

ANNUAL REPORT

Hand in hand towards sustainable
and equitable communities where inclusiveness
knows no boundaries.



2022-23

Empowering Communities to Create Opportunities for Inclusive Growth

Vision

A just and Humane society that ensures equal opportunities for quality of life to every citizen of India through relevant and quality education to the most marginalized

Mission

To create relevant opportunities for the most marginalised sections of society by engaging with and building the capacity of civil society actors, such that it leads to educated, egalitarian and Empowered communities.

Core Values



HOPE



RESPECT



COMMITMENT



ACCOUNTABILITY



TRANSPARENCY





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1. REFLECTIONS

India's Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.633 in 2021/22, places the country in the medium human development category, lower than its value of 0.645 in the 2020 report. HDI measures progress on 3 key dimensions of human development - a long and healthy life, access to education, and a decent standard of living. India ranks 132 out of 191 countries and territories on the 2021/22 Human Development Index, tracking the global decline in human development. Ninety percent of countries have registered a reduction in their HDI compared to the previous two years, reversing much of the progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

There are considerable disparities within the states of India. For example, Kerala ranks first among the states and union territories with a HDI of 0.752. Jharkhand, where we implement most of our projects has a HDI of 0.589 and ranks 33 out of the 34 states and union territories in India. Even within Jharkhand, Gumla and Simdega districts rank in the last few of the 24 districts. As we present this report for the year 2022-23, here are a few thoughts for reflection.



Children collecting chakora seeds (also called Cassia tora seeds) for sale.



Children's Club members coming up with plans

Disparity within the country keeps growing. Life is very difficult for millions of Indians who are living in the margins. For many Dalit and Tribal communities of Central India; there are no roads and no bridges. Women must walk long distances to collect water and spend hours to collect firewood to cook their daily meal. There are no toilets or bathrooms. Having electricity supply is still a distant dream. There is no mobile connectivity and hence no digital services. Basic needs like a health centre or school are few and far between. Even the few that are there do not have adequate human and material resources. Children are the worst affected and have no future to look forward to. These are the realities in the tribal villages where we work.

Some of the new schemes that the government ushers in with great fanfare, unfortunately do not bridge this divide. For example, Digital India a flagship programme of the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy makes several services easily accessible to majority of Indians. However, communities living in far flung rural areas get further excluded since they cannot access these services.

It is in this scenario that Development Focus has been working. We have deliberately chosen to go to some of the poorest districts of Jharkhand to bring development to tribal communities, especially their children and youth. In the year of report, we have been implementing two projects in two districts of Jharkhand to help children and youth see opportunities for learning and livelihood in their own villages and prevent them from moving to cities without a safety net. Presently, they see no opportunities in their village, and many children and youth migrate to cities only to be under-employed and abused.

Ushering in social justice has been an important, cross-cutting initiative in all our projects. Youth have been enabled to see alternatives to unsafe migration, child marriages, and children engaged in child labour are back in school. The communities that have been living on the margins of society are empowered to demand much needed services from the providers.

This report, which is in your hands, provides a glimpse of what has been achieved and the challenges faced. We are grateful to all who through their commitment and hard work have made this happen. Although much has been achieved, this is just a drop in the ocean. There is still so much more to be done in this great country of ours. Through our efforts we join hands with all those who want to see the wide disparities narrow down and people living in harmony with their basic needs met.

Thomas Paul



A mother carrying the harvest of her hard work on her shoulders.



A child carrying drinking water for her family



Children's Club members engaged in club activity



A beneficiary with his garden

2. DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

Development Focus (DF) was registered as a Trust in March 2006 and started operations. The aim has been to reach out to children and youth in excluded communities, and to facilitate them to see opportunities that can transform their future, so that they can see meaning and purpose in their lives. The interventions are always with community participation such that the projects are sustainable, even after the project cycle is over. Our strategy has been to work for the poorest of the poor and we have been working in the tribal belt of Central India, covering the states of Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh. More recently we have implemented projects in Mizoram in the Northeast and two very poor districts of North Karnataka.

Our programme strategy has been to empower communities to claim their rights and entitlements from the State, focusing on basic education and sustainable livelihood.

In the first few years, Edukans Foundation in the Netherlands was our donor partner, and we had a strong relationship with them for over 10 years. This greatly helped the fledgling organisation to establish itself and build a strong and resilient organisation. This partnership ended due to policy changes in both governments. Thereafter we have been receiving financial support from MISEREOR in Germany, the CSR of Corporate houses, and funds we raise from individuals, social media, and small organisations.



Children's Club members playing games

“Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves.”

Abraham Lincoln

Some of the core values that the organisation subscribes to are:



The strong belief that every human being, however poor or marginalized, has God given potential. We work to help them realize and unleash this potential.



Respect for every individual in the community, staff members and organisations.



When isolated, the poor are powerless and voiceless. By mobilizing them into homogenous groups, they understand their rights and can claim their entitlements.



People can find the best solutions for their problems if provided the opportunity. We seek to listen to them leading to bottom-up approaches.



People have fundamental rights and possibilities that needs to be nurtured.



To bring a positive change in the attitudes and behaviour of people and developing local leadership that can lead to sustainable development.



Value for people's culture and initiatives and include initiatives to enrich the same.



The projects do not set up parallel structures like schools and hospitals but empower people to claim their rights and entitlements for quality services from the state.



Cost effective approaches with a wide impact.



Partnerships with like-minded players and networking are of great significance.



Respect for the law of the land as responsible citizens and fulfilling all statutory requirements – not out of fear of being penalized but as a core value.

The way forward is not easy, when it comes to meeting the requirements and raising the needed resources for the projects. However, Development Focus is determined to press on to make a difference in the lives of children and youth from excluded communities.

3. CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE.



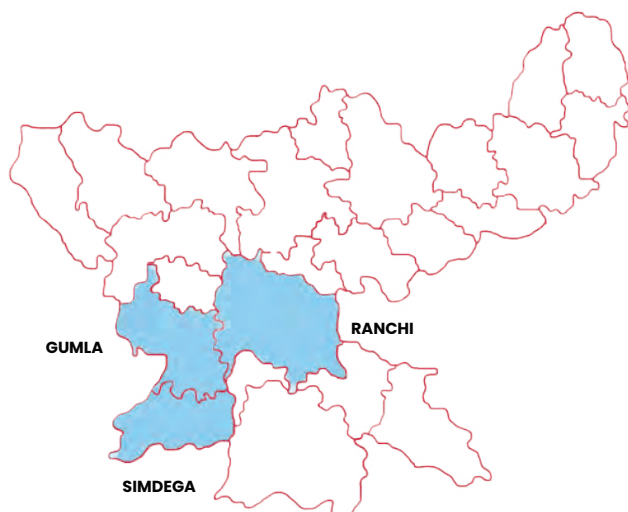
Location of Jharkhand in india

Jharkhand, which means, "The land of forests" is a state in eastern India, created on November 15, 2000, from what was previously the southern half of Bihar. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. It has an area of 79,710 km². It is the 15th largest state by area, and the 14th largest by population. Hindi is the official language of the state. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub capital. The state is known for its waterfalls, hills, and holy places. Jharkhand is famous for its rich mineral resources like Uranium, Mica, Bauxite, Granite, Gold, Silver, Graphite, Magnetite, Dolomite, Fireclay, Quartz, Feldspar, Coal (32% of India), Iron, Copper (25% of India) etc. Forests and woodlands occupy more than 29% of the state which is amongst the highest in India.

Kamali, a 20-year-old girl from a remote village in Ranchi district, Jharkhand, had to drop out of school due to poverty. She spent years helping her family with farming and grazing cattle. Despite her strong desire to study, there were no schools nearby and the ones that were available were difficult to reach. Her village is located in thick jungles with no phone connectivity and poor infrastructure. The daily trek through the forest is very risky. With the Anchal project initiated by Development Focus, Kamali is now engaged in a business with the Yuva Samuha in her village, making eco-friendly leaf plates and bowls. This has enabled her to earn a decent income and support her family.



Jharkhand suffers from what is sometimes termed a resource curse. It accounts for more than 40% of the mineral resources of India but 39.1% of its population is below the poverty line and 19.6% of children under five years of age are malnourished. Jharkhand is primarily rural, with about 76% of its population living in villages. Most of the villages are tribal dominated with 32 tribal communities. Some of the main tribes are Santali, Munda, Kharia, Korwa, Oraon etc. There are also Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) residing in remote villages. Subsistence agriculture is the main source of livelihood and minor forest products. The people are desperately poor, backward, malnourished, and lead a hard and miserable life. As a result of poverty, the intake of various essential constituents of food is inadequate among women, children, adolescent girls, and youth. Malnutrition during critical period of growth leads not only to stunting of physical growth but also to sub-optimal intellectual development that contributes directly or indirectly to high morbidity and mortality. Most farmers are unskilled, and do not have irrigation facilities nor have access to developments in farming technology.



Location of our project districts

Their income is used for household expenses, largely for food, educational expenses of their children, and meeting other social obligations. Due to lack of capacity and skills, inadequate financial and material resources, required agricultural equipment, less irrigation facilities the earning from agriculture is not adequate. This results in malnutrition, food insecurity and migration. The women folk are forced to play triple roles, i.e., reproductive, productive and community managing roles. Socio-cultural practices that are inimical to their well-being poses many challenges.

Riya, a 12-year-old girl from a remote village in Gumla, Jharkhand, was manipulated by her aunt to leave her home with a 20-year-old boy under the false promise of good education. Her worried parents sought help from the Development Focus (DF) project team, who contacted the Child helpline. With their assistance, Riya was miraculously found safe near Ranchi airport. The DF project staff visited her family to stress on the importance of education and the risks of unsafe migration. Riya is now back in school and raises awareness in other adolescents with her own experience.



Riya with her family

Families are driven to a life of resignation, looking at survival, one day at a time, without considering their future. In this scenario, when an outside agent walks in with an offer of job and money for their daughters/sons in a far away, unknown world, they are gullible and fall for it without thinking of the consequences. Unsafe migration and trafficking are rife. In many villages, most of the youth have left and parents have no clue as to where they are. The little education that the youth have received has not exposed them to opportunities before them. They are not aware of their rights, even to their own body. Early marriages, child labour harmful traditional practices are all going on unabated.

In our many years of interaction with the youth in Jharkhand, they acknowledge that they are aware that this way of life is not good for them, but they have no other option. Unless they have a stable livelihood and financial stability, they are unable to take a stand for what they believe is right.

With this clear message from the ground, Development Focus started implementing projects in tribal villages to bring transformation in the lives of children and youth. The goal is to Prevent and Protect children and youth from Abuse and Exploitation by providing holistic education and stable livelihood. Youth are facilitated to see resources and opportunities before them in their own villages and add value to the same by using simple / appropriate technology and earn a stable living through business. This leads to an overall impact where youths can stay in their communities and create wealth for their communities leading to overall development. This brings transformation in their lives and that of their communities. The communities are mobilized, their awareness raised and empowered to claim their rights, fight exploitation and other social evils.

Development Focus has been implementing the following projects since 2019:

1. Prevention and protection of tribal youth from unsafe migration / trafficking.

- Covered 20 villages in Thethaitangar block of Simdega district in Jharkhand.
- 1005 children in the 9 to 14 age group and 765 youth in the 15 to 22 age group were direct beneficiaries.
- Project duration: February 2019 to July 2022.

2. Empowering tribal communities to stop trafficking of youth from villages of Jharkhand.

- Covered 20 villages in Dumri block of Gumla district.
- 1170 children in the 9 to 14 age group and 980 youth in the 15 to 22 age group were direct beneficiaries.
- Project duration: July 2019 to October 2022.

3. ANCHAL – to protect the vulnerable and marginalised.

- Covering 30 villages in Tamar and Silli blocks of Ranchi district.
- To reach out to 1,500 children in the 9 to 14 age group and 800 youth in the 15 to 22 age group as direct beneficiaries.
- Project duration: from December 2021 and ongoing.

4. HOPE – Hope, Opportunities, Protection and Entrepreneurship.

- Covering 30 villages in Basia and Bano blocks of Gumla and Simdega districts.
- To reach 1,500 children in the 9 to 14 age group and 800 youth in the 15 to 22 age group as direct beneficiaries.
- Project duration: from May 2023 and ongoing.

These projects have been making a huge impact in transforming the lives of young girls and boys. In the past four years, several hundreds who would have landed in cities to be casual labourers, leading to exploitation and abuse are earning a sustainable living in their own village and contributing to the development of the community and village. The community has been empowered to claim their entitlements and are slowly getting roads, bridges, electricity, and mobile connectivity. There are more teachers in schools and better access to health facilities.

