

KABIL



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT FY 23-24



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Major Highlights of the Year

KABIL has extended its operations to West Bengal, specifically targeting tea garden workers in the Dooars region of North Bengal. Supported by the Oak Foundation, this initiative aims to enhance the livelihoods of 2,500 families from closed and sick tea gardens over the next four years. This marks KABIL's first engagement with tea garden communities, presenting significant challenges that have been successfully addressed by our team in Banarhat.

The project in Mazbat Block, Udalguri District, supported by the Azim Premji Foundation (APF), concluded this financial year. Initially targeting 2,000 families, the project successfully reached 2,417 households over its three-year duration. We are hopeful for an extension of this project to continue its impactful work.

In July 2024, a new high-impact project received sanction with support from the APF, in collaboration with the BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) government and the Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF). This four-year project aims to enhance the livelihoods of 10,000 ST, SC, and other vulnerable communities in Udalguri and Mazbat Blocks of Udalguri District, Assam. The project will leverage resources from MGNREGA and other line departments in order to achieve sustainable development in the area.

KABIL's work in water resource development for livelihoods in Tikamgarh District continues to progress under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). We maintain close collaboration with district administration and have extended our support to partner NGOs in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh to enhance access to MGNREGS for water resource projects. Additionally, a new pilot initiative is underway in Uttar Pradesh, where we are assisting social activists with water resource development using MGNREGS.



Work Done in Assam

Executive Summary

Funded by the Azim Premji Foundation, KABIL is implementing a project titled “Strengthening Livelihoods for Rural Poor in Mazbat Block of Udalguri District (Assam)” across five VCDCs (equivalent to panchayats) in Mazbat Block, Udalguri District, Assam. This three-year project aims to enhance the income of 2,000 rural households in the selected VCDCs by an average of 50% of their current income.

For sustainability and to promote entrepreneurship in the local area, the project will incubate 20 entrepreneurs from among the local youth. These entrepreneurs will supply quality inputs and services to the local community and will also be involved in product aggregation over time. The main focus areas of the project are agriculture and livestock improvement.

Mazbat Block is part of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) and is home to Bodos, Rabhas, Tea Tribes (tribal people who migrated from Central India to work in tea gardens), Nepalese, minorities, and other indigenous communities. The block is remotely located and acutely rural, with no urban habitation. Agriculture and livestock are the primary sources of livelihood for most of Mazbat's residents.

This report covers the period from April 2023 to March 2024, presenting an update on project activities, implementation environment, challenges, and opportunities. As this was the final year of the project, the report emphasizes the achievements over the three-year project duration. Initially scheduled to end in December 2023, the project received a three-month extension, concluding on March 31, 2024.

The period from April 2023 to March 2024 primarily involved exit activities. Some agricultural and allied activities were repeated as demonstrations during the exit process. These activities included:

- Awareness campaigns on pig and poultry vaccination.
- Refresher training on nutrient management.
- Refresher training on the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method.
- Open-field vegetable cultivation.
- Demonstrations on low-cost farm pond structures.

In October 2023, the APF team visited for a project evaluation. Additionally, a joint project by KABIL and ASRLM on the Integrated Farming Cluster in Lamabari, initiated in the last half-year, has been progressing well. Training events have been conducted for the cadres of ASRLM and women farmers, known as Mahila Kisan. ASRLM has provided a Livelihood Service Centre to support farmers with farm equipment.



Project Activities Implemented

Skill Building of 2000 small marginal farmers on Agri and livestock

Around 2,133 households were involved in various agri-allied activities, and 1,309 farmers were engaged in livestock management practices during the project duration.

In Agriculture,

The economy of the Mazbat Block is primarily agricultural in nature. Earlier most of the farmers practiced single cropping, the cultivation land was kept unused after paddy harvesting, which led to the wastage of land resources and it results in a loss of productivity. Some farmers did multi-cropping and cultivated seasonal vegetables, however, Subsequently, with KABIL's constant engagement, presently, the farmers are practicing multi-



cropping, they are making the optimum use of their land, even the homestead land is used for Climate resilient agriculture i.e. cultivation under the rain shelter, where they are sowing King Chili, Tomato, leafy vegetables etc. Farmers are now cultivating throughout the year under the rain shelter. The surplus is being sold in the local market.

Alongside cropping, organic practices have been one of the significant components in agriculture intervention. KABIL always encourages the farmers to adopt organic practices and training is imparted for the same.

KABIL's outreach in agri-allied activities during the project duration is as follows:

Activities	No. of HHs Covered
Nursery created	6
Kharif Paddy	114
Cultivation under Rain shelter	1163
Trellis Cultivation	931
Horticulture Activities	895
Vermi Tank	9
Adapted Nutrient management for Agriculture	734
Gross Household Covered	3852
Net Household Covered	2133



The agri activities round the year showed progress in the following activities:

Open-field vegetables such as bitter gourd, bottle gourd, ridge gourd

Mazbat is a place where people do open field vegetable cultivation after Kharif paddy. The farmers already practice the open filed vegetable cultivation after being involved with KABIL since last two years. Hence, during the exit period the project, KABIL tried to influence the farmers to cultivated two to three types of crops in the season. The purpose was increasing the crop quality and reach to a bigger market.

