

The AIDA nicle

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

WOMEN WITH SEWING MACHINES CUT A NEW PATH IN THE HILLS



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

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Cover photo: Habitats in the hills (Photo: Lawrence Guria)

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Random thoughts

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

— Mahatma Gandhi

A note from the editor



Dear friend,

Welcome to the 7th issue of AIDA Chronicle!

In this edition, we feature stories from four initiatives: Silai Schools in rural Arunachal and Nagaland, WINGS with its innovative bio-waste management for better livelihoods, BOSCOME school for children of migrant families in Dimapur, and the Skilling Youth in Sports for Holistic Development , also in Dimapur.

We also introduce you to the Tai Khamti community of Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, in “Communities AIDA Works With” section. From Manipur, the coordinator of the AIDA-Solar project shares his experiences in community development. Under “Reflections,” we bring you the concluding part of OH Youngsoo’s two-part article offering valuable guidelines for aspiring volunteers.

As always, our Executive Director opens this issue with a warm message, inviting you to journey deeper into AIDA’s work.

We hope this issue informs, inspires, and strengthens your connection with us.

Warm regards,

J Matthew

Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Warm greetings from AIDA!

This quarter's Chronicle celebrates the spirit of innovation, resilience, and transformation that defines our work with communities across Northeast India. Each story reflects how compassion and creativity, guided by purpose, can lead to sustainable change.

At Don Bosco Rangajan, the **WINGS Project (Waste and Insect Nexus for Growth and Sustainability)** shows how science can serve both people and the planet. What began with just 30 grams of Black Soldier Fly eggs has evolved into a thriving model of circular economy — converting waste into resources, livelihoods, and learning.

At **BOSCOME School**, education opens doors for children once on the margins of society. Here, learning nurtures confidence, creativity, and compassion, shaping future change makers.

Through the **AIDA-USHA Silai Schools**, women in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland are stitching new paths of dignity and enterprise. Their work stands as a symbol of empowerment and economic self-reliance.

The **Tai Khampti community of Namsai** reminds us that development must go hand in hand with cultural preservation. Their traditions continue to inspire AIDA's work in sustainable rural growth under the SBI Gram Seva Program.

The **Skilling Youths in Sports** initiative reflects how discipline and teamwork can transform young lives — nurturing not only athletes but responsible leaders.

Together, these initiatives reaffirm our mission to empower lives, protect the environment, and celebrate human potential with faith, hope, and action.

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

WINGS TURNS WASTE INTO WEALTH

By Amos Ekka

Waste and Insect Nexus for Growth and Sustainability, WINGS, shows how science and community innovation meet. By converting food scraps and farm waste into valuable resources, the project charts a greener path for the future.

Black Soldier Fly farming at DBTech, Rangajan

Photo: A.Ekka

Initiated by AIDA at Don Bosco Tech, Rangajan in April 2025, the **WINGS** (Waste and Insect Nexus for Growth and Sustainability) Project pioneers sustainable waste management through Black Soldier Fly (BSF) farming. Starting with just 30 grams of BSF eggs sourced from Bihar, the project has grown into a model of circular economy innovation, addressing waste disposal challenges while generating valuable protein and fertilizer. Over five months, the team has carefully optimized the BSF lifecycle, converting bio-waste into biomass and collecting critical data to refine the process.

Project inception and setup

The project began with the establishment of a dedicated BSF facility designed to support the insect's complete lifecycle. The initial 30 grams of eggs



The project was set up with a dedicated BSF facility at Don Bosco Tech, Rangajan, Golaghat in April 2025. Photo: A.Ekka

(approximately 900 eggs, at 30 eggs/gram) were incubated under controlled conditions, with temperature maintained between 22–35°C and relative humidity at around 70%. Within a few days, the eggs hatched into larvae, marking the start of production. Rearing units were equipped with ventilation and

ventilation and moisture-control systems to ensure optimal growth. A core team—comprising one full-time member, one part-time member, and a BSF expert—manages the facility.

Larvae Reproduction and Growth

The initial phase focused on rearing 7-Day-Old Larvae (7-DOL), the stage at which BSF larvae achieve peak nutrient absorption and waste-processing efficiency. From July 2025, the SIMBA (SIMplified BSF Approach) model was introduced. This approach is suitable for:

- Beginners exploring BSF waste processing as a side activity or demonstration model.
- Small farms producing BSF larvae as feed for poultry and/or fish but with limited human resources, allocating only a few hours per week to BSF activities.



Harvested BSF larvae are dried using a microwave oven for 6-8 months self-life without using nutritional value.

Photo: A.Ekka



Harvested BSF larvae are dried using a microwave oven for 6-8 months self-life without using nutritional value.

Photo: A.Ekka

Data analysis revealed consistent trends: Monday batches outperformed Thursday batches, with a peak yield of 51,961.8 grams on July 21, attributed to stable environmental conditions and optimized feeding schedules. Through continuous improvements, an average feed conversion ratio of 2.1:1 was achieved—meaning each kilogram of bio-waste produced approximately 476 grams of larvae biomass.

