

The AIDA Chronicle



stories from inspiring...enabling...empowering journeys



Healing Tirap hills of Arunachal Pradesh

(p.15)

Impact stories || Projects updates || Team corner || Reflections

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Cover photo: Healing Tirap hills of Arunachal Pradesh
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Random thoughts

'What the ocean gives to the clouds, it eventually gains back — such is the cycle of giving and receiving.'

A note from the editor



Welcome to the 6th issue of the *AIDA Chronicle*!

In this edition, we bring you inspiring stories from four projects: the AIDA-Child Friendly Dimapur, the AIDA-Don Bosco Job Placement Network, the Malaria Elimination Program in Peren district of Nagaland, and the SBI Sanjeevani – Clinic on Wheels project in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.

You'll also hear firsthand from two dedicated team members of the CFD project as they reflect on their journeys as social workers. In our "Reflections" section, you'll find thoughtful guidelines for aspiring volunteers drawn from Oh Youngsoo's field experience.

We hope this issue informs, inspires, and strengthens your connection with the work we do.

Warm regards,

Joseph Matthew

Message from Executive Director



Dear Readers, Friends, and Partners in Development,

Warm greetings from AIDA!

It is with great joy and deep appreciation that I present to you Volume 2, Issue 2 of our quarterly publication for 2025. This edition takes you into the heart of our mission—sharing stories of commitment, collaboration, and transformation from the rural corners of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Assam.

At AIDA, we believe development is not just about projects and outcomes, but about people—their hopes, dignity, and active participation in building a just and inclusive society. This issue highlights some of the most meaningful interventions we've undertaken with our communities.

The **Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI)** has shown what sustained collaboration can achieve. With support from civil society, government, village councils, child protection units, and educational institutions, we've seen a shift in how cities and institutions view and include children. We are grateful to all who have walked this journey with us to make our cities more responsive to the needs and rights of every child.

The **SBI Sanjeevani – Clinic on Wheels** continues to deliver healthcare to remote villages in Tirap, East Arunachal Pradesh. Over three years, it has reached 45 villages, served over 30,000 patients, and conducted awareness sessions and cleanliness drives under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

We also feature the **Malaria Elimination Program in Peren**, launched in June 2024, promoting prevention through sanitation, mosquito control, and community education.

You'll also hear from our dedicated field staff—stories of resilience and service. May these pages inspire you, as they inspire us, to continue walking with the rural communities of Northeast India.

With gratitude and hope

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Dr. Fr. Roy George SDB". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Fr. Roy George SDB
Executive Director, AIDA



Participants at CFD 3rd Annual Convention at Don Bosco School, Dimapur / photo: S Chacko

Inspired by the UN's Child Friendly Cities Initiative, AIDA's Child Friendly Dimapur project has transformed the city by empowering children, engaging communities, and collaborating with local authorities. This initiative has significantly improved child safety, increased awareness of child rights, and fostered a supportive environment where children can thrive.

Gone are the days when, as children we experienced a happy and carefree childhood. Vibrant greenery surrounded us and the air hummed with birds chirping, no pollution, no foul smell from piled-up wastes, no honking, just the echoes of children's laughter and cheers filling the neighbourhood.



"Happy Childhood" - Art by Child Rights Club member as part of children's activity

We had ample time and unlimited spaces to play, hop, jump and skip around. Our neighbourhood and surroundings stretched out before us, becoming our endless playgrounds.

We were never tired, never bored of playing the same old games over and over again. There were no cell phones or gadgets to distract us, no stories of killing, kidnapping, rape, theft, fights or abuses within our neighbourhoods to scare or haunt us. It was simply a time of joy and happiness, a joyful and carefree childhood.



CFD was officially launched by Shri. Rajesh Soundarajan, Deputy Commissioner, Dimapur in 2021 / photo: L Guria

Too engrossed in development, building structures and multi-storied buildings with barely any space for the children to play, we now barely see any greenery. Our once safe haven has become a place of insecurity, abuse and violence where a child no longer feels safe, we are at a juncture where the child states that they are neither safe at school nor at home.

Despite this situation, a dream of safe city, where every child experiences a carefree childhood, a place where every child gets access to equal opportunity without any discrimination and develop to their full potentiality. This is not an impractical dream, it is the unfolding reality in Dimapur and its neighbouring towns and cities.

Gratitude goes to ANMA Integrated Development Association (AIDA) for germinating an idea and officially launching the initiative on 29th September 2021 by Shri. Rajesh Soundarajan, the then Deputy Commissioner of Dimapur. Since then, AIDA has worked tirelessly to turn this vision into action, moving closer to the dream of creating truly child friendly cities.



Children participating in games during a session with Child Rights Club members / photo: S Phom

Inspired by the UN's Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI), Child Friendly Dimapur, with technical support from DB YaR Forum and funded by BMZ and Don Bosco Mondo, embarked on a mission to translate the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into tangible action.

Building a city where every child feels seen, safe and empowered was not a top down approach but a ground up movement driven by the community.



Children posing for lens with the Child Rights Facilitator during the 2nd Annual Convention / photo: Limatoshi

The strategic approach used was multidimensional, grounded in engagement, empowerment and collaboration. Ensuring that children, communities and stakeholders all played an active role in shaping a child friendly city

Consider the tangible impact of forming **81 Child Rights Clubs**, reaching over **2,139 children**. These weren't just mere gatherings, they became fertile grounds for nurturing young advocates.

Imagine the transformation in a child, once marginalized and unheard, now finding their voice within a supportive peer group, learning about their rights, and realizing their potential to influence their surroundings **849 visits and**



Workshop with Duty Bearers (ASHA Workers-Dimapur / photo : G Kamei

sessions with 9,539 children conducted by the project team weren't random check-ins; they were consistent investments in these young minds, fostering trust and providing guidance.



Session with the Child Rights Club by the project team in Urra Villa / photo: S Phom

The initiative didn't stop there. Recognizing that true change requires nurturing leadership, **15 Child Rights Club Leaders Trainings** empowered **514 young individuals** to become confident voices within their communities.

Simultaneously, 12 capacity building trainings for Child Rights. Facilitators equipped **114 youth & adults** with the skills and knowledge to effectively mentor these

budding leaders. The impact is evident in the **836 monitoring visits** undertaken by these facilitators, ensuring the clubs remained vibrant and impactful spaces.

Beyond structured engagements, Child Friendly Dimapur tapped into the power of creativity and expression. Through **95 Children Creative Activities**, the project provided platforms for **over 3,400 children** to articulate their realities and aspirations in ways that words alone often cannot capture.



Session with Caring Community members / photo G Kamei

Child led surveys weren't just data collection; they were powerful exercises in participatory democracy, **giving 581 children** agency in identifying the challenges and opportunities within their communities. And the **Children Group Campaigns**, reaching over **1,600 individuals**, transformed these insights into collective action, raising awareness on critical child rights issues.

The project recognized that creating a child-friendly ecosystem demanded the active involvement of the wider community. **30 Caring Community Groups** were formed **with 378 adults** becoming local hubs for child protection and well-being.

The **692 visits and sessions** with these groups and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) sensitizing **4,034 adults**, alongside **15 targeted workshops with 493 adults**, fostered a deeper understanding of child rights and protection mechanisms, broadening the circle is movement. of responsibility.