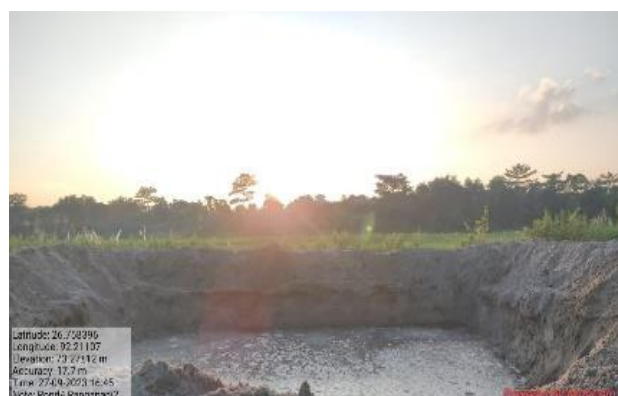
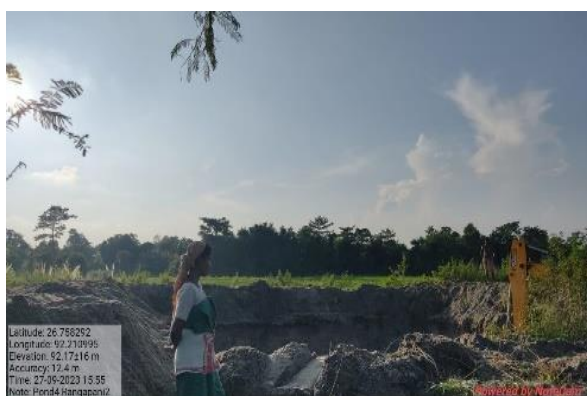


Support to farmers with horticulture Crops like Papaya, Arecanut and Coconut.

As a part of the exiting process KABIL supported 70 farmers with papaya saplings, 115 farmers with Assam Lemon Saplings, 40 Farmers with Arecanut saplings and 50 farmers with Coconut saplings. As the horticulture saplings when managed for the initial 2 years, gives a sustainable income for the next 6 to 10 years. Hence, most of the active farmers were supported at this juncture.

Construction of low-cost Fishery Pond

17 farmers were supported with low cost farm pond structure. The structure was of 50''x50'' size and the construction charges of the farm pond was as low as Rs. 7000/-. This pond can be used as fish rearing tank and the water stored can be used for agriculture.



In Livestock, the current period showed progress in the following activities:

Livestock is the main wealth next to the agriculture of a large chunk of the rural population. Starting from January 2021 KABIL could reach around 1309 households through livestock activities as on March 2023. Pig is highly consumed in the Udalguri district, whereas, mostly the Bodo, Adivasi, and Rabha communities do pig rearing which is a source of income for them. The farmers in Mazbat used to practice the traditional method of livestock management. The pigs could not have proper growth because they were kept outside and there was a lack of hygiene. Subsequently, KABIL intervened and made the community aware of the improved livestock practices like building low-cost pigsties, the benefit of keeping pigs under the pigsty, the Significance of vaccination, deworming of pigs, and adding the mineral mixture to the pig feed. Earlier, the pigs used to grow upto 60Kgs at the time of selling it. Following KABIL's intervention, it is observed that the pigs now grow upto 80kgs at the time of selling.



Alongside Pig rearing, other livestock vaccinations like poultry vaccination, and cow and goat vaccinations have been encouraged among the community.



During the year the KABIL supported 360 households vaccinated their livestock under supervision of KABIL. SPEs who are now adequately trained in improved piggery practices, vaccination, and para-veterinary services. Improved pig feed training events are being conducted by SPEs. Linkage with the veterinary department: SPEs have been linked with the veterinary department by availing resources from the department.

Improving the livelihood asset base of the target farmers

Over the past two years, implementing MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) in the targeted VCDCs has become increasingly challenging. The entire process of creating and submitting the annual action plan has been



handled at the Block and district levels. KABIL professionals have actively participated in the Gram Sabhas conducted in each VCDC to raise awareness about the IBS schemes.

According to the Block Development Officer (BDO) of Mazbat, the VCDCs are prioritizing community schemes over individual schemes. Despite numerous follow-ups and requests to the Block, individual schemes have been stalled.

To address this issue, the project is being merged with the DWIMU project, which will be supported by BRLF to be sanctioned by APF in collaboration with BRLF. The project will be implemented in Udalguri and Mazbat Block. KABIL has targeted 11 VCDCs out of a total of 16 VCDCs in the Mazbat Block excluding the 5 VCDCs of the livelihood project. Merging the MGNREGS activity of both projects might bring a significant result in a short period of time. Furthermore, through this project inflexibility at the BTC level is expected to break down and the schemes would get sanctioned.

The primary focus will be on accessing resources from MGNREGS. The resources, skills, and strategies of the project will be utilized to address the backlog in MGNREGA implementation. The DWIMU project will provide a platform to influence block-level officials, with BRLF having a stake at the BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) level. This integration aims to overcome the challenges and rejections encountered at the block level, ensuring the successful implementation of genuine plans.

