Change Initiatives

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23

Change Initiatives

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INTRODUCING
CHANGE INITIATIVES

Change initiatives is a Calcutta-based non-governmental organization working in the areas of education, employment creation and environment. We work mainly among women, children and youth. Our work has a strong focus on ICTs, and we work on proven solutions to development problems — both of which help us to quickly achieve the desired results.

FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY

DEAR PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT,

Here we are. Another year gone and Change Initiatives is into its 22nd year. A year when we came out of restrictions and we moved full swing into our coding, education and environment projects and ventured into newer areas of gender development and working with specially-abled people, while inviting more volunteers to come to our projects. At the same time, we were able to enhance our research and monitoring and evaluation and data capabilities, giving a deeper base to our activities.

Change Initiatives is about our stakeholders. One that comes to mind is the students of the Let'sCode project — where we have set up computer labs in 10 government schools in the Garia-Sonarpur region. The students have boldly ventured into the new area beyond their day-to-day learning, giving shape to their imagination on the computer screen by mastering intricate concepts like variables, loops and functions. They have also entered the do-it-yourself world of tinkering as they give more strength to the concepts of science. The students have been ably assisted by the teachers and headmasters of the schools, who have openly embraced project-based learning, including coding and tinkering in their class routines.

We recollect our women SHG members in our Plant Mangroves, Rebuild Sunderbans project. They have procured saplings, build nurseries and then transplanted them into the plantation sites. All 3 lakhs of saplings — and now they have pledged to protect the saplings as they turn into mangrove trees in five years. They are aware Sunderbans are not just mangroves, but also the role of mangroves as carbon sinks, thereby fighting climate change. Their hard work is paying off: the swamps round the mangroves are now spawning flora and fauna and as they groves, the women of Sunderbans are contributing in their own small way to rebuild the bio-diversity of Sunderbans.

And how can we forget the dear children of Kisholoy: from the slums of Dhakuria to the dry lands of Purulia the children have openly embraced joyful learning, while they build their foundational numeracy and literacy skills. The children come to the classes regularly as they recite rhymes, count numbers in exciting ways and learn about their environment. We also thank those who have graciously contributed to giving the children warm clothes and hoodies and their support in providing the children nutritious support.

Now as we enter into a new year, we are continuing to look for opportunities in environment, coding and digital literacy. Each will be carried out with our key strengths: local level co-ordination and implementation in a multi stake-holder framework, backed by data, evidence-based action and behavioural science. I end with a Big Thank You to all our supporters and well-wishers who have been with us in this long journey. And of course our students, the women and the children of Panchanantala and Purulia — without you this would not have been possible.

Thank You. Stay Safe and Stay Well.

Mr. Suryatirtha Ray, Secretary (Honorary)

ABOUT CHANGE INITIATIVES

Change Initiatives' mission is to promote learning so that everyone lives a life of dignity, is capable of exercising choices that affect their well-being, contributes to society, and nurtures the environment.

Mission

Promoting learning for poverty reduction, with a thrust on ICTs

Vision

Change Initiatives is an organization that takes technology to the grassroots and builds to scale solutions for the most pressing problems of our time.

Our objectives

a) Empowering students of government schools and from disadvantaged communities through soft skills, mentoring with a particular focus on girls b) Building foundational and numeracy skills of poor children and engaging in their mental development as well as interacting with their parents and community. c) Promoting livelihood among women and youth d) Engaging communities to protect the environment and fight climate change

Key Themes

Environment   **Education**   **Empowerment**

Strategies

a) Implementing proven solutions in development that are based on the principles of evidence-based approach to poverty reduction b) Use ICTs and proven ICT- based solutions to development as they accelerate development outcomes and impact c) Set up human development centres as a single place to carry out all community development activities besides being a meeting place for women, children, and youth

Principles

Work among the vulnerable sections of the society — women, youth, children, the aged and the disabled.