Pupation and Harvesting

As larvae transitioned into pre-pupae, their development was closely monitored. The pre-pupae stage lasted approximately 14 days after 7-DOL, with an average mass of 12–16 grams per 100 individuals.

Pupation rates varied between 55–82%, peaking at 2,867 grams of pupae on July 31. Substrate depth emerged as a critical factor; standardizing it to 15 cm significantly improved consistency. Initially labor-intensive, harvesting efficiency increased by 60% after implementing systematic processes—demonstrating the team’s commitment to innovation.



Larvae were supplied to establish a BSF center at Don Bosco Vocational Training Center, 3rd Mile, Dimapur, Nagaland

Photo: J Mangku

Waste Processing and Community Impact

A key goal of the WINGS Project is bio-waste diversion. We processed diverse waste streams, including pig manure, rice bran, kitchen waste, and vegetable scraps, achieving a 10% reduction in landfill contributions. Beyond environmental benefits, the project created local employment opportunities (two full-time and one part-time position). The frass (insect excrement) generated served as a high-quality organic fertilizer, boosting yields in campus vegetable gardens by 18%.

Young larvae were also supplied to establish a BSF center at Don Bosco Vocational Training Center, 3rd Mile, Dimapur, Nagaland—marking the project’s first step toward replication in other institutions.

Future Vision and Expansion Plans

Building on its success, the project aims to:

a) Scale operations by adding 10 rearing crates (a 40% capacity increase).

Supply larvae to five new facilities in the Dimapur province.

b) Train 150 women and youth in BSF farming techniques.

Provide starter kits to 30 women and youth to establish their own BSF farms.

The WINGS Project demonstrates the potential of sustainable innovation. From modest beginnings with 30 grams of eggs, we have developed a system that effectively manages waste while

while producing protein-rich biomass and organic fertilizer. A major milestone was the establishment of a BSF center at Don Bosco Vocational Training Center, Dimapur—our first step in replicating the model beyond Rangajan.

These achievements reflect a blend of scientific rigor and practical adaptation. Looking ahead, we are excited to expand our impact, harnessing the remarkable capabilities of the Black Soldier Fly to foster a greener future ■



We processed diverse waste streams, including pig manure, rice bran, kitchen waste, and vegetable scraps, achieving a 10% reduction in landfill contributions.

Photo: A.Ekka



Amos Ekka is Coordinator of project WINGS



BOSCOME : A SCHOOL FOR MARGINALIZED DREAMERS

by Jerome Mangkung

Bosome believes in holistic education, provides platforms that allow children to showcase their talents

Photo: J Mangkung

Bosome in Dimapur stands as a ray of hope for children from underprivileged and diverse backgrounds. Established with the vision of providing quality education and comprehensive support to economically challenged families, the school admits children as young as four and nurtures them up to Class V.

More than just an educational institution, Bosome is a community of care and growth. It instils essential values—hygiene, mutual respect, civic responsibility, and environmental stewardship—while also nurturing creativity through art, dance, and music.

For many children, these activities are as life-changing as academics, helping them build confidence and discover their talents.

Humble Beginnings

Bosome School traces its roots to the early 2000s through the vision of Salesian Father K.O. Sebastian, who was deeply moved by the struggles of children in Dimapur's slum communities. He believed that education should never be denied because of poverty, and began by teaching a handful of children in a rented room.

"The day I was admitted, I felt pure joy, especially when I received all my books for free. Bosome may be small, but it gave me big dreams. I've learned English, computers, and painting. I wish I could stay longer."

Shamlao W
Class V student, BOSCOME



BOSCOME stands as a ray of hope for children from underprivileged and diverse backgrounds Photo: J Mangkung

With the support of fellow educators, social workers, and later AIDA and well-wishers, this small initiative grew steadily. What started as a simple effort to reach children left behind has today evolved into two vibrant centres—Kevijau and Signal Angami—that continue to carry forward Father Sebastian’s dream to make education the great equalizer.

“Boscome follows a child-first approach. Teaching here is not only about imparting lessons—it is about serving society. Every student inspires me to keep learning and adapting.”

Mrs. Rena Chanda Paul,
(Teacher at BOSCOME since 2019)

Empowering Young Minds

Boscome primarily serves children from migrant and marginalized families—Bengali, Bihari, Assamese, Manipuri, Oriya, Nepali, Garo, Boro, and others—who

settled in Dimapur in search of work. These families face constant economic pressure, and education is often the first sacrifice.

Here, Boscome steps in as a lifeline. The school not only provides quality teaching but also eases family burdens by supplying food items and study materials. Its inclusive philosophy ensures that every child willing to learn is welcomed, regardless of caste, creed, or background.



BOSCOME stands as a ray of hope for children from underprivileged and diverse backgrounds

Photo: S Kamei

In this way, Boscome creates a space where diversity is celebrated and friendships blossom across communities.



