



*Change Initiatives*



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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# INTRODUCING CHANGE INITIATIVES



*Change Initiatives is a Calcutta-based non-governmental organisation working in the area's education, employment creation and environment. We work mainly among women, children, and youth.*

# FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY

DEAR PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT,



Change Initiatives has entered its 24th year. Almost 25! And what a journey it has been. We started with computer training in a remote rural region of West Bengal, appreciated more the needs of our stakeholders, and moved into Education, Environment and Empowerment over the years, with a laser focus on Digital Inclusion, while adhering and implementing the principles of Monitoring and Evaluation.

As I look back the year gone by, we are happy that we have stuck to our goal of consolidation that we had set up for 2024-25. Indeed, we have been expanding at a breakneck speed over the last five years over all our programme areas. But now having fully closed the door to the epidemic that scarred our lives for almost three years, we realized the need to move in a measured manner, strengthening our

research and data capabilities as well as M&E.

Our flagship LetsCode project has moved into its second phase. Besides, providing almost 10,000 students in foundational skills in coding and tinkering, the project placed emphasis on practical learning and building prototypes based on the lived experiences of the students, who come from government schools.

In our Digital Labs at 10 government schools, we have started training in Robotics, Drones and 3D printing, which is over and above our Coding — Python and Scratch — and Tinkering activities. Along with this our activities on enhancing the student personalities and their mental enrichment is in full swing with workshops on theatre, gender sensitivisation and visits to museums.

Our longest project Kisholoy, is in its 19th year. It is a project on Foundational Learning. From humble beginnings of giving books and stationary materials in rural regions, we have now learning centres in Nadia (two regions), Purulia, Canning and among the slum children of Kolkata. In Purulia we now have six learning centres (Sabar Bikash Kendras) imparting education in basic maths, Bengali, Geography, History and General Science. Almost 500 students are enrolled in our learning centres here and at the other regions.

Our Digital Literacy project has turned 10. We have trained and certified more than 20,000 in the 14-70 age group on the basics of the internet and cybersecurity at our Kolkata learning centre. We operate on a hub-and-spoke model, with the Kolkata centre the main one and smaller centres in rural Bengal.

This was also the year we did the Stay Safe, Be Cybersmart project, where we trained more than 650 young women at the American Centre, Kolkata. The women belonged to schools and colleges in and around Kolkata, and they became aware on mobile phone hacking, identity theft and safe social media practices, which they then imparted to others in the schools.

Research is playing a prominent role in our Women Empowerment Programme, Nabanna, where we are training 175 women of West Bengal in building a sustainable poultry business. We are not only training the women in building sustainable enterprises but also in building resilience against external shocks such as climate change and developing their capabilities as Women Leaders, with the work getting calibrated with research at every step of project development.

Come to Sunderbans, and you will see the impact of our Environment project, Basudha. Over the last four years our team has regenerated areas of the Sunderbans by planting 3.5 lakh mangroves in multiple places. It will take you five hours by boat to see our entire plantation at Chotomollakhali Island in the Sunderbans. Lest we forget we have also planted saplings in other parts of India, including Rajasthan, Assam and Gurgaon.

Exciting days ahead! All have been made possible by our partners, donors and our well-wishers. But more than anything we are here because of the kids of Kisholoy, the students of Let'sCode, the women guardians of our mangrove plantation in the Sunderbans and our women poultry farmers of Balrampur. Thank You to all of you. Our Utmost Debt and Gratitude.

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 buildsto scale solutions for the most pressing problems of our time.