Children creative activity in Niesatou / photo: D Sachu

Engaging **1057 youth** through **16 creative activities** and **1019 youth and CSOs** actively involved in **three impactful campaigns** ensured that the next generation of adults became allies in this movement.

Crucially, Child Friendly Dimapur understood that systemic change requires engaging those in power.

The **210 visits to 344 duty bearers** and **15 workshops with 413 duty bearers** weren't just courtesy calls; they were strategic dialogues aimed at sensitizing government officials and other key stakeholders to the needs and rights of children.

The numbers speak volumes, but the true impact lies in the stories of transformation :

"We've witnessed a tangible shift in awareness regarding child labor and rights in our community. The inclusion of marginalized children in Child Rights Clubs opened doors that were previously closed, and even hesitant parents began to trust the project's positive influence."



Children posing for the lens after session / photo: Sorenbeni

- Mrs. Tesiovino Lotha, Chairwoman, Public Ground Colony,

"Braving heavy rain with over 350 participants, the 2024 Walkathon truly illustrated our community's growing commitment to children's rights, even in the face of adversity."

- Mr. Nekenchiba, Associate Pastor Youth cum Director, Children Education Ministry, Sangtamtilla Ao Baptist Arogo:

"There's been a significant increase in children's knowledge about their rights and where to seek help, a direct result of Child Friendly Dimapur's interventions."

- Ms. Lozua Kape, Member, Child Welfare Committee.



From a Children Creative Activity in Sangtamtilla colony / photo: Temsumenla

"From unemployment to becoming a teacher, my experience as a Child Rights Facilitator shows how the project empowers not just children, but also the adults who champion their cause."

-- Mr. Rhonbemo Lotha's, Child Rights Facilitator

"Targeted interventions tackling substance abuse led to a dramatic increase in school enrollment, especially among girls,

and a safer community. The fact that children's voices are now a valued part of our community discussions signifies a profound cultural shift."

- Mrs. Narola Ao, Caring Community Group member, Neisatuo Colony

"We've seen immense change, but it's a crucial reminder that building a truly child-friendly city is an ongoing journey that requires sustained efforts."

- Mr. Sangto Longchar, Project Coordinator, Dimapur Legal Services Authority, Civil Society Forum member.

Child Friendly Dimapur's journey, from August 2021 to April 2025, involved empowering children, engaging communities, and collaborating with duty bearers, to build bridges of hope and create urban spaces where every child can thrive. This initiative attempted to open our eyes to what is happening with our children in our very own homeland, create awareness and capacitate ourselves. It is a call to action for every responsible citizen for all who believes in a future where every child's rights are not just acknowledged but actively and constantly upheld. ■



Ms. Garrol Lotha is Coordinator at project AIDA-CFD

AIDA's Malaria elimination efforts in Peren district, Nagaland

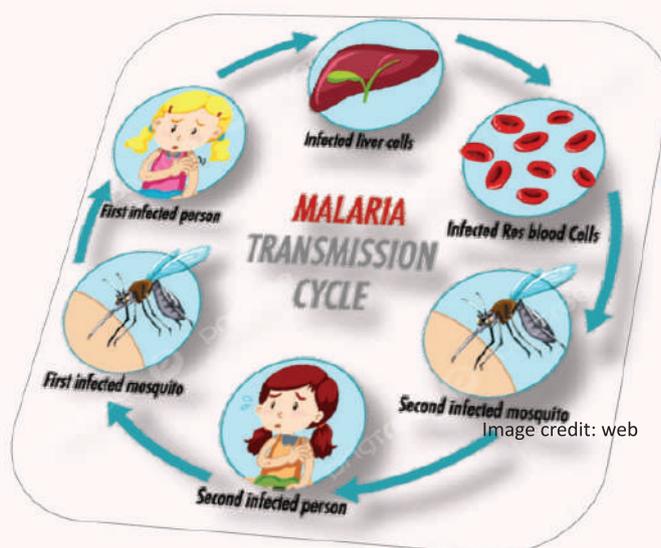
By Johnson Gangmei

Nagaland has made remarkable progress in reducing malaria cases, with Peren district nearing elimination due to targeted interventions. Malaria Elimination Program in Peren district of Nagaland (MEPPN), launched by AIDA in June 2024, further supports this goal through community-based sanitation improvements and education, aiming for a malaria-free district by 2026.

Malaria remains a significant public health challenge in India, particularly in the north-eastern states. The region's dense forests, heavy rainfall, and humid climate create ideal conditions for mosquito breeding, contributing to the persistent threat of the disease. Elimination efforts are therefore crucial, not only for the well-being of local communities but also for India's broader goal of eradicating malaria by 2030.

Malaria was once endemic in Nagaland, including the Peren district. However, dedicated interventions have led to a substantial decline in cases over the years.

In 2009, Nagaland reported 2,893 cases of *P. falciparum* and 5,596 cases of *P. vivax*.



By 2022, these numbers had decreased dramatically to just two cases of *P. falciparum* and three cases of *P. vivax*. This progress is the result of concerted efforts, including awareness campaigns, cleanliness drives, and the



distribution of long-lasting insecticidal nets. Nagaland's progress in malaria control represents a significant step towards India's 2030 elimination goal.

Peren district has mirrored this positive trend, experiencing a significant reduction in malaria cases. From thousands of cases in 2009, the district has moved close to elimination by 2022.

This achievement is attributed to targeted interventions, including awareness campaigns and focused village-level eradication strategies.

While progress is substantial, challenges remain, particularly in remote areas where malaria transmission persists. The district is now focused on achieving malaria-free status by 2026, aligning with India's national goal of zero malaria cases by 2030.

The "Malaria Elimination Program in Peren district of Nagaland" (MEPPN), an initiative by AIDA, contributes to these efforts. Launched in June 2024, MEPPN aims to improve sanitation and reduce mosquito breeding sites through

practical measures and community education on hygiene and disease prevention.

The program's strategy is designed for long-term impact, fostering a culture of cleanliness and promoting sustainable health practices. This includes addressing the social determinants of health, such as access to clean water and effective waste management, which play a crucial role in malaria transmission.



Community involvement and localized strategies

The MEPPN emphasizes practical, community-based solutions specific to the needs of the two project villages : Beisumppuikam and Jalukie Zangdi. The program prioritizes prevention and addresses the root causes of malaria through sanitation improvements, vector control, and community education. This localized approach recognizes that effective malaria elimination requires active participation from the community, ensuring that interventions are both relevant and sustainable.

