

THE JOY OF ACCOMPANYING THE POOR

Diamond Jubilee of IGSSS



Indo-Global
Social Service Society
Celebrating the Spirit of Humanity







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MESSAGE

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners

I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and pride on the diamond jubilee commemoration of Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS). Since 1961, IGSSS has tirelessly worked towards uplifting and empowering the marginalized and vulnerable communities and created significant impact in their lives. Over the past six decades, our journey has been one of resilience, compassion, and unwavering commitment to creating positive change in the world.

With great pleasure, I present “The Joy of walking with the Poor”. The coffee table book fondly remembers the partners, communities, collaborators who walked with us. It takes us through memory lane and give us glimpses of our work, communities, the triumphs, the happiness, and pride.

This coffee table book stands not only as a tribute to our past accomplishments but as a beacon of hope for the future we continue to shape. As I reflect on lives we have touched, I am reminded that our collective efforts have transformed dreams into reality, and adversity into opportunity. It is a time to remember the lives touched, the positive impact created, and the transformative changes brought about in the lives of countless individuals and communities.

In the pages of this book, you will find stories that illuminate the impact of our work: tales of individuals whose lives have been forever changed, communities lifted out of despair, and ecosystems restored. It is a testament to the dedication of our staff, the resilience of the communities we serve, and the unwavering support of individuals like you who believe in our mission.

This would not have been possible without Dr. Joe Xavier, who for more than 2 years of time traveled the length and breadth of the country, met the partners, communities, listened to their stories and documented the same. I wish to thank Dr. Joe for his hard work to encapsulate the experiences of IGSSS, which is now published on the commemoration of 60 years of IGSSS. And special thanks to Shikha and communication team for designing and editing the final version of the book.

I dedicate the coffee table book, “The joy of Walking with Poor” to all the individuals who have been associated with IGSSS; community, staff, volunteers, donors, or partners for contributing to the IGSSS’ unparalleled legacy of compassion and service. The book celebrates the collective efforts and milestones and look forward to a future where impact of IGSSS’ work continues to be felt far and wide.

Happy Reading!

John Peter Nelson
Executive Director



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SPEAKING FROM THE HEART

Characteristics of IGSSS

Diverse stakeholders describe the nature and characteristics of IGSSS from their personal experiences.

A TRUST SPACE

Mr. Jyoti Kiran, who implemented the Samaveshi project in Lucknow stated, “IGSSS was my guide. We did not have a donor-recipient relationship, though IGSSS funded our projects”. Mr. Sohan and Mr. Ravi Sigh, who partnered with IGSSS on the Sustainable Options for Uplifting Livelihood (SOUL) project in Rajasthan categorically stated, “The mutual trust built up over the years made us more responsible in project implementation. Many partners of IGSSS stated that they cherished the trust and confidence of IGSSS, which made them more responsible in project implementation, reporting and accountability.





A LEARNING SPACE

Cardinal Oswald Gracias in his interview stated, "I was proud to be associated with IGSSS. I was deeply impressed by their concern for the poor. In every board meeting, a segment of the discussions was focussed on learning and improving the quality of work and learning."