## Our objectives

a) Providing after-school education to poor children and engaging in their mental development as well as interacting with their parents and community. b) Offering skill-development training to young boys and girls and the youth c) Mentoring the youth for entrepreneurship and d) Empowering communities and the vulnerable throughawareness and counseling on social issues, gender, and the environment

## Key Themes



**Environment**



**Education**



**Empowerment**

## Strategies

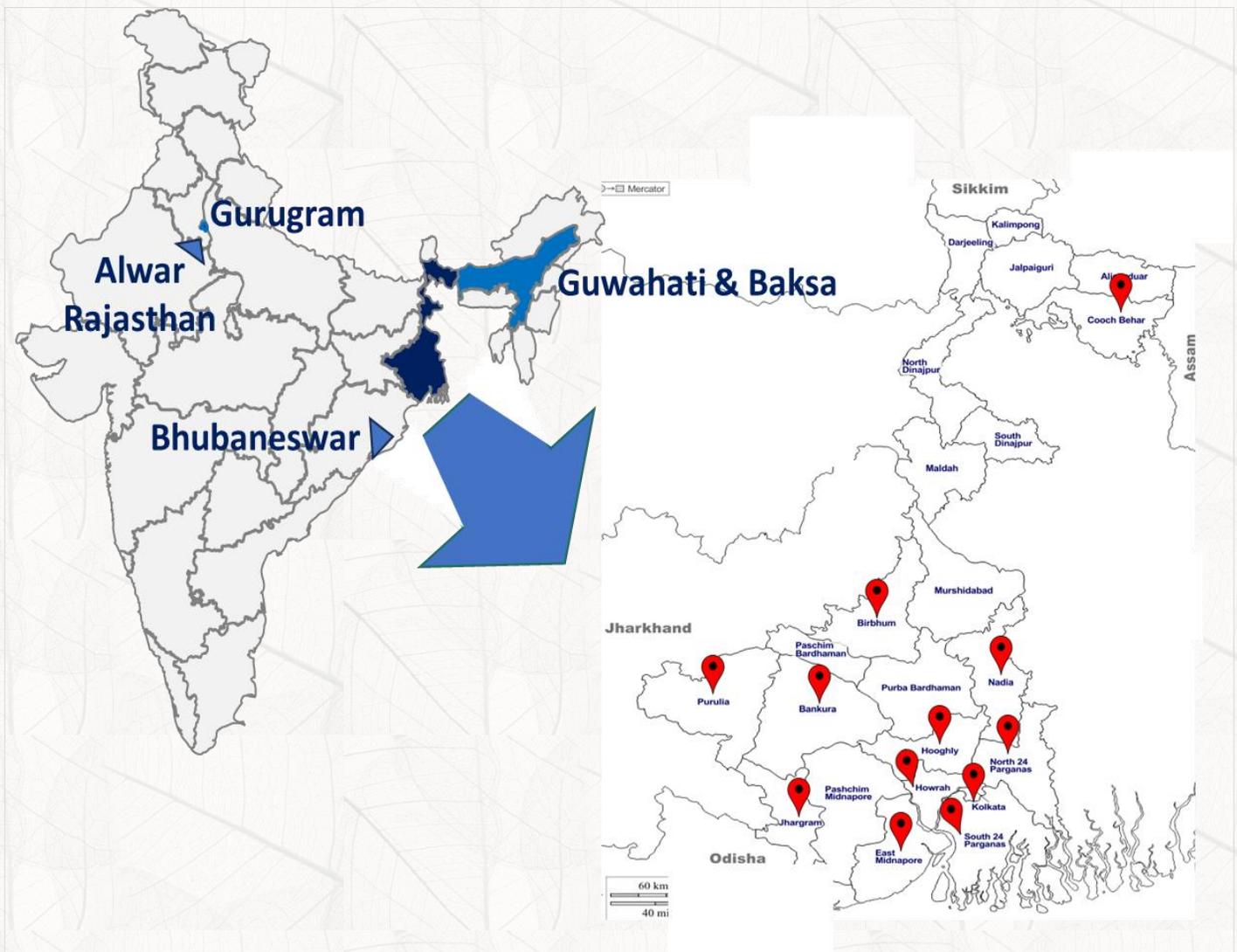
a) Implementing proven solutions in development that are based on the principles of evidence-based approach to poverty reduction b) Using ICTs and proven ICT-based solutions to development as they accelerate development outcomes and impact c) Set up human development centers as a single place to carry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

