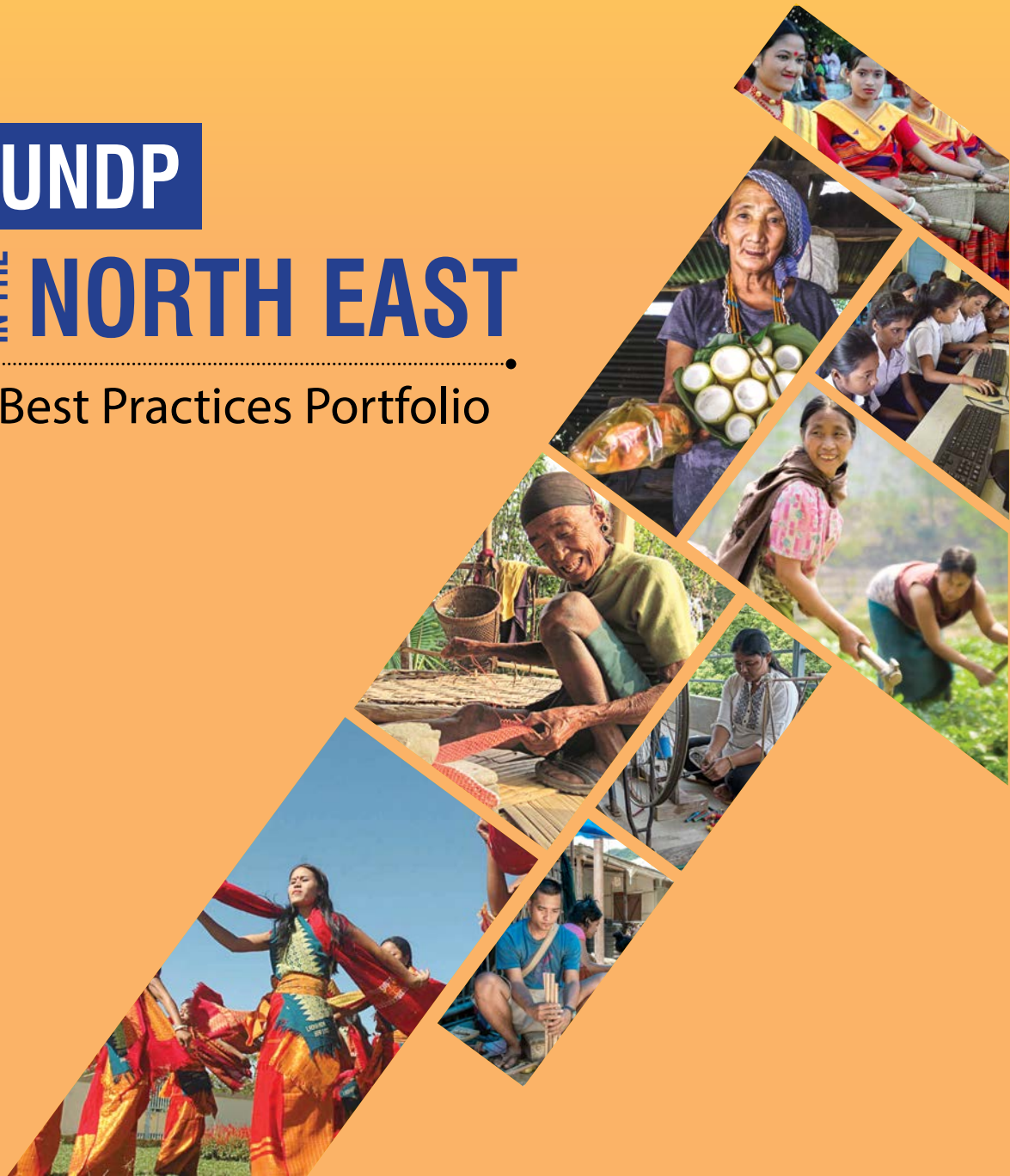
Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