Geographic Focus

Guwahati & Baksa

Kalimpong
Darjeeling
Jalpaiguri
Alipurduar
Cooch Behar
North Dinajpur
South Dinajpur
Maldah
Murshidabad
Birbhum
Paschim Bardhaman
Purba Bardhaman
Nadia
Purulia
Bankura
Hooghly
North 24 Parganas
Pashchim Midnapore
Howrah
Kolkata
Jhargram
East Midnapore
South 24 Parganas

60 km
40 mi
N
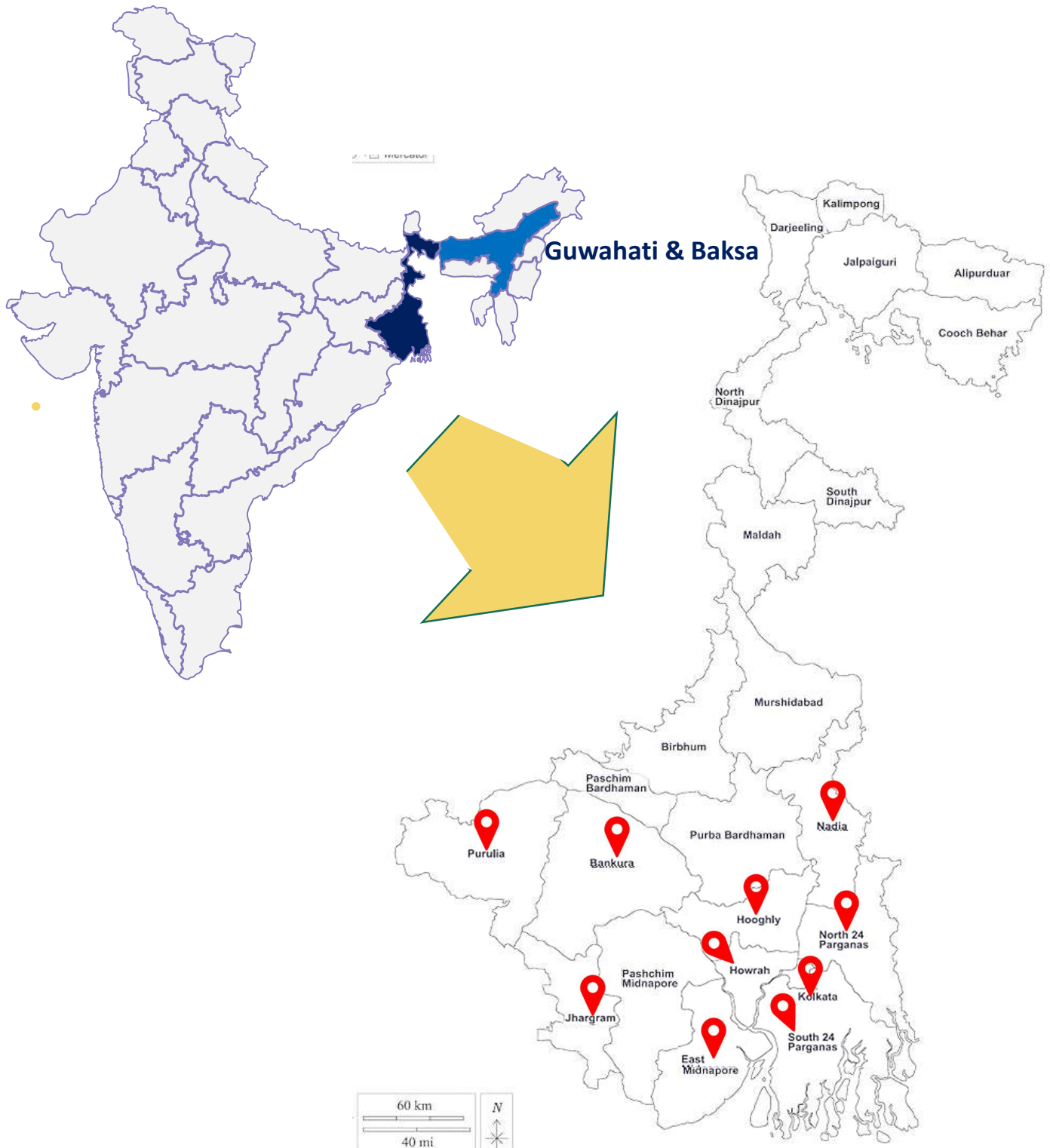
BASUDHA (ENVIRONMENT)

Project Name	Target Group	Location	Target Number	Number Achieved	Funding Agency
Mission Million Trees	Empowering Change: Women SHGs Leading the Battle Against Climate Change and Deforestation	Hentalbari and Kalidaspur villages, Chhottomollakhali GP and Kumirmari village, Kumirmari GP, GOSABA	2,30,000	2,30,000	Schneider Electric India Foundation, Tellus Carbon

One of our environmental programs under the Basudha (The Earth) initiative is Mission Million Trees, whose main goals are to combat climate change and reduce deforestation.