## Principles

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



# GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS



# LET'S CODE

Location	Target Group	Impact	Funding
Kolkata	<b>8,465 Students</b> from Government schools	Students from 10 government schools in Classes VI to IX learning coding and tinkering	Capgemini

Change Initiatives had set up well-equipped Computer and Tinkering Labs in 10 government-sponsored schools at Sonarpur circle of Kolkata under Capgemini's STEM, Tinkering Lab, and Coding Program in the year 2021. The initiative was designed to foster digital literacy, creativity, and problem-solving skills among students from classes VI to IX. Over the course of the past three years of Phase 1 of Capgemini Let's Code project, a total of 6,794 boys and girls have been enrolled in these schools. Through regular classes, they are learning the fundamentals of computer science, coding, and tinkering, which not only strengthen their technological aptitude and confidence but also empower them to apply these skills for the betterment of their communities. This program has played a crucial role in advancing STEM education in government-run schools, where access to such learning opportunities has traditionally been limited.



Throughout these three years, the classes have been conducted smoothly and consistently across all partner schools. The program follows a student-friendly and scientifically structured curriculum that encourages curiosity and engagement, helping students to develop a keen interest in science and technology. Equal emphasis is placed on enhancing the practical and hands-on learning experience, enabling students to connect theoretical concepts with real-world applications.

Building on the success of the first phase, Phase 2 of the Let's Code Program began in October 2024, with an expanded vision and renewed objectives. This phase emphasizes not only student learning but also capacity building of teachers through comprehensive training programs. By equipping teachers with the necessary technical and pedagogical skills, the project aims to ensure the sustainability and scalability of coding and tinkering education. Additionally, the program is gradually transitioning towards a hybrid teaching methodology, integrating online learning modules and digital resources to make education more accessible and interactive.

In Phase 2, two new schools — Garia Barada Prasad High School and Gobindapur Ratneswar High School — have been included in place of the two previously participating institutions. Fully functional Tinkering Labs have already been established in these new schools, and regular coding and tinkering classes have commenced successfully. A significant milestone in this quarter has been the inauguration of the Robotics Lab, marking a new chapter in hands-on STEM learning for students.



With these additions and innovations, the program has witnessed a surge in participation — **8,465 students** have already been enrolled in this phase. The enthusiasm among students, teachers, and school administrations reflects the growing impact of the initiative in transforming the educational landscape. The Capgemini Let’s Code Project continues to inspire thousands of young learners to dream big, innovate fearlessly, and become future-ready citizens in an increasingly digital world.

