

the ant

(28th April 2023)

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Members of Koraihari Village Organisation, Deosiri Cluster.
From left: Archana Soren, Helena Murmu, Sumi Hembrom, Chita Hasda, Salomi Murmu



Photo credit: Rhondeni Kikon

Eva Wallensteiner from DKA Austria Visits the ant

Eva from DKA Austria came for a two-day field visit on 2nd March and 3rd March to interact with the youth and children associated with the Colouring the Rainbow (CTR) and Bring the Change (BTC) programmes of the ant. The visit ended with reporting on six-months activities of the two programmes and feedback meeting with Eva.



Photo credit: Zulfikar Aslam

Five Women Change Makers from the ant Felicitated

Haseena Khatun, Laxmi Chetri, Damyanti Brahma, Phungbili Basumatary and Mina Tudu were felicitated in an event organised by the Social Welfare Department under Ministry of Women and Child Development for their exceptional roles in changing gender roles in the society.



Fireflies 'Jonaki Porua' Screened for the Youth in Bengtol

'Fireflies' (Jonaki Porua), a film by Milind Dutta and directed by Prakash Deka was screened on 18th March at the Bengtol Cluster office by the team of F.a.B (Friends Across Barriers). The screening was organised to raise awareness amongst the youth on the discrimination faced by the transgender communities.



Photo credit: Tanushree Rabha

Meeting with Farmers at Kuklung

The Director of Operations, Rhondeni Kikon, accompanied the Kuklung Livelihood team to meet a few farmers at No. 2 Dongsiapara to discuss with the farmers on forming a community seed bank in the area. While seed banking was the main agenda, **the ant** staff also took brief reviews from the farmers on their experience of using organic farming techniques that they learnt from the livelihood programme.



International Day of Forest Observed

the ant observed the International Day of Forest with the children of Remedial Learning Centres at Chirang and Udalguri. Children participated in drawing session, poem recitation, play, etc. based on the theme of forest and its importance. Oscar awarded documentary 'The Elephant Whisperers' was also screened at the event.



the ant Participated in the Orientation Programme on Human-Elephant Conflict Management

On 14th March, 2023 **the ant** took part in the orientation programme on human-elephant conflict management organised by the World Wildlife Fund and Assam Forest Department at Mushalpur, Baksa. A discussion was held with community members and Anti-Depredation Squads (ADS) of the villages adjoining the Manas Tiger Reserve on various ways and best practices to manage elephant encounters with the villages.



On-campus ant staff attends well-being session

14 staff members attended a well-being session organised on the campus. Priyanka from MITA facilitated the session, and walked the participants through the meaning of well-being, and how to measure our mental well-being through self-assessment tools.



Meeting with Key Leaders from Community

Team members of AVAHAN met with important community leaders and stakeholders of 6 clusters in Chirang. The participants engaged in discussions regarding safety of women and girls at home and public place, and provided suggestions and feedbacks to incorporate in the planning for the 3rd phase of AVAHAN.

Paper Presentation by MITA at 7th National Conference on World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation Indian Chapter

Dr. Mintu Moni Sarma, Dr. Sunil Kaul, Priyanka Bhuyan and Ramesh Chandra Deka co-authored a paper titled "The Equity-Informed Recovery Paradigm in Structurally Vulnerable Clinical Population: A Case Study on Mental Illness Treatment Alliance in Assam" for the conference held on 17th and 18th March, 2023 at Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health (LGBRIMH), Tezpur. The paper was presented under the theme - "Rehabilitation in Northeast India".



Cluster Review Meeting at Deosiri

A cluster level review meeting was organised at Deosiri on 22nd March'23 attended by all the ant staff members working at Deosiri, and Netaji Basumatary, the Executive Director of the ant. The objective of the review meeting was to foster understanding between the teams of different projects to work together towards achieving their goals.



Women's Day Observed Across the ant

Various projects of the ant organised International Women's Day events across Chirang, and in Udalguri. The events observed the day through various activities ranging from fun-filled sports activities to discussions and meetings with women's groups, children, youth, and community stakeholders.

IDEating for Change



Photo courtesy: Pathikrit

Community Library Opens Its Door for Children and Youth at Desang, Sivasagar

IDEA's partner organisation Pathikrit inaugurated the opening of a community library at Desang, Sivasagar on 25th March, 2023. The door of the library is opened to the children and youth of the area with their aim to reach more than 300 children across 5 child centres.



Photo credit: Zulfikar Aslam

IDEA and the ant Talk About Gender Empowerment at BIKF'23

IDEA and the ant collaborated with Kolkata Rishta, Nari Pokko, Sahaj, Zubaan and Northeast Network to curate a two-day programme on Gender Empowerment at the Bodoland International Knowledge Festival, 2023 on 28th February and 1st March, 2023.

Sustaining Education in a Forest Village Through Collective Efforts

As the month of March is dedicated to women all around the world, we look at the contributions women make towards ensuring the smooth functioning of the ant's activities. In 2018, the ant had formed a village organisation (VO) with the presidents and secretaries of 10 SHGs formed in the same year with the women of Koraibari village under Deosiri cluster. The VO and SHGs were formed to introduce a self-sustaining system of managing the only learning centre, now known as Model Learning Centre (MLC), established by the ant in the village. At the beginning of the SHGs, each member was provided with a she-goat and each SHGs were given a billy goat for rearing kids for sale to earn money for maintaining the learning centre. For the past five years, the members have been submitting one kid each to the VO, which are then sold by the VO members.

The total money earned is given by the VO to the School Management Committee (SMC) consisting of VO members and the guardians of the students for the maintenance of the MLC. Apart from maintaining finances from the goateries, the VO members also conducts occasional inspection on the working of the MLC, and ensures that the children are regularly attending the classes. "Earlier the VO was good. But now it's not very stable", says Sumi Hembrom, the President of the VO, in the context of some of the SHGs becoming non-functioning. But amidst this state, the current VO members are hopeful of sustaining this system by creating new SHG groups.

New Family Members

We welcome our new ants Noya, Narjee, and Dibyajyoti to our family.

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