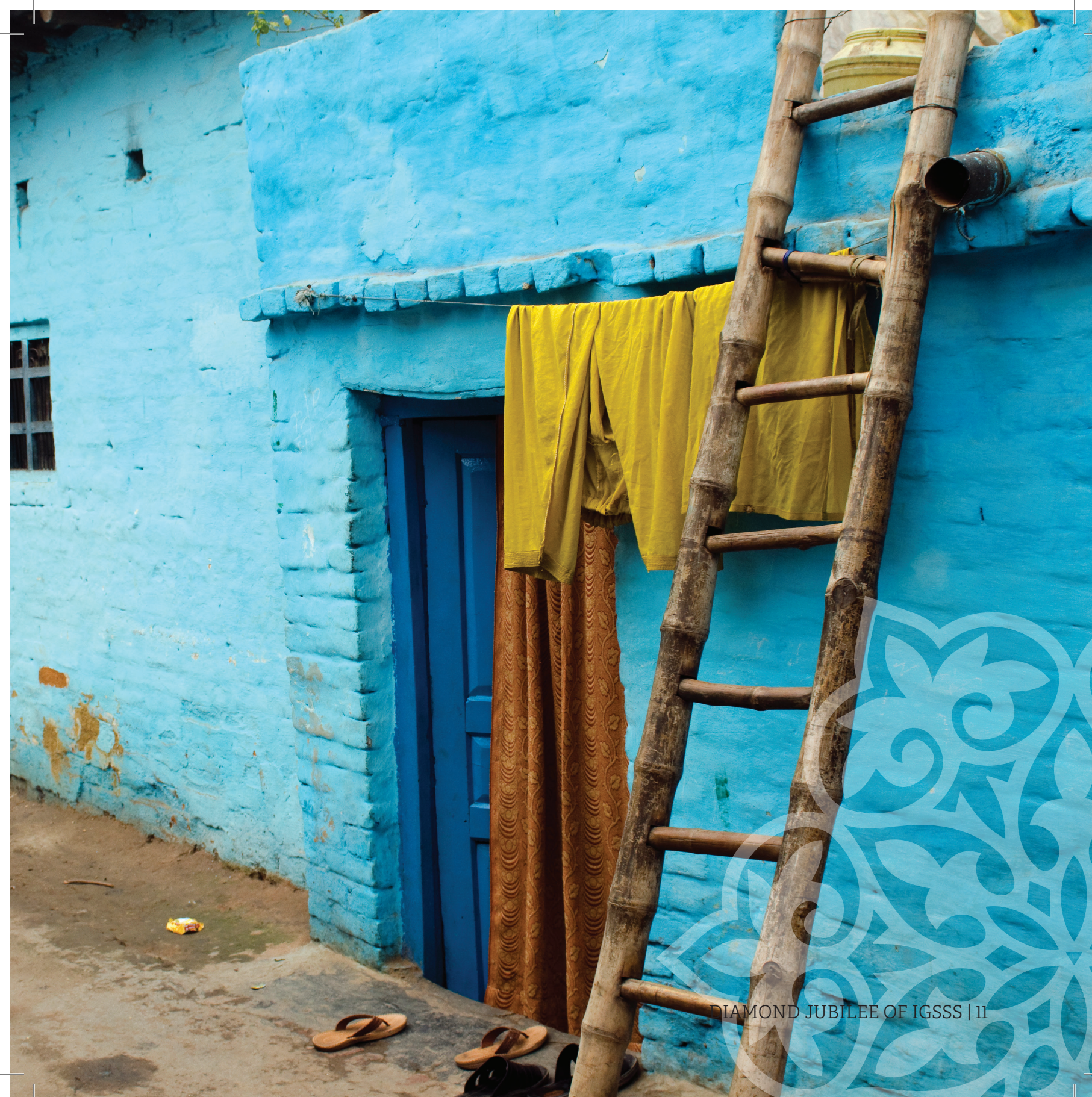


A DARING SPACE

IGSSS was never content with traditional interventions. 'Kashmir is a case in point', said Dr. Cherian, the current Vice-President and board member. As early as 2004, reflecting on the socio-economic condition of the people of Kashmir, IGSSS initiated pilot projects. In the very next year, it set up a Regional Office in Srinagar. Today IGSSS has Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). It has taken more than 15 years to reach this level".

"Very few NGOs have linked agriculture with climate action and IGSSS is a model creator in this field.", expressed a partner from Odisha.







A YOUTH NURTURING SPACE

Students Mobilisation Initiative For Learning Through Exposure (SMILE) has been one of the flagship programmes of IGSSS on youth development. Spot/identify, nurture, and support has been the mantra. “I was a SMILE fellow in 1994. My skills were spotted and nurtured. Trained and motivated by IGSSS, later I was part of PRAVAH, which works with youth. I can say that the DNA of IGSSS is youth”, said Ms. Asharaf Patel, founder member and board member of Pravah and Community – The Youth Collective.

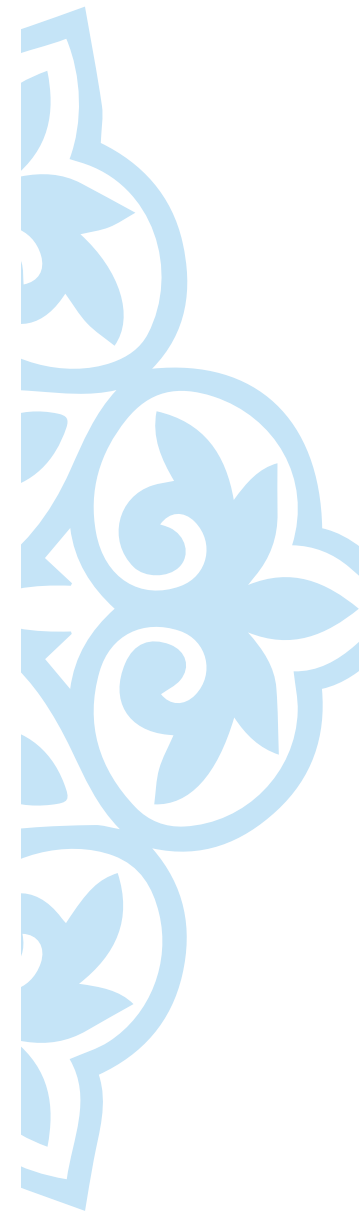


AN EVOLVING ASPIRATIONAL SPACE

“IGSSS has evolved over the years, responding to the needs of the times and the aspirations of the people served. IGSSS has nurtured new and small NGOs and accompanied them to fulfil their aspirations to serve the poor and the marginalised”, commented Dr. N. J. Kurian, a former President of IGSSS.

IGSSS seems to fulfil the aspirations of the young developmental practitioners. Ms. Sreya Mozumdar who worked in IGSSS between 2012 – 2018, succinctly stated, “IGSSS gave me roots to be grounded in the hard realities of people and wings to fly. The organisation is a space filled with opportunities”.

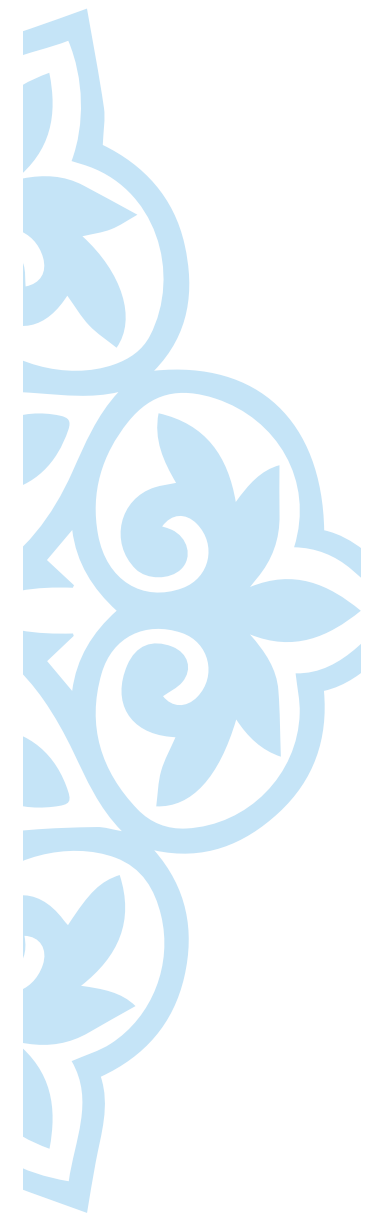




AN INCLUSIVE SPACE

“Diversity and inclusion have been the hallmark of IGSSS. Thematic approach helped IGSSS not to get trapped into an exclusive sectoral or social category (caste) approach. Whether it was youth empowerment programmes, sustainable agriculture or women empowerment, the projects focused on working with the vulnerable and most neglected communities with preference to socially excluded communities.”, stated a donor partner. IGSSS has also taken conscious steps to work with transgenders. It has recruited staff from transgender community in the programme planning and operations.





