with 29 farmers on the importance and ways of preserving local seeds. Out of them, 27 were women. The farmers were engaged in participatory resource mapping activity which helped the participants and the ant staff in understanding the resource availability in Kuklung and the history of the place. The session ended with the screening of two videos on seed preservation and a discussion on the possibility of opening a local seed bank managed by the communities in Kuklung.



The Ultimate Disk Sectionals tournament was held on 10th and 11th December, 2022 at Patabari, Deosri, Basugaon and Kuklung. A total of 410 players of the age group 11-25 years participated in this tournament. 20 teams from around 20 villages in Chirang played in this tournament and 8 teams selected from them will play in the Regionals tournament to be held in January.

International Day of Rural Women 2022



On 15th October 2022, the International Day of Rural Women 2022 was observed at Hatisar, Chirang with the objective of highlighting rural women's contribution in livelihood generation. More than 500 people attended the event including community leaders, women self-help group members, Secretary of Sanjarang Cluster Level Federation, and representatives from All Santhal Women Association of Assam. Stalls and a photo exhibition were put up in the event to showcase the various works done by rural women from Deosri, Hatisar, Shantipur and Bijni.

Concept Development Workshop



On 21st and 22nd October 2022, the Community Media Unit (CMU) of **the ant** had organised a one-and-a-half-day workshop on concept development in filmmaking and storytelling. Pinky Brahma Choudhury, one of the Directors of Media Division of Samaj Pragati Sahayog and an award-winning documentary filmmaker, facilitated the workshop on how to conduct research and identify impactful stories in the rural communities. A few staff members attended the workshop and participated in exercises to write stories in an impactful manner.

Upcoming Activities

One Billion Rising Campaign

Ultimate Disk Regional Rainbow Tournament
Training on Nutrition Garden at Govt. schools in
Kuklung and Udalguri
Art for Peace - Mural Painting Drive in Schools

District Level Science Mela

On 10th November, 2022, the District Level Science Mela was held at Kajalgaon Higher Secondary School. 41 teams of three students each from 29 M.E. and High schools participated in this mela. The teams selected at School Level Science Melas presented different science models on the basis of which three models were selected for awards. Out of the 29 schools, 15 are direct intervention schools under **the ant**. The vision of conducting science melas is to inculcate scientific temperament amongst young children in general and to develop interest for scientific ventures in students from Government schools in Chirang.



The 5 Months RTL Training Concludes

The five sessions of Radical Transformational Leadership training concluded on 15th December 2022. Radical Transformational Leadership is based on Monica Sharma's leadership model based on Universal values for bringing sustainable and equitable development in the society. The training started in August 2022 where 48 staff members of **the ant** participated and practised various tools of designing transformational projects by sourcing their inner capacities and values.

Induction Training of New Recruits

Two-day induction programme was organised for the newly recruited employees of **the ant** on 19th and 20th December 2022. Induction training is a compulsory process of introducing the new staff members to the working culture and staff setup of the organisation. A total of 20 staff members (12 women and 8 men) were given orientation on employer and employee rights, different projects and programmes, the organisation's policies, including financial policies, the code of conduct for working at our organisation, and paying attention to the health and safety of the new employee.

New Family Members

We welcome our new ants Kastury, Xavier, Rama, Haina, Lucy, Daisin, Dwmwisiri, Fungja, Priskila and Pohor to our family.



the ant turned 22!

On 13th October, 2022 **the ant** celebrated its 23rd Foundation Day with much pomp and enthusiasm. The celebration was graced by a few government officials and community members from advisory committee of **the ant**. Speaking on **the ant**'s arrival to Chirang in 2000, Netaji Basumatary, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, **the ant** said, "By the 25th year of **the ant**'s existence, our vision should be clear on how to increase our presence both geographically and thematically in Assam and in the northeast region."

Workshop on Sexual Harassment at Workplace

A half-day workshop on sexual harassment at workplace was organised by **the ant** for its staff members at Don Bosco Institute, Kharguli in Guwahati. The workshop was facilitated by Anurita P. Hazarika, State Coordinator, North East Network and the external member of the Internal Committee of **the ant**. 18 women and 23 men from the staff attended the workshop. Anurita discussed about the history of recognising sexual harassment at workplace by the Indian law and the discourses generated on this issue over the years. The crucial part of the workshop was the orientation on the types of sexual harassment that women face at workplace.



Acknowledging that there are grey areas in the existing laws and mechanisms to address sexual harassment at workplace, Anurita said, "Although statistically true that women face sexual harassment more than men, the laws fail to recognise that there are many gender identities such as transwomen and also men who face sexual harassments."

Making of A Leader for Youth Development

(Story collected and written by Ansuma and Abinash, **the ant**)

20-year-old Moinuddin Ali is a bright student and a hard-working youth leader from a small hamlet named Serfanguri under Bengtol Serfang VDC in Chirang, located just 25 kilometers away from the Indo-Bhutan Border. Hailing from an economically poor family, Moinuddin has faced a lot of financial barriers in pursuing his education by studying in Guwahati on scholarships. In 2018, Moinuddin started working as a youth volunteer in Bengtol with **the ant**. With several ups and downs and breaks in his journey to pursue education and work as a youth worker, Moinuddin has emerged as a promising youth leader and teacher. As a youth leader he brought many interventions. He along with other youth designed a project to create awareness among children and parents in Serfanguri on drug abuse. He designed a project to reduce the dropout rate in his village by 50%. As a part of this intervention project, he is engaging with the students of high school and with their parents from time to time to spread awareness about SMC roles, regulations and the detrimental effects of drop out. He also began teaching children in his neighbourhood to self-finance his higher education. Moinuddin is very ambitious and with his leadership skills he is working towards bringing positive change in the society.

[READ MORE](#)



**Moinuddin Ali, 20
Youth Volunteer**

Institute of Development Action (IDeA)



Organisational Development Workshops for IDeA Partners

Under Project ENRICH, each of IDeA partner organisations is working towards youth development by engaging with youth. To enhance their understanding of youth development IDeA organised an exposure visit for project staff of all partner organisations including the staff of IDeA to PATANG at Sambalpur district, Odisha from 29th October to 7th November 2022. The visiting team got the opportunity to visit exhibition on PATANG's work, attend sessions on approaches to youth development, visit to 'Kishor Kishori Mela' organised by PATANG's community youth volunteers, visits to organisations RARE, Sonpur and YCDWA, Boudh and their field locations in Subarnapur district of Odisha, and participation in the 'Youth Recognition Program' for felicitating PATANG's community youth volunteers.

Online Session on Child Safeguarding Policy

On 10th December, an online session on Child Safeguarding Policy was conducted for IDeA partner organisations. The first half of the session, facilitated by Rwmwi Basumatary from **the ant**, involved a discussion on the importance and process of formulation of the policy. This was followed by a brief discussion and sharing by IDeA partner organisation- Karunar Kheti Trust (KKT) on their Child Safeguarding Policy. Gaurav Sharma from KKT shared about the process of developing their policy with stakeholder participation, and the importance of policies being specific to the context of every organisation.

Incubation Partners' Induction Meet

On 17th December 2022, an Induction Meet was conducted for IDeA's Incubation partners. Representatives of the 15 Incubation partner organisations from Assam, Meghalaya, and Nagaland participated in the meeting. The meeting served as an opportunity for the IDeA team and partners to get introduced to each other, and their respective work. The IDeA team also shared about the Incubation Model and its philosophy along with a brief orientation on reporting formats, and an SOP on the use of organisation logos.