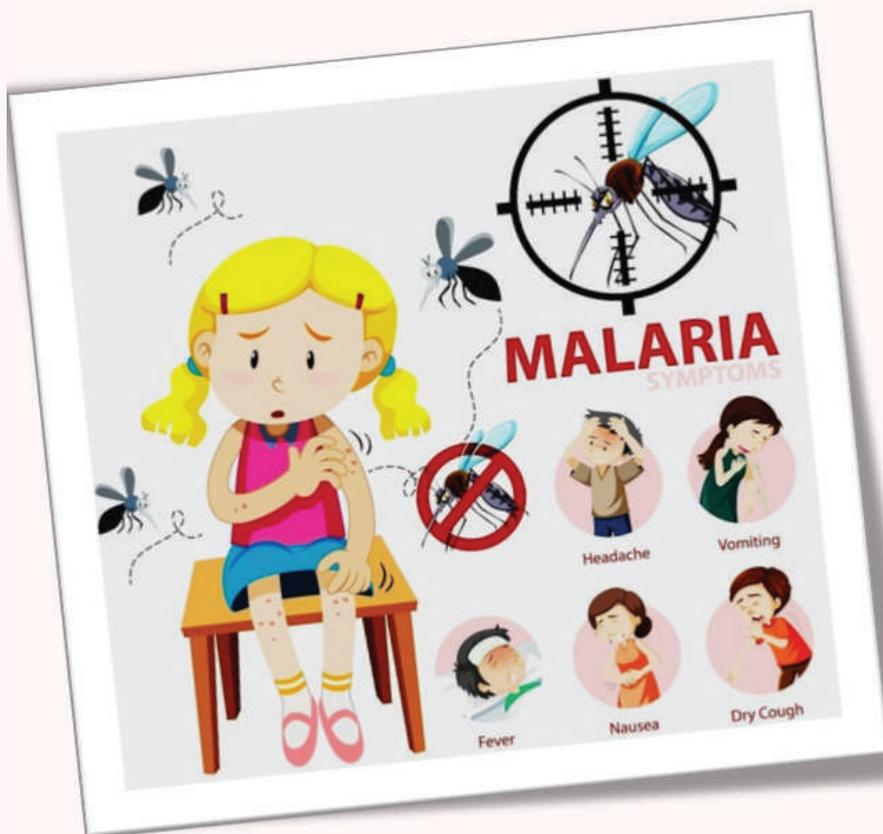
Practical Solutions for long-term impact

MEPPN, launched in June 2024, aims to improve sanitation and reduce mosquito breeding sites by implementing practical measures and educating villagers about hygiene and disease prevention.

The program's strategy emphasizes a lasting impact by fostering a culture of cleanliness and promoting sustainable health practices. This includes addressing the social determinants of health, such as access to clean water and effective waste management, which are critical in malaria transmission.

The program has introduced tangible improvements, such as the construction of ten durable waste-bins, strategically placed to enhance waste management

in both villages. These waste-bins help reduce unsanitary conditions that contribute to mosquito breeding. Additionally, the distribution of 90 mosquito repellents in Beisumppuikam provides residents with essential tools for personal protection against mosquito bites. These practical measures aim to reduce disease-carrying vectors and improve overall sanitation, contributing to a healthier environment.



Community Participation and Ownership

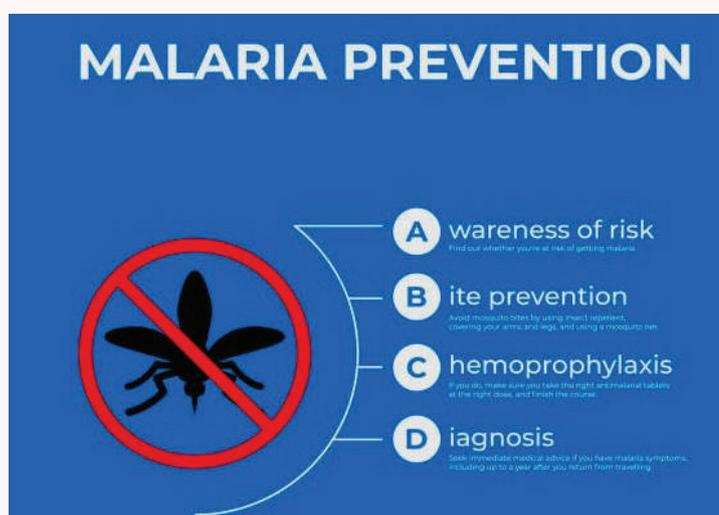
Residents of the project villages have actively participated in the program, demonstrating a strong commitment to adopting new waste management practices and embracing the importance of cleanliness. This community involvement is crucial for the program's long-term sustainability, as it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents. By empowering villages to take control of their health and environment, the program is building a foundation for lasting change.

Collaborative action

The program's strength is rooted in collaborative action, involving active participation from villagers, local leaders, and AIDA staff. Ongoing efforts include continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions. MEPPN demonstrates that community-driven initiatives can lead to tangible results.

Looking Ahead

The program's strength is rooted in collaborative action, involving active participation from villagers, local leaders, and AIDA staff. Ongoing efforts include continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions. MEPPN demonstrates that community-driven initiatives can lead to tangible results.



The Malaria Elimination Program in Peren is making steady progress through practical interventions and community engagement. By addressing the root causes of malaria and promoting sustainable hygiene practices, the program is working towards a healthier future for the villages involved. The focus remains on consistent effort, collaborative action, and continuous improvement.

The lessons learned from this program can serve as a model for other communities in Nagaland and beyond, demonstrating that sustainable progress is possible through practical solutions and community empowerment.



Mr. Johnson Gangmei is MEPPN Program Facilitator

AIDA-CFD hosts 3rd annual convention

AIDA-Child Friendly Dimapur hosted its 3rd Annual Convention on 12th April 2025 at Don Bosco Hr. Sec. School from 10 am through 4 pm. Under the theme “**Voice for every child: Inclusion, Protection and Participation,**” the event celebrated AIDA's progress since 2021 in making Dimapur a child-friendly city and drew around 550 participants, including Child Rights Club members, facilitators, and community leaders.

The convention featured key addresses from Col. Kartik Thapa, VSM, Commandant of the 22nd Assam Rifles, Medziphema; Shri. Nikito Zhimomi, District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), Chumoukedima; and Mrs. Neisavinuo Mor, Headmistress of Footprint Academy, Dimapur. They underscored the collective responsibility required for child protection and praised AIDA's initiatives



Dignitaries with a group of children at CFD 3rd Annual Convention

Ms. Garrol Lotha, Project Coordinator, shared project highlights through an insightful video presentation. Mr. Rhonbemo Lotha enlightened the gathering with his experiences as a Child Rights Facilitator. Adding vibrancy to the event, different groups of children enthralled the audience with cultural presentations, powerfully amplifying the call for empowering children's voices.

Earlier, Rev. Fr. Dr. Roy George, Executive Director of AIDA, welcomed the gathering and felicitated the dignitaries. The convention concluded with a vote of thanks by Ms. Mechietonü Agnes, CFD's Civil Society Mobilization Officer, reinforcing the spirit of collaboration towards ensuring every child's right to thrive. ■

Project WINGS takes flight in Assam

April 2025 marked the launch of the WINGS (Waste-Insect Nexus for Growth and Sustainability) project with the setting up of a pilot facility at Don Bosco Tech, Rangajan, Assam.