UNDP IN THE NORTH EAST

Best Practices Portfolio

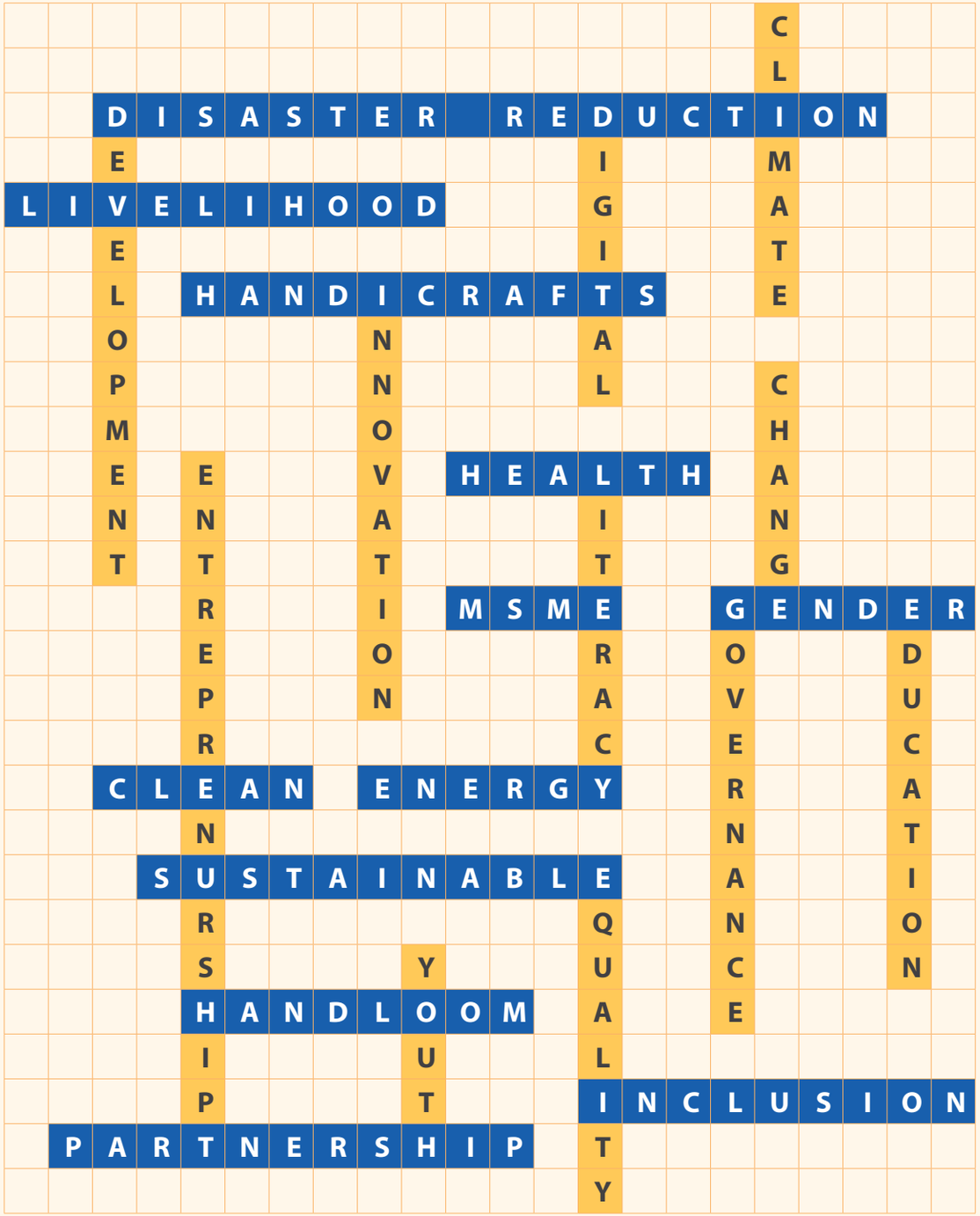


ANTÓNIO GUTERRES

United Nations Secretary-General

“The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, provide a coherent, holistic framework for addressing these challenges and their interconnections. (…) They require member states to address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner. Their implementation must embody the principles of inclusiveness, integration and ‘leaving no one behind.”

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND



UNDP IN THE NORTH EAST
AN INTRODUCTION

India's North East is extremely rich in natural resources, crafts and untapped human potential. However, at the same time, the region faces its own set of environmental and developmental challenges. For over a decade now, UNDP has been working in the North East region in the areas of promoting sustainable development through institutional and systems strengthening, equitable and inclusive growth through strengthening of , sustainable livelihoods, MSMEs, clean energy and environment, disaster risk reduction and community resilience.

With a regional base in Guwahati and project teams spread across the States, UNDP has been able to carry out key development interventions in the North East which has yielded strong results in the areas of inclusive and equitable growth and public service delivery.