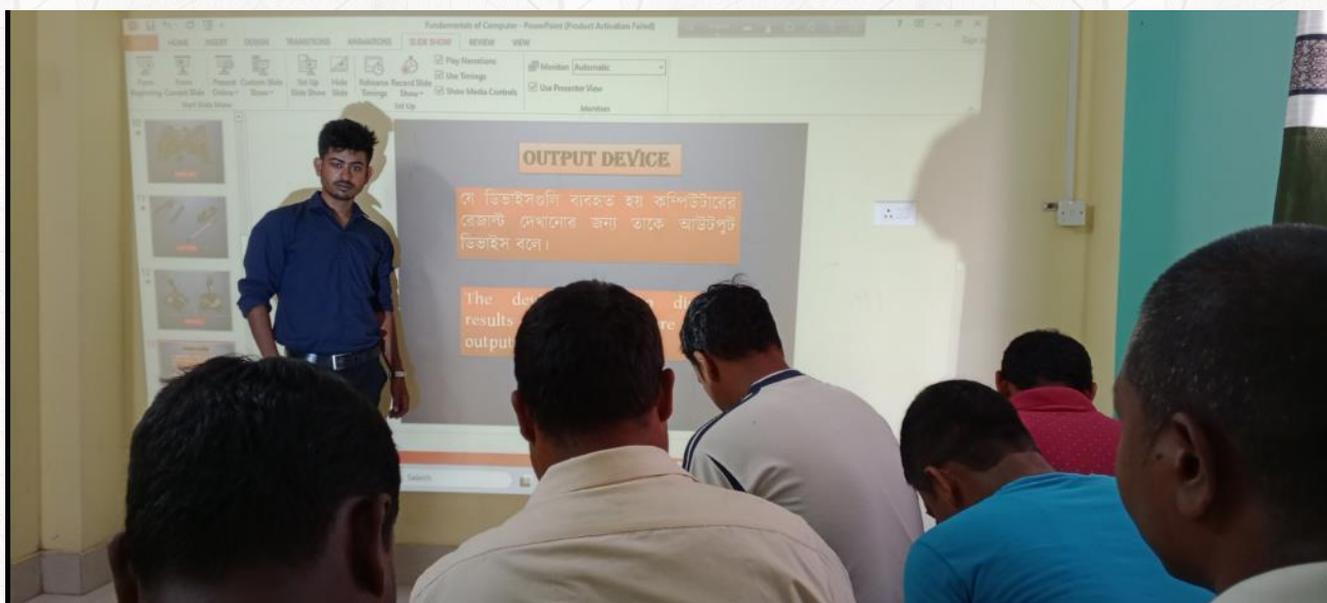


## DIGITAL LITERACY

Project Name	Target Group	Location	Number Achieved	Funding Agency
Capgemini Digital Literacy Mission	Individuals aged 14-70	Calcutta	20,000	AADHAAR Capgemini

Entering its ninth year, the Digital Literacy Project continues to spread its wings reaching out to train individuals and equip them with essential digital skills. From basic computer skills like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, to navigating the internet, using email and social media, and operating payment applications, the programme focuses on empowering participants to achieve digital independence. A strong emphasis is placed on cybersecurity, ensuring learners know how to stay safe while using digital platforms in their day-to-day activities.

Designed for individuals aged 14 to 70, Change Initiatives has established three main digital literacy centres, including one in Lake Town, along with four spoke centers in Sundarbans, Birbhum, Purulia, and Bankura, following the hub-and-spoke model. Before beginning training, awareness drives were conducted among families, groups, and communities to highlight the importance of digital literacy and its transformative potential.



### Objectives of CDLP

1. To empower communities with capacity building & training programmes 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. Target group: The CDLP centres aim primarily to engage citizens in different age groups across diverse communities across India to significantly impact human development indices. Women, youth, and children in urban, semi-urban & 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.

## BASUDHA (Environment)

Project Name	Target Group	Location	Target Number	Number Achieved	Funding Agency
Plant Mangroves - Rebuild Sundarbans	Empowering Change: Women SHGs Leading the Battle Against Climate Change and Deforestation	Village: Nazat Gram Panchayat: Nazat Block: Sandeshkhali-I CD block	50,000	50,000	Schneider Electric India Foundation
Mission Million Trees	The target group for this initiative includes women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and local communities in West Bengal, Assam, Rajasthan, and Gurugram, focusing on environmental sustainability and community empowerment	West Bengal (Bankura and Purulia districts), Assam (Baksa district), Rajasthan (Alwar district), and Gurugram	17,000	17,000	Schneider Electric India

Under the *Basudha (The Earth)* initiative, Change Initiatives has been implementing large-scale plantation and mangrove restoration programmes through *Mission Million Trees* and *Plant Mangroves – Rebuild Sundarbans*. Till date, more than 3.2 lakh saplings have been planted across West Bengal — including around 1.8 lakh mangroves and 1.4 lakh fruit and wood trees in districts such as the Sundarbans, Jhargram, Nadia, Hooghly, Purulia, Bankura, Kolkata, and New Town.