Facing Challenges, Holding Steady

Today, Boscome serves 243 children across two centres. The school has stayed faithful to its mission of providing accessible, value-based education that combines academic learning with character building.

Teachers, management, and community-supporters work tirelessly to keep that mission alive, ensuring that every student is given the chance to envision and work towards a brighter future.

Beyond Classroom

Boscome believes in holistic education. Poetry recitations, dance and painting competitions, speeches, and creative events are organized throughout the year.

These platforms allow children to showcase their talents, often for the very first time. For them, being applauded for a poem, a painting, or a dance is a moment of pride that fuels their desire to keep learning.

Skill-building workshops and practice sessions also prepare students for discipline, teamwork, and perseverance—values that stay with them beyond school walls.

Looking forward

Boscome School is a lifeline for children who might otherwise be denied education and personal growth. By integrating academics with values, life skills, and creative expression, it equips students not just to pass exams, but to face life with confidence and purpose. Despite socio-economic barriers and external challenges, Boscome continues to light the path ■

“Scarcity-sparked creativity and resilience defined us. The students taught me perseverance.”

Ms. Anen,
(Teacher at BOSCOME since 2016).



Jerome Mangkung is Coordinator of the BOSCOME School program at AIDA

WOMEN WITH SEWING MACHINES CUT A NEW PATH IN HILLS

By Lawrence Guria



Photo: L Guria

The AIDA–USHA Silai School Programme is changing lives of women in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland by equipping them with tailoring skills, confidence, and livelihood opportunities. From village homes to community-based sewing schools, over 500 women are stitching a future of financial independence, dignity, and hope.

Rhythm of life In the foggy hills of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland has long been set by the cycles of subsistence farming. However, the persistent struggles of women—limited choices, meagre incomes, and overlooked potential—are often hidden by the region's enchanting beauty.

Since 2018, a new sound has joined the mountain breeze: the steady hum of sewing machines. This sound signals a profound shift in the lives of the women in these hills, as they begin to stitch a new fabric of financial independence and hope for themselves and their families.

Beginning of this transformation is the result of a unique partnership between AIDA and the USHA Silai School Programme. This initiative empowers women with tailoring skills, fostering self-reliance and dignity. It has already transformed the lives of nearly 500 women across 135 villages in these hills, giving them the skills and opportunity to pursue their dreams.

The program began in 2018 with a 9-days intensive advanced tailoring training session conducted by AIDA in Longding, in collaboration with the USHA Silai School Programme. This initial training served a handful of women from Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland.

From that initial training, the program has blossomed into a vibrant network of "homes-turned-sewing schools." This network spans Arunachal Pradesh's Longding and Tirap districts and extends across Nagaland in the districts of Dimapur, Chümoukedima, Niuland, Peren, and Zunheboto. This expanding initiative continues to transform lives through skill-building and enterprise.

Phero Manham's Story

The success of the AIDA-USHA Silai School program is powerfully demonstrated through the story of Phero Manham. In 2018, this 25-year-old Wangcho tribal woman from Longding district, Arunachal Pradesh, became one of the program's earliest success stories. Determined to find a future beyond subsistence farming, she joined the training.



Phero Manham became one of the program's earliest success stories

Photo: L Guria

After completing a nine-day residential training at AIDA, she returned to her village with new skills, confidence, and a sewing machine—part of a start-up kit she received. Determined to earn an income through tailoring and to train others, she soon inspired her village council. Moved by her dedication, they gifted her 10 additional machines, enabling her to establish her own Silai School.

Phero soon trained over 30 women and began earning around ₹5,000 a month. Today, she is more than just a tailor; she is a teacher, entrepreneur, and inspiration.

Her story is living proof that when one woman takes a bold step, an entire community can follow, igniting the journeys of many other women in the hills.

Spreading Across the Districts

The program's growth continued rapidly. By 2023, 50 villages in Wokha had joined the movement. In late 2024, it reached 10 more villages in Peren district, and in early 2025, by expanding to 10 rural villages in Zunheboto district, the total number of villages implementing this program has risen to 135.



In April 2025, a significant milestone was reached when ten women from Zunheboto completed a 14-day intensive training in stitching, cutting, and design.

Hailing from some of the most remote and underserved communities, they returned home not only with sewing machines but also with the confidence to establish their own Silai Schools.

For the first time, women in Zunheboto were stepping forward as income-earners and teachers, carrying the program into Nagaland's rural interior.

The Silai School graduates are becoming more than just tailors; they are trainers, entrepreneurs, and change-makers. Many now earn between ₹7,000 and ₹12,000 a month, a substantial sum in rural villages where regular cash flow was once rare.

The tangible effects of the program are clear, such as in October 2024, when four Silai School teachers were selected by the Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) to stitch uniforms for Cluster Coordinators. Each was assigned 94 waistcoats at ₹400 per coat, a government-backed contract that validated their skills and underscored their growing economic role.