The UNDP India Country Programme Document (2018-2022) signed with Government of India (GoI), stresses on "systems strengthening as the single most important innovation to achieve last mile impact".

In line with this, UNDP proposes to focus on systems strengthening of public institutions to enable them to deliver citizen services better.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

BOLDER INNOVATIONS

CLOSER PARTNERSHIPS

By creating digital tools, assisting in data collection and creating monitoring dashboards, conducting socio-economic impact assessments, developing toolkits for building capacities and other activities, UNDP aims to shift focus from traditional development methodologies to people-centric policies and sustainable development.

In the current programme period, UNDP, has been providing continued support to States for fast-tracking SDG agenda. Under the Aspirational District Programme of NITI Aayog, UNDP is providing technical support to districts of the North East in the areas of Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial inclusion and skill development and Basic Infrastructure. UNDP is also implementing projects like the Resilience Building of Communities, Capacity Building of MSMEs, Alternate Vaccine Delivery system, Disaster and Climate Change Risk Reduction and SECURE Himalaya Project in various districts and states of the region.

I SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE NORTH EAST

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all UN Member Nations in 2015 with the pledge 'Leave No One Behind'. UNDP focusses on integrated solutions and partnerships so that the world moves toward zero poverty, climate change resilience, peace and prosperity by 2030.

Institutional Strengthening

- UNDP has been working closely with state governments in the North East Region for the integration of SDGs in policy and vision planning.
- The first North East SDGs Consultation was organized with stakeholders from across the region in October 2016.
- Technical support has been provided for the Centre for SDGs, Government of Assam, from 2017 to 2018 and the preparation of 'Assam Agenda 2030: Strategies and Actions for Achieving the SDGs' after a year-long exercise with nine conclaves with all relevant government departments.
- Assistance has been provided to the Centre for SDGs, Assam, in preparation of the District Manual for Districts, Blocks, Councils and Gaon Panchayats.
- Technical assistance has been provided to the Government of Nagaland in: (i) establishing the SDGs Coordination Centre, (ii) SDGs monitoring and policy strengthening and (iii) SDGs implementation at the Village Council level.
- Technical assistance has been provided to the Government of Manipur in preparation of 'Manipur Vision 2030: Leaving No-one Behind: Achieving Inclusive Growth and the Sustainable Development Goals', released on 14 November 2019.

Capacity Building and Localisation

UNDP has worked with multiple stakeholders building capacities from the grassroots to the state level. UNDP organized several workshops and exercises in the North East:

- Capacity workshops in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim with participants from the government, academic institutions, NGOs, CSOs and others.
- A multi-stakeholder regional capacity building workshop for localisation of SDGs with representatives from all eight states of the North East in August 2018.
- A two-day sensitization for all Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) of Assam in February 2018.
- Priority mapping exercises and localisation workshop in Ri Bhoi District of Meghalaya with district and block level officials in December 2019.
- SDGs sensitisation training in 19 districts of Assam.

INNOVATION

UNDP North East has sought to encourage innovation and encourage ideation.

- The Innovation Lab Summit had participants from all departments of the Government of Assam and saw the development of the blueprint for an Innovation Lab in Assam.
- 'Ideathon: Youth Innovations for Brighter Assam', organized in Guwahati by Transformation and Development Department, Government of Assam, Centre for SDGs, UNDP, and the Centre for Innovation and Futures Studies. Twenty-six youth teams presented their ideas, prototype models and innovations in handloom, agriculture, education, livelihood and health.

II TRANSFORMATION OF ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS

UNDP is providing technical support for fast-tracking efforts in the 14 select districts in the North East under the Transformation of Aspirational District (TADP) of NITI Aayog — Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Darrang, Baksa, Udalguri and Hailakandi in Assam, Dhalai in Tripura, Ri-Bhoi in Meghalaya, Namsai in Arunachal Pradesh, Chandel in Manipur, Mamit in Mizoram, Kiphire in Nagaland and West Sikkim district in Sikkim. The ADP has been designed to monitor the real-time progress of these districts.