During 2024, extensive plantation drives were carried out — particularly 50,000 mangrove saplings at Nazat in Sandeshkhali (North 24 Parganas) with the involvement of 10 self-help groups comprising about 500 women. Under the *Mission Million Trees* campaign supported by Schneider Electric India, 17,100 saplings were planted across multiple states — 12,000 in West Bengal (Bankura and Purulia), 2,500 in Assam (Baksa District), 2,500 in Rajasthan (Alwar District), and 100 in Gurugram.

In 2025, the key focus has shifted towards monitoring and maintenance of the plantations completed in the previous years. Field teams and SHG members conducted bi-monthly site inspections, GPS-based tracking, and community-led reporting on sapling survival. Periodic geo-tagging and fencing activities were undertaken in Bankura, Purulia, and Sundarbans sites to ensure continued growth and survival.

The monitoring results indicate a survival rate of nearly 90%, reflecting the strong community participation and sustained ecological impact achieved through these initiatives.



## KISHOLOY (EDUCATION)

Location	Target Group	Beneficiary Numbers	Funding
Barrabazar area of Purulia District	Tribal Children under Sabar Community	<b>305</b>	Crowd Funding
Dhakuria, Kolkata	Kids of Panchanantala Slum	<b>26</b>	Crowd Funding
Madandanga and Kantabele Village, Nadia District	3 to Youth	<b>90</b>	Local Donation, Community Foundation, US Change Initiatives own funding
Canning, South 24 PGS	Kindergarten to 11	<b>24</b>	Community Foundation, US
Ranaghat, Nadia	4 to Youth	<b>45</b>	Community Foundation, US

Kisholoy, our child education initiative, has been nurturing young minds for over a decade. Initially focused on providing essentials like exercise books, textbooks, and pencils to village children, the program has since expanded to establish and manage learning centers and schools. Currently, we operate seven schools in rural areas and a slum in Kolkata, with an emphasis on foundational literacy, numeracy, and providing nutritious meals.



We're now supporting six Sabar schools at Barrabazar block of Purulia, providing primary and pre-primary education to 305 children across Jahanabaid, Beldih, Garasagma, Jilling, Dumurdih and Latpada Sabar

Schools. These students, from pre-primary through Class X, attend remedial classes in key subjects such as Mathematics, Bengali, Geography, History, and General Science at the Sabar Bikash Kendras. Alongside essential educational materials, we distribute sweater during winter.

This year On 9th August 2025, Change Initiatives marked the International Day of the Indigenous Peoples with a heartwarming celebration in Barabazar, Purulia. We donated archery equipment — including 5 bows, arrows, stands, chest guards, quivers, targets, etc— to the Lakshya Archery Academy, run by Barabazar Police Station, nurturing the sporting dreams of young tribal talents.

The occasion was graced by Janab Manzar Hussain Anjum, IAS, SDO of Manbazar, and Mr. Samit Ranjan Mondal, WBCS (Exe), BDO of Barabazar Block. Adding a touch of cultural warmth, Raksha Bandhan ceremony was also held, symbolizing unity and brotherhood.

Our Sabar schools joined the festivities with equal enthusiasm. The Sabar children celebrated by tying rakhis to one another, embracing the spirit of togetherness. The day concluded with a delicious community meal, making the World Tribal Day celebration truly special.

We regularly provide tiffin to the Sabar children, including items like puffed rice (muri), ghugni, poha, eggs, sweets, and milk. Additionally, well-wishers sometimes sponsor lunch on special occasions, such as their birthdays or wedding anniversaries. Students engage in yoga and physical training and participate in cultural celebrations, including Saraswati Puja, Republic Day, and Teachers' Day.

To further support education in Purulia, we've awarded scholarships to 20 academically promising but economically disadvantaged students from Madhyamik and Higher Secondary levels in Barrabazar block to assist them in pursuing higher studies.