4. “PROJECT ANCHAL” TO PROTECT THE VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED



Development Focus has been implementing this project since December 2021 in Ranchi district of Jharkhand. The project covers 30 tribal dominated villages in Tamar and Silli blocks. With its proximity to the West Bengal border, unsafe migration has been very high in these two blocks. The thirty villages were carefully selected for project implementation with the goal of facilitating children and youth to find safer and meaningful alternatives for their lives and for the future of their communities.

In a world that often disregards the voices and perspectives of its youngest members, ‘child participation’ emerges as a powerful tool for empowerment. Project Anchal primarily works on the principles of child participation besides, providing appropriate technology and skills to youth for livelihood. The project proposes protecting children and youth by providing them life skills, economic growth, and social justice.

To achieve this, the project employs three main objectives:

1. Promoting child participation among children and youth as they become aware of rights, have access to education, training, and livelihood.
2. Developing a movement of change through supporting, training, and motivating a cadre of change agents known as ‘Yuva Mitras’.
3. Promoting dialogue between relevant stakeholders and the communities.

As we delve into project ‘Anchal’, which is a project empowering children, youth, and communities, we also embark on a journey of discovery, immersing ourselves into the enigmatic, extraordinary lives and identities of hundreds of these children and youth of Jharkhand’s tribal and marginalized groups. In this brief article, we wish to take you through the process initiated for each of our target groups and the interventions that we take them through.

CHILDREN

Children are one of the core target groups in the project. They beam with their inherent curiosity, untamed creativity, untainted outlook, and possess immense potential to contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process that shapes their lives. By embracing and nurturing this potential, the project unlocks a transformative force for their inclusive and democratic future. The process involves children recognising their rights as individuals. It goes beyond token gestures of involvement and instead seeks to create spaces where children's voices are not only heard but also valued and acted upon. The initiative grants children the opportunity to participate in matters that affect their lives such as education, healthcare, and community development. Furthermore, it inspires them to believe that their ideas, dreams, and experiences matter!

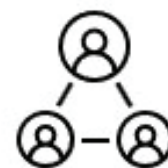
The Children's Clubs are also known as 'Bal Samohas', in the locally spoken Hindi. It is a structured group specifically designed for children to engage in various activities, interact with peers, learn new skills, and have fun in a safe and supportive environment. Children in the age group of 9-14 years are part of the club. The club promotes Child Participation. It is rooted in the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which recognizes children's rights to express their views, be heard, and participate in matters concerning them. Children's Clubs focus on a wide range of activities and interests, such as sports, arts and crafts, science, literature, community service, and more. These clubs often operate under the supervision of a Community Mobiliser (CM) who mentors and facilitates the activities of the club.



Children enjoying a game as part of their club activities.

Imprints on children through their participation in clubs:

Empowerment: Children's Clubs serve as a platform for child participation, allowing children to have a say in their activities, goals, and direction of the club. This empowers children by giving them a sense of ownership. They plan their activities. Some examples are saving money regularly, helping a child in their village to re-enrol in school, organise events such as holi, anti child labour day among others.



Life Skill Development: Through participation in clubs, children develop various skills such as effective communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, and decision-making. These skills are crucial for effective participation in the club and in the context of the larger community. These skills are facilitated through the Community Mobilisers who have been trained to facilitate.

Voice and Expression: Children's Clubs provide opportunities for children to express their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. When their opinions are valued within the club setting, children are more comfortable to express themselves in other contexts as well. They meet every week and discuss various topics.



Responsibility: Children are involved in the planning and execution of club activities, based on quarterly plans that they have come up with. They learn to take on responsibilities and contribute to the collective goals of the group. They maintain the minutes register and handle the savings effectively.

Diverse Perspectives: Child participation in clubs helps ensure that a variety of perspectives are considered when making decisions, leading to well-rounded and inclusive outcomes. To cite an example, a Children's Club in Mishirhotag has more than 30 members, normally considered as too many in a club. The children however decided that they did not want to be separated into two smaller clubs. The club has now started a stationery shop well managed by all the members with clear roles and responsibilities.



Active Citizenship: Children's clubs have a pivotal role in their communities, where children are introduced to the concept of citizenship, community involvement, and the importance of participating in society. These are seen when a child club is engaged in cleaning the school compound, organising sports activities, or ensuring that no child marriages take place in their community.

Social Interaction: Clubs facilitate interactions between children from different backgrounds (religion, caste, and tribal groups), helping them develop social skills, empathy, and an understanding of diversity.



Advocacy and Social Change: Children who learn about participation and are empowered in the clubs are more likely to become advocates for positive change in their communities and beyond.

Earn While You Learn (EWYL)

"Earn While You Learn" is a unique concept that facilitates children to make money while still pursuing their basic education and learning new skills. This approach recognizes the importance of balancing education and preparing for livelihood in future. It is a relevant approach in communities where children drop out of school to go for work and provide food for their family. Parents tend to value this approach as the child friendly skills learnt are applicable for life and not mere textbook learning. Some of the examples of EWYL are vegetable gardening, poultry/duck rearing, small animal rearing, stationery shop in their villages, selling small eatables at weekly markets, trading various forest produce, paper bag making etc.



Children engaged in paper bag making Murpa village



Children with seedlings for their vegetable garden at Goradih village

A typical Children's club at Mishirhotag...

Mishirhotag is a village encircled with mountains at Silli block, about 9 km from the block office. The inhabitants of this village are from the Bediya tribe. Agriculture is the main source of income and migration is very common during the off season (when agriculture is stalled). Children walk 2.5 kilometres to attend primary school and about 4 kilometres for secondary education. They go by foot on poor roads. The village has no mobile network connectivity and very poor infrastructure. Children are often left with no meaningful engagement, encouragement, or guidance to discover their potential.

An important turning point was when project Anchal began implementation in this village. A Children's Club was formed, engaging all children in the 9-14 age group. The children named their club as 'Chand Sitara Hathi Pyara' loosely translated as "My lovely elephant moon and star". Members meet every Monday evening at 4:00 p.m. where they discuss and learn many important lessons of life.



Weekly club meeting in progress

Field staff from project Anchal and the Community Mobilizer attend club meetings from time to time to provide inputs and strengthen the club. The children decided to save money in their club and started saving Rs.5 per week. This helps them to value money and instills the concept of saving. They have come up with a system to keep their money safe and manage it in a transparent manner.