Under this program, Change Initiatives has planted almost 3.20 lakh saplings of mangroves, 60 thousand fruit trees, and wood trees in West Bengal, including Jhargram, Nadia, Hooghly, Purulia, and Bankura districts, the Sundarbans, as well as in the urban areas of Kolkata and New Town.

In the year gone by (FY-2022-23), we have planted around 2.3 lakh saplings: 150000 mangroves were planted at Hentalbari and Kalidaspur villages under Chhottomollakhali gram panchayat and 80,000 were planted a Kumirmari under Kumirmari GP in the Sunderbans. As many as 65 self-help groups were involved in the plantation. The total number of women involved was around 850.

We engaged with local Self-Help Groups (SHGs), emphasizing to them the significance of mangrove plantations in safeguarding the local habitat. Several meetings were held with panchayat members, SHGs, and the local Block Development Officer (BDO). We also celebrated Mangrove Day on July 26.

Subsequent meetings were conducted with stakeholders to select the plantation site and ensure proper program implementation. Location Details of the plantation area were collected through GPS. The land was prepared and fenced with nets. Volunteers from our corporate sponsors visited the site and actively participated in planting the saplings. Interns from the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, visited the plantation site to understand the modus operandi of the

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project. Strict monitoring is ongoing in the plantation area to ensure the growth and survivability of the saplings.

To further our initiative, we aim to plant 50,000 mangroves this fiscal year (FY 2023-2024) in Sandeshkhali by utilizing vacant spaces. Involving the community and empowering local Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for field implementation is a key component of our approach.

We also plan to establish a nursery for different mangrove species. By 2025, our vision extends to planting 200,000 mangroves and creating a mangrove nursery to support these vital ecosystems. Additionally, we plan to plant 17,000 saplings (FY 2023-2024) across multiple locations in West Bengal (Districts: Bankura and Purulia), Assam (District: Baksa), Rajasthan (District: Alwar), and Gurugram, as part of an initiative to promote a carbon-neutral cricket match.

LET'S CODE

Location	Target Group	Impact	Funding
Kolkata	Children from Government schools	5,080 children from 10 government schools in Classes VI to IX learning coding and tinkering	Capgemini
Madhyamgram	Tribal children of Khelaghar	68 students from class II to VIII learning basic computer and tinkering	Capgemini

Change Initiatives, in collaboration with Capgemini, embarked on this noble journey with the goal of providing accessible and high-quality computer coding education to students from Class VI to IX in 10

government schools across the Sonarpur area. By introducing coding and tinkering as an integral part of their curriculum, we aimed to equip these young learners with essential skills to thrive in the digital age and foster a passion for technology and innovation. The project is based on the principle of project-based learning. The children learn basic coding in Scratch and Python, with the learning aligned to building projects that can impact their daily lives. In this way, they learn soft-skills such as teamwork, leadership, and empathy as well acquire coding skills. A total of 5,080 students of Sonarpur area were enlisted in the project. Our reach has increased to Madhyamgram area as we have started basic computer and coding class at Khelaghar where around 68 students from class II to class VIII were enrolled.

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In the current fiscal year, we initiated regular classes in 10 selected schools encompassing urban, semi-urban, and rural areas. The selection process, including student recruitment and lab setup, has been successfully completed. Meetings with school heads were conducted multiple times. Among the chosen schools, five are girls' schools, three are co-ed, and two are boys' schools. The selected schools are: 1. Ghasiara Vidyapith, 2. Kalikapur Ramkamal Vidyapith, 3. Kalikapur Basanti Devi Balika Vidyalaya (H.S), 4. Balia Nafarchandra Balika Vidyalaya, 5. Greenpark Shiksha Sadan High School, 6. Garia Harimati Devi Uchcha Balika Vidyalaya, 7. Rajpur Vidyanidhi High School, 8. Laskarpur Rabindra Vidyapith, 9. Sonarpur Vidyapith H. S, 10. Kamrabad Girls High School.