In the Panchanantala slum, we support the Panchanantala Shishu Prathamik Vidyapith every Saturday by providing tiffin and interactive, engaging lessons. Here, children from pre-primary to primary levels receive education with a focus on fostering computational thinking through creative and participatory teaching. Currently remedial classes are also started at the evening of Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.



Our learning centers in Canning (South 24 Parganas), Madandanga, and Kantabele (Nadia) provide a range of services, including remedial classes, extracurricular activities, stage performances, pre-primary support, early childhood development, libraries, and innovative learning techniques. We also offer scholarship support to college-bound students. Volunteers, both local and international, play an active role in supporting these initiatives, enriching the experience and impact of the Kisholoy program.

## NABANNA (Gender)

Project Name	Target Group	Location	Number Achieved	Funding Agency
West Bengal Livestock Learning Lab	175 Women poultry farmers	Balarampur, South 24 Parganas	175	International Rice Research Institute

The Nabanna initiative of Change Initiatives empowers women through skill development, entrepreneurship, and awareness-raising. The CGIAR Initiative on Gender Equality is dedicated to harnessing gender and social equality for resilience in agri-food systems, focusing on empowering women as key partners and drivers of climate change solutions. The West Bengal Livestock Learning Lab, implemented by Change Initiatives in Balarampur, South 24 Parganas, is a pilot project funded by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).



The Learning Lab aims to address the multiple vulnerabilities faced by women in rural communities through a series of tailored socio-technical innovations and training. The project's objectives include building climate resilience, promoting economic empowerment, facilitating social empowerment, improving nutrition and health, testing innovations, and fostering stakeholder collaboration. By developing and implementing context-specific Socio-Technical Innovation Bundles (STIBs), the Learning Lab equips women farmers with adaptive practices to manage climate risks and enhance food security.

In addition, skill development and business management training are provided to improve economic stability, while workshops on gender equality and women's rights empower women to take on leadership roles within their communities. This project aims to drive community development by empowering women to become skilled poultry farmers and reliable contributors to local growth. Through proper training, guidance, and continuous support, women gain the knowledge, confidence, and skills to build sustainable poultry businesses that provide a steady source of daily income. This empowerment not only enhances their financial independence and family well-being but also fosters cooperation, economic stability, and long-term development within the entire community.

Last year, we conducted training sessions on Gender, Leadership and Heat Stress Management, strengthening the participants' ability to respond to climate-related challenges. Additionally, we distributed four raised chicken cages among selected women farmers. This intervention proved to be highly impactful — during subsequent flooding, the four farmers who received the raised cages faced no losses. Their birds remained safe and healthy, demonstrating how small but thoughtful innovations can protect livelihoods during crises.



It was inspiring to witness the resilience, preparedness, and collective spirit of the community during such an unexpected situation. The success of this intervention underscores the importance of combining training with practical support, fostering both empowerment and resilience among rural women farmers.

## PROJECT WELL

Providing clean water and sanitation in rural areas remains a significant challenge. Aligned with the sixth Sustainable Development Goal of 'Clean Water and Sanitation,' the Change Initiatives Project Well has made a meaningful impact on rural communities and the environment over the years. The project aims to prevent arsenic contamination of groundwater through indigenous technology and the establishment of bacteria-free, arsenic-free bi-tech wells equipped with iron-removal filters.



Currently, there are **402** bi-tech wells under the "Arsenic Mukto PaniJal" initiative across five blocks in North 24 Parganas (Baduria, Deganga, Habra, Swarupnagar, and Gaighata) and one block in Nadia (Chakdaha), West Bengal, India. Additionally, 356 toilets have been installed to further enhance

sanitation in these areas. Approximately 2,500 families and 10,000 consumers benefit from the wells, while about 200 families benefit from the toilets each month.

The project modernizes old dug-wells into advanced bore dug-wells (bi-tech wells) that draw water from upper arsenic-free aquifers. In the fiscal year 2024-25, we established 10 bi-tech wells and 60 toilets, and we continue to advance this initiative in collaboration with Project Well, US.