The project introduced various activities for the children. "Earn While You Learn" (EWYL) is one that aims to help children to earn money while they are still at school. The children were very happy and excited when they heard about EWYL.

They brainstormed and discussed various child-friendly business opportunities in their village. After considering many options, they decided to open a small stationary shop in the village investing the club's savings. After learning about basics of business, the CM and Community Watch Group (CWG) assisted them to set up a room in the Anganwadi centre (Pre School) after taking permission from the authorities. The children loaned Rs.2,000 from the weekly savings of the club for the business and an additional contribution of Rs 20 from each member. This gave them a capital of Rs 2600 to buy stationary for their shop.



Member of Bal Samoha engaged in a child friendly activity called EWYL (Earn While You Learn)

On June 5, 2023, Mr. Gausundar Manjhi, the village Gram Pradhan inaugurated the shop in the presence of CWG members and the villagers. The children named their shop "Student Corner". The village elders and parents were very pleased to see the progress made by children and inspired them to study well. The children sold stationary worth Rs.80 on the inauguration day. The Anchal Project staff assisted them in learning bookkeeping skills as well as the rotation of responsibilities. They made the decision to open the shop for one hour in the morning and two hours in the evening.

They also chose three members each week to serve as shopkeepers on a rotational basis. The shop has been operational for about two months and children have sold stationary worth Rs.900. They have also added some additional items for sale like sweets and snacks – based on market demand. This EWYL initiative strengthened the club, has a positive influence on school retention, and is serving as a model for children in other villages. Children now find themselves engaging in meaningful and fruitful activities. Parents and the community are pleased with this initiative.

YOUTH

Jharkhand has a relatively young population, with a large percentage of youth in the 15 to 29 age group. This demographic group presents both opportunities and challenges. They are a valuable resource, with their undying energy and creativity. This can be tapped in areas such as education, healthcare, technology, agriculture, and many more. Despite their potential, youth face several challenges. These challenges include limited access to quality education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and lack of skill development. Poverty, lack of infrastructure, and issues related to tribal rights and displacement badly affect the youth. As Jharkhand is home to a large tribal population, many of the youth belong to these tribal communities. Their empowerment and inclusion in development initiatives are often excluded.

The desperate need for livelihood opportunities drive youth to migrate from rural to urban areas within the state or to other states. The fact is that there are no opportunities in their own villages or even nearby towns. This trend leads to social change and economic imbalances and struggles within their communities. Most of these issues can be addressed by creating local employment opportunities and developing their entrepreneurial skills.

Project Anchal strives to address some of these challenges by mobilising youth in the 15 to 22 age group in Youth Clubs. These clubs are social and recreational organizations or spaces designed for the youth to gather, interact, learn, and participate in various activities. The Youth Clubs are facilitated by the Community Mobilisers in each village. The primary goal of a Youth Club is to provide a safe and secure environment for young individuals to explore their interests, build social connections, develop life skills, and engage in constructive activities along with learning skills that will help them in building business and livelihood. In the clubs, youth participate in a range of activities such as sports, arts and crafts, workshops on life skills, educational sessions, community service projects, and business concepts such as Grow Your Money (GYM). They play a significant role in fostering personal growth, building self-confidence, leadership skills, and a sense of belonging among the young people.

Extreme poverty has been the plight of 21-year-old Arjun (name changed) who hails from a remote village in Jharkhand. He had to surrender his right to education to take up the responsibilities of his family at a very young age. This was the reason for dropping out of school when he was pursuing his 10th grade. Since there were no opportunities to earn an income in his village, he was compelled to migrate for employment in the unorganized sector, with all the risks involved. When the Covid pandemic hit, he was back at home without a job. The family had no financial support.

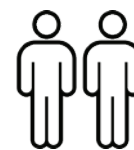


Arjun (sitting on right) hulling rice

Development Focus started working in his village and implemented the Anchal project. Arjun joined the Youth Club. Different livelihood options were introduced to the youth. He and his club members decided to set up a business to provide rice hulling service, which is in great demand. Now he can earn money through business and contribute to the upkeep of his family. His business provides much needed services to the entire village.

Imprints on youth through their participation in clubs:

Empowerment and Leadership Development: Youth Clubs empower the youth by providing them with opportunities to develop leadership skills, decision-making abilities, and a sense of responsibility. It prepares them to take on leadership roles within their community in the future.



‘Before Project Anchal was initiated in my village, our Gram Sabha never met to hold a meeting. People were confined to their own lives, work, and families. Nobody was concerned about the children and their future. After Project Anchal, the Gram Sabha began meeting and discusses various issues. As a result, a proposal for a road to our village was sent and the government has approved the village road connecting the hamlets. The village environment has changed to a great extent. We are very grateful to Development Focus.

-Dagan Oraon, YC member from Murpa village



Skill Development and Grow Your Money: Youth Clubs facilitate vocational training, and skill development workshops that equip tribal youth with practical skills for employment or entrepreneurship. This contributes to their economic well-being and reduces dependency on external resources and reduce the incidence of migration.

Health and Awareness: Youth participate in health awareness campaigns, workshops, and discussions on topics such as hygiene, nutrition, preventive healthcare, and sexual and reproductive health rights. This helps improve the overall well-being of tribal youth and their communities. A Youth Club initiated a campaign against alcoholism and drug abuse in Modidih village.



Social Cohesion, Networking and Sports: The clubs provide a sense of belonging and a space for social interaction. The young people also engage in many sports activities and they have a special preference for football. This helps them build strong relationships within the community, fostering mutual support and collaboration.

Advocacy and Community Development: The clubs serve as a platform to address issues relevant to tribal communities, such as land rights, access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure. By advocating for their rights, youth contribute to the overall development of their communities. They are slowly gaining insights on various development initiatives from the Government and claiming their entitlements for themselves and their community.



Personal Growth and Self-Confidence: Engaging in club activities has allowed the youth to step out of their comfort zones, try new things, engage their time effectively and overcome challenges. This has boosted their self-confidence and personal growth.

“Development Focus has provided me with the opportunity to learn, practice, and grow in life. I am overjoyed to learn about various Life Skills that have helped me and impacted my life. I am now much more aware and confident in my life. I can also help and guide my friends.”

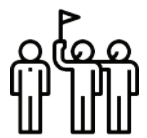
-Pusho Kumari, YS member from Bhuli

Environmental Stewardship: Tribal communities have a close connection with nature and rely on the environment and forest around them for their livelihoods. Youth Clubs are educated about sustainable practices, conservation, and the importance of preserving their natural resources. The youth are oriented about vermicomposting, use of rotational crop and organic fertilisers.