The lab consists of four desktops, projector, 3d printer and other TLM items. All the labs have their own internet facility for better learning experience.

The main objective of the coding classes was to empower students with basic computer knowledge, fundamental coding skills and computational thinking abilities. By utilizing Scratch, a visual programming language, we aimed to make coding accessible and enjoyable for young learners, fostering their creativity and problem-solving capabilities.

To enhance problem-solving skills, leadership qualities, and teamwork abilities, we've conducted numerous science exhibitions in schools. These programs celebrate the innovative powers of children. Additionally, workshops on anti-trafficking, awareness about early child marriage, yoga, and the creation of alternatives to plastic bags have been organized to motivate children and enhance their soft skills.
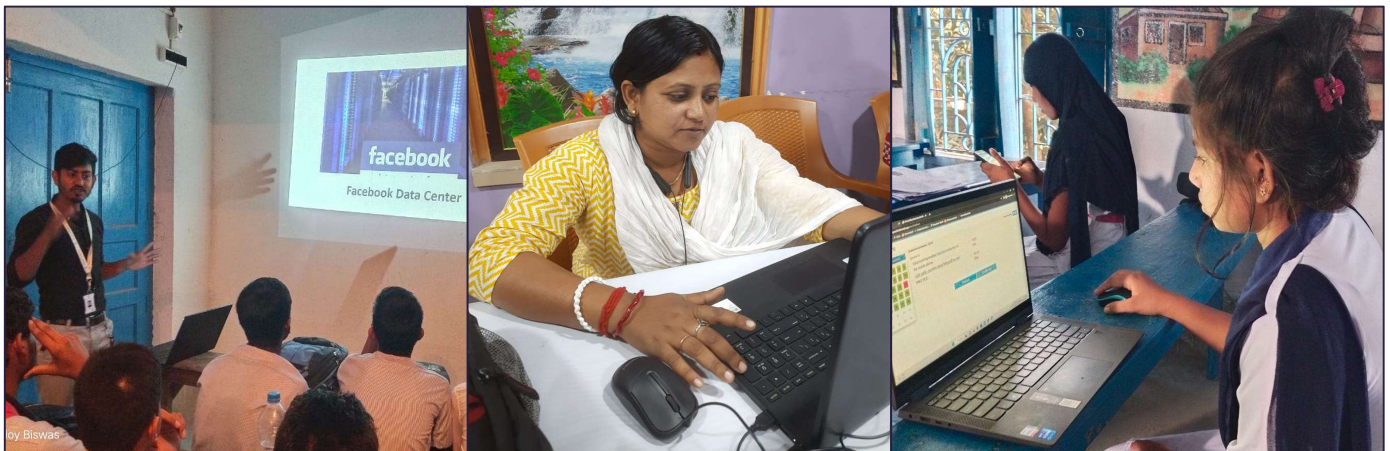
DIGITAL LITERACY

Project Name	Target Group	Location	Number Achieved	Funding Agency
Capgemini Digital Literacy Mission	Individuals aged 14-70	Calcutta	9,330	Capgemini We Kare Society

Entering its seventh year, the Digital Literacy program continues its mission to empower individuals by providing essential skills such as internet navigation, email and social media usage, downloading examination and government forms, purchasing transportation tickets, and utilizing payment apps. Notably, the program places a special emphasis on cybersecurity, ensuring participants are equipped with the knowledge to safeguard themselves in the digital realm during their daily activities.

The program is designed for individuals aged 14-70, and Change Initiatives have established digital literacy centers, including one in Lake-Town and three spoke centers following the hub-and-spoke model. The spoke centers are strategically located in Sundarbans, Bhangar, and Medinipur. Before commencing training, we prioritized raising awareness about digital literacy and its objectives. We engaged with various groups, families, and individuals, emphasizing the importance of digital independence for adapting to the constantly evolving modern technology and its associated environment.

