



➤➤ WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER ◀◀

UDYAMINI RWE CHRONICLES- APRIL'24



April's Capacity Building Odyssey

Centre for Education and Communication Boosts weaver Skills and Growth

Using an innovative approach, CEC's **Foundation-level Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP)** reached three additional villages. Trainer made sessions engaging by employing puppetry to address gender stereotypes and labour division within households and communities. This creative method aims to inspire meaningful change and empowerment at the grassroots level.



Facilitated by CEC's continuous support, a **Leadership Networking Meet** of 17 Rural Women Entrepreneur leaders from 7 villages took place in Kamrup district, Assam. They shared their experiences and new knowledge gained through the PDP, such as introduction to quality yarn, advanced production tools, and product standardization. They also held an exhibition showcasing their group's woven products, including table runners, cushion covers, and stoles representing the skills of RWE's.

CEC launched two new **Production Development Training Programs (PDP)**, reaching 171 rural weaving enterprises. These training programs are designed to enhance the skills and production capabilities of the weavers, fostering sustainable growth and development within these communities.





Digital Endeavours and Skill-Building Initiatives by Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)



1

DEF conducted **Enterprise Development Program**. The Sochnapreneur Buiseness Mitras (SBM's) of Assam and West Bengal learned digital catalog making, preparing them to train Rural Women Entrepreneurs (RWE'S). Additionally, District Coordinators in both states received training in digital and financial literacy, enabling them to train SBMs and RWEs. The training included pre and post-assessment sessions, culminating in certification.



2

- The DEF team in West Bengal conducted orientation and **Training Sessions on Udyamini SkillBot, MeraApp, and MeraBill** across four districts.
- In Assam, DEF equipped SBM centers with digital infrastructure and makerspace equipment.
- SBMs received comprehensive training on service delivery, hardware handling, entrepreneurship development, and digital solutions



In a vibrant session hosted by DEF in Sualkuchi Block, Mr. Dhrubajyoti Medhi from the Aditya Birla Group shared his wisdom on the intricacies of **Yarn Quality**. This dynamic event aimed to enlighten Rural Women Entrepreneurs (RWEs) about the secrets of yarn excellence—covering aspects like price, color, texture, and the tactile magic of the final product. Empowered with this knowledge, RWEs are now equipped to weave their way to higher standards and customer delight.



3

SBM facilitated training on Agarbatti making, packaging and branding for RWEs



Empowering Tea Growers: Grassroots Tea Corporation's (GTC) Impactful Initiatives!



1

GTC held a three-day residential **Training of Trainers** program in Guwahati. This training focused on the tea value chain, earning additional income through chemical-free cultivation, and setting up manufacturing units. Participants learned to compare current and new business models and understand the necessary investments and benefits of producing chemical-free green



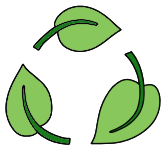
2

As a follow-up to the ToT program, **Seven Dynamic Capacity-Building Sessions** for rural women entrepreneurs (RWEs) were led by master trainers. These sessions covered business planning, chemical-free leaf cultivation, manufacturing processes, investment strategies, quality control at collection centres, business model reviews, and financial and digital literacy. The aim was to inspire small tea growers to start home-based processing units, boosting their income.



3

In a push for **Regenerative Agriculture**, GTC supported 199 RWEs in adopting land isolation methods, 10 RWEs in preparing NADEP compost, 25 RWEs in crafting organic pesticides, and 31 RWEs in installing yellow sticky traps to deter pests, fostering healthier crops and environment.



SwitchON Empowers with Entrepreneurship and Modern Packaging



In Bankura a training on enhancing **Product Packaging and Branding** for RWEs was held. This encouraged them to move away from outdated packaging practices, such as sealing plastic bags with candles. Instead, SwitchON highlighted the benefits of using paper bags, emphasizing their ability to improve both the shelf life and marketability of products. The initiative aims to empower women by equipping them with modern packaging techniques that can boost their business success.

SwitchON set up a **Millet Demonstration Plot** in Hura, Purulia. This provided a hands-on training ground for local women to learn millet cultivation techniques like line sowing. This initiative led to the successful cultivation of foxtail millet in the area, promoting domestic consumption.



In Hanskhali, Nadia, SwitchON conducted a **Concept Seeding Training** which introduced Self Help Group (SHG) members to the basics of entrepreneurship for better clarity and understanding.



The Goat Trust (TGT) Promotes Healthy Herds and Farmer Empowerment

In a dynamic session at State Institute of Panchayat and Rural Development (SIPRD), Dr. Salima and Dr. Iqbal, supported by the TGT team, **Trained Pashu Sakhis** in goat health care, medicine identification. Practical sessions covered soap and Neem oil production. The training also discussed goat housing strategies for various seasons and explored business opportunities for Pashu Sakhis in selling these input products, promoting both economic empowerment and improved goat care.



TGT orchestrated **goat vaccination camps** in Cluster Chamaria and Balijana in Assam focusing on fortifying livestock health and preventing diseases. It led to a significant community turnout and farmers learned about disease prevention and proper care, ensuring healthier herds and community well-being



TGT hosted **Video Sessions** on preventive goat healthcare, disease prevention, and Pashu Sakhis' operational procedures. These sessions educated farmers on maintaining livestock health, emphasizing proactive measures and animal welfare. The event facilitated knowledge exchange, fostering collaboration and strengthening goat farming communities.