A summary on the achievements of the project:

Interventions Wise Household details	
Types of Interventions	No of HHs
Pigsty	443
Livestock Rearing (Vaccination/ Deworming/ Application of mineral mixture in feed)	1184
Green House	6
Kharif paddy area in bigha	114
Rainshelter (King chilli/ leafy Vegetables/Tomato)	1163
SeasonalVegtabale Cutivation (Trellis/open field through organic method)	931
Horticulture (Assam Lemon/Papaya/Black Pepper/Coconut/Arecanut)	895
Vermi tank	9
Training on Nutrient Management for Agriculture	734
Farm Ponds	17
Net Household	2417



Nos of Interventions Vs Incremental Income Range		
Nos of Interventions	No of HHs	Income Range Interventions wise
Single	993	Rs. 3,900 - Rs. 18,738
Double	583	Rs. 3,900 - Rs. 23,900
Three	343	Rs. 3,900 - Rs. 29,150
Four	263	Rs. 3,900 - Rs. 32,200
Five	168	Rs. 4,650 - Rs. 39,913
Six	53	Rs. 8,400 - Rs. 30,088
Seven	14	Rs. 15,640 - Rs. 19,593
Total	2417	

Incremental Income Range as per Endline Survey of 204 Households		
Income Range	No of HHs	Percentage
Rs. 3,900 - Rs. 9,999	91	45%
Rs. 10,000 - Rs. 19,999	76	37%
Rs. 20,000 - Rs. 29,999	29	14%
Rs. 30,000 - Rs. 39,913	8	4%
Total	204	100%

Visit of APF for Program Evaluation:

Three APF officials visited our project area for evaluation. They categorized the selected villages into three groups: Category A (Active), Category B (Less Active), and Category C (Not Active). The APF chose to visit one village from Category A and one from Category B.

During their evaluation, APF noted several positive impacts of the project, including improvements in nutrition levels, increased adoption of livestock vaccination, and greater awareness of organic farming among farmers. However, they observed that village development has not been uniform, with success stories being scattered across the population. The APF identified this as a potential area for KABIL to focus on if the project is extended.



Engagement in Integrated Farming Cluster (IFC) Project

The objective of the Integrated Farming Cluster (IFC) is to enhance, intensify, expand, and integrate existing diversified livelihood activities. IFC targets 2-3 adjacent intervention villages, covering approximately 250-300 households. With the assistance of the ASRLM (Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission) Block Coordinator, KABIL has successfully initiated concept seeding for the IFC in the three blocks of Mazbat, Rowta, and Udalguri within the Udalguri district. This initiative aims to strengthen the concept and implement the IFC to improve livelihoods.

To facilitate the delivery of training linked to the livelihood program, households have been organized into several units based on the SHGs (Self-Help Groups) of the beneficiaries and neighbouring hamlets. Two contact individuals from each unit have been selected to act as representatives. So far, work has commenced in the Lamabari cluster in the Mazbat block, where KABIL has made significant contributions by:

1. Orienting ASRLM cadres about the project in detail.
2. Providing baseline training for ASRLM cadres.
3. Conducting baseline monitoring of the households.
4. Organizing community meetings with ASRLM cadres.

During the last financial year, KABIL facilitated refresher training for block-level officials and ASRLM cadres on IFC management. The training provided valuable insights into the progress and processes followed during the project implementation, as this was the final year of the project. The district-level ASRLM officials have expressed their gratitude to KABIL for its support throughout the project duration.



Farmers exposure to Bahalen's Rainshelter at Tekelibil Village



Bahalen selling King chilli and other vegetables at a local market





Community meeting for beneficiary of agri activity



Linkage of Active women farmers with vendor dealing agri products in Bechimari

DWIMU-Diversification with Integrated Management for the Upliftment of People's Lives

In July 2024, we launched the DWIMU project, standing for "Diversification with Integrated Management for the Upliftment of People's Lives." This initiative was previously known as TLLB, or "Transforming Lives and Livelihoods in Bodoland." The Azim Premji Foundation generously funds the project, while the Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF) provides technical support at both district and state levels. This high-impact project is being implemented across the districts of Udalguri, Tamulpur, and Baska, all located within the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

The project's overarching goal is to improve the lives of 40,000 households belonging to Scheduled Tribes (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC), and other vulnerable communities across seven blocks within the BTR. To achieve this, five dedicated Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are actively engaged in the project's implementation.

The project strategy involves KABIL taking a leading role in collaboration with BRLF and the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). In Udalguri district, Assam, the initial phase targets 10,000 ST, SC, and Adivasi households within the Mazbat and Udalguri blocks, spanning over four years. The implementation strategy of this project focuses on several key elements.

Firstly, KABIL provides facilitation support to Gram Panchayats and front-line government functionaries to ensure participatory planning and to offer on-site technical assistance. This participatory approach is vital for the project's success, as it ensures that the interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the communities involved.

Secondly, the physical work and input support for the targeted households are achieved by leveraging financial resources from government flagship schemes like MGNREGA and other line departments working under the BTC. BRLF funds KABIL's facilitation support and capacity-building efforts, which are crucial for the sustainable implementation of the project's interventions.

The project has three main objectives. The first is to increase income levels among the target communities through land and water development, thereby boosting agriculture and off-farm activities. The second



objective is to improve the governance of local institutions and enhance the capacities of community institutions, which will lead to better community participation and stakeholder engagement in the development process. The third objective is to develop the capacities of local human resources to ensure that project interventions are carried out sustainably.

The expected outcomes of this four-year project are significant. Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for 105 villages in 20 Village Council Development Committees (VCDCs) across two blocks will be prepared and approved by the Gram Sabhas. This process will ultimately enhance the project stakeholders' capability to implement the project deliverables successfully. Furthermore, the project aims to strengthen the governance of local institutions and increase community participation, especially among women. By disseminating information regarding various government schemes and programs, the project will ensure that targeted households are aware of the benefits available to them and know how to access these benefits.