Areas of Focus

Education	Basic Infrastructure	Skill Development	Financial Inclusion	Agriculture & Irrigation	Health & Nutrition
(30%)	(10%)	(5%)	(5%)	(20%)	(30%)

49	81	5
INDICATORS	DATA-POINTS	KEY SECTORS

Strategic Developmental Interventions Roundtable

UNDP, in collaboration with Transformation and Development Department, Government of Assam, organized a one-day roundtable, 'Strategic Developmental Interventions in Aspirational Districts', in February 2019, to create dialogue between the various stakeholders in the ADP on the following:

- Challenges in the aspirational districts
- Means of fast tracking projects/programmes in these districts
- Possible projects/programmes which can be undertaken in these districts
- Fine-tuning of ongoing schemes/programmes for enhanced service delivery
- Developing an understanding on SDGs in sectors where CSR activities are concentrated
- Developing PSU engagement in aspirational districts through projects addressing the developmental issues of the region
- Scalable signature development solutions available with UNDP and the private and public sector organizations
- Developing platforms for partnership among stakeholders

Technical Support to North East States

UNDP provided technical support for districts in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya in:

Identifying priority areas

Developing proposals for funding

Finalizing District Action Plans (DAPs)

III HEALTH FOR ALL

Health and development are intrinsically linked. With widening economic and social inequalities, rapid urbanization, threats to the environment, and ongoing challenge of diseases, UNDP focusses on multi-sectoral, rights-based and gender-sensitive approaches to achieve good health for all.

Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) — Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura

In 2015, the GoI, with implementation support from UNDP, introduced eVIN, a new age indigenous technology enabling real-time visibility of stock and temperature of cold chain equipment across the country. In the North East, eVIN is currently implemented in six states - Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura.

Implementation of eVIN helps in making vaccines available to the last beneficiary, real-time monitoring of stock, reduced vaccine wastage, strengthening the management practices and making evidence-based policy decisions at all levels of the health system. It is a big step towards achieving SDG 3. Analysis revealed a total of 900 lakh vaccine doses were saved in the states in which eVIN was implemented.

Vaccine availability rate of over 99% at all cold chain points

Solar Assessment of Health Facilities — Assam and Meghalaya

In tandem with UNDP's objective of Solar for Health, UNDP India has developed a digital tool to assess capacities for solar energy. This has been used to assess health facilities in the aspirational districts of Baksa in Assam and Ri Bhoi in Meghalaya. The project shows that solarization of health facilities will help communities in access to better healthcare 24x7 along with achieving SDG 7.

Assessment of Vaccine Distribution till the Last Mile — Assam

UNDP is supporting the Department of Health, Government of Assam, to conduct a study on methods and modes of vaccine delivery from cold chain points to the immunization session sites, recording information on vaccine deliverers, vaccine temperatures for safety till the last mile, rational distribution and allocation of sub-centres in view of distance, processes and practices. UNDP has developed a tool to record and analyze this information for efficient vaccine distribution.

The Alternate Vaccine Delivery (AVD) assessment resulted in high level policy discussions to re-structure the AVD system in Assam. This is termed a pioneer initiative to streamline vaccine delivery to the last beneficiary in the world's largest public health intervention, the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).

Streamlining vaccine delivery to the last beneficiary

IV YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

More than 50% of India's population is below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. As such, it is clear that development of a community or region is not possible without participation, development and empowerment of youth.

Improving connectivity through road construction — Manipur

Tamenglong district of Manipur is prone to heavy rainfall. Landslides and road connectivity affect villagers in many parts of the district and they get cut off. The UN Volunteer (UNV) coordinator organized young volunteers from Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS) of Tamenglong district, who in turn mobilized the local community to undertake the construction of 14 km of road connecting 11 remote villages with nearby towns. In this community-led initiative, funds available for Luangrang village under MGNREGA was used and villagers raised the remaining funds to cover the deficit cost.

India has the largest youth population in the world:

600 million

Self-employment and self-reliance amongst young rural women — Sikkim

UNDP provided a Mahila Mandal (women group) in Menglee, South Sikkim district, with technical and financial support to start a manufacturing unit for low-cost sanitary pads. Apart from promoting livelihoods and income generation, this intervention also aimed at promoting menstrual hygiene among rural women. Accordingly, Suraksha Self-help Group (SHG) was formed with 11 members and saw the birth of 'Suraksha' sanitary pads. Post initial technical and financial support, the SHG has become self-sufficient and has initiated branding of their product.

V LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

UNDP-EXIM Bank Partnership for MSMEs

The UNDP-EXIM Bank project "Capacity Building of the MSMEs in the North East for Export Competitiveness" focusses on fair, sustained and inclusive economic growth of the target beneficiaries, which includes men, women and youth. Under the project, UNDP has undertaken key interventions to enhance technical as well as management proficiency of the entrepreneurs such as exposure visits, creating market linkages, skill enhancement and managerial training.

The UNDP-EXIM Bank Network of Social Entrepreneurs has more than 100 enterprises and acts as a knowledge sharing as well as a mentorship platform to improve the reach, quality and sustainability of the MSMEs in the region.

Malamoni Hazarika is one of the 210 entrepreneurs who benefited from the UNDP-EXIM Bank project. Her enterprise, Kamdhenu Industries, is a medium food processing enterprise in Guwahati, Assam. Run and managed by women, it now produces more than 15 variety of pickles, squashes, juices and cold-pressed virgin coconut oil, and has won her many awards.

APONIR Cluster Development of Handloom Artisans — Assam and Manipur

Under the Action Plan on North East India Report (APONIR) for the fashion and lifestyle industry, UNDP partnered with mainstream commercial organizations such as Reliance and GoCoop to facilitate a pilot market-linked development intervention for artisans in two clusters in Assam and Manipur. GoCoop launched an online presence of artisans from these two clusters and was able to successfully promote one artisan group, Hilli Valli, from Manipur under its exhibition channel, GoSwadeshi.

House of Anita Dongre and Raymond helped in overall product development and supply chain strategies in the selected clusters. House of Anita Dongre initiated the use of sustainable yarns such as Tencel and Modal into fabric for their womenswear collection. Raymond initiated developments in eri fabrics using zari for their men's wear collection. These were showcased at Lakme Fashion week.

Future projects include:

- Setting up common yarn production and **procurement facilities** in each cluster.
- Setting up **government subsidies** on yarn price in order to control fluctuation
- Linking producers to major brands, **buyers and online platforms**
- Organizing exhibitions for market exposure with **financial support** for participation
- Negotiating terms with banks to minimize **loan processing** time and requirements

The North East has:

Over 53% of all handlooms in India

Over 50% of all weavers in India

VI BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

UNDP-Airports Authority of India Resilience Building Project — Assam

UNDP, in partnership with the Airports Authority of India, is implementing the Resilience Building of communities in 15 villages across 3 gram-panchayats around Guwahati Airport, in Rani Development Block, a rural tribal belt. The three-year project focusses on building sustainable and resilient communities with special focus on women and children with equal access to health services, quality education, clean energy and community infrastructures.

The project nourishes the practice of building sustainable communities with partnerships among district and local administration, health experts, social welfare, academic institutions, research centres, technical experts, local vendors and the community, thus extensively practicing SDG 17.

Some accomplishments include:

Puhor Project

UNDP's Puhor project distributed solar lanterns to 1200 households across the project area, out of which 700 have been to households with zero (238) and erratic electrification (462).

> ***"...We had never seen light after sunset. Thanks to UNDP for selecting our village for intervention..."***
>
> Ramesh Rabha
> A beneficiary from Kallapara N.C.

Digital Jupuri

Almost 98% of students in Rani had never accessed a computer earlier. This UNDP project provided 35 computer systems to 6 high schools with 6 computer trainers. In 2019, students from these high schools underwent a computer practical examination with focus on 3-D painting, power-point presentations and preparing biodatas. UNDP is constructing 3 computer laboratories called 'Digital Jupuri' tied with 3 schools, with previously unemployed educated local youth as trainers.

> ***"...I had never seen a computer in my life. But today I can prepare ppt slides for presentation..."***
>
> Nazia Sultana, Class 9, Rani High School

Crusaders

The UNDP Crusaders program imparts Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) to students as well as teachers of selected high schools in Sports for Gender Equality, Sanitation & Hygiene, Personality Development and Character Building, Effective Communication, Confidence Building and Time Management, with a Model Classroom in each school.

MY RIGHT TO A CLEAN TOILET

23% girls in India drop out of school due to lack of toilets

Sixteen toilets in 6 selected high schools, which were in dilapidated condition, were repaied and upgraded under the UNDP Resilience Building project. This has directly impacted not only the health and hygiene but also the dropout rate of girl students. The upgradation of school toilets has been accompanied by life skills sessions on proper usage of toilets, handwashing techniques and other hygiene practices.