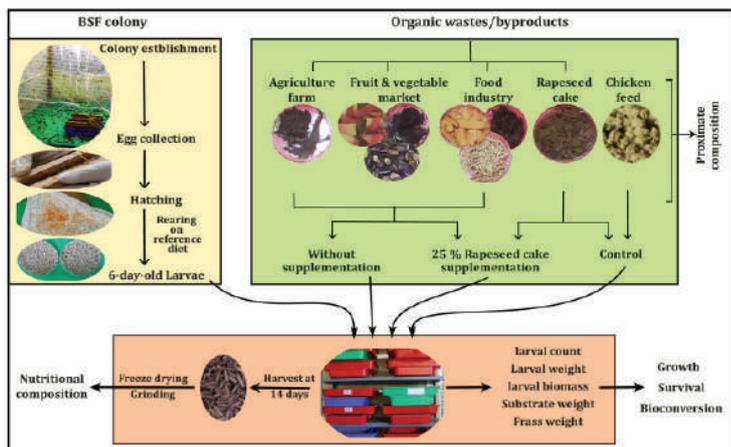


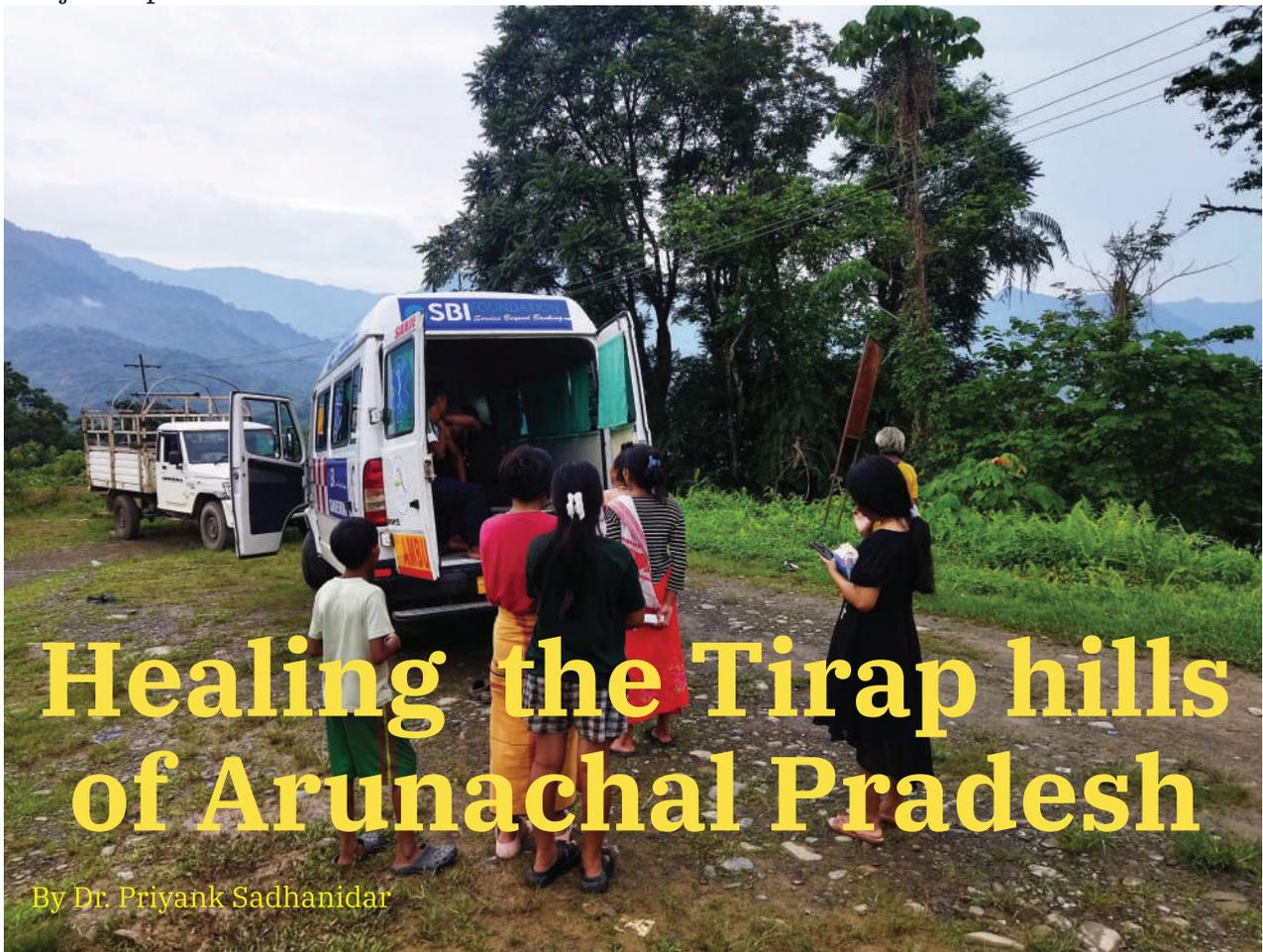
Image from the web

This innovative project harnesses the Black Soldier Fly (BSF) to convert organic waste into high-protein animal feed and organic compost. With the first batch of flies now breeding successfully, WINGS is actively demonstrating a scalable solution to rural waste management.

Aimed at promoting green micro-enterprises, especially among women and youth, the project targets training 150 individuals and processing 150 tons of waste while replacing 20 tons of fishmeal.

Six BSF training centres will soon be operational across Dimapur Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

By turning waste into income and improving sanitation, WINGS is building a sustainable and resilient future for rural communities. ■



Healing the Tirap hills of Arunachal Pradesh

By Dr. Priyank Sadhanidar

SBI Sanjeevani-Clinic on Wheels team on a daily routine trip to villages / photo: S Nath

Far in the mountains of Arunachal Pradesh's eastern border lies Tirap district, a place as scenic in its natural landscape as it is intricate in its socio-economic issues. Isolated, hilly, and densely forested, Tirap is bordered by Myanmar to the east and inhabited by indigenous peoples such as the



The program made Lab tests accessible for the patients of the area / photo: P Sadhanidar

its natural landscape as it is intricate in its socio-economic issues. Isolated, hilly, and densely forested, Tirap is bordered by Myanmar to the east and inhabited by indigenous peoples such as the

A land of contrasts

Tirap district is marked by hilly landscapes, dense forest cover, and heavy rainfall that often cuts off villages for days during the monsoon.

The economy is primarily agrarian—livelihoods are based on jhum (shifting) cultivation, bamboo handicrafts, and subsistence agriculture.

Infrastructure is still developing; many villages have limited electricity, no internet, and are accessible only by foot or off-road vehicles.

Life is uncomplicated but profoundly cultural. The people are close-knit, led by traditional village councils and centuries-



OPD at Soha village of about 150 households / photo: S Nath

old practices. Yet, the extreme remoteness frequently results in limited or no modern healthcare access. Traditional medicine is most people's resort, or visiting private hospitals in Assam—luxuries many cannot afford in time or cost.

SBI Sanjeevani bringing care where it's needed the most

Launched in 2022 as part of the SBI Foundation's vision for **inclusive development**, **SBI Sanjeevani** is a mobile medical initiative aimed at taking healthcare to India's most remote areas. In Tirap, the initiative has been a lifeline, implemented by the ANMA Integrated Development Association (AIDA), Dimapur.

As the project's medical officer, my team and I travel across valleys and over ridges in a well-equipped Mobile Medical Unit. Our field unit consists of diagnostic equipment, medications, consultations, and above all—a caring team of a doctor, a nurse, a lab technicians, and a Program Coordinator.



Since inception in Tirap, we have:

- Toured 45 villages in the district.
- Provided over 26,000 patient consultations.
- Given health awareness talks to almost 26,000 residents on various topics.

Doctor treats Titting Shin, in his house, Lamlo village / photo: S Nath

- Served more than 3,400 Swachh Bharat Abhiyan beneficiaries.
- Reached around 2,200 beneficiaries through Specialized Health Camps.
- Treated a variety of conditions, ranging from gastroenteritis, fungal infections, and respiratory diseases, to more long-term diseases like hypertension and diabetes that were frequently undiagnosed in such areas.
- We also handle emergency cases like accidents and lacerated injuries in their work areas.
- Organized nutrition, health, and maternal health drives.