Encouraging visits to the centers, we motivated them to attend classes at their convenience, fostering a proactive approach to developing digital skills. We also implemented this training in many schools.

Over a period of three years, we trained around 5000 students while in the last year (FY-2022-23), we trained 2500 students.

Objectives of CDLP

1. To empower communities with capacity building & and training programs and make them digitally literate using ICT as an outreach platform.
2. To create an opportunity for collaboration of industry bodies to enhance digital literacy in the country.

3. To facilitate deployment of rural citizen services through digital means thus reducing frictional losses suffered by under-served communities in trying to meet their basic human needs.
4. The CDLP centres aim primarily to engage citizens in diverse age groups in diverse communities across India to significantly impact human development indices. Women, youth, and children in urban, semi-urban & and rural communities will be the primary target groups.
5. Each CDLP centre will be housed in a unique community, and the idea is to extend the outreach to the whole community to bridge the digital divide.

KISHOLOY (EDUCATION)

Location	Target Group	Beneficiary Numbers	Funding
Barrabazar area of Purulia District	Tribal Children under Sabar Community	225	Crowd Funding
Dhakuria, Kolkata	Kids of Panchanantala Slum	20	Crowd Funding
Madandanga and Kantabele Village, Nadia District	3 to Youth	90	Local Donation, Community Foundation, US Change Initiatives own funding
Canning, South 24 PGS	4 to Youth	65	Community Foundation, US
Ranaghat, Nadia	4 to Youth	45	Community Foundation, US

Kisholoy is our child education programme, which is more than a decade old. The programme has evolved from giving free exercise books, textbooks and pencils to village children to setting up learning centers and managing schools. We are now operating seven schools in rural regions as well as in a slum area in Calcutta, with an emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy as well as nutritious food.

This year, we are maintaining five Sabar schools in Purulia, providing primary and pre-primary education to 205 children across Jahanabaid, Beldih, Garasagma, Jilling, and Latpada Sabar Schools. Students, ranging from pre-primary to Class V, focus on key subjects including Mathematics, Bengali, Geography, History, and General Science at the Sabar Bikash Kendras. In addition to educational materials, we've donated

© Niloy Biswas

Puja dresses and blankets to the children. Sports materials such as football and skipping ropes have also been provided. Beldih Sabar Siksha Kendra has been selected for renovation as a model school and the works will start shortly.

We also regularly provide tiffin to the Sabar children. The tiffin mainly consists of Muri, ghugni, poha, eggs, sweets, and milk. We engage the students in Yoga and Physical Training and hold cultural day celebrations.

We have also provided scholarships to 20 poor but meritorious students of Madhyamik and Higher Secondary of Barrabazar block of Purulia to support them in their higher education.

Every Saturday, we back Panchanantala Shishu Prathamik Vidyapith in the Panchanantala slum by providing tiffin and delivering education in a lively, interactive manner. The slum children receive education ranging from pre-primary to primary levels, with a primary emphasis on fostering computational thinking through engaging teaching methods.

We also run Niharika Primary School in Nadia district. We have learning centers in Canning South 24 Parganas and Madandanga and Kantabele in Nadia. We now engage with the students in multiple ways: remedial classes, extra-curricular activities, including stage acts, pre-primary school support, early childhood development, libraries and modern learning techniques as well scholarship support to students going to colleges. The project has seen active involvement of volunteers both from within the country and abroad.

DIGITAL CLASSROOM

Today's era is digital era. So, with the traditional way of learning, it is very important to learn digitally also. But majority of the school do not have such facilities. A digital board can provide an interactive and engaging learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It enables teachers to present complex concepts in a simplified and visually appealing way, making it easier for students to understand.

Therefore, with the help of Alliance Broadband, Change Initiatives set up a Digital Classroom at Gobindapur Ratneswar High School. The second digital classroom was set up at Chandaneswar High School of Bhangore 1 block with the help of Echoes Project. The main objective is to promote digital learning among the backward students of these selected schools.

The digital classroom has a Digital Board, Sound System and UPS. We have installed the digital boards and then we had trained the teachers on how to use the digital boards.