As Mrs. Pyingchano Yathan, a Silai teacher from Lakhuti Village Wokha, put it, **"Before, I relied on my husband for every little thing. Now, I help out around the house and still manage to save some. The respect within my family and village has increased."**

The Multiplier Effect

If Phemo Manham lit the initial spark, women like Rhuviine Zholia are fanning the flames. A resident of Fourth Mile in Dimapur, Rhuviine began with just one machine. Through hard work and savings, she purchased ten more and transformed her small

operation into a structured tailoring institute. Charging ₹5,000 per student per month, she has already trained 15 learners in just one year.

Her success demonstrates the multiplier effect of the Silai model: empowered women don't stop at personal growth; they build ecosystems of opportunity, mentoring and training others in their communities.

To ensure no woman feels alone, especially in hilly and scattered villages, AIDA has created WhatsApp groups where Silai teachers exchange photos, share progress, and trouble-shoot challenges.



Rhuviine Zholia transformed her small operation into a structured tailoring institute

Photo: L Guria

These digital networks are lifelines, connecting women across the two states and districts and fostering a sense of solidarity.

The impact of the AIDA-USHA Silai School Program is visible and deeply felt. Young women are enrolling in classes, families are experiencing a steady stream of extra income, and women are saving, reinvesting in their village-based businesses, and daring to dream beyond survival.

From alterations to babywear, school uniforms, and wedding outfits, these Silai

Schools are not only meeting local needs but also fostering pride and independence.

Direct beneficiaries: Current status

Classical Silai Schools	125
Satellite Silari Schools	92
Learners of Tailoring Skills	271
Total	488

A Sustainable Model for Empowerment

The program's success is built on a simple, three-tiered structure that ensures sustainability.

This cascading model empowers participants to not only learn but also to earn and teach.

1. Teachers for Classical Silai Schools (TCSS): These teachers receive nine days of intensive training from USHA Master Trainers and are provided with a sewing machine. They generate income by both teaching others and taking on tailoring work.

2. Teachers for Satellite Silai Schools (TSSS): These are individuals who have completed at least one month of training under a TCSS and have also received an additional two days of intensive advanced training from a USHA Master Trainer. They earn income by training others for a minimum of one month and by doing tailoring work.

3. Learners of Tailoring Skills (LTS): These participants are trained for at least one month by a TCSS or TSSS teacher. They earn their income primarily through tailoring projects.

Each level of the program is designed to build on the previous one, creating a continuous cycle of skill development and income generation.



Silai Schools not only meet local needs but also foster pride and independence

Photo: L Guria

Ultimately, the power of the Silai School Programme lies in its simplicity and sustainability. With modest investments in a machine, structured training, and mentorship, a woman gains the power to earn, teach, and inspire.

Each graduate becomes a torchbearer of dignity and resilience, carrying forward not just her own livelihood but also a vision of what women not only in the hills of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, but anywhere in rural India can achieve ■



Lawrence Guria is Program Coordinator at AIDA Silai Schools Program

The Tai Khamti Community of Namsai

By Chau Chanaka Mannow

The Tai Khamti community of Arunachal Pradesh is a vibrant and culturally distinct group of the region. Predominantly followers of Theravada Buddhism, the community traces their origins to the Shan region of present-day Myanmar.

Migrating in the eighteenth century, the Tai Khampti settled primarily in the Tengapani river basin. Today, they are mainly concentrated in the Namsai and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh, with smaller populations also found in neighboring parts of Assam. Across these areas, they continue to uphold their ancient traditions with remarkable devotion.

Faith and Language

At the heart of the community's life is their profound Buddhist faith. This spirituality is manifest in daily life through sacred rituals like almsgiving (offering food to monks), which consistently reinforces community bonds and reciprocal support.

Monasteries serve as vital spiritual and educational centers. They are the primary places where the community's unique script, Lik-Tai, is taught. Derived from the Shan script of Myanmar, Lik-Tai is actively used to preserve and study Buddhist texts, Jataka tales, and core cultural traditions.

Golden Pagoda, Namsai :Photo: Amit Brook

The Khamti language belongs to the South-western Tai family, establishing a close linguistic connection to other Tai-speaking groups across Southeast Asia. This shared heritage highlights the deep cultural roots and transnational identity of the community. About 79% is the literacy rate among the community members

Livelihood and Artistry

The Tai Khamptis are primarily farmers, with rice cultivation forming the mainstay of their livelihood. In addition to staple crops, they cultivate various horticultural products such as ginger, turmeric, arecanut, and small-scale tea gardens.



Weaving Traditional Tai Khamti Bag

Photo: Chanak

Complementing agriculture is their famed artistry in handicrafts and handlooms. They are particularly known for weaving beautiful traditional bags and garments that display their mastery of colour and pattern. Women's groups often lead these efforts, playing a critical role in sustaining these valuable generational skills.

Festivals

Festivals and rituals are essential to the fabric of community life. The most prominent celebration is Sangken, which marks the Tai New Year every April. This festival is famous for the ceremonial bathing of Buddha images and the joyful custom of splashing clean water on one another, symbolizing purity, peace, and renewal.