Community Participation: Through various initiatives, Youth Clubs actively participate in community development. They join village level meetings and are cognisant of the social issues in their communities. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among the youth for the betterment of their community.

Participation and Leadership: There are two Leadership Academies in the project, which encourage youth participation in governance, decision-making, and community leadership. This leads to inclusive and sustainable development. Change Agents are carefully selected and trained systematically in the Leadership Academy to become future leaders and influencers.



“Children and youth in our village had no interest in coming together, learning, and discussing various issues regarding their future. After joining the youth club, I had the opportunity to learn many new things such as social aspects of my life/community, life skills, my responsibility to my community etc. This has changed my perspective on life. We also learn about savings and growing our money. I use a portable water pump to irrigate small agricultural plots and earn an income. I now have hope, confidence, and a positive perspective for my future.”

- Pankaj Bediya, YC member from Balagoda



Distribution of sports materials in one of the Youth Clubs

Grow Your Money and Livelihood

Project Anchal has initiatives aimed at providing vocational training, skill development, and entrepreneurial opportunities for the tribal youth. These efforts are intended to equip youth with the tools that they need to become self-reliant and contribute to their economic development. The important initiatives in the project are Grow Your Money and Livelihood units.

Grow Your Money is a unique initiative that instills a business mindset in the youth by encouraging them to do small business with little capital and make quick profit. They are also encouraged to reinvest the money to diversify and expand their business. With this practical start, the budding entrepreneurs are introduced to profit, loss, marketing, capital, book-keeping etc. The experience of each entrepreneur is regularly shared within their groups for cross learning. This business mindset is important before initiating larger livelihood activities in the groups. Traditionally, tribal youth are not exposed very much to business. Giving them a start can bring economic development.

On the other hand, 'Livelihood' refers to how individuals or families earn a sustainable living and support their basic economic needs. It involves activities like, skills development, resource mapping, technological inputs and

identifying relevant opportunities to generate income. Livelihoods take various forms, such as formal employment, self-employment, entrepreneurship, agriculture, trade, crafts, and more. Project Anchal strives to enable sustainable and productive livelihood options for poverty reduction, economic development, and overall societal progress.

The intersection of these two concepts lead to sustainable livelihood where youth can earn a substantial income. For example, after the youth go through "Grow Your Money" exercise, they are facilitated to explore relevant business opportunities, preferably using locally available resources. Many of the villages have forest cover with plenty of Sal trees. Quality leaf plates and leaf bowls can be produced by introducing appropriate technology. This will involve a couple of sewing machines to sew the leaves and a manual, heated press to press and trim the plates or bowls. Youth are formed into production groups based on their aptitude. The leaf plate/bowl group is trained to operate the machine to produce quality plates and bowls as well as market the same. This is one example. Few other possibilities in the project area are:

- Rice hulling machine to hull locally harvested paddy
- Oil extraction machine to extract oil from locally grown oil seeds.
- Sal leaf plate and bowl making machine.
- Tamarind processing and packing machine.
- Portable water pumps to provide irrigation to small and marginalised farmers at a cost.



A portable water pump pumping water to irrigate a field.

After production stabilises in each of these groups, the group is facilitated to register as a production group and market the products on a regular basis. Group members are trained to maintain their books of account and profit is shared among the group members.

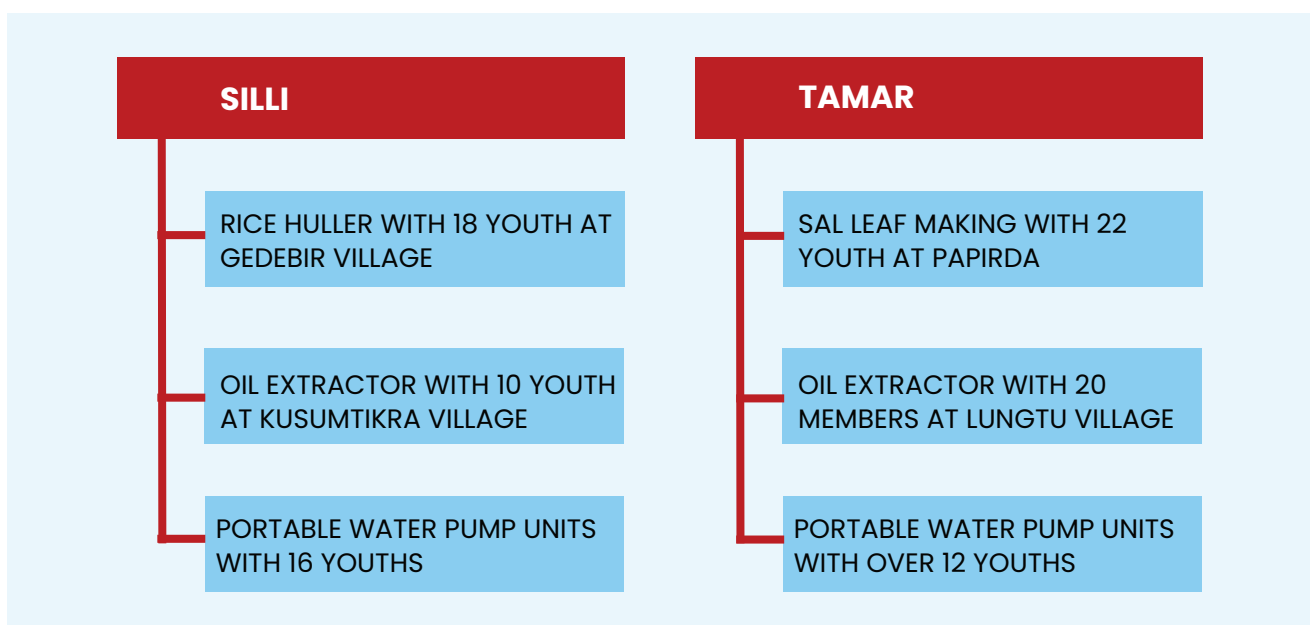
The low-cost machine that was provided for training and start-up, as part of the project is formally handed over to the group on the condition that they will maintain it and continue to use it for their livelihood. This has been an effective process to provide livelihood to tribal youth and effectively stop unsafe migration and trafficking.