Resilient Childhood

UNDP has adopted and upgraded 15 Anganwadi centres in the project area with strong and sustainable infrastructure, adequate and efficient teaching-learning materials, safe drinking water facility, sanitation facility, play materials and mobile mini-parks.

Dr Bondhu

Dr Bondhu, a fully fabricated Mobile Medical Unit developed by UNDP, provides door-to-door health services with a dedicated team of a doctor, GNM, pharmacist, coordinator and driver, drugs and consumables, ECG machine, glucometer, OPD services, post-natal services, identification of difficult pregnancy, minor surgery, dressing of wounds, basic pathological services, and referral services for the local communities.

In its 4 months of intervention, Dr Bondhu has served

4928 people across

32 villages

VII CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

UNDP endeavors to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into the everyday business of governance, thus ensuring that development is better protected from the impacts of disasters and, at the same time, keeps a check so that development does not aggravate existing natural hazard risks. UNDP believes that partnership between communities, organizations and government is the best, and probably only, way forward.

Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction — Meghalaya

The GoI-UNDP partnership project on 'Developing Resilient Cities through Risk Reduction in the context of Disaster and Climate Change' supported by USAID covers Shillong, Meghalaya from the North East. Under the project, the following activities were implemented in Shillong:

- Development of City Disaster Management Plan
- Review of the Early Warning System (EWS)
- Preparation of hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment
- Training of master trainers on psychosocial care
- Incident Response System training for government officials
- Sensitization and training on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation
- Preparation of school disaster management plan
- Simulation exercise on hospital safety

Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Action — Sikkim

'Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions' was implemented by the UNDP in partnership with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in Sikkim. Its overall goal was to integrate climate actions into sub-national planning benefitting local communities. Key interventions included:

01 Capacity building of resource persons/institutes

02 Support to strategy implementation

03 Knowledge sharing among states on subnational planning for climate change

Glacier Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Risk Reduction — Sikkim

The pilot intervention was implemented in 2019 to reduce the risk of GLOF at South Lhonak Lake through engineering interventions along with a state-of-the-art EWS. It also enhanced the adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities through awareness and training on evacuation and disaster risk response strategies. Three clear key capacity building tasks identified:

01 Vulnerability prioritization of all glacial lakes vulnerable to GLOF risk

02 Installation of integrated EWS along the Teesta Basin

03 Implementation of GLOF Hazard Management Plan, including capacity building of the down-stream communities

In Sikkim, 14 of the more than 300 glacial lakes have been identified as vulnerable.

The scaling-up of the GLOF pilot to all vulnerable lakes would benefit villages covering almost 75% of the state and benefiting 95% of the vulnerable communities.

Spring Shed Development Programme —Sikkim

In Sikkim, 80% of rural households depend on springs for drinking water and irrigation. *Dhara Vikas* is a UNDP-SDC spring development project completed in 2019 and its core thrust was to catch surface run-off by digging trenches and recharging groundwater sources. The salient features of the pilot were:

Analysis of geotagged spring points

Analysis of spring discharge with meteorological data.

Analysis of long-term that can be undertaken by the government.

Implementation of State Climate Change Action Plan — Manipur

UNDP, in partnership with MoEFCC and Global Environment Facility (GEF), is implementing a project on 'Market Transformation and Removal of Barriers for Effective Implementation of the State Climate Change Action Plan.' Interactions, interventions and partnerships between various state government departments, academic institutions, Energy Efficient and Renewable Energy equipment suppliers, project developers and financial institutions are being worked upon.

The focus is on:

- Implementation of project activities in Manipur
- Mobilization of low-cost financing to upscale climate change mitigation actions

Bold climate action could trigger at least US$26 trillion in economic benefits by 2030 globally

VIII NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SECURE Himalaya Project —Sikkim

The SECURE Himalaya Project is an initiative by the MoEFCC and UNDP supported by GEF. The project seeks to implement participatory conservation plans in select snow leopard landscapes. In Sikkim, the project initiatives are:

- **Enhancing capacities of government institutions through:**
  - Development of comprehensive wetland management plans for high-altitude areas
  - Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) to measure implementation impact in Protected Area management.
  - Sustainable Harvesting Protocols designed for key medicinal and aromatic plants.
  - Standardized data collection protocols to mitigate illegal trade in wildlife and medicinal plants.
- **Strengthening community-based conservation models through:**
  - Capacity building and training of Biodiversity Management Committees and preparation of Peoples' Biodiversity Registers.
  - Training of 'Himal Rakshaks' or community volunteers undertaking monitoring and surveillance activities.
  - Upscaling plastic waste management model of local Dzumsas.
  - Automated alarm systems to reduce human-wildlife conflict.
- **Alternative livelihoods for communities to reduce natural resource dependency including:**
  - Solar drying systems for large cardamom to reduce fuelwood consumption.
  - Detailed micro-plans prepared for high altitude villages in snow leopard landscapes.