Swachh Bharat Abhiyan program conducted in Raho village of about 70 households / photo: W Wangsu

Voices from the field

One case that sticks in my memory is that of Jigo Garh, a 25-year-old male residing in New Doidam. He came to us with a lacerated injury on his occipital head, sustained when a bamboo fell on him in the field.



From a Specialized Health Camp conducted in Turet village of 88 households / photo: B Murmu

He reached us on December 16, 2024, three days after his injury, with pus around the wound. He hadn't been able to visit a hospital due to his poor economic conditions and status as a daily wage worker. Our team thoroughly cleaned the wound and stitched the area under all aseptic and antiseptic conditions.

Such stories are common here. Every village presents a new challenge and vast appreciation. It strengthens our conviction that every kilometer we cover brings us one step closer to healing a community.

Challenges on the road to health

Our Tirap initiative is highly fulfilling, though it comes with its share of setbacks:

- **Geographical Barriers:** Several villages are off-limits during the rains. Landslides and flooded bridges consistently disrupt our timetables
- **Lack of Awareness:** Superstitions and a deep-rooted reliance on traditional medicine sometimes make people hesitant to seek modern treatment.
- **Resource Scarcity:** Limited connectivity hampers our Outpatient Department (OPD) services, and medical supplies must be managed meticulously due to difficult resupply logistics.
- **Security Concerns:** Some areas near the international border are considered sensitive zones, requiring us to work closely with local administration for safe passage.
- **Frequent Power Cuts:** These hinder our communication systems, making it difficult to share important announcements and updates.



Program dispensed medicines free of cost to OPD patients / Makat village / photo: S Nath

- **Wildlife Encounters:** Villages located near Dihing Patkai National Park face disruptions in timely medical service delivery due to frequent visits by wild elephants. These elephants often enter residential areas, creating safety concerns and obstructing travel routes for the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU).



OPD patients at Turet village / photo: B Murmu

A closing note

As I gaze out across the hills of Tirap shrouded in mist, I'm reminded every day of the great privilege we have—and the responsibility to serve. AIDA-SBI Sanjeevani is not just a project; it's a promise. A promise that no matter how remote the corners of our nation, every life is precious, and every individual should have the right to health and hope.

Together, with sustained support and public trust, we hope to heal, educate, and empower—one village, one patient, one heartbeat at a time. ■



Dr. Priyank Sadhanidar is Medical Officer at AIDA-SBI Sanjeevani Project – Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh



By Sebi Chacko

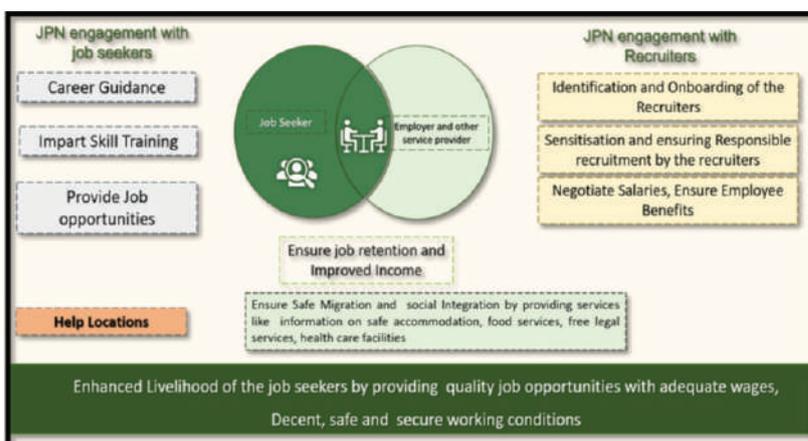
Inaugural session of AIDA Job fair October 5th 2024 / photo: J Mangkung

The transition from education to employment remains a critical and often daunting phase for young individuals. This transition is further complicated in north-east India by geographic isolation, economic disparity, and limited employment infrastructure. From April 2024 to March 2025, the AIDA–Don Bosco Job Placement Network (AIDA-DBJPN) rose to this challenge by engaging over 3,000 youth across Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh.

Through various interventions, including career counseling, job fairs, training programs, and digital outreach, the program formally registered 1,703 job seekers—980 male and 723 female—indicating a commendable stride toward gender inclusivity.

Program Overview

The AIDA–DBJPN, based in Dimapur, Nagaland, empowers marginalized and underserved youth by facilitating access to employment and skill development opportunities.



Launched in October 2019 under the Province Development Office (PDO), it provides career assessments, training, counseling, and job search support.

Led by Rev. Dr. Fr. Roy George SDB, the initiative connects rural and migrant youth to credible job avenues in both public and private sectors. With tools like the 'Jobs DBI' mobile app and web portal, the program extends its reach to remote areas, fostering sustainable livelihoods and promoting social inclusion.

Outreach and Registration

AIDA–JPN began the year with proactive outreach campaigns targeting deserving youth across Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh. Through partnerships with educational institutions, government departments, and civil society organizations, the program succeeded in registering



Employability session at AIDA conference hall / photo: S Chacko

1,703 job seekers (980 male, 723 female). The total number of youth engaged—both directly and indirectly—exceeded 3,000.

Career counseling was offered through multiple channels including email, WhatsApp, telephonic conversations, and in-person sessions. Each engagement was personalized, helping young individuals navigate decisions related to education, job searching, and career goals with greater confidence.

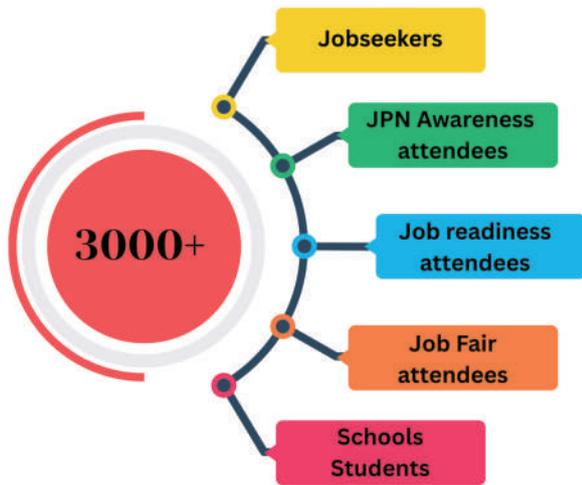
Awareness Programs and Career Guidance



Career Guidance session at DBHSS Dimapur / photo: J Mangkung

The Network placed strong emphasis on spreading awareness about employment, safe migration, and career planning. Programs were conducted online and offline in collaboration with schools, colleges, and the Employment Exchange Department in Dimapur.

Special sessions for students in Classes 8 to 10 introduced them to career pathways, goal setting, and academic alignment. AI-based career assessment tools helped personalize guidance.