A SELF-CRITIQUING SPACE

A striking example of self-critiquing was pointed out by a donor. One of the donors said, “Usually most of the project implementers project only the positive side. This was not the case with IGSSS. I received a project report that it was not a success and outcomes projected could not be realised. I insisted that no more money should be wasted in evaluating a failed project. But the Director calmly said,

“I understand what you are saying. However, the organisation will spend from its local resources and evaluate the project and process to understand what went wrong and to learn lessons from a failed project”. I understood that donors also have got to learn. I found facilitating and servant leadership at the top level of IGSSS leadership.”





AN INSTITUTION BUILDER

One of the main goals of IGSSS has been to engage in people-led development. Several NGOs in India owe their inspiration to their accompaniment and support provided by IGSSS. These NGOs enjoyed the programmatic approach of IGSSS: baseline/endline studies, pilot to major interventions, evidenced based and data driven approach, strong Management Information System (MIS), regular bench marking and so on. "While many NGOs are concerned about themselves and their growth, IGSSS was truly instrumental in building our organisation. IGSSS has the right people and right systems", said Mr. Kushwant of Ankur Yuva Chetna.





EXPERTISE IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

IGSSS has carried out massive humanitarian relief for people affected by flood, earthquake, cyclone, tsunami, drought etc and has received a few awards for being effective in disaster response. Shivani from Christian Aid said, "IGSSS's ability to jump into a situation and respond, adhering to core humanitarian standards and accountability to community make IGSSS a unique

organisation. Closeness to the community, ability to win over the trust and confidence of the community, professionalism, accountability, and inclusion are the aspects that I witnessed during monitoring visits. These dimensions demonstrate that IGSSS is a value-based organisation more than a mere service-oriented organisation".



A LEGACY SETTER

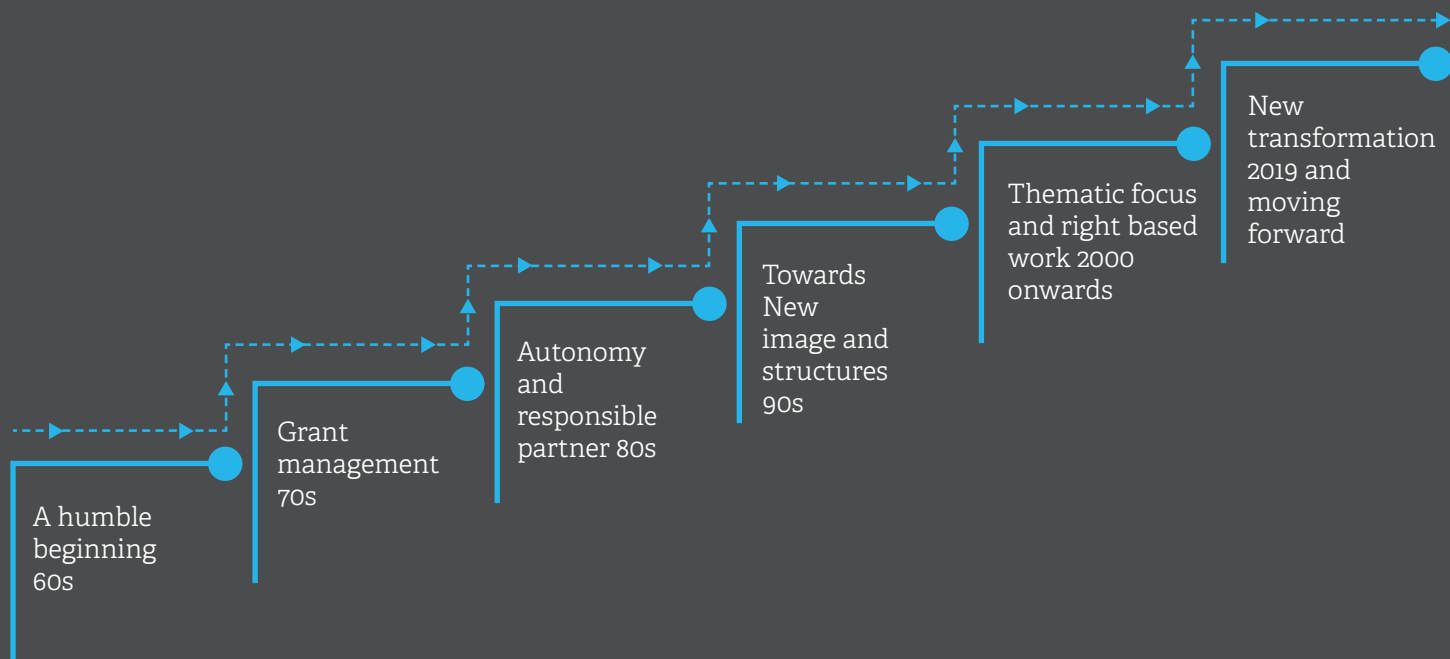
Mr. Krishna, Jan Vikas, Indore, a partner in Samaveshi Shehar was working with ragpickers in urban settlements. He said, "Initially I used to tell IGSSS, the need to fulfil immediate needs owing to the vulnerability of the people. IGSSS staff insisted that NGOs are not providers but facilitators of developmental processes. In hindsight, I can say that the legacy passed on by IGSSS was the right approach. We, as a local organisation instilled the same approach with community leaders, and they now are on their own. I owe this learning to IGSSS."