## FUNDRAISING EVENT

Change Initiatives has organized several Fundraising events in the financial year 2024-25. The main objective of the fundraising campaigns is to reach more and more people and for seeking their support.

The Fundraising events which were organized last year, were:

SI No.	Fund Raising Event	Time
1	Puja Dress for the slum kids of Panchanantala	September'24
2	Sweaters for the Sabar kids of Purulia	November'24
3	Lunch for the Sabar Kids	January'25
4	Be the Reason: A Sabar Child Smiles	Entire year

With the help of social media, Change Initiatives mainly reaches 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 Hoodies to Sabar tribal kids of Purulia in the time of winter.

## VOLUNTEER & INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Change Initiatives welcomed interns and volunteers from various universities and colleges. This collaborative effort provided a valuable platform for students to gain insights into the practical aspects of Rural Management, organizational operations, and project monitoring, allowing them to acquire hands-on experience and participate in exposure visits.

Last year (FY 2024-25), we had four enthusiastic students from the KIIT School of Rural Management in Bhubaneswar and four aspiring students from the Institute of Rural Development Management (IRDM) Faculty Centre in Narendrapur who actively engaged in our internship program. Their dedication and passion brought fresh perspectives to our organization, enhancing the synergy of ideas and fostering innovation. we also hosted nearly **60 volunteers** across our various programs.

## OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

### ***Empowering Young Adults: Transformative Alliance with Partner Hooghly***

Change Initiatives, in collaboration with Partner Hooghly—an organization dedicated to supporting young adults with mental challenges—is making a meaningful impact in the community. Partner Hooghly operates a training and production center where these young adults create various products, including spices, squash, pickles, wax diyas, and rakhis. We support this initiative by selling these products at various events, such as fairs and school functions.

The funds raised from these sales are returned to Partner Hooghly to further improve the well-being of these individuals. Additionally, the rakhis made by them are sold in schools and colleges. To enhance their learning experience, we have also hired a special educator. Together, we are promoting independence and inclusivity for these young adults.

### ***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 is 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.

## 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.



### **Dr. Rupak Goswami**

Rupak Goswami is currently a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at University of California, Davis.

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 2024-2025

Name of Board Member	Designation	Gender	Age	Profession
<b>Sanghamitra Majumder</b>	President (Honorary)	Female	55	Service. M.Sc. Economics. Calcutta University
<b>Sarmistha Banik</b>	Vice- President (Honorary)	Female	52	Associate Professor Physics. BITS Pilani
<b>Suryatirtha Ray</b>	Secretary (Honorary)	Male	59	Journalist. MA in Economics from Delhi school of economics
<b>Sumita Mandal</b>	Treasurer (Honorary)	Female	55	Service. M.Com Calcutta University
<b>Soumen Gupta</b>	Members (Honorary)	Male	61	Cost Accountant
<b>Sudipto Das</b>	Members (Honorary)	Male	59	Consultant
<b>Mrs. Sujata Chatterjee</b>	Members (Honorary)	Female	73	B.Sc. Former Education Worker in UK.

**Relationship between Board Members: None**

# FINANCIAL BRIEF REPORT

Years	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Total Income (Rs)	19,026,261	14,583,568	20,917,481
Total Expenditure (Rs)	14,716,740	16,29,272	15,599,723

RECEIPTS (for last three Financial Year) (Rs)	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Self-Generated (fees/ subscriptions/ interest/ community contributions etc)	---	---	---
Donations from Indian individuals	221,269	95,573	279,813
Donations from foreign individuals (under FCRA)	---	---	12,616
Grants from Indian sources (trusts/ govt/ companies/ foundations)	10,637,543	10,851,261	14,497,406
Grants from International sources (under FCRA)	78,07,034	33,27,421	58,77,262
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>18,665,846</b>	<b>28,814,675</b>	<b>20,667,097</b>

## PARTNERS



**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  
Radboud 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 2003 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