AIFT and OAK Team's Insightful Visit to Assam & West Bengal

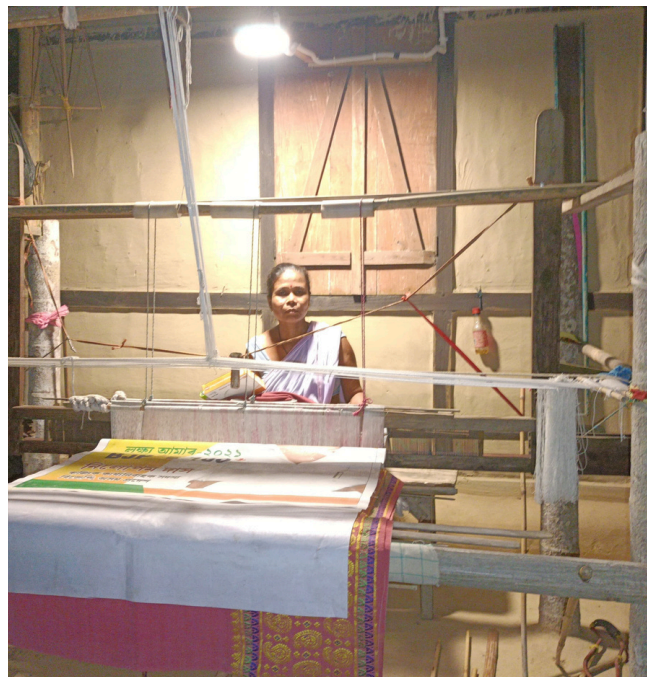


In April, the AIFT and OAK teams conducted a valuable **Field Visit** with Udyamini Partners in West Bengal and Assam. Traveling alongside the partners to project locations and engaging with a diverse group of Rural Women Entrepreneurs at various stages of their entrepreneurial journey provided valuable insights into the program's progress over the year. During the visit, areas for improvement and capacity building needs were identified and discussed to enhance future plans. The teams delved into how RWEs navigate their ecosystems, including market dynamics and government frameworks, and discussed aspects such as data collection through MIS and the importance of communications and social media with the Partners. This dynamic visit, filled with learning and collaboration, reinforces our commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs and creating a robust ecosystem. The journey continues with a focus on achieving impactful development and creating brighter futures through the Udyamini program.



SELCO Foundation, in collaboration with Centre for Education and Communication facilitated the **Installation of Solar Lights in the Work-Sheds** of three RWEs in Kamrup rural district of Assam. This initiative aims to enhance working conditions by offering reliable and eco-friendly lighting solutions.

Cross-Cutting Partnerships



Unlocking Markets : Expanding Horizons

Experience the impact of SwitchON's initiatives at the **District Level Producer Expo Cum RWE Capacity Building Training** in Surpanagar, Bankura in West Bengal. Here, local artisans and entrepreneurs, supported by SwitchON, had the opportunity to showcase their products and engage with potential buyers, unlocking new markets and economic opportunities.



Step into the vibrant **District Level Krishi Mela cum Buyer Seller Meet** at Hanskhali, Nadia in West Bengal, where women collectives, in collaboration with SwitchON and NABARD, displayed a diverse range of products including handicrafts, home decor, saris, vegetables, and value-added products like pickles.



Witness the remarkable strides DEF is making in Assam! By partnering with Rudra Sagar Sales and Aditya Birla, DEF has empowered RWE clusters in Kamrup and Darrang Districts with innovative **Pilot Product Prototypes**. This initiative is lighting the path for a surge in orders for jacquard-based handloom clusters, unlocking new markets and weaving a brighter, more sustainable future for local artisans.



MOU'S SIGNED



SwitchON Foundation and Resham Sutra Pvt. Ltd. signed an MoU to promote women entrepreneurship under the Udaymini program, **Empowering Traditional Thigh Reelers** and encouraging new women entrepreneurs.



Digital Empowerment Foundation and Council for Social and Digital Development signed an MoU with Women in Tech India North East Chapter to offer '**Cyber Safety and Security**' training and **Skill-Building** to women entrepreneurs in the Northeast region.

Navigating Challenges: Insights from the Udyamini Program

The Udyamini program has made significant strides, yet several challenges persist. Here are some key issues faced by Rural Women Entrepreneurs (RWEs) that could impact their progress.

Election Constraints

As the Lok Sabha elections approach, restrictions to uphold the Model Code of Conduct are limiting the mobilization of Rural Women Entrepreneurs (RWEs). These regulations are impeding their ability to gather, making it challenging to conduct essential events and training sessions.

Resource Riddles: The Quest for Raw Materials and Tech

A lack of access to raw materials, modern equipment, and awareness of the latest technologies hampers the progress of RWEs. This shortage stifles innovation and growth, making it harder for them to improve their production processes and expand their businesses.

Quality and Marketing Quagmires

RWEs often struggle with maintaining high product quality and effective marketing strategies. These challenges can leave them in difficult positions, affecting their ability to compete in the market and achieve profitability.

Remote Roadblocks: The Transportation Tangle

In the remote areas, inadequate transportation options are a significant hurdle. This scarcity restricts key RWE events, preventing women from attending public gatherings and accessing the vital resources needed for their entrepreneurial activities.



Udyamini Buzz: Trending Posts, Engaging Podcasts & News Highlights

Embark on a journey of how Udyamini is making waves across social media with inspiring stories and impactful collaborations. From insightful podcasts to engaging Facebook and Instagram posts, our partners are showcasing their incredible work in empowering rural women and fostering sustainable development.



NEWS ARTICLES

[Click here to](#), Discover key insights into rural women's participation in Assam's handloom sector through CEC's groundbreaking study

[Click here to](#), Discover how SwitchON Foundation is driving innovation and empowerment among rural women entrepreneurs in Bengal through this insightful article.

PODCASTS

[Podcast: Women will take the lead in solving global problems: Vinay Jaju, SwitchON Foundation](#)

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