A FASCINATING JOURNEY

Thank you for being part of our quest

THE TRAJECTORY OF IGSSS



A SELF-EFFACING BEGINNING

- Fr. Felix A Plattner, a Swiss Jesuit, deputed by Misereor arrived in Delhi in July 1960 and set up the office of the “Indo German Social Service”.
- The Indo-German Social Service Society (IGSSS) was registered on 9 May 1961 under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, in Delhi. The major objective of IGSSS was to function as a trustee of Misereor in India.
- In 1965, the Society became the de jure donor of grants sanctioned by Misereor for projects in India.
- Mr. K. T. Thomas was appointed as Secretary of IGSSS and the Chief Executive of the organization.
- Fr. Frank N Loesch S.J was the first resident representative of Misereor in India and to the Indo-German Social Service Society from June 1961 to January 1972.
- The Personal and Medical Aid (PMA) Programme was initiated in 1966 which aimed at supporting poor patients suffering from life threatening diseases.
- The individual scholarship programme was started in 1966.



FROM 1970 - GRANT MANAGEMENT PHASE

- By the middle of 1973, the Constitution of the Society had been changed significantly, to make IGSSS a more autonomous and responsible Indian partner.
- Fr. J.B Thiel S.J was resident representative of Misereor in India and to IGSSS from June 1973 to 1980.
- By late 70s', 6 major departments namely account, analysis, counselling, project planning, project administrator and project service were in place.
- In 1978, IGSSS launched a programme called Development, Motivation and Leadership Training Programme (DMLTP) modelled on the adult education programme of the Government of India.
- 20 August 1978 was an important day in the history of IGSSS. The foundation stone of the new premises for IGSSS, at 28 Lodi Road, Institutional Area, New Delhi was laid.
- Mr. Schmitt Degenhardt, President, Misereor inaugurated the building by unveiling the commemorative.







FROM 1980 – AS AN AUTONOMOUS AND RESPONSIBLE PARTNER

- A shift came in 1984 giving a new thrust to the concept of partnership which envisaged that IGSSS, besides monitoring the funded projects, could directly promote human development to help the people in need. This means IGSSS's role as a trustee of Misereor was diluted and IGSSS could exercise their right to make donations directly to partners.
- The organizational structure of IGSSS was evaluated by external experts through self-appraisal of organizational performance. With effect from 1985, the structure was simplified and functionally streamlined.
- In 1987, Awareness Training and Motivation for Action (ATMA) was launched to enhance the self-determination of the poor, the basis for all future programmes of IGSSS.



FROM 1990 – TOWARDS A NEW IMAGE AND GOVERNANCE

- IGSSS formulated a five year plan which necessitated some changes. The major change involved a gradual move towards adoption of specific geographical area(s) and addressing the crucial problem(s), with the people's involvement in the process.
- The five year plan envisaged a decentralized operation. While the Northern Region was already in operation in Delhi, the Western Region was established in Pune in August 1992.
- The name of IGSSS was changed from “Indo-German Social service society” to “Indo-Global Social Service Society”, with a new logo.



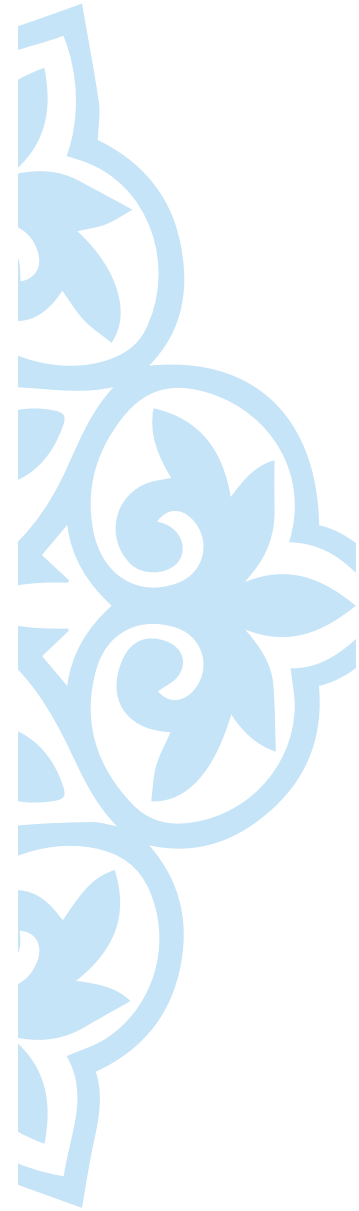


FROM 2000 – THEMATIC RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

- In 2002, IGSSS launched the National Integrated Empowerment Programme (NIEP) with an objective to consolidate the programmatic approach of IGSSS.
- External evaluation of the National Integrated Empowerment Programme (NIEP) was initiated by Misereor in 2007.
- IGSSS has a new name and new logo, positioning itself as a secular dynamics, professional and national development support organization.
- Major recommendation was to consolidate the efforts and focus on limited issues in a limited geographical area (clusters) to have greater visibility. The whole programme process was to work with specific focus on sustainable livelihood in a rights-based approach.
- The new programme design, referred to as the Cluster Approach, where a cluster was defined as a contiguous geographical area which would be working for a period 4-8 years in partnership with 3-5 partners, sharing a common objective, was set in motion.



- Total of 12 clusters were identified in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur and Assam.
- IGSSS was awarded citation and appreciation for good practice in community based disaster risk reduction by Sphere India, in January 2010.







FROM 2010 – 2019 STRENGTHENING THEMATIC AREAS AND DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION

From 2010 – Strengthening thematic areas and direct implementation

- IGSSS focussed on Promoting sustainable livelihood, urban poverty and homelessness, disaster risk reduction, youth development, and gender.
- IGSSS completed 50 years in development promotion in May 2011. Shreshtha Puraskar was launched by IGSSS to commemorate its Golden Jubilee year. A Memoir, development and a work a profile of IGSSS from 1960-2010 was published. The IGSSS coffee book, Vignettes IGSSS, a visual documentation of the development interventions of the organization was published.
- In 2016, Ten years of IGSSS journey in Kashmir was published.
- In 2016, a strategic plan document for five years, 2016-20 was developed. Disaster Risk

Reduction (DRR), Youth development, Climate change and mitigation and Livelihood related themes assumed much significance.