Sangken is a powerful expression of the Tai Khampti ethos, a time when people of all tribes and communities come together, underscoring the values of harmony and inclusivity.

Their identity is also reflected in their traditional attire. Men wear the siu pachai (a full-sleeved shirt) with a colorful lungi. Women wear a sui pashao blouse paired with a long cotton or silk skirt. Married women are distinctively recognized by a plain black wrap-around skirt called sinn, often worn with a shorter green cloth.



Lighting of Sky lantern during festivals

Photo: Chanak

The Tai Khampti community actively nurtures a tradition of indigenous games. Activities such as Mit-kan (bamboo twisting), bamboo stilt races, and even elephant races are popular features during festivals and village gatherings.

AIDA's Commitment in Namsai

Since 2023, AIDA has been working with the Tai Khampti communities in Namsai through the SBI Gram Seva Program. AIDA's efforts are concentrated in the villages of Adi Ningroo, Ningroo Charali, Nampong, Piyong Khampti, and Piyong Singpho

Here, AIDA's work focuses on strengthening livelihoods, promoting self-reliance, and ensuring sustainable development. We aim to complement the inherent cultural richness of the community with opportunities that empower them to thrive in a changing world.

The Tai Khampti people, with their powerful blend of spirituality, cultural pride, and resilience, remain an integral and inspiring part of Arunachal Pradesh's heritage. Their strong traditions continue to guide them as they adapt to modern challenges with dignity and strength ■



Chau Chanaka Mannow is the education in-charge, SBI Gram Seva, Namsai

SKILLING YOUTHS IN SPORTS FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

By Jerome Mangkung



DBSA football teams at practice Photo by: J Mangku

The " Skilling Youths in Sports for Holistic Development " program empowers disadvantaged youth in Dimapur, Nagaland. It uses sports training to develop physical fitness, essential life skills, and character, shaping young champions both on and off the field.

"Skilling Youths in Sports for Holistic Development," is an initiative launched by AIDA in January this year, 2025, and is making a significant impact in Dimapur, Nagaland. This program is initiated in partnership with the Don Bosco Sports Academy (DBSA), a hub for both athletic and personal growth.

The program focuses on providing disadvantaged youth with structured sports training, mentorship, and wellness support. DBSA offers expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including basketball, football, Taekwondo, and Shaolin Kung Fu.



DBSA offers expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including Taekwondo and Shaolin Kung Fu.

Photo: J Mangkung

This comprehensive approach develops not only physical fitness but also essential life skills such as discipline, teamwork, and self-confidence.

A Holistic Approach to Development

This initiative goes beyond athletic training to ensure participants are well-rounded individuals. They receive nutritional guidance, attend motivational seminars, and have regular health check-ups. This holistic model prepares young athletes for success both on and off the field. DBSA provides expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including football



DBSA provides expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including football

Photo: J Mangkung

seminars, and have regular health check-ups. This holistic model prepares young athletes for success both on and off the field. DBSA provides expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including football

Photo by: J Mangku
AIDA's long-term goal is to build sustainable, grassroots sports initiatives across Nagaland.

The program's strategy is to foster confident, skilled, and socially conscious athletes by:

- Developing strong infrastructure.
- Providing standardized coaching from professional trainers.
- Integrating values-based education into every aspect of training

Building Champions and Community

The DBSA campus has become a vibrant center for youth empowerment. Training sessions are tailored to different age groups and emphasize teamwork, technical skills, and strategic thinking. By including martial arts, the program also instills discipline and cultural pride.

To support the participants' well-being, healthy snacks are provided, and health camps are held regularly.

The program also prioritizes competitive exposure, organizing friendly matches and facilitating participation in block, district, and state-level tournaments.



DBSA provides expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including Taekwondo, and Shaolin Kung Fu.

Photo: J Mangkung

The results are already impressive:

- The martial arts center trains 22 boys and girls in accredited modules.
- The grassroots football program has 61 registered trainees.

These young athletes are already making their mark, winning state-level awards and showcasing impressive character development.

Investing in Infrastructure and Success

Significant infrastructure improvements at DBSA—including new goalposts, essential equipment, and better coaching techniques—have created a safe and inspiring environment for every participant.

The impact is most visible in the participants themselves. The program has improved their physical fitness, coordination, and strategic thinking. More importantly, they have developed resilience, self-worth, and leadership skills, learning to collaborate and face challenges head-on.



DBSA provides expert coaching in a variety of disciplines, including basketball, football, Taekwondo, and Shaolin Kung Fu.

Photo: J Mangkung

The talent nurtured at DBSA was on full display at two major events in 2025:

1. 9th National Shaolin Kung Fu Championship (Darjeeling):

Ms. Mongngam Senon and Mr. Manshah Nyiemla both won gold medals.

2. 35th Nagaland State Taekwondo Championship (Longleng): Ms. Tetsonye Lorin and Ms. Naomi Dutta secured gold medals, while Mr. Anjok Taro won a silver. These accomplishments highlight the program's dedication to developing top-tier athletes.