“The children and youth in my village never had such an idea, attitude, or opportunity to get together and have a meaningful discussion and engagement before the formation of clubs that project Anchal has introduced. They are now becoming very active, serious, and united. Forming clubs and bringing them together on one platform is a major achievement for our village because youths had never come together and had such an attitude previously. Even parents are getting more involved and concerned with the lives and future of their children. Children are now coming together and gradually adopting a business mindset, as evidenced by children selling snacks at the village fair.”

- Gopinath Karmali, 47 years old, CWG member from Gedebir

Some Livelihood Units already set up in the Field:



COMMUNITIES

Most of the communities in Jharkhand are made up of different tribes, prominent among them are the Santhals, Mundas, Oraons, and Ho. These people groups have a rich cultural heritage but have historically faced socio-economic challenges such as land alienation, displacement due to mining and industrialization. They have limited access to quality education and healthcare. In the given context project Anchal works in 30 villages in Tamar and Silli blocks of Ranchi district.

Each of these 30 villages have Community Watch Groups (CWGs) locally known as 'Nigrani Samiti'. The CWG is made up of 9 volunteers who are committed for change in their village. These community-based organisations are formed in the first year of the project. They anchor the project at the village level taking on the role of facilitating the Children and Youth clubs.

They participate in all the activities and interventions of the project. They along with the communities select a Community Mobiliser (CM) for each village. The capacity of CWGs and CMs are systematically developed over the duration of the project enabling them to influence policy and ownership of the project interventions. They play an important role in the implementation and sustainability of project initiatives. They are the working arm of the project during and after the project cycle.

They receive systematic training on issues such as role of civil society, prevention of child marriage and child labour in the communities, effects of unsafe migration, incidences of trafficking. These are some of their roles and responsibilities as CWG members.



Community Watch Group from Babaikundi



Village mapping by CWG members and Children

"I've always wanted to make changes in my village, especially in the lives of children and youth, but I couldn't do it alone." DF intervention and development work has had a significant impact on the lives of children, youth, and parents. Children are now more confident and aware of their life, village, and future. I am pleased to be a part of this effort as a CWG member."

Asha Ram Bediya, 36, a CWG member from Bhuli village.

ANCHAL TEAM



From Left to Right: Amit (Block Project Officer), Jyoti (Leadership Academy Facilitator), Ginna Lucas (Project Manager), Ruby (Leadership Academy Facilitator), Dhan (Block Project Officer)

5. LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Empowering communities towards Equity and Social Justice

Leadership has long been recognized as a driving force in shaping the course of organizations, communities, and societies with leaders serving as agents of change – both positive and negative. Despite the presence of numerous leaders, social change remains a difficult challenge because many social injustices persist, shadowing communities with poverty, hunger, limited access to education, healthcare, gender discrimination etc.

Development Focus has incorporated the concept of Leadership Academy (LA) in our projects to empower children, youth, and their communities. Youth who have the potential are carefully selected from the communities where we work and are provided opportunities to learn and develop over a period of one year so that they can go back and be Change Agents among their peers and in their communities.

By developing leaders within communities, we aim to empower individuals with the capacity to advocate for social justice and effect change from within. This framework places leadership as a channel for addressing the multi-layered challenges faced by youth and children in our project villages, including early marriage, unsafe migration, trafficking, educational and employment disparities, and the marginalization of tribal communities. These issues force many youth to drop-out from school, seek casual jobs in distant cities, and be subject to abusive work conditions. Further, social problems like child marriage, child labour, and substance abuse worsens the plight of these young individuals. Change Agents from within their communities will seek to make a difference.



Leadership Academy is a resource centre that aims to develop leaders to be 'Change Agents' in their own communities. Currently two Leadership Academies are operating in Ranchi district of Jharkhand at Tamar and Silli blocks under Project Anchal, and two Leadership Academies are coming up at the Gumla-Simdega border of Jharkhand. These Leadership Academies are also designed to sustain the objectives of the projects, such that after the project implementation cycle is over, the outcomes will continue.

The students of the Leadership Academy, who will be trained to be Change Agents or Yuva Mitras (in Hindi) are carefully selected. Each of them belongs to a Youth Club in a project village. The community is involved in the selection process. Youth with good communication skills and leadership potential are carefully selected. A minimum of 3 to 4 members from each village are chosen from youth groups to be trained at the Leadership Academy. It is ensured that the selected youth from a particular village represent the community's interests and needs.

Once the youth are selected, they make a commitment to be regular for one year and spend a minimum of 3 hours a day at the Academy and take part in all the activities and training conducted. They can come either in the morning or evening shift based on their convenience. The aim is to equip them with knowledge and skills required to become Agents of Change within their communities.

The curriculum is developed based on the need and prevailing situation in the communities represented. The curriculum covers various aspects of learning related to life skills, understanding poverty, prevailing social injustice, and development. The Yuva Mitras (students) develop good communication skills so that they can communicate effectively to their peers and the community back in their village. Every Academy has a facilitator who manages the academy. She is responsible to develop and implement the overall curriculum and to manage the Academy. The facilitator identifies experts in topics that must be covered and will invite them as resource persons to come and take sessions for the Yuva Mitras. The focus is on knowledge acquisition and skill development. The whole process involves teacher-centric and learner-centric methods such as lectures, demonstrations, group work, discussions, brainstorming, practical assignments, etc.



Yuva Mitras of Tamar Leadership Academy on their exposure visit to the Block Office

The Leadership Academy thus far:

The Tamar Leadership Academy was inaugurated in January 2023. After few students dropped out, 18 students have been participating regularly. Some of the activities of the past six months are:

Yuva Mitras have acquired basic computer skills and can comfortably use Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Powerpoint.

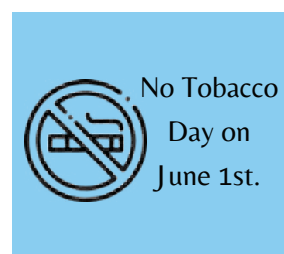
The following sessions have been covered under social aspects:

- One-day training on first aid by a competent nurse from the community health centre.
- Five-days training on roles and responsibilities of civil society by a Block Programme Manager of National Rural Livelihood Mission.
- Three-days training on Nutrition and Know your Body by a Cluster Level Federation Manager from the Self-Help Group movement.
- Four-days training on understanding gender and gender discrimination by a consultant.
- Several sessions on Financial Literacy facilitated online by an accountancy firm in South India.

Topics covered under personal development.

- Spoken English facilitated online by Vitae International Accounting Services in South India.