- In 2020, IGSSS initiated a massive Covid-19 response, and the organisation was awarded by the India Today group, as the 'Best NGO Offering Healthcare Services during the Covid-19.'
- In 2021, IGSSS completed 60 years of its services to the excluded and the poor.
- Ms. Shanti Sundharam, the first woman to become the President of IGSSS.
- In 2022, a research work titled '60-Years of Building Community Resilience and Journey Ahead' and a coffee book titled 'The Joy of Accompanying with the Poor' were published.

WHERE ARE WE PRESENT?

Listening to communities before
project implementation









THEMATIC AREAS

Towards life, to its fullness

INVESTMENT ON PEOPLE SERVED

During the period of 1960 to 2010, the total aid given for various socio-economic development projects in India, was estimated at Rs 1,040 crores, for about 13,700 projects. A simple average calculation works out to be 274 projects a year at an average annual grant of Rs 20.8 crores.

Year	Number of families served	Amount spent
2010-2011	2,29,777	6,62,38,709.00
2011-2012	80,976	13,13,83,474.00
2012-2013	1,07,647	22,77,99,599.00
2013-2014	1,05,171	24,76,24,363.00
2014-2015	1,06,780	22,93,59,068.00
2015-2016	1,24,724	19,91,62,028.00
2016-2017	1,41,633	22,02,81,302.00
2017-2018	1,12,761	23,96,28,645.00
2018-2019	1,51,677	26,46,87,126.00
2019-2020	2,04,078	28,47,98,462.00
2020-2021	2,71,946	33,95,19,606.00
2021-2022	2,91,267	42,49,65,827.00
Total	19,28,437	2,87,54,48,209.00

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION

We eagerly await organic food production certification

“We have formed a Village Development Committee with 45 members. IGSSS helped us to reclaim about 30 small ponds and build 2 check dams. Now, we have a perennial water source for cultivation. All the families are into organic farming. While the cost of production decreased, the soil became rich. The produce increased year by year. We also got into mixed cropping. Vegetable production has helped us to increase our daily income. The additional profit per acre is about Rs. 3,000 to 4,000. Some hotels from cities are buying our vegetables as they are produced organically. We have applied to the government to get a certificate – 100 percent organic village and we are waiting”, stated Kalavathi, a Santhal woman, from Saram village, Gola Block, Jharkhand.



Group farming builds the community and increases income

In one of the villages in Assam, IGSSS is working with farmers. Some members of the village have begun group farming, with masterly calculation. The leader narrated. “In our area, a daily labourer gets Rs. 250 per day for 8 hours of work. Work is also not available every day. On an average in a month, one could get a maximum of Rs. 5,000/- We, 12 of us, got together and took 12 acres of land on lease. Seed expenses were Rs. 4,000. We planted potatoes and pumpkins. In two and half months, we got potatoes worth Rs 7,000 and in four months, pumpkins worth Rs. 5,000. It involved only 2 to 3 hours of work every day. What a good additional income we are generating.”





ইণ্ডিয়া গ্ল'বেল চ'হিয়েন গার্ডিচ ১'ছইট'ন উদ্যোগত (IGSSS)
অক
Secours Catholique ৰ অৰ্প সাহায্যত

শ্ৰী পদ্ধতিত বড়ো ধানৰ খেতি

স্থান : ভোমা গাঁও

Shejaar Vegetable Producer Company Limited

Shejaar Vegetable Producer Company Limited (SVPCL) is a farmer's company located at Sumbal cluster of Bandipora District and established in 2019.

The journey began with smallholder vegetable farmer groups coming together as Farmer's Producer's organisation. (FPO). The seed to expand FPO into a company was sown in 2015, during the decennial assessment study of Kashmir interventions of IGSSS.

The company now has its own brand and packaging services. The company has a turnover of more than Rs. 25 lacs with a net profit of Rs. 1.5 lacs. The major chunk of this income has come from the organic fertilisers/vermi compost which have been produced mostly by women shareholders. The FPO has signed a MOU with Tahoer Srinagar (Milk Vendor) for supplying the milk daily. Currently, the company has 416 shareholders with a share capital of Rs. 416,000.





Water conservation and regeneration changed our lives

Basanti Devi, a woman leader of Saradkala village, in Gola Block, Jharkhand narrated the changes in detail. She said, “425 members from 15 villages have formed a Farmer’s Production Organisation (FPO) and have applied for registration. In my Bediajara Tolla, we have formed a Village Development Committee. Women are giving lead in the functioning of the committee We have done micro planning for the development of the village. We are working on a link road facility, electricity to the village and some village road repair works. We have managed to stop alcoholism. There is improvement in the education of the children. IGSSS helped us to repair one well and three ponds. IGSSS not only helped us to improve our irrigation facility but also introduced floriculture. Marie gold cultivation has become a viable livelihood option.”





Mixed crop ... increased our income

Amar Kumar Gouda, National Capacity Building Coordinator (sustainable agriculture) based in Odisha said, “Cultivation of vegetables and pulses is introduced as a mixed crop. Through vegetable cultivation the farmers get additional and steady income. System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and System of Millet Intensification (SMI) are also introduced. Though these are labour intensive, the income has increased substantially. Farmer producers’ groups are formed who explore market opportunities, especially to sell vegetables. Earlier during the mono crop system, only at the end of harvesting people looked for market facilities. They had no knowledge of how markets function. Now with a multi-crop system, frequency of interface with the market has increased and farmers are looking for better prices for their produce.”