A Model for Social Change

The "Skilling Youths in Sports" program is an inclusive initiative, welcoming youth from all backgrounds and cultivating a sense of community through respect and shared experiences. It serves as a haven of opportunity where sports are used as a powerful tool for social and personal development.

Ultimately, this program is an example of youth empowerment. By integrating wellness support, character education, and athletic training, it equips young people to overcome socioeconomic barriers and achieve their full potential. With continued support, the program will continue to mould not just future champions in sports, but champions in life ■



Jerome Mangkung is Coordinator, Skilling Youths in Sports for Holistic Development, AIDA.

Career Guidance Training for Don Bosco Teachers in Tripura

A two-day Career Guidance Training for Don Bosco School teachers of Tripura was held on 29–30 August 2025 at St. Xavier’s Higher Secondary School, Pathaliaghat, Agartala.



The program was coordinated by the school’s principal, Fr. Babu Stephen SDB, with resource persons including Fr. Gabriel Karunaraj SDB, National Director of Don Bosco Job Placement Network; Fr. Joseph D’Souza Kamalesh SDB, Professor at Sacred Heart College, Tirupatur, Tamil Nadu; and Mr. Sebi Chacko, Regional Coordinator, AIDA–Job Placement Network.

80 teachers from eight Don Bosco Schools participated in interactive discussions, case studies, and group activities, appreciating the blend of theoretical and practical insights relevant to their context ■

Career Guidance Training for Don Bosco Teachers in Dimapur

Don Bosco Youth and Educational Services, in collaboration with AIDA and Don Bosco Job Placement Network, organized a two-day Career Counselors Animation Program on 26–27 August 2025 in Dimapur, Nagaland, for Don Bosco School teachers of the province.

Led by Fr. Kamalesh Joseph SDB and Fr. Gabriel Karunaraj SDB, the training equipped teachers with practical skills for career guidance through data analysis, case studies, and group work.

Systematic handouts, interactive presentations, and real-life insights enriched the sessions, which participants found impactful and meaningful ■



General Councilor for Formation of the Salesians of Don Bosco visits AIDA

Rev. Fr. Silvio Roggia SDB, the General Councilor for Formation of the Salesians of Don Bosco, paid a cordial visit to AIDA on August 14, 2025, during his trip to the Salesians of Don Bosco, Dimapur Province, Nagaland.

He was warmly welcomed at a gathering of AIDA Head Office team in the conference hall, where he was presented with a traditional Naga waistcoat as a gesture of respect and hospitality.



Fr. Roggia commended AIDA's impactful community development initiatives and officially released the 3rd edition of "The Child-Led Survey and Success Stories 2024" of the AIDA-Child Friendly Dimpaur project, a document that highlights the voices and progress of participating children.

Rev. Dr. Roy George SDB, the Executive Director, extended the welcome and briefed him on AIDA's extensive work, particularly projects in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, and Upper Assam. The one-hour program was anchored by Ms. Shemang S. Phom ■

AIDA extends heartfelt condolences to the Executive Director and family



The AIDA family deeply mourns the passing of the beloved mother of our Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Roy George SDB.

Mrs. Thresyakutty Varkey Mannattel passed away peacefully at her home in Paingottur, Kerala, on September 30, 2025, at the age of 93. She will be remembered for her strong faith, warmth, and devotion to her family. Her funeral was held on October 2, 2025, at St Anne's Forane Church Cemetery, Paingottur.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Rev. Dr. Roy George SDB and his family and pray that God grant them strength and consolation during this time of bereavement.

May her soul rest in peace

My Journey as a Social Worker

By P.M. Joachim
(Ground Coordinator, Solar Project, Manipur)

Life sometimes takes us down paths we never planned. My own career, which began with 15 years as a teacher and three years in network marketing, took a completely new direction in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the world was forced to slow down in 2019, I too found myself rethinking my future. By the grace of God, the trust of the Salesians of Don Bosco, and the support of ANMA Integrated Development Association (AIDA), I stepped into the world of social work in 2022.

I am a graduate in the arts, with no formal background in social work. Yet these past years of learning and service have been deeply rewarding, and I am grateful for the chance to share my journey with the readers of AIDA Chronicle.



PM Joachim

An Unexpected Beginning

In 2021, while searching for opportunities after the pandemic, I received a phone call that changed my life. The voice on the other end was warm and reassuring: Rev. Fr. Dr. Roy George, SDB, the Executive Director of AIDA. He invited me to apply for the role of Morung Facilitator in my village of Duiluan-2, Manipur, under the Rural Education and Appraisal Program (REAP). Following a successful interview, I began my work in April 2022.