More than 3,000 underprivileged children got benefitted from the digital classroom. This has changed their style of traditional learning to a hybrid mode of traditional and smart learning.

FUNDRAISING EVENT

Change Initiatives has organized several Fundraising events in the financial year 2022-23. The main objective of the fundraising campaigns are to reach more and more people and for seeking their support.

The Fundraising events which were organized last year, were:

Sl No.	Fund Raising Event	Time
1	Puja Dress for the Sabar kids of Purulia and the slum kids of Panchanantala	September'22
2	Blanket Distribution Programme	December'22

With the help of social media, Change Initiatives mainly reaches to the potential donors and ask them for some support. The generous people help Change Initiatives financially to support the deprived kids. We have distributed new Puja Dress among the children of Panchanantala slum and Sabar tribal kids of Purulia. We have also distributed blankets in winter to the Sabar kids of Beldih village of Purulia.

VOLUNTEER & INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Change Initiatives had welcomed interns and volunteers from various universities and colleges during the 2022-23 session. This collaborative effort served as a platform for students to learn about the practical reality of Rural Management, Organization Works, and Project Monitoring. This will provide them with hands-on experiences and exposure visits.

Last year, six enthusiastic students from KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneswar, and four aspiring students from the Institute of Rural Development Management (IRDM) Faculty Centre, Narendrapur, actively participated in our internship program. Their dedication and passion infused our organization with fresh perspectives, contributing to the synergy of ideas and innovation.

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OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

Swayangsiddha Programme: Change Initiatives organized Swayangsiddha Programme on different schools to motivate the children against Human Trafficking and Early Child Marriage. With the collaboration of Bhangore 1 BDO and Baruipur Women PS, Change Initiatives organized this Swayangsiddha awareness programme in 14 schools of Bhangore 1 block.

Change Initiatives also organized several Swayangsiddha programmes at different schools of Sonarpur block also.

Through these awareness campaigns we had reached over 2,000 students and motivated them against early marriage and Human Trafficking by explaining them about the consequences.

Empowering Young Adults: Transformative Partnership with Partner Hooghly

Change Initiatives, in collaboration with Partner Hooghly, an association supporting mentally challenged young adults, are making a significant impact.
Partner Hooghly is running a training-cum-production center where these young adults produce items such as spices, squash, pickles, wax diyas, and rakhis. We assist them by selling these products at stalls in places such as Capgemini Kolkata office during "Capgemini Prtithvi Mela" and GC block community hall. The funds generated from selling these items are handed back to Partner Hooghly to further enhance the well-being of these individuals. Additionally, rakhis crafted by them are sold in schools and colleges. We've also recruited a special educator to enhance their learning experience. Together, we're fostering independence and inclusivity.

Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine:

For maintaining menstrual hygiene among the girls' students, Change Initiatives installed Sanitary Vending Machine in four schools. The machines are automatic and the students can easily access them without any hesitation.

Online Quiz Competitions

Change Initiatives organizes online quiz contests on the special events like World Environment Day, Independence Day, etc. The link of the quiz are shared among the schools and the students enthusiastically participate in the quiz contest. After successfully getting the qualification marks, students are awarded with online certificates.

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ADVISORY BOARD

Bisakha Ghosh

Born and raised in Kolkata as the oldest of two siblings, Bishakha Ghosh learned Economics from great teachers at Presidency College and Calcutta University.

Now she is a teacher at Kalyani University. She is irresistibly drawn to the power of words and the lure of distant places.

Indira Kanjilal

Sr Manager, Editorial, ICRA Ltd, Indira Kanjilal is an editor, writer, translator.

She works for women and children's education and healthcare. She is working to make a slum school into a Happy School at Panchanantala, Dhakuria. She has also been working on domestic violence and gender discrimination in an individual capacity.

Rupak Goswami

Rupak Goswami is a Fulbright Scholar.

Rupak teaches agriculture and rural development at the Integrated Rural Development and Management Faculty Centre of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute, Kolkata. He is a PhD from Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Kalyani.