Increased income through fish cultivation and organic farming

Bhuri Manga and Resham Rathor, two Adivasi women from Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh happily said that through group fish farming they have made good money. “We 23 women in our village joined and took a pond on lease. In one season, we invested about Rs. 1.5 lacs and got a profit of about Rs. 4.5 lacs. This helped us to educate our children. We are expanding our fish business now”. Manu Singh Rup Singh Damor realised that he could make money like other farmers by engaging in organic farming. “I took a decision to give up my part time security job and focused fully on organic farming. Earlier I was getting an income of Rs.50,000 annually and now I am getting Rs. 180,000.”



You need not come with me, I can go alone for meetings

Savitri Kumari from a village in Jharkhand happily stated, “My food habits have changed. Earlier, my family was eating only rice and potatoes. As we are cultivating different vegetables in the field and in the kitchen garden these days, we eat a lot of vegetables, and we feel healthy. Through various training sessions I have built self-confidence. In the beginning, whenever I went out of my village for a common meeting, I would take my husband along. I have told him that henceforth I can go alone, and he need not accompany me. I have also bought a Scooty and I ride Scooty to attend the meetings. People around look at me with awe and wonder. I can vouch that through the motivation and guidance of IGSSS, the quality of my life has improved.”





DRR AND CLIMATE ACTION

Community is empowered with DRR techniques

Basant Kumar, State Coordinator of IGSSS leading work on DRR in Ganjam district in Odisha said, “A task force is formed composed of youth volunteers. Community members are trained, and they can assess damage with photos and data and submit it to the government.”

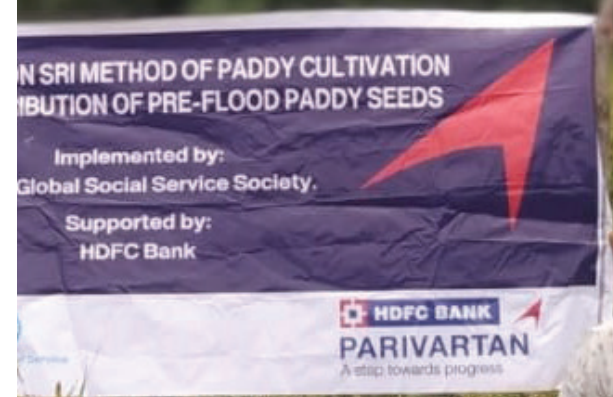
Nirupama Adhikari member of DRR committee was asked what she will do at the time of the cyclone and she said, “I will move to a safe place, and will carry food, medicines and important documents. I will assist pregnant women and children and move them to cyclone centres. I will take photos/pictures of damage, prepare a list of houses damaged, livelihood destroyed and submit to the government for compensation and rehabilitation.” As a comment, leaders stated that DRR preparedness cannot be a one-time action. Constant motivation and guidance of communities is required.



Saving a flood prone area

In Badhakara village in Lakhimpur, Assam, IGSSS has initiated mixed cropping, solar based irrigation, kitchen garden, paddy cultivation using SRI technique and conventional methods. It is a flood prone area. There was huge investment on DRR components, such as, construction of rescue centres, low cost but stilt toilets, solar lights, elevated water pumps and boat distribution. To earn additional income, traditional home-based weaving was given a face lift by setting up a common weaving centre where about 10 women work daily. The village development committee functions as the extended arm of IGSSS.





A farmer's generosity

IGSSS offered financial support to build a safety shelter, provided the community identified and offered land free of cost. The VDC members took up this challenge, negotiated with a few members who had pieces of land. Babul Mudo is a farmer. His own house was simple and tiled. Mudo came forward and offered a piece of land to build a safety shelter. IGSSS, with the active involvement of community members has built an impressive safety centre, having space for men and women separately, raised toilet facilities, bore well, kitchen and a storing place. The community members were proud of this achievement, and they expressed their gratitude to Babul for his big heart.

I saved a life

"I am Azia, aged 22 and studying 2nd year Architecture. I was trained in DRR, especially in saving the lives of the people in a flood prone area. Once Sakine, a pregnant woman, aged 25 got slipped into Ferozpora Nala. I got ready to plunge to help her. I also raised the alarm and immediately some people came to the spot. Sakine was pulled out and sent to a hospital. IGSSS DRR training gave me self-confidence. IGSSS has also provided materials like Belt, torch, helmet, jacket, shoe, foldable bed, and spade to the taskforce."





YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Spending 5-10 percent of time for community is worth

“Our Youth group was trained by IGSSS on various issues, such as youth as leaders, importance of working for the community and so on. We, as youth, felt that the dump yard was a big issue. It was close to the community and caused many health hazards to the community. We submitted a petition in corporation office. There was no response.

Again, we filed a complaint and visited the office three times. The youth leaders did not give up but followed it up. Finally, the dump yard was cleaned.”, said Rohit, a youth leader.

It was also amazing to hear from Rohit how he had learnt photography and used his skills for community development by using social media platforms. He is a freelance photojournalist and earned Rs. 75 lacs income in the last two years.







AI QUAD CAMERA
Shot by eRubi

Digital Resource Centre run by volunteers

One of the striking phenomena in Lakhimpur, Assam was the setting up of a Digital Resource Centre. A place was donated by the community, in the center of the village. "IGSSS supported us with repair of the building and helped us to buy a few tables. A good computer lab was set up, which is now functioning under the auspices of the Masjid committee." The teacher and volunteers were filled with joy. The volunteers said, "About 25 students are studying computers and they pay Rs. 500 per month. This takes care of the salary of the teacher. We are already helping community members to access government schemes by filling up applications, and to get various entitlement cards, such as PAN, e-Shram, guidance to make ration cards, Aadhaar card etc. Digital Resource Centre has become a credible centre for the community."



REDMI NOTE 9 PRO MAX
AI DUAL CAMERA



My hidden energy is blossoming

“I am Irfan and I used to be a shy person. I was not ready to come into the public domain as I was feeling diffident, socially, and psychologically. IGSSS helped me to learn skills and to train others. I believe that I am an asset and a blessing, and I can contribute. IGSSS gave me a platform and brought out my hidden potential.