Additionally, the project aims to create assets for 5,000 households through MGNREGS, developing micro-watersheds covering 500 hectares to ensure double cropping. This initiative will double the income of 60% of the target families. The leverage of ₹200 crore from government schemes will enable the creation of assets, with 60-70% of targeted households generating an average income of ₹120,000 per year.

Training and capacity-building efforts will focus on two Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) and 112 Producer Groups (PGs) to ensure the sustainability of the interventions through effective marketing of their products. Furthermore, the project will engage 30 Barefoot Architects (BAs) known as Mates in MGNREGA from among the local youth to carry out project interventions in a sustainable manner at the village level.

To implement the project, two teams were set up in the Udalguri and Mazbat blocks. Each team consists of two team leaders, two NRM experts, one cluster coordinator, two livelihood experts, and 12 community resource persons.

The initial on-field work involved identifying potential villages and VCDCs in the two blocks through discussions with block and VCDC representatives. Based on previous work done by KABIL in both blocks, 31 VCDCs were initially shortlisted. After intensive engagement with VCDC members and considering their feedback, 20 VCDCs were finalized for the DWIMU project (10 in Udalguri and 10 in Mazbat).



Block Level Orientation Meeting



VCDC Level Orientation Meeting



Following the finalization of the VCDCs, KABIL conducted block-level, VCDC-level, and village-level orientations. This included an E-PRA exercise (mapping social infrastructure, water resources, land use, land cover, and flood maps) and door-to-door surveys to collect family-based livelihood plans for 9,000 families. These plans will help identify available resources and potential areas for livelihood implementation within each family, linking them with the relevant line departments for additional support.

Alongside the preparation of DPRs, the team engaged in the Gram Sabhas and the preparation of the Annual Action Plan (AAP) for MGNREGS activities. This engagement aimed to influence the VCDC to include 65% of Natural Resource Management (NRM) plans in their AAP. Plans such as farm ponds, orchard plantations, social forestry, and canal construction are expected to have a sustainable impact on the villages. Throughout this process, the team built strong rapport with VCDC representatives, primary committee members, ASRLM cadres, and user committees in the villages.

Looking ahead, KABIL will now engage with block authorities to get plans sanctioned and begin implementation in the upcoming year. Additionally, KABIL will work with line departments to secure additional resources for the needy community.



Special Gram Sabha



E-PRA Exercise



Village Level Orientation Meeting



Video Bite: Women's Participation in PRA Exercise





Canal construction through MGNREGA



Kadam and Eucalyptus saplings distribution leveraged from Tide Trust

Year in Review: KABIL's Ongoing Journey in the Dooars Region of West Bengal

As we reflect on the past year, KABIL's initiative in the Dooars region of West Bengal stands as a testament to our commitment to improving the lives of tea garden workers. Launched in October 2022, our partnership with the Oak Foundation aimed at uplifting 2,500 families across four sick or closed tea gardens—Red Bank, Surendranagar, Chamurchi, and Katalguri—has made visible footsteps in addressing socio-economic challenges faced by the tea garden community.

Nestled at the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas, the Dooars region is a land of diverse cultures and rich biodiversity. However, the tea garden communities, predominantly ethnic minorities, grapple with poverty and lack of essential resources. Our initiative aims to address these challenges through a focused intervention, encompassing livelihood enhancement, capacity building, and community engagement.

This report covers what we have done over the past year. It shows the progress we have made in helping the tea garden workers. We have worked closely with local government, community groups, and other partners to make sure our efforts bring real, lasting change.

As we continue our work, we remain focused on empowering these families, making them more resilient, and creating a model of development that can be used in other areas. This report highlights our activities and achievements in 2023 and outlines our plans for the future.



Homestead garden development using MGNREGS:

We continued our efforts from the previous financial year (FY 2022-23), where 200 households in Red Bank & Surendranagar TG had been provided with ponds lined with polythene sheets (poly ponds) for fish cultivation under the Individual Beneficiary Scheme (IBS) of the MGNREGS.

During the previous year, initiatives were taken to assess the conditions of the poly ponds and enhance livelihood activities related to them. A survey was conducted to categorize the ponds based on their conditions. It was decided to implement a new scheme under IBS to develop homestead orchards and renovate ponds, aiming to improve productivity and livelihoods. Additionally, plans were made to implement 348 Individual Beneficiaries Schemes-IBS (71 in Red Bank and Surendranagar, 87 in Chamurchi, and 190 in Katalguri) subject to resource availability and household interest, including measures such as utilizing soil excavated from ponds to cover areca nut tree roots and planting black pepper saplings.

Continuing from the groundwork laid in the previous year, a total of 544 plans were submitted to the panchayats with approval from ward members. After consolidation and verification at the block and district administrative levels, 348 plans were included in the Annual Action Plan for FY 2023-2024.

However, progress has been stalled due to fund shortages. The Government of India stopped MGNREGS funding to West Bengal because of what they described as 'misuse of funds'. The dispute between the centre and the state and the resulting stalemate continued over the year. Despite this setback, preparations are underway to upload these schemes onto the MGNREGS portal pending clearance from the State. Once approved, the estimation process will commence utilizing the MGNREGS software (SECURE), followed by final administrative approval.

This ongoing endeavour signifies our commitment to sustainable development and the improvement of livelihoods in our community through MGNREGS initiatives.