Apart from these the Yuva Mitras had observed Important events like:



This helped them broaden their horizons beyond academic learning. They were also engaged in organising the event. The community greatly appreciated the events.

A significant activity was a visit to the Tamar block office, where our Yuva Mitras got first-hand experience of local governance and administration. The passion for learning and dedication of the Yuva Mitras has been inspiring. One of the Yuva Mitras was able to facilitate a member from her village to correct her Aadhaar card. She visited the block office, met the Block Development Officer (BDO), and as instructed, was able to correct the Aadhaar card. The Yuva Mitras have taken the initiative to share their learnings with the Children' Clubs

and Youth Clubs in Murpa and Dubla villages based on the inputs received from the Leadership Academy.

A noteworthy partnership was established between Development Focus and Vitae International Accounting Services to establish the Leadership Academy and support the learning process of the Yuva Mitras. The business house not only provided funds to establish the academy, but their highly qualified team members engaged the students online for topics like financial literacy, basics of computers and spoken English. The youth greatly benefited from these highly professional inputs and the exchange of ideas between urban and rural communities.

The Silli Leadership Academy was inaugurated on June 28, 2023. The local MLA, Mr. Sudhesh Kumar Mahto was the chief guest. 27 students are enrolled from neighbouring villages, and they are regular at the academy despite transportation challenges. Classes are going on with inputs in basic computers, local geography, and various social issues prevalent in the communities. They have been discussing issues like alcoholism, dowry, child marriage, child labour, etc. The academy had a one-day training session on first aid by a trained nurse and had an exposure visit to Silli Block Office. The Silli Yuva Mitras have also started transferring their learning to the children and youth club members in their villages.



Yuva Mitras of Sill Leadership Academy with classroom engagement

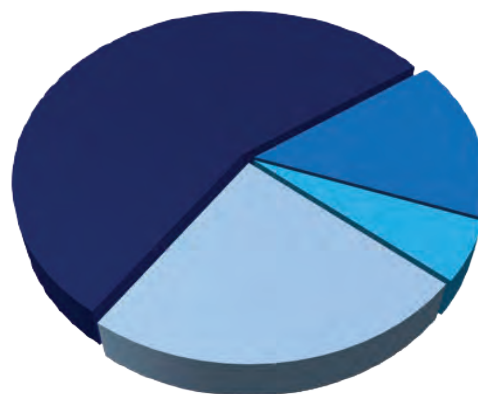
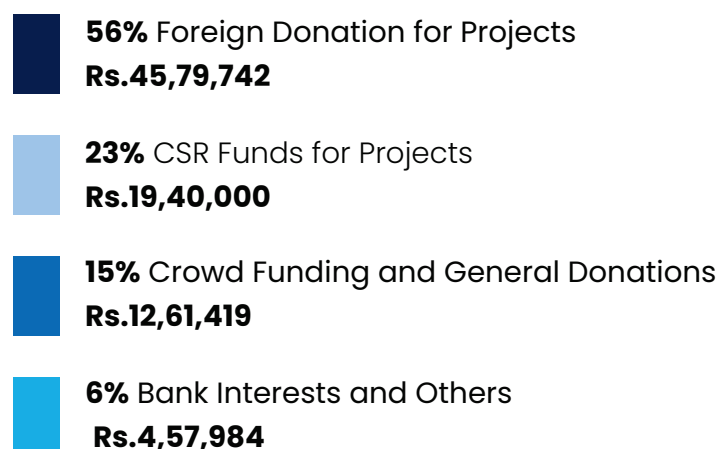
The impact of these academies on the Yuva Mitras is significant. They are not only gaining knowledge, but there has also been a noticeable shift in their attitude and behaviour. They are more confident, vocal, and eager to take on leadership roles in their communities.

While we celebrate these achievements, we are also aware of the challenges our Yuva Mitras are facing such as transportation, balancing community work (like planting and harvesting) with attending classes regularly and managing the vagaries of nature. However, we are actively working on collaborative solutions, involving the community and local stakeholders, to address these obstacles.

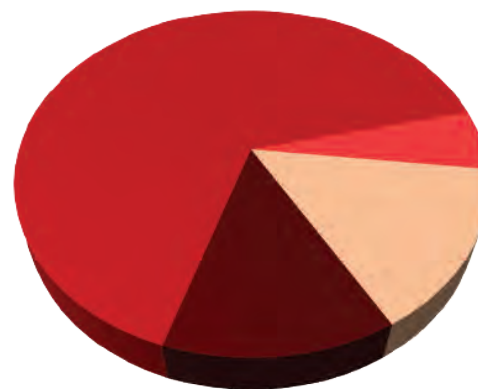
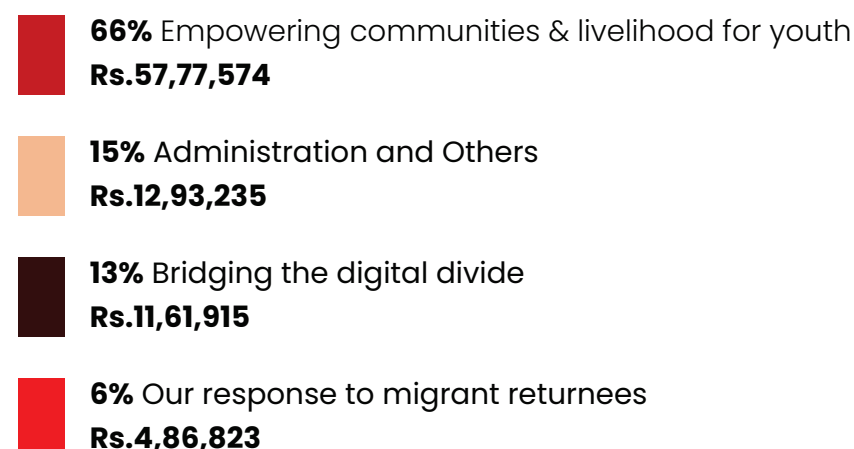
In this short period of time, what we observe is there is a significant gap in addressing issues faced by the coming generation – children and youth. This intervention realizes the need for Change Agents or Yuva Mitras, who are prepared and ready to take over the leadership gap. Having a motivated Change Agent within a community will make a positive impact and sustain the inputs provided during a project cycle to bring long-term social change.