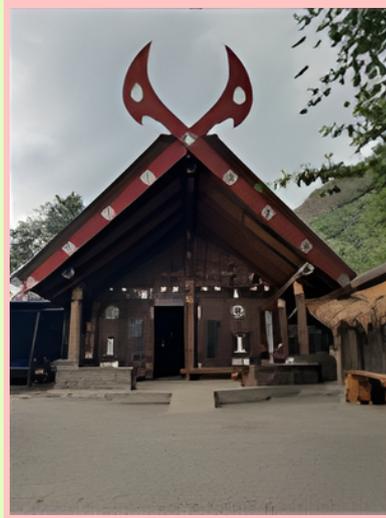
Before joining, I attended a three-day capacity-building training at AIDA in Dimapur. Around 30–40 of us came together from different states—Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh. We were trained on leadership, community service, and the values needed to work effectively among people.

Making a Difference as a Morung Facilitator

As a Morung Facilitator, I supervised children from Classes I to V at our community study center, or Morung.

Each day, I conducted three hours of study time, while weekends were reserved for literary activities, sports, cleanliness drives, and children's parliament. I also taught a weekly literacy class for women who had never had the chance to attend school.

This eight-month engagement, from April to November 2022, was a true blessing for our village, where schools had remained closed since the pandemic. At first, 50 children enrolled; later the number settled at 27.



Morung is the traditional youth dormitory of the Naga tribes in each villages. Young men of the villages lived in these dormitories, learning skills, values, and culture before marriage. Though this institution has nearly disappeared, Project REAP sought to revive its spirit in the project village

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We designed a routine of two hours in the morning and three in the evening. The results were striking. Within months, the children's listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills improved dramatically. Nearly 90% were later admitted into reputed schools, where they continue to do well.



PM Joachim with a few children in village Duiluan-2

Photo: Joachim

The REAP project also helped preserve the cultural identity of the Zemei, Liangmei, Rongmei, and Inpui tribes of Tamenglong and Noney districts.

Elders came in on Saturdays to teach folk songs, lore, and dances. The children also joined clean-up drives and tree-planting activities. The smiles of the children and the appreciation of villagers remain some of my most cherished memories from that time.

A New Chapter: Caring for the Environment

In February 2024, I was given a new responsibility: to lead the project Action for

Protection of Environment in Northeast India Region (APENIR) in Nagaland. The ambitious goal was to form 200 Eco Clubs in schools and colleges across five districts, training 10,000 students in the principles of the Green Protocol.

The first year was daunting. With no team, I often felt like a “one-man army.” For months, I pedalled under the blazing sun on my bicycle to reach institutions. When my bike was stolen, I was provided an Activa scooter—a small but significant upgrade that made the journeys easier.

By January 2025, perseverance paid off. I had visited more than 350 institutions, successfully formed 206 Eco Clubs, and reached 11,696 students—surpassing our original target. APENIR made me realize that protecting the environment is not just a project, but a personal calling. I now consciously save water and electricity, plant trees, and minimize plastic use.

Lessons and Gratitude

My four years with AIDA have enriched me in countless ways. I have learned the basics of design and implementation community development projects, gained exposure to diverse communities, and grown in confidence through the gratitude of those we serve.



PM Joachim (5th from left) at the staff orientation program at AIDA, Dimapur

Photo: Joachim

One person who has profoundly shaped my journey is Rev. Fr. Dr. Roy George, SDB. His approachable nature gives me courage in my work, while his discipline and eye for detail inspire me to be more thorough.

During difficult times, his counsel and generosity have supported both me and my family.

Looking back, I see how God has guided my steps. Teaching and network marketing seemed to be my path, yet today I find myself serving as a social worker. The journey has taught me that when we surrender ourselves to a greater purpose, we can be used in ways we never imagined.

I remain grateful to AIDA for the trust placed in me and for giving me the chance to serve. May God bless AIDA and inspire all of us to serve one another with compassion and dedication ■



PM Joachim at an introduction program for project APENIR

Photo: Joachim

Types of Volunteering: A Guide for Those Starting to Volunteer

By Theresa OH Youngsoo

In the previous issue, Theresa OH Youngsoo's reflections on volunteering introduced five broad types of volunteering based on roles and motivations. In this second part, she continues the conversation by exploring other dimensions—how people engage, what they contribute, and the issue areas that shape their participation.

Volunteering can be understood in many different ways. Beyond roles and motivations, it also varies according to how people engage, the contributions they make, and the issue areas they choose.



This continuation offers a more complete picture of the diverse ways one can begin a volunteering journey.

Formal and Informal Volunteering

Volunteering may be organized formally or carried out informally.

- Formal volunteering refers to structured activities planned and managed by Volunteer-Involving Organizations (VIOs).

Examples include volunteering at hospitals, schools, government programs, or NGOs. Many employee volunteering initiatives under corporate social responsibility (CSR) also fall into this category.

- Informal volunteering, by contrast, is spontaneous and flexible. It happens outside official channels—such as helping a neighbour, joining a local clean-up, or visiting isolated community members.

Both forms are valuable: formal volunteering provides scale and structure, while informal volunteering often responds more quickly to immediate needs.

Regular and Episodic Volunteering

Another way to view engagement is through time commitment.