SHG strengthening

The institution of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in our region has historically been weak, with very few groups maintaining proper records or engaging in regular financial transactions. To empower women through alternative livelihood activities, it became imperative to strengthen these groups. A key step in this effort was establishing a culture of regular meetings among SHGs, which we recognized as a gradual but crucial process. We have successfully instilled the importance of regular meetings in some of the SHGs.

Among the 109 SHGs we work with, we have actively facilitated the planning for livelihood activities.



Following the submission of planning sheets and meeting resolutions, these activities have commenced. Additionally, we have connected SHG members with various line departments to enhance their access to resources and support.

Collaboratively with Cluster Level Federations (CLFs), we have assisted SHG leaders in applying for high-quality vegetable seeds through the District Horticulture Department. Furthermore, we have mobilized the community to participate in SHGs, expanding their reach and impact. With support from us, staffs from the State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM) have successfully established several new SHG groups in our operational areas.

Moving forward, we are committed to fostering a healthy practice of regular financial transactions in these newly formed SHGs, which is essential for their effective functioning and sustainability.

Training on Accessing MGNREGS for SHG representatives and KABIL staffs:

As part of our capacity-building initiatives, we conducted two training sessions focused on assessing and planning under the MGNREGS. These sessions were aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of SHG representatives and KABIL staff. A total of 29 representatives from Katalguri TG, Chamurchi TG, Red Bank TG & Surendranagar TG and KABIL staff members attended the training at KABIL Banarhat Office.

The key objectives of the trainings were to inform participants on the key aspects and benefits of MGNREGS, provide detailed instructions on the processes for assessing MGNREGS benefits, train participants on effective planning and implementation strategies under MGNREGS and define and document the roles of different community stakeholders in the MGNREGS process.



During the training KABIL staff as well as participants identified and documented their potential roles in facilitating MGNREGS processes within their communities. This initiative is expected to significantly improve the implementation and effectiveness of MGNREGS in our operational areas.



Black pepper cultivation

Due to an abundance of areca nut trees on the homesteads of many households, we introduce black pepper on areca nut trees, which would add further value to the areca nut plantations. This initiative promised significant returns of ₹1000 per black pepper vine annually. To kickstart this process, we organized an informative visit to ICAR-CPCRI in Mohitnagar. Additionally, our team members benefited from an exposure visit to Chaygaon, Assam, further enriching their knowledge in this field. We distributed black pepper saplings to 38 households, ensuring they adhered to the prescribed Package of Practices (POP). To support their efforts, we supplied fungicides and organic manures. Despite the beneficiaries' diligent care, several saplings succumbed to the challenges posed by dry spells and interference from domestic animals. Others are surviving and growing well.



Vermi compost preparation

Given the significant number of cows being reared in the region, we recognized the potential for vermicompost production, which will have a widespread market in the tea gardens and beyond. Through collaboration with the District Horticulture Department, we successfully trained many members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in vermicompost preparation techniques. The department also provided vermicompost tanks, and with additional material support, 23 beneficiaries were able to construct vermicompost beds on their homestead lands. We supplied the necessary worms for the process.



Initially, the growth rate of the worms was slower than expected, but the momentum of compost preparation improved markedly after we introduced higher quality worms. To ensure sustainability, we facilitated the linkage of our beneficiaries with the Dhupguri Farmers Producer Company, enabling them to sell their produce effectively.

This initiative not only leveraged the cow dung in the area but also empowered local SHG members



through skill development and market access, contributing positively to agricultural practices and economic growth in the community.

Vegetable cultivation

Initially, the community had limited knowledge about cultivating winter vegetables. To address this gap, we collaborated with the Assistant Director of Agriculture to support them. We provided seeds, focusing on important species such as long beans, okra, and leafy vegetables like lal bhaji. This initiative reached out to 73 families, enabling them to start cultivating these crops.



In addition, we identified 20 families for a special project to explore the feasibility of growing cabbage, cauliflower, and kohlrabi. The initiative exceeded expectations. One of these families was highlighted in a social media video posted by the Assistant Director of Agriculture.

This collaborative effort not only introduced new agricultural practices to the community but also created successful demonstrations, inspiring others to adopt similar initiatives.

Ginger & Turmeric Cultivation:

In our ongoing efforts to enhance income opportunities and promote alternative livelihood options among the residents of the tea garden area, we have introduced the cultivation of ginger and turmeric. Ginger and turmeric are endemic to the area but have not been traditionally cultivated by the residents of the tea gardens. Despite being native crops, their potential as income-generating alternatives has been largely untapped.



Unlike other vegetables that require more fertile soil and adequate water supply, these crops can grow on rocky soil having limited water availability. This makes them a good choice for agricultural diversification in this region.

As of now the community of 14 households has embarked on a promising journey of cultivating ginger and turmeric. Looking ahead, we plan to expand the cultivation of ginger and turmeric based on the outcomes and lessons learned from this initial phase. This will include scaling up production, exploring



value-addition opportunities, and further integrating these crops into the livelihood strategies of tea garden residents.

Fish cultivation

During the financial year of 2021- 2022, BDO had undertaken the construction of several civil farm ponds in Red Bank and Surendranagar using NREGA funds. Unfortunately, many of these ponds fell into disuse within just a year. In contrast, with our demonstration funds, we initiated the construction of farm ponds across the 4 tea gardens under our purview to pilot fish cultivation prototypes. Concurrently, we conducted surveys on previously constructed farm ponds and devised plans to reintroduce fish farming in these ponds alongside those established through our own program funding.