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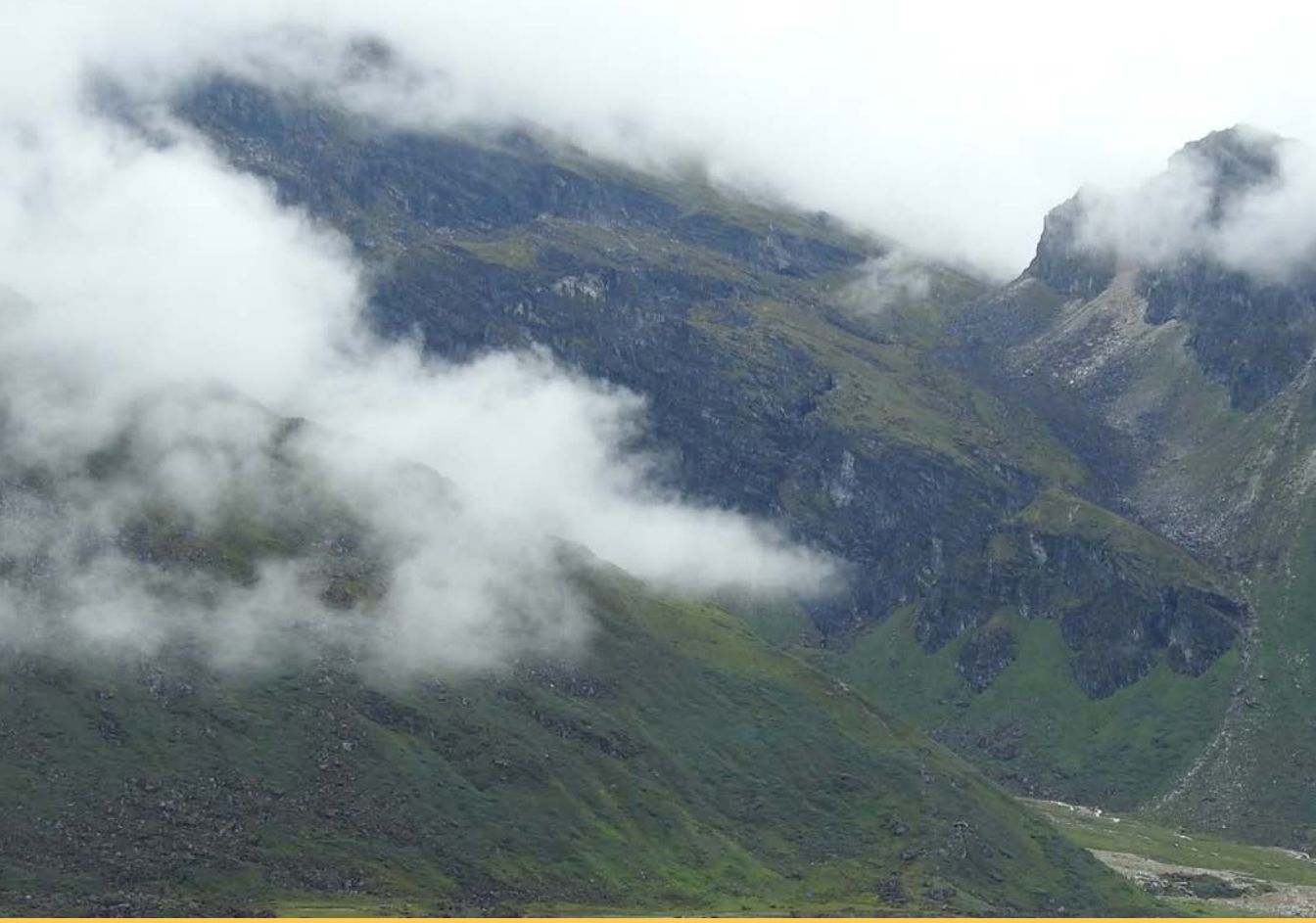

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