Miriam aged 24 said, “Many organisations have given us free things but hardly, a few have accompanied and built the youth with the right kind of motivation and guidance. My voice is heard in my family. Community members respect me. Many women come to me and share their problems. I have handled critical issues like health and hygiene, especially Menstrual Hygiene Management, an issue spoken less of, and considered as taboo. We have broken it.”



I have a vocation to serve my community

Thiamboi is working as project coordinator in Manipur. The project goal is to identify potential youth, train them in appropriate skills and help them become employable. "I am from the community. I see youth directionless and unemployed. This pained me and I wanted to do something for the youth. IGSSS offered me an opportunity. I am proud of the changes among the youth in a short span of time".

Muanga and his friends were trained by IGSSS in painting. Muanga has formed a group of five and they take up painting contracts and earn a monthly income of Rs. 10,000. Thanglalen was a trainee turned trainer on painting and trained youth in 2018. When he was asked, "What gave you motivation to help others?" he said, "Individual passion, family background and guidance by IGSSS. IGSSS gave me an opportunity to learn painting, which has been my passion from my childhood."







URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Transforming sex workers

Ranjit Kumar is the head of Amar Trishta Seva Ashram, an NGO working in Muzaffarpur. “IGSSS gave our organisation an opportunity to work with sex workers. Our area is prone to sex workers and many young girls were regularly and illegally trafficked. It was a huge racket with nexus among many stakeholders. With the help of ASP, we could change the life of many sex workers. Positions in Public Distribution System (PDS) were given to commercial sex workers. The ASP helped us to access many government schemes. Our NGO became popular among the sex workers.”



Confidence and bargaining power helped us to grow in dignity

Lipi Nayak is a leader of a domestic workers SHG in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. She said, “Training sessions helped me to be a confident leader. I found men were drinking and passing comments on women when we were returning to our homes in the evening. Some women were scared, and they never questioned men. Some of us got together and we challenged men. Men got scared and left the area and women felt safe. For me, this is a big change.” She also said, “During lockdown, as a group, we took out our savings and provided cooked food for 50 families. I have learnt the availability of various government schemes and how to access them. Domestic working women come to me for help to get entitlement cards and government schemes. I help them.”

I am ready to study, give me an opportunity

Kulsum Bibi living in a slum in Guwahati stated, “I have been working in a house for 10 years and in the beginning, I was given Rs. 1,500 per month. Now, after 10 years, I am getting Rs. 2500. I work for 3 hours in cleaning and mopping. Rest of the time, I do not have work. I could not send my children to school as I could not get birth certificates. I come from a faraway district of Assam. The Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI) helped me to get birth certificates and now, my children are in school.” The teacher pointed out that many children do not get opportunities. With some motivation and guidance, many migrant children are excelling in studies.



Aatma Santushti is my gain

Deepak Kumar has been working as a painter for 20 years in Allahabad. “Sometime around 2017, I saw a board on the roadside about the Labour union. I said to myself, “Why not join this union?” From the time, I started working with the labour union, many labourers came to me for help. I did what I could. Eventually, I emerged as a leader. I got cycles for the

construction labourers, cash support for the education of children of labourers and gas connection to poor families. Today, I am surrounded by many poor people for help. I continue my painting work and all my spare time goes into helping the needy persons. I can only say, by my work, I get Aatma Santushti. Later, I came to know that IGSSS had a role in sowing the seed in forming this collective.”



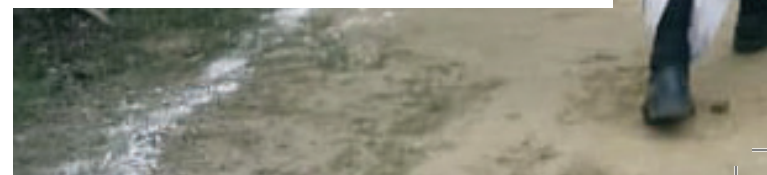
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

A rural community transformed with a renovation of a school

With the support of IGSSS, an NGO took up school renovation in a remote village bordering Nepal. The head of the NGO stated, "What gave me satisfaction was the identification of the schools. Schools in remote villages, totally neglected, were chosen. Neither the teachers nor the students were ready to sit inside the school. The school buildings resembled cowsheds. There were snakes around. Toilets were unusable. Totally, 5 Primary and 2 Middle schools were repaired.



The community members were jubilant during the inauguration of the schools, and the State SC/ST Commission Chairperson inaugurated them. Open defecation stopped and education and health of the students drastically improved". When the researcher visited one of the schools, the children and teachers expressed deep gratitude for IGSSS. The contribution of the NGO was recognised, and it received the best NGO award. The Government officials show-cased IGSSS' repair work as an ideal model to be replicated.



क विद्यालय सुड़ियाही प्र.-फुलपरास



LIC HFL **IGSSS Indo-Global**
Sri Aurobindo Society
LIC HFL School Renovation Project
Implemented at
Middle School Suriyahi, Madhubani, Bihar
Renovation Work includes: Installation of Hand pump, Raised platform, Whole building floor leveling, Wall concept, Room flooring and plaster, Veranda floor, Electrical wiring, Earth piling, Boundary wall repairing & Construction, etc.
Organized by: **Prakash and Sunita Jaisankar Mahapatra**
Supported by: **LIC HFL**







Access to safe drinking water

After severe rains in Kerala in August 2018, many sources of water got contaminated. More than 30 community wells were sabotaged under the deluge in Kanikuzhy village, Idukki district, leaving 1000 households left with no option but to use contaminated water. One of the wells, which were used by the 200 school children and 10 households was filled with mud leaving the water not fit for drinking. The school was using contaminated water as they did not have any other water resource. In consultations with the Panchayat, IGSSS decided to clean the well. The well was cleaned and now it is providing clean water to the school children and families living nearby. To sustain this intervention, IGSSS trained the village WASH committee on how to keep the well clean, provided water filters and took up campaigns on sanitation and hygiene. The children were very happy.

THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

IGSSS intervened in 41 rural districts and 28 cities and towns in 18 states..

Total financial investment

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	Total	%
Amount spent on relief	3,98,08,528	13,67,18,062	17,65,26,590	66.6
Amount spent on Livelihood support, cash transfer and cash for work	2,58,62,950	5,61,60,000	8,20,22,950	30.9
Amount spent on critical supplies to strengthen Rural Health infrastructure		66,50,332	66,50,332	2.5
Total investment	6,56,71,478	19,95,28,394	26,51,99,872	100

Total number of individuals/families served

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	Total
Total individuals served	5,22,455	6,25,000	11,47,455
Total families served	1,04,491	1,25,000	2,29,491

I feel proud when I remember the person

“A young divorcee lady lost her both legs while trying to commit suicide a few years ago. She was in fear as she thought that she might be prone to the Covid-19. She asked me whether I could take her to the vaccination centre. I along with other volunteers helped her with mobility support and got her vaccinated. She also received cash support

to start a small petty shop. She is doing well now. I feel proud that by volunteering I could instil hope in the life of a desperate woman”, said Sapna, a volunteer from Chhattisgarh. A similar experience was shared by Om Prakash, a community mobilizer from Pali block, who reached out to an old man with a ration kit, who was living all alone. “When the old man received the ration kit, he was singing that God is kind.”



70 THE JOY OF ACCOMPANYING THE POOR

Parent's group reached dry ration to widows

"IGSSS constructed a road last year in Paikhala, West Bengal after the Amphan cyclone through cash for work. It also later formed a Parent's group in the village. During the Covid-19, the parent's group referred to IGSSS the need for providing dry ration to Bidhoba village. IGSSS staff were unaware of this community. This village had a substantial number of widows. When IGSSS staff agreed to support, the leaders of the parent's group hired an autorickshaw by themselves and took the dry ration kits for distribution on their own. The villagers were deeply grateful for their generosity. I could not believe that a group which was formed by IGSSS had developed a deep sense of solidarity and found joy in reaching out to the most vulnerable persons", stated a staff member.



I called him on Eid and thanked him

Mohamed Sultan, living in Nowgam Payeen, in J&K is a daily wage labourer. "During the Covid-19 I could not get any work. I received ration from PDS. It was not sufficient. I was given 10 items, especially 50 kgs of rice and 10 kg of oil, tea, sugar, masala and so on. This support helped me to feed my family for 5 months.

I liked the way the materials were distributed.

I was given a token and asked to come to a particular spot on a particular date. When I reached, there were volunteers and staff of IGSSS, who instructed us about the Covid-19 precautions. After registering our family details in an app, they gave us a dry ration kit. On the day of Eid, I called the volunteer and staff and thanked them. On the distribution spot, a government official visited us and appreciated the work done."



I am doing a dignified small business

“I started working as a sex worker after my husband’s sudden death in an accident. I suffered from a nerve problem. During COVID the brothel was closed. I did not have money to buy medicines or go for a check-up. By December 2020 I completely lost my sensation in the right leg and by the time the brothel resumed, I could not be a part of it anymore.”

I opened a small saree business in the red-light area of Kalighat with the financial assistance of Rs 15,000 received from IGSSS. Slowly, my business picked up. I sold 8-10 sarees a day ranging from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000. Daily, my income was about Rs. 1,200. I am proud to say that I am earning more than what I had been earning as a sex worker. My shop has given me dignity. I hope to expand my business”, said Saidia Bibi.



A sewing machine support changed my life

Somya from Guwahati narrated how her life has changed. "I am a resident of Shitalbari working in a tailoring shop. During the lockdown I was jobless. I was the only earning member of the 6 member family.

After the lockdown, it became worse for me as my husband was affected by the Covid.

My family came under community surveillance. Having heard about my desperate situation, IGSSS offered me cash support and I purchased a sewing machine and started stitching masks. This was a turning point in my life. Now I am stitching clothes at home and able to earn a reasonable income. The most important change is that I am the master of myself – I decide my work time and rate for the work. I have paid back the loan taken during the pandemic. I have found meaning in my life".



Person with Disability smiled

Gulam Hasad, a person with disability lives in Gadakund, Bandipore. Gulam was given Rs. 15,000 through bank transfer. His wife went to a nearby village and bought a pregnant goat for Rs. 10,000. After a month the goat yielded a female and a male kid. Gulam and his wife were in an exultant mood as they were expecting only one kid. The family has planned to sell the male after a few months and continue to multiply.

“Earlier I was weaving carpet. I stopped the work 3 years ago as I became sick and handicapped.” One of Gulam’s daughters said, “Earlier we used to buy milk on a few occasions. Now we have milk tea at home every day. The goat gives us at least 1 litre of milk every day. We use 50 percent for family, and we leave 50 percent for young lambs.”



Honouring Bidya, a cerebral palsy patient

“Am I worth all your efforts!? God might have made me incomplete so that I am filled with your love and compassion towards me” Bidya Sardar, a cerebral palsy patient exclaimed to Suparna, a field volunteer.

Bidya resides in an extreme corner of a village in Aamgachia, South 24 Pargans, West Bengal. A pond divides his shanty from the rest of the village. The only way of crossing the pond was a narrow electric pole and someone had to carry him every time across the pond.

When an opportunity of Cash for Work was offered, the village took a decision to honour Bidya, the first graduate of the village, despite being handicapped. The community managed to mobilise resources in addition to the Cash for Work support provided by IGSSS. Eventually, a road was laid. Today, Bidya drives his wheelchair across the pond by himself through the constructed road and gives free tuition to the children in his village.





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