To facilitate this initiative, we collaborated with a local fish dealer and conducted site visits to assess the potential for fish cultivation. With insights from the Fishery Extension Officer, we determined the appropriate types and quantities of fish fingerlings for each farm pond. In total, 61 farm ponds were stocked with fingerlings, including Singhi, Tilapia, and Pangas species. We provided fish feed for the initial month, while beneficiaries arranged feed for the subsequent two months.

Despite being newly established, the growth rates of fish in these ponds were promising. However, our efforts encountered a setback when a flash flood swept away some of the farm ponds. Nevertheless, instances of beneficiaries selling cultivated fish were rare; most opted to consume the fish themselves. Fortunately, the farm ponds we directly supported remain in good condition, contributing to sustained local agriculture.

Introduction of Pigsty:

KABIL's intervention extends to animal husbandry through pigsty management. By incorporating pigsty management into the livelihood interventions, KABIL aims to create a holistic model where every aspect of the community's life is interconnected and contributes to overall well-being.

Small livestock rearing, particularly pig rearing, is a common activity among tea garden workers, supplementing their income. However, pigs are often raised in open areas using traditional methods. As a result, mortality and morbidity rates are very high. Also, pigs gain more weight when kept in enclosures. Keeping pigs inside a pigsty significantly decreases their energy loss from roaming around.

So far, KABIL has introduced 127 low-cost pigsties in four tea gardens. The introduction of shelters, vaccination and other improvements in husbandry practices could lead to a significant income improvement for many families.



Introduction of Goat Shelters:

In addition to pigsties, KABIL has launched a new initiative to improve goat rearing through the introduction of goat shelters. Currently, one household has built a low-cost goat shelter for a trial. This model aims to demonstrate the benefits to other beneficiaries.

KABIL has provided extensive training to the community on various aspects of goat rearing, including feed management, hygiene, and vaccination. These trainings ensure that the goats are kept healthy and productive, enhancing the income of the families involved. The success of this pilot project could lead to wider adoption, further improving the livelihoods of tea garden workers.



Cultivating Azolla as a livestock feed supplement:

During our community exploration through several SHG (Self Help Group) meetings, we identified a significant gap in livestock management: the need for a source of quality feed at a low cost. To address this issue, we consulted with an SRLM (State Rural Livelihoods Mission) resource person who suggested the cultivation of Azolla as a viable solution.

Azolla is a remarkable plant—a branched, free-floating aquatic fern that rapidly grows on the water's surface. It is an excellent nutrient source and an ideal sustainable feed for cattle, goats, pigs, and poultry. Many farmers, with their limited resources, often struggle to produce sufficient feed for their animals. Azolla offers a practical and cost-effective solution to this problem. Additionally, it can also be used as a biofertilizer.

We introduced Azolla cultivation through several meetings and demonstrations. As a result, till date 29 beneficiaries have started feeding Azolla to their livestock.



Saves Livestock Through Vaccination Drive:

Facing high livestock mortality due to a lack of vaccination knowledge in the community, KABIL launched the "All Animal Vaccination" initiative. We began with an awareness campaign and organized two vaccination camps. The first camp, funded by our demonstration fund, faced challenges as the veterinary department was initially unable to provide free vaccines.

However, after several visits and persistent negotiations, we successfully collaborated with the Veterinary Department to secure free vaccines for the second camp.

This partnership was a crucial breakthrough, allowing us to expand our reach and provide vaccinations to more animals.

In total, the animals of 225 families were vaccinated across both camps. This effort increased community awareness and participation and also became a lesson in animal health education.

Case story of Rubina Saheed

Name- Rubina Saheed

Age-36

Occupation- Homemaker

Rubina, a middle-aged homemaker residing in the Hospital line of Chamurchi Tea Garden, holds a graduate degree but has primarily focused on managing her family, particularly caring for her three daughters. Initially, her group lacked consistent bookkeeping practices. However, after Kabil engaged with her group, Rubina took the initiative of writing the books. She also motivated them to participate in alternative livelihood activities.

For her own, with the financial support from KABIL, Rubina undertook significant initiatives. She constructed a farm pond on her homestead and initiated fish farming. The earth excavated from the pond was utilized to cover the exposed roots of Areca nut trees, while black pepper vines were planted underneath. She anticipates an increase in the yield of Areca nuts next year, along with an additional income of ₹1000 per black pepper vine after a gestation period of three and a half years.

Rubina also diversified her agricultural pursuits by planting ginger and turmeric for the first time. This expansion into new crops reflects her enthusiasm and determination to improve her family's economic prospects through innovative farming practices.

Rubina's story highlights not only her personal achievements in agriculture but also the transformative impact of targeted support and training in enhancing livelihoods within the community.



Case story of Punam Oraon

Name- Punam Oraon

Age- 33

Occupation - Tea Garden Worker

Punam, a permanent worker at Chamurchi Tea Garden, resides independently in the Dipa line within the same estate. Apart from her regular job, she raises goats and pigs to supplement her income. As the sole member of her family, managing all her livestock single-handedly proved challenging, especially when she faced financial setbacks due to piglet mortality. To alleviate this, she received material assistance from Kabil to construct a cost-effective pigsty on her homestead. This upgrade enabled her to now care for two pigs instead of one. Additionally, Punam established an Azolla pit to ensure better feed quality for her animals.