- Regular volunteering involves a consistent schedule—such as mentoring students weekly, delivering meals, or serving in community libraries. While it allows for deep relationships, it may not fit everyone’s availability.

- Episodic volunteering is short-term and event-based. It includes food drives, beach clean-ups, tree planting, or mural painting. Episodic volunteers may also step in during emergencies such as natural disasters. Though less continuous, their contributions can be impactful and energizing.

Volunteering by Contribution

Volunteers contribute in different ways:

- **Time:** Dedicating hours to hands-on tasks like clean-up drives, meal delivery, or hospital accompaniment.
- **Talents:** Offering specific skills such as coaching, designing brochures, teaching languages, or cooking for the needy.
- **Knowledge:** Sharing professional expertise through pro bono work—free legal aid, medical services, or consulting.
- **Voice:** Advocating for justice and awareness by writing, campaigning, or speaking out on issues.
- **Money:** Supporting causes through direct donations or fundraising events like bazaars, concerts, or crowd-funding campaigns.

While all contributions matter, skill-based volunteering and pro bono services often require deeper commitment and specialized qualifications.

Volunteering by Issue Areas

Different countries also define volunteering through the lens of national priorities. For example, Korean volunteering law identifies fifteen issue areas, ranging from social welfare, health, and education to human rights, disaster management, cultural promotion, and international cooperation.

Such frameworks reveal both where volunteers are needed and what motivates them. In Korea, national surveys conducted every three years track how citizens' volunteering interests shift across these issue areas.

To conclude, Volunteering is not one-size-fits-all. It takes many forms—formal or informal, regular or episodic, skill-based or resource-based. It also responds to evolving social issues, from poverty and education to digital exclusion, loneliness, and the climate crisis.

For those beginning their volunteer journey, the key is to reflect on your interests, skills, and passions. Choose a type of volunteering that resonates with you, and you will not only contribute meaningfully but also experience personal growth and fulfillment.

The world of volunteering is wide and varied. Whether through small acts of kindness or structured commitments, each effort adds to a collective force for positive change ■



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	Pinakate Assam
No. of Villages	9
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	100
Indirect	500

Project	Integrated Development of Rural Communities of Lakhimpur District (IDRCU)
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 (APENI)
Project Area	Dimaapur, Chumouakhoma, Kohima, Jirani, Nisaland Districts of Nagaland
No. of Eco Clubs	200
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	10000
Indirect	50000

Project	Solar Muzama
Project Area	Tamenglong and Jirani Districts, Manipur
No. of villages	15
No. of households	750
No. of persons trained	15
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	15
Indirect	13750

Project	Solar Sakshi
Project Area	Anunchal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Assam
No. of villages	36
No. of persons trained	36
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	36
Indirect	180

Project	AIDA Don Based Job Placement Network, Dimaapur
Project Area	Anunchal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Upper Assam
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	5000
Indirect	20000

Project	Female Disempowerd
Project Area	Burundi, Myanmar, Palau, Nepal, Philippines, Timor
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	1079
Indirect	4376

Project	Digital Community School
Project Area	Tamenglong Manipur
No. of villages	3
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	32
Indirect	792

Project	Madara Education Programme
Project Area	Peren, Nagaland (Jirani)
No. of villages	2
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4512
Indirect	4512

Project	USHA Sash School
Project Area	Dimaapur, Nisaland, Chumouakhoma, Kohima, Wokha and Peren Districts, Nagaland, Longleng and Tripa Districts, Anunchal Pradesh
No. of villages	115
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	173
Indirect	861

Project	SRI Gram Seva
Project Area	Nisaland, Anunchal Pradesh
No. of villages	5
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	1500
Indirect	3500

Project	Solar Muzama
Project Area	Longleng District, Anunchal Pradesh, Nisaland District, Assam, Peren District, Nagaland
No. of villages	9
No. of households	400
No. of persons trained	9
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	400
Indirect	2250

Project	Sampervani - Child on wheels
Project Area	Tripa District, Anunchal Pradesh
No. of villages	25
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	21,000
Indirect	24,000

Project	Bostonia Shani School
Project Area	Dimaapur, Nagaland
No. of Schools	6
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	418
Indirect	2090

Project	SRI Gram Saksham
Project Area	Chumouakhoma, Nagaland
No. of villages	18
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	301
Indirect	1505

Project	SRI Gram Seva
Project Area	Chumouakhoma, Nagaland
No. of villages	5
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4000
Indirect	4000

Project	Child Friendly City Initiative- Dimaapur
Project Area	Dimaapur, Chumouakhoma, Nagaland
No. of Beneficiaries:	
Direct	4065
Indirect	18025

Project	Backyard piggy units as a livelihood enhancement means for 200 vulnerable Muzama 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





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	

Don Bosco Campus, P.B. -2, N. N. Goan, River Belt Colony, Dimapur Nagaland - 797113

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Mob / WhatsApp- 9402857561 / Email - aidasdb@gmail.com