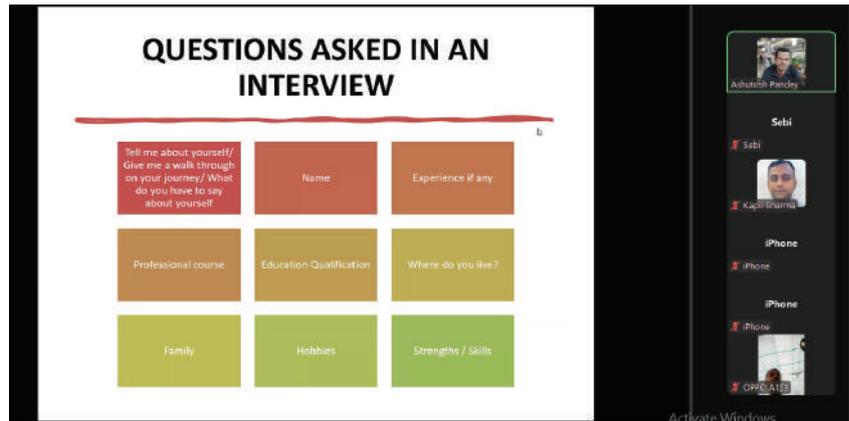
In total, 1,607 youth—700 from schools and 907 from colleges—benefited from these sessions. These sessions covered:

- SMART goal setting
- Mind mapping
- Personalized career planning using AI tools
- Awareness of local job markets.

Programs were delivered in classrooms, virtually via Google Meet, and individually before job fairs or interviews.

Building Job Readiness

Job readiness training formed a core component of the year’s initiatives. Tailored to enhance employability, these sessions helped participants with: *Resume and CV writing Interview preparation Communication and



Online Employability Skilling session by Macquarie / photo: J Mangkung

workplace etiquette Understanding company policies Clarifying job roles aligned to skills.



Candidates attending group interview during job fair / Photo: J Mangkung

A total of 12 structured training programs reached 1,186 candidates (630 male and 556 female). Mass readiness sessions were also organized during job fairs in Kohima and Dimapur, reaching over 900 freshers. Topics covered included: Job sustainability and workplace culture Government job preparation Confidence building and personality development Soft skill enhancement Analysis of job market trends

Employer Engagement and Job Fair Collaborations

Given the limited industrial presence in Northeast India, AIDA–DBJPN strategically partnered with over 30 recruiters across the country. These collaborations led to two major job fairs in Nagaland, offering over 1,000 openings across various sectors. Candidates could attend multiple interviews, significantly enhancing their employment prospects while gaining firsthand exposure to recruitment standards.



Candidates registering for job interviews / Photo: J Mangkung

At one event, the District Employment Officer of Dimapur highlighted the urgency of such initiatives, noting that *“over 72,000 unemployed youths are registered and still awaiting opportunities.”*

Further extending its reach, the program co-hosted an HR Summit in Guwahati with Bosco Reach Out in December and was invited to another by the Reddy’s Foundation in February 2025.



HR Meeting at Bosco Reach Out Guwahati /Photo: Bhirkang

Coordinator from AIDA–DBJPN also supported by volunteering the BRO-led job fair in Guwahati, aiding over 200 additional job seekers.



Shri Moatoshi Longkumer MLA, DMP II, addressing job fair attendees / Photo: J Mangkung

The AIDA–Don Bosco Job Placement and Career Guidance Program continues to be a beacon of hope for youth navigating the complex transition from school to the workplace. With its deep regional engagement, innovative use of technology, and people-centric approach, the program is not only building bridges to employment but also shaping a generation of informed, empowered, and resilient young individuals in Northeast India. ■

Highlights

- 3,000+ youth** reached through various outreach activities.
- 1,700+ job seekers** registered on our platform - including 723 women and 980 men.
- 1,607 students participated** in schools-colleges career guidance sessions
- 1,186 potential job seekers** enrolled in skill development training.
- 30+ companies** collaborated with, generating over 1,000 job openings.
- 1,000+ candidates** connected to job opportunities through job fairs and placement drives, with
- 800+ attending** online/offline drives.
- 100+ post-placement** follow-ups to provide on-going support



Sebi Chacko is Coordinator at Don Bosco Job Placement Network

My experience at social work

By Mechietonu Agnes Kiso

Coming from a corporate HR background, Agnes never envisioned a career in social work. Her journey with AIDA as Civil Society Mobilization Officer of the Child Friendly Dimapur project unexpectedly changed her perspective, revealing a deep sense of purpose and fulfilment in serving society.



Mechietonu Agnes Kiso

Coming from a management background, I never imagined myself transitioning into the field of social work. Prior to joining AIDA, I worked as a Senior HR Executive for nearly five years. Shifting from the corporate world to the development sector was something I had never considered.

However, looking back to my college days, I do recall once thinking about teaching basic reading and writing skills to adults in my community through evening classes. Unfortunately, it remained just a fleeting thought and was never acted upon.

Like many people, I had a limited understanding of social work. I believed that social workers were primarily social justice advocates, involved in fighting for equity, human rights, and systemic change. I also thought that social workers and social activists were essentially the same. I was unaware of the diverse roles, extensive commitment, and hard work that the field demands. My time at AIDA has completely reshaped that perspective.

I now have deep admiration for social workers, including AIDA staff and colleagues, who tirelessly work for the betterment of society, often putting their personal challenges aside.



Mechietonu Agnes Kiso with CFD team mates.

My journey to AIDA feels deeply meaningful and guided; it seems like everything came together at the perfect moment. The transition from my previous job to joining AIDA happened so smoothly that it felt like more than coincidence.

I had a strong feeling that this route was intended for me and was happening for a reason.

I remain ever grateful to our Executive Director, Rev. Fr. Dr. Roy George, who placed his trust in me and appointed me as the Civil Society Mobilization Officer for the Child Friendly Dimapur project, despite my lack of prior experience in social work.

The first few months in the project were particularly challenging.

Coming from a business management background, the concept of "projects" was always associated with business plans, market survey and studies, etc.



Agnes with some members of Youth & Civil Society Organization/ photo: G Lotha

I had little understanding of what a social project involved. However, the orientation and training provided by the organization played a significant role in bridging this knowledge gap. I gradually became familiar with social work terminologies and came to appreciate the vital role that documentation and reporting play—not only for funders but also for future reference and impact assessment.

The project I am currently involved in, Child Friendly Dimapur, aims to create inclusive, safe, and rights-based urban environments for children in Dimapur and Chümoukedima municipalities. It aligns with UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities Initiative and seeks to empower children while engaging civil society in promoting child rights and overall well-being of children. The project includes child-led awareness campaigns, capacity building, and collaborative efforts with community leaders, civil society groups, and other stakeholders to encourage sustainable and child-friendly urban development.



Agnes with Civil Society Members

Through this project, especially by working closely with children and various communities, I have developed valuable interpersonal skills. It has broadened my understanding of children's rights, something I previously had little knowledge about.

One of the most significant personal takeaways has been the improvement in my communication skills. The trust placed in me by the organization—particularly by our Executive Director—has provided me with multiple opportunities to grow. I have been given additional duties and have attended various workshops, which exposed me to individuals from across different states who share a common vision of uplifting society

I am also deeply thankful to my team and other AIDA staff members, from whom I have learned countless values such as love, patience, commitment, compassion and selflessness—qualities that are essential to being a true social worker. These experiences would not have been possible had I not been a part of AIDA.

Professionally and personally, joining AIDA has been a journey of discovery. It has opened up a whole new world for me—one filled with purpose, growth, and a deeper sense of fulfilment. I have grown to new heights, and for that, I am truly grateful.