Her passion for agriculture is evident as she actively engages in vegetable cultivation. Last winter marked her successful debut in growing cauliflower, kohlrabi, and cabbage, alongside regular crops like brinjal and chillies in her garden. Despite setbacks, such as the loss of 33 black pepper saplings under her Areca nut trees due to domestic animal disturbances last year, Punam remained undeterred. She responded by erecting a robust fence around her Areca nut plantation and independently propagated new saplings. She plans to plant these saplings during the upcoming rainy season.

Punam's story exemplifies resilience and determination in overcoming challenges while pursuing diversified livelihood strategies.

Case Story of Doma Chhetri

Background and Financial Condition

Doma Chhetri, a 44-year-old woman resident of Katalguri Tea Garden (TG), is a testament to resilience and determination. Married to Sanjib Chhetri, Doma's life is a continuous struggle to make ends meet. Sanjib works in Bangalore, comes home only every 2-3 years, and sends 5,000 to 6,000 rupees each month to support the family. Their son, an 18-year-old, is studying in class 8.

With her husband away, Doma is managing the household on her own. The family's financial situation is bad, and their living conditions are poor. The Chhetris live in a two-bedroom kaccha house with a kitchen and a bathroom that are both in poor



condition. They do not own enough land to grow crops and lack basic amenities, including a personal toilet, forcing them to rely on her sister-in-law's facilities.

Despite being a homemaker, Doma is always looking for ways to improve her family's situation. She once considered a job at a cosmetic store in the main market area, which is 11 kilometres from her home. However, the salary was so low that it would all go towards travel expenses, making the job useless.

Intervention by KABIL

The turning point in Doma's life came through KABIL's intervention. KABIL introduced Doma to ginger and turmeric cultivation. Ginger and turmeric are endemic to the area but have not been traditionally cultivated by the residents of the tea gardens. Given the limited land around her homestead, Doma adopted the innovative technique of cultivation in sacs.

Doma has begun with 45 sacs for growing ginger and turmeric. This method proved to be both practical and effective, allowing her to make the most of the limited space available. She expects to harvest around 40 kilograms of ginger and turmeric, which, although may not significantly increase her income, represents a promising new beginning nevertheless.

Future Aspirations

With the anticipated income from her ginger and turmeric cultivation and an SHG loan that she hopes to get, she plans to build a personal toilet, improving the family's quality of life. Her goal is to continue finding sustainable ways to support her family and improve their living conditions.

Her journey shows that with support and new ideas, women like Doma can initiate action to improve their living conditions.



All the activities with their respective numbers at a glance:

SI No.	Activity Name	Total Number Reached
1	SHGa and KABIL staff working on group nurturing, planning, implementation and monitoring process	89
2	SHG where plans, implementation and supervision taking place	86
3	Plan include in Annual Action Plan of MGNREGS	348
4	SHGs and PRI representatives and KABIL staff trained on process to access MGNREGS	19
5	Black Pepper plantation	57
6	Vermi Compost preparation	23
7	Vegetable cultivation	101
8	Ginger & Turmeric cultivation	14
9	Fish Cultivation	61
10	Low-cost Pigsty model	127
11	Low-cost Goat Shelter model	1
12	Livestock Vaccination & Azolla cultivation	225
Total Net Family		436



WORK IN MADHYA PRADESH, RAJASTHAN, AND UTTAR PRADESH

In 2019, we initiated a project in Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh on rainwater harvesting to enhance agricultural livelihoods by leveraging the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS in short, which is supposed to guarantee 100 days of unskilled work to anyone in rural areas) with support of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

Approaches followed are a) Mobilization of the community, b) developing a village-level participatory Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM) Plan, c) exposure visits and training of the community, Panchayat members, and government officials, and d) closely working with government officials and other stakeholders to channelize Government resources such as MGNREGA. KABIL provided "do-how" support to all the stakeholders, NGOs, Government functionaries, and the community in implementing the plan.

The work began by developing an Integrated Natural Resource Development Plan (INRM plan) in a cluster of 9 villages at Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh in 2019. The plans consisted of individual field tanks for 559 households (Estimated cost of Rs. 10.5 Crore). The plans were accepted by the District Administration. However, the work was disrupted due to Covid 19.

Work done in 2023-24:

We continued to focus on Rainwater harvesting to bring the well-being of small farmers in MP, UP, and Rajasthan by using the MGNREGS program. We partnered with 4 NGOs and Youth volunteers. Our focus was on introducing and approval of "Individual beneficiary schemes (IBS)" under MGNREGS by creating surface storage in field tanks with rainwater & increased area of crop cultivation.

At a glance: Training conducted and the status of the schemes as on 31 March 2024 are:

1	State	MP	Rajasthan	UP	UP
2	Location	Tikamgarh	Karauli	Son Bhadra	Varanasi
3	Training and Capacity building of MGNREGS functionaries of location	1	1	2	1
4	Training and capacity building of MGNREGS functionaries of Panchayats, Block & District	2	1	2	1
5	Plans incorporated in the Annual action plan of MGNREGS	45	3	20	3
6	Estimate prepared by the Engineers on the website SECURE of MGNREGS	37	0	20	3
7	Technical sanction done	30	0	9	2
8	Administrative / Financial sanctions done	23	0	9	2
9	work started	11	0	9	1
10	Schemes/ Excavation Completed	6	0	6	1



Outcome:

The joint effort of Kabil, the partner NGOs, and Community volunteers resulted in the development of 71 schemes. Engineers of MGNREGS have prepared estimates of 60 schemes amounting to Rs 120 Lakh (approximately). 34 schemes amounting to Rs 68 Lakh (approx.) have been approved by the Government for execution.