Board Members 2022-2023

Name of Board Member	Designation	Gender	Age	Profession
Sanghamitra Majumder	President (Honorary)	Female	52	Service. M.Sc. Economics. Calcutta University
Sarmistha Banik	Vice-President (Honorary)	Female	50	Professor Physics. BITS Pilani
Suryatirtha Ray	Secretary (Honorary)	Male	57	Journalist. MA in Economics from Delhi School of Economics
Sumita Mandal	Treasurer (Honorary)	Female	51	Service. M.Com Calcutta University
Soumen Gupta	Members (Honorary)	Male	58	Cost Accountant
Sudipto Das	Members (Honorary)	Male	55	Consultant
Mrs. Sujata Chatterjee	Members (Honorary)	Female	71	B.Sc. Former Education Worker in UK.

Relationship between Board Members: None

Financial Brief Report

Total income and expenditure of Change Initiatives for the last three years as per audited accounts (in Rs).

Years	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Total Income	20,917,481	12,956,572	8,029,648
Total Expenditure	15,599,723	86,26,109	58,12,125

Annual receipts of the organization. (Receipts are the total money received by Change Initiatives in a year in Rs) for the last three years:
On the basis of source:

RECEIPTS (for last three Financial Year)	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Self Generated (fees/ subscriptions/ interest/ community contributions etc)	--	--	25,000
Donations from Indian individuals	279,813	5,62,287	11,76,462
Donations from foreign individuals (under FCRA)	12,616	4,26,939	9,530
Grants from Indian sources (trusts/ govt/ companies/ foundations)	1,44,97,406	94,61,397	42,71,584
Grants from International sources (under FCRA)	58,77,262	24,12,640	23,66,612
TOTAL RECEIPTS	20,667,097	1,28,63,623	78,49,188

Distribution of staff by gender and salary:

Slab of gross monthly salary (in Rs.) plus benefits paid to staff	Male Staff	Female Staff	Total Staff
< 2500			
< 7000	3		3
< 15000	3	3	6
< 30000	3	2	5
< 50000	3		3
>/ 50000	1	1	2

No international travel by staff, governing body members at the expense of the organisation

Partners

U.S. Consulate General
Kolkata

AMERICANCENTER

Capgemini

Schneider Electric Foundation India

NASSCOM FOUNDATION

IAHV INDIA

Ortho Clinical Diagnostics

Praxis Business School
CELEBRATE YOUR WORTH

Below are some of the names of Partners whom we work/worked with.

Toronto Calcutta India Foundation

UNESCO, Social and Human Science Sector, Paris

UNESCO, Communication & Information Sector, New Delhi

Department for International Development (DFID)

European Union

NASSCOM Foundation

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

IDPM, University of Manchester, United Kingdom

Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, UK

InfoBridge Foundation, the Netherlands

Radbound University, the Netherlands

We For Hope, USA

Community Foundation, USA

DIT, India

IT Dept, India

WEBEL

Centre for Advancement of Sustainable Agriculture, New Delhi, India

Deccan Development Society, Hyderabad, India

Rural Agency for Social and Technological Advancement, Kerala, India

National Dairy Resource Institute, India

West Bengal Renewable Energy Development Authority

Sarva Sikha Mission, Hoogly

Sarva Sikha Mission, North 24 Parganas

Panchayat & Rural Development Department, West Bengal

Directorate of Animal Resource & Animal Health, West Bengal

Pollution Control Board, West Bengal

Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vidyalaya

Uttar Banga Krishi Vidyalaya

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nadia

University of Burdwan

Calcutta Municipal Corporation

Howrah Municipal Corporation

Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation

IL&FS Foundation

Jeevika Development Society

Extension Training Centre, Rajarhat

About 50 Gram Panchayats of Nadia, 24 Parganas (North) and 24 Parganas (South)

Above 500 Schools

Farmers' Club, SHG, CBO

And

Many more…….

Awards: Change Initiatives is a winner of the Gender and ICT Awards for 2023 presented by APC Women's Networking Support Programme and Global Knowledge Partnership in the Category of Community/ Individuals Advocacy and Networking.
(http://www.genderawards.net/winners/2003/winners.htm).

Nabanna has also received an Honorary Mention at Prixars Electronica 2004