Mechietonu Agnes Kiso

Looking back, my journey into the field of social work has been both unexpected and profoundly rewarding. What began as a leap of faith has become a life-changing experience that has reshaped my values, perspectives, and aspirations. Being part of AIDA and contributing to the Child Friendly Dimapur project has not only helped me grow professionally but has also instilled in me a deeper sense of purpose and compassion. I now understand that social work is not just a profession—it's a calling to serve, uplift, and stand in solidarity with those in need. I am truly humbled and grateful to be part of this noble mission. ■

Learning Social Work in the heart of the community

By Gaisanglung Kamei



Gaisanglung Kamei

Beyond textbooks and theories, this article chronicles details social worker Seng Kamei's unexpected immersion into real-world challenges, revealing how true learning often happens far outside the classrooms

As soon as I completed my Master's in Social Work, I was very enthusiastic about working in a field related to Social Entrepreneurship. I envisioned developing new ideas, fostering innovation, and creating income-generating programs for vulnerable populations. I always sought out places where I could venture in to explore my talents and interests.

However, I never anticipated working for AIDA on their 'Child Friendly Dimapur' project, taking on the role of Civil Society Mobilization Officer. My responsibilities included educating and raising awareness about children's rights.

It was truly challenging to balance the lessons learned in the classroom with real-life experiences. Many times, I found myself thinking there was a drastic difference between social work theory and social work in a real-world scenario. Being assigned responsibilities such as meeting people, educating them on child rights, and tracking targets always hit me hard. It was a challenge to balance activities with their actual impact. Yet, as I gradually immersed myself in what real social work truly looks like, I realized that to be a social worker, you don't always need the exact situations or conditions cited in books

Throughout my experience as a social worker, I've practically applied many key aspects of the profession. For example, I've worked with individuals, families, and groups, educating them on child rights, enhancing their capacities, and engaging in social action to promote these rights.



Gaisanglung Kamei at a Children Creative Activity

I've also practiced social work in a community setting where my colleagues and I actively formed adults into caregivers, organized sessions, workshops, creative activities, and campaigns on child rights in the city.

There were times I felt I had landed in the wrong place because the lessons and concepts I learned long ago didn't seem to align with the practical realities. However, through this process, I understood that there are numerous ways I've practiced social work in its true sense.



Gaisanglung Kamei at a session for Caring Community Members

I began to enhance my skills as a social worker, which I once learned in the classroom, and they are now evolving in my personal behaviour and conduct. I've become more empathetic towards people, giving my best to understand their perspectives. I've also improved communication skills; over the years,

I've seen the shy person in me transform into a confident and vocal young man enthusiastically working towards child rights promotion. I've also learned the skill of being more organized in both my personal and professional life.

"Learning begins at birth and ends in the tomb," as the proverb goes, has become very clear to me in my continuous quest to build Child Friendly Cities. This endeavor has presented me with many chances to develop both professionally and personally. I've learned from this experience that learning never ends with formal schooling; it continues every day as we encounter obstacles, use different approaches, and aim for different results.

Time management is among the most important things that I've learned. In a field where timely delivery of results and efficient execution are critical, learning time management has been crucial. It has helped me fulfill deadlines, strike a balance between conflicting goals, and maintain a high level of quality in our work. This ability has turned out to be essential to our success.



Session with CRC Leaders

Regular mentoring has been another important component of my learning process. The monthly review meetings our organization regularly holds have provided a useful forum for reflection and feedback.



Gaisanglung Kamei at session for Civil Society Members

In addition to monitoring our progress, these sessions help in recognizing obstacles, refining our tactics, and promoting an environment of accountability and ongoing development.

Moreover, my expertise and viewpoint have been substantially expanded by exposure visits and capacity-building training initiatives. Exchanging ideas, learning from other cities and organizations, and understanding various forms of Child Friendly urban design have led to more successful and efficient program implementation. Achieving sustained results requires capacity building, intelligent time management, guided mentoring, and ongoing learning. These elements have empowered me to work more carefully, react more skilfully, and contribute to create cities that genuinely prioritize every child's rights and well-being. ■

Types of volunteering: a guide for those starting to volunteer

By Theresa OH Youngsoo

This first part of a two-part article introduces a categorized guide to volunteering for beginners. It outlines five distinct types of volunteering based on roles, motivations, and engagement.

Many people see volunteering simply as doing good deeds, so they assume they can start anytime. However, it's not always that simple. It's best to start volunteering in a way that you enjoy and that aligns with your interest, skills, and personality, as your first experience can shape your future involvement. Therefore, understanding the various types of volunteering will help you decide which volunteering to start with. Volunteering can be categorized from different perspectives, such as roles and motivations, participation structures, and ways of engagement. Surely, also issue areas.

In 1997, the UN declared 2001 the International Year of Volunteers, encouraging citizens in the world to participate to increase promotion, recognition, facilitation and networking of voluntary action worldwide.[1] At that time, volunteering was categorized based on roles and motivations into four types: Mutual Aid, Service to Others, Campaigning and Advocacy, and Participation in Self-Governance. Based on this understanding and experiences of volunteering in Korea, I would like to suggest the following five categories as different types of volunteering.



[1] <https://www.unv.org/publications/unga-resolution-5217-declaration-2001-international-year-volunteers>

1. Mutual aid/Self-help. This refers to traditional types of volunteering, where individuals or groups facing similar challenges support one another. This type of volunteering was active in countries before industrialization. This type of volunteering is rooted in a shared understanding of their challenges. They know what is needed and provide the necessary assistance to each other.

2. Service to others/Helping others commonly refers to assisting those in need, also known as human services. This includes aiding minorities or vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the disabled, children in poverty, immigrants, the homeless and so on. This type of volunteering is mostly organized by NPOs, social welfare institutions, etc. and found in industrialized countries.



3. Civic Participation involves engaging in activities to address various social issues. Civic participation is more prevalent in countries with strong civic engagement. It includes engaging in activities to help solve various social issues such as human rights, peace, culture, the environment, and safety, as well as community services, where people can

develop their leadership skills and sense of responsibility as good citizens.

4. Advocacy and campaigns involve raising voices regarding social issues. This type of volunteering is primarily carried out by NPOs and other voluntary organizations to promote social justice, often by challenging vested interests or advocating for minority groups and social issues.

5. Participation and Self-governance refer to being involved in community decision-making and governance. This type of volunteering is one of the most developed types and it requires strong motivation and a strong sense of responsibility as a member of the community.

While volunteering can be classified as above, the beneficiaries and key social issues evolve over time. The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted perspectives.