6. FINANCIALS

2022-23 INCOME



2022-23 EXPENSES



Credibility Statement

At Development Focus, we believe that Accountability is the key to all our actions, decisions, and policies related to the governance of the organisation and implementation of projects entrusted with us. We ensure that our accounting and financial practices are according to the existing standards in the country and in line with priorities set by our Board of Trustees. We have a committed team of professionals in our office who work not just for the money that they earn but out of passion for the cause we stand for. Many of them can earn much more in the marketplace. The money we raise goes directly to the people we serve. Our Board of Trustees and our donors make sure that we have strict and professional financial audits regularly to ensure that the resources entrusted to us are not spent unwisely or lost along the way. We fulfil all statutory requirements of the governing institutions, not out of fear of being penalized but as a core value of the organisation.

7. TRUSTEES OF DEVELOPMENT FOCUS



Dr. Gladys Sumithra (Treasurer & Founder Trustee) holds a PhD in economics from Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. She was the Senior Director of the Planning Department, Government of Karnataka where she served for 25 years. On retirement she was reappointed as Senior Scientist in the office of the Additional Chief Secretary for Public Works and Housing.

Dr. Gladys Sumithra is actively involved in civil society development and continues to be on the Governing Board of several educational institutions and Non-Profit Organizations in Bangalore.

Dr. P. Sethu (Founder Trustee) is the Director of Indienhilfe, India – a charitable organization that empowers children belonging to economically and socially weaker sections in different states of India. Analysing and finding solutions for empowerment of communities especially among the children, youth and women has been his passion for the last 3 decades.

Besides serving on the Board of several organizations and institutions, he renders consultation on administration, finance and project launching. Dr. Sethu has organised national and regional events, seminars and conferences, and has also led international and national delegations in India and abroad.



Dr. Hannah Anandaraj (Trustee) holds a doctorate in Social Sciences and has expertise in Social Work with a focus on Medical and Psychiatry. Dr. Anandaraj worked as a Reader (Associate Professor) in Osmania University. She has many publications to her credit. She continues to teach at the university and guides several research scholars.

Dr. Hannah Anandaraj has served on boards of several organizations and committees. She encourages and enables Child-Centred NGOs to build on their strengths and overcome challenges, which has been a deeply rewarding experience.

Mr. Thomas Paul (Managing Trustee) holds a Masters' degree in Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras. After working for a private firm in Gujarat for 10 years, he moved on to the social development sector and was the Director of the Methodist Technical Institute at Vadodara, Gujarat. He later took over as the General Secretary of Skills for Progress, an all-India association of over 200 private vocational training institutions across India. He has been supporting various international organizations as a freelance consultant. His main forte has been community development and livelihood training for marginalized children and youth. His passion has been to help people realize and unleash the God given potential within them.



8. OUR TEAM



Back row from Left to Right: Emmanuel (Project Officer), Masillamani (Team Leader), Betrayan (Project Coordinator) Thomas (Managing Trustee).

Front row from Left to Right: Diptty (Programme Executive), Monika (Office Assistant), Deepika (Asst. Project Officer), Pearl (Communication and Fundraising Officer), Sanjana (Accounts cum Admin Officer).

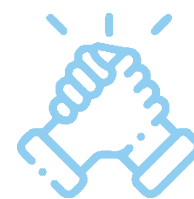
I am very privileged to work at Development Focus, an organisation which is striving for the development of the poorest of the poor and marginalized communities. I started my career with Development Focus as Accounts cum Admin Officer in August 2017. It has been an adventurous, educative, and fruitful journey.

The team is encouraged to work sincerely as we have a board which upholds the values – Hope, Respect, Commitment, Accountability and Transparency. As an accounts person I am happy and satisfied with the work I am doing as it enables me to support communities in need. It gives me immense happiness to see an excluded community grow. My job is to closely work with the program team to facilitate them work within the budget, make the required payments on time, and maintain the book of accounts accurately. I further work with the Auditors to prepare the audit reports, utilisation reports, and financial reports for the Donors. I help the partners in the field responding to their accounting queries and building their capacity to meet statutory compliances. It has been a great learning experience, enriching my life.

One aspect that touched me the most is that even at times of crisis, Development Focus has never compromised its mission, values, and ethics. This has encouraged me to give my best for the work I do. I am very thankful to Development Focus for this great opportunity to give back to the community and make it a better place.

-Sanjana Shaji

9. SOLICITING YOUR SUPPORT



Join us in our journey to transform lives.

In almost every family in tribal communities, a member is compelled to seek casual employment in unfamiliar cities and states to fulfil the basic needs of their family due to abject poverty. To meet their family's needs, they are compelled to migrate, which invariably leads to exploitation and abuse.



Happy children in a Children's Club

Join our mission to facilitate children and youth combat the root causes of poverty and create a safe environment in their own villages through meaningful activities. We raise awareness on the potential dangers associated with unsafe migration and trafficking. We actively promote life skills for children and livelihood skills for youth, fostering community involvement leading to quality life.



Household chores are a responsibility in a tribal family for every child.



A youth club member engaged in brick-making for a livelihood.

You can be a part of this initiative by making a lasting impact on tribal communities with your contributions. Your involvement and contribution, however small, would be a great support for the cause. Explore more ways to help through our website at <https://devfocus.in/donate>

You may also send your contributions directly to our bank:

FOR LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN INR:

ACCOUNT:
DEVELOPMENT FOCUS
ACCOUNT NUMBER:
909010037997565
NAME OF BANK/ BRANCH:
AXIS BANK, KALYAN NAGAR
IFS CODE:
UTIB0000734

FOR FOREIGN CONTRIBUTIONS:

ACCOUNT: **DEVELOPMENT FOCUS**
ACCOUNT NUMBER: **40047167730**
NAME OF BANK: **STATE BANK OF INDIA**
BRANCH OF BANK: **FCRA CELL, NEW DELHI**
MAIN BRANCH
ADDRESS OF BANK: **11, SANSAD MARG, NEW**
DELHI 110001
IFS CODE: **SBIN0000691**
SWIFT: **SBININBB104**

“Helping hands are better than Praying Lips.”

-Mother Teresa

For more information and updates please follow our work at



www.devfocus.in



A multi-purpose Rice huller machine amidst Youth club members in Lungtu village

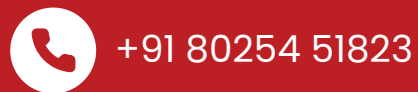


A Rice huller machine amidst Youth club members in Dubla village

www.devfocus.in



Follow our work



Development Focus

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Bangalore 560043 Karnataka