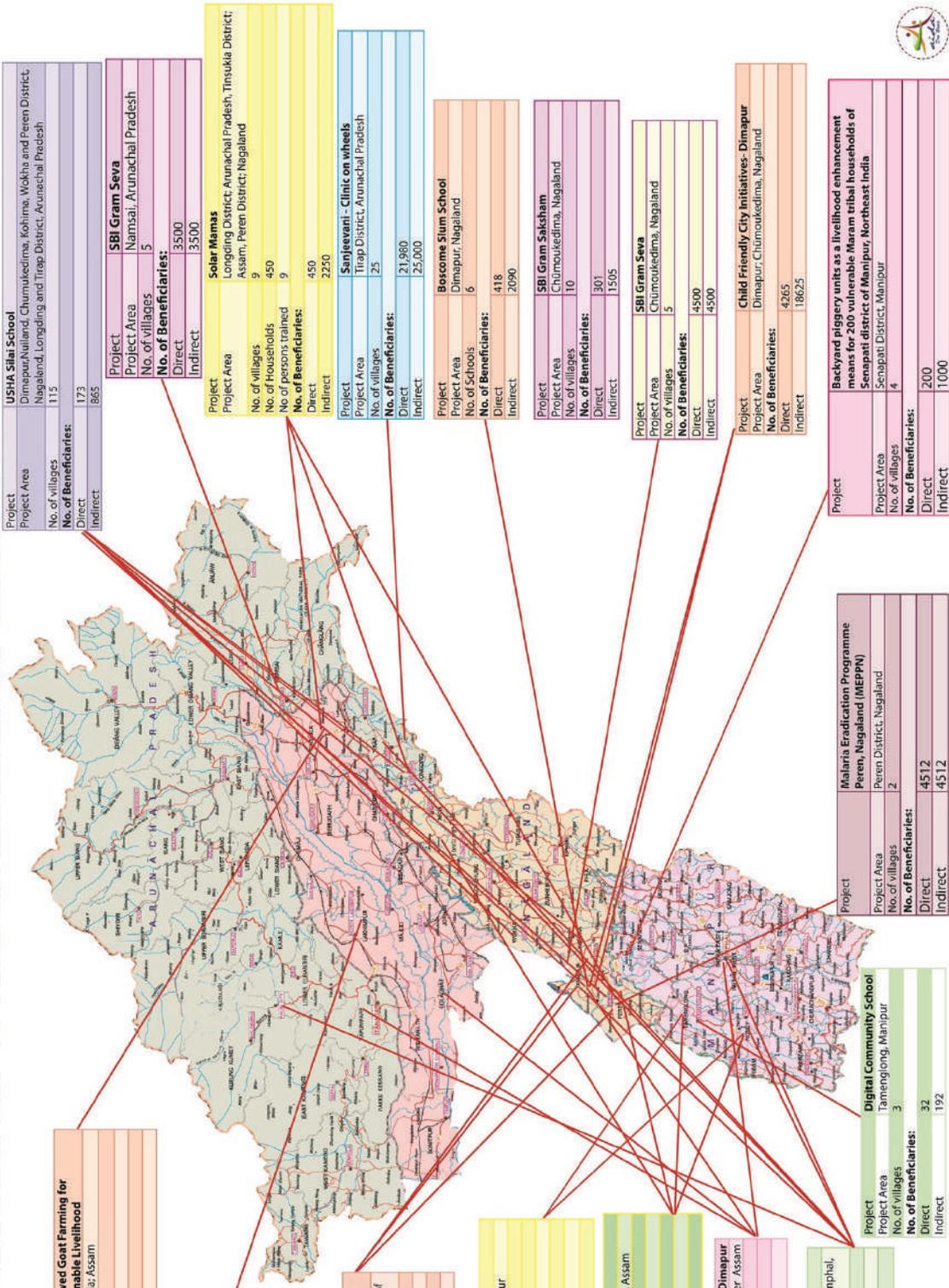
Categories	Motivation & Role	Examples
1. Mutual aid/self help	Helping each other	Disaster relief within the community, exchange of work, a recovery group for former alcoholics, etc
2. Service to others	Helping others in needs	Meal delivery, hospital accompaniment, mentoring, tutoring etc.
3. Civic participation	Solving social problems	Planting trees, cleanup cultural heritages, volunteer staffs of NGOs, building community libraries
4. Campaign and advocacy	Calling for social change	Environmental campaign, advocacy on the disabled, the street parade for demonstration, etc.
5. Participation and self governance	Strengthening community	Committee member of the village water and sanitation project, elected local representatives, board member of NGOs, etc.

The perspectives on minorities and vulnerable groups have been changing. Before the pandemic, those who were poor and uneducated were considered the ones in need of help. Now, people who are lonely, socially isolated, or digitally excluded due to the digital divide are also seen as needing support. Environmental issues, especially the climate crisis have become global challenges that require collective action not only from individual nations but also from the world as a whole. ■



Theresa OH Youngsoo is Executive Director, Korea Federation of Volunteer Centers, Seoul, South Korea

AIDA'S PROGRAMME AREAS



Project	Improved Goat Farming for Sustainable Livelihood
Project Area	Tinsukia, Assam
No. of Villages	9
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	100
Indirect	500

Project	Integrated Development of Rural Communities of Lakhimpur District (IDRCL)
Project Area	Lakhimpur District, Assam
N. of Villages	25
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	8250
Indirect	41250

Project	Action for Protection of Environment in Northeast India Region (APENIR)
Project Area	Dimapur, Chumoukedima, Kohima, Peren, Nisaland Districts of Nagaland
No. of Eco Clubs	200
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	10000
Indirect	50000

Project	Solar Mamas
Project Area	Tamenglong and Moiny Districts, Manipur
No. of Villages	15
No. of Households	750
No. of persons trained	15
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	15
Indirect	3750

Project	Solar Sakhi
Project Area	Assam
No. of Villages	36
No. of persons trained	36
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	36
Indirect	180

Project	AIDA Don Bosco Job Placement Network, Dimapur
Project Area	Assam
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	5000
Indirect	20000

Project	Fratelli Dimenticati
Project Area	Borduria, Mintong, Palin, Imphal, Khoupum, Dimapur
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	1079
Indirect	4316

Project	Digital Community School
Project Area	Tamenglong, Manipur
No. of Villages	3
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	32
Indirect	192

Project	Malaria Eradication Programme Peren, Nagaland (MEPPN)
Project Area	Peren District, Nagaland
No. of Villages	2
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4512
Indirect	4512

Project	Backyard piggery units as a livelihood enhancement means for 200 vulnerable Maram tribal households of Senapati district of Manipur, Northeast India
Project Area	Senapati District, Manipur
No. of Villages	4
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	200
Indirect	1000

Project	USHA Silai School
Project Area	Dimapur, Nuland, Chumoukedima, Kohima, Wokha and Peren District, Nagaland, Longding and Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh
No. of Villages	115
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	173
Indirect	865

Project	SBI Gram Seva
Project Area	Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh
No. of Villages	5
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	3500
Indirect	3500

Project	Solar Mamas
Project Area	Longing District, Arunachal Pradesh, Tinsukia District; Assam, Peren District; Nagaland
No. of Villages	9
No. of Households	450
No. of persons trained	9
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	450
Indirect	2250

Project	Sanjeevani - Clinic on wheels
Project Area	Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh
No. of Villages	25
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	21980
Indirect	25000

Project	Boscome Slum School
Project Area	Dimapur, Nagaland
No. of Schools	6
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	418
Indirect	2090

Project	SBI Gram Saksham
Project Area	Chumoukedima, Nagaland
No. of Villages	10
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	301
Indirect	1505

Project	SBI Gram Seva
Project Area	Chumoukedima, Nagaland
No. of Villages	5
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4500
Indirect	4500

Project	Child Friendly City Initiatives- Dimapur
Project Area	Dimapur, Chumoukedima, Nagaland
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4265
Indirect	18625





Training facilities available at AIDA

Type of facility	Details	Person capacity	Food available
Conference hall	A/C, LCD, PA system	50	Yes
Conference hall	Non-A/C, LCD, PA system	50	
Training hall	A/C, LCD, PA system	100	
Training hall	Non-A/C, LCD, PA system	100	
Guest rooms	A/C	2	
Guest rooms	Non A/C	4	
Dormitory	Non A/C	80	

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