All are Individual Beneficiaries schemes (IBS). This means that 34 small farmers have been assisted to have field tanks for assured two crops a year. Each farmer is the owner of a field tank. She has access to irrigation of two assured crops. The harvested water can also be used for fish rearing. An impact story is attached at the end.

The sanctions of the MGNEGS schemes are rested with the Government Line Departments, Office of the BDO, and DRDA. Moreover, the declaration of the Elections and other related events and priorities restrict the sanctions of Individual Beneficiaries schemes (IBS). These have an impact on the target outcome and achievement.

Location-wise progress report:

Tikamgarh Location in MP: KABIL initiated 45 new works in the online portal of MGNREGS. All of these 45 possible tanks were involved in the online portal of MGNREGS and estimates of 37 were made by sub-Engineer. Technical sanction of 30 schemes and administrative sanction of 23 was done and work of 11 schemes was started. 6 ponds were completed including one Amrit Sarovar in Bhadra village.

KABIL did several meetings with new BDO and block officials and engaged in implementing farm pond excavation in the selected Panchayats. In collaboration with the block, facilitated by KABIL, a model estimate was prepared and adopted by the block as a uniform estimate. KABIL organized a training session, facilitated by the agriculture department, for 20 beneficiaries who accessed Farm Pond leveraging MGNREGA funds. The impact observed that families have created assets and received training for utilizing these assets, provided by the Government department facilitated by KABIL.



The schemes that were at different stages of the process is listed below:

SN	Activity	No.
1	Included in online portal	45
2	Estimate prepared	37
3	Technical sanction	30
4	Admin. Sanction	23
5	Work Started	11
6	Excavation Completed	6

Activities in Eastern Uttar Pradesh (Varanasi and Son Bhadra districts): Several Youth groups from UP visited our interventions at Tikamgarh in MP and witnessed the impact and built an understanding of the implementation process and livelihood generation through MGNREGS. One group that operates in Varanasi and Sonbhadra districts has organised farmers for farm ponds. They invited KABIL for technical assistance.

We visited both Varanasi and Sonbhadra districts in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. We conducted training for both the youth volunteers and the farmers for pond excavation under MGNREGS. We met the block officials of the Chiraigaon block of Varanasi district. We conducted training for the Block staff and youth volunteers to build their understanding of MGNREGS.

We guided them through the process of online projection of schemes and sanctioning the same. Additionally, we engaged with the volunteers who then organized a joint meeting with the Nagua Block officials, where KABIL had the opportunity to facilitate the block officials on estimate preparation. The key results after continuous engagement in both districts are listed below:

SN	Activity	No.
1	Schemes submitted to the district administration for approval (Varanasi and Sonbhadra District)	19
2	Technical sanction Done	11
3	Administrative/ Financial Sanction	11
4	Work Started	10
5	Work Completed	7



Meeting cum training of NGO Members in UP



Meeting with NGO Leaders in UP



Work in Karauli district in Rajasthan:

KABIL partnered with Gram Gaurav Sansthan (GGS), an NGO. GGS operates in the Dang region of Karauli district, which is characterized by rocky terrain that poses challenges for agricultural activities. GGS supports local farmers by facilitating the conversion of wastelands into double cropping arable land using traditional methods like "Pagara," as well as implementing water harvesting techniques such as "Pokhar" and "Taal." Through this partnership, the "Pagara" activity, which involves rainwater harvesting by installing stone masonry across drainage lines, has been initiated as an Individual Beneficiary Scheme (IBS) under MGNREGS for the first time in the district.

The KABIL team conducted periodic visits, which led to the inclusion of 32 new schemes (Pagara) in the online portal of MGNREGS under the Individual Beneficiaries Scheme (IBS). However, the Government decides not to approve IBS temporarily. So GGS and Kabil tried an alternate approach. For approval, Kabil and the GGS NGO have conducted meetings at all three levels: Panchayat, BDOs, and District Collector to facilitate the approval process. 3 schemes have been included in the annual action plan.



Meeting with Panchayat members in Karoli.



Meeting with the NGO Leadership in Karoli

Success Story

Manu Giri is a resident of panchayat Srinagar in Tikamgarh district in MP. He has 6 family members with 3 acres of cultivated land, in which he grows mustard, wheat, and paddy in different seasons. He attended a village meeting organised by Kabil and learned the benefits of fishery, irrigation and well recharge from farm pond. This idea of excavating a farm pond gave hope to Manu Giri that his family could earn more and his son wouldn't have to migrate for earnings. With the support of KABIL, a farm pond of 36 meters in length and breadth and 3 meters in depth was approved under the MGNREGS with an estimated cost was Rs 3.37 lakh in 2021. Manu Giri and his son Berendra took an interest and were engaged during the farm pond excavation. Manu Giri took up fish rearing and KABIL provided essential information about pisciculture such as fish breeds, feed, and cultural practices. He was linked with the Fishery Department. He put 15,000 fish fingerlings in his pond with an investment of Rupees 9,200.

The production of fish from the pond was around 900 kg and his earning was around 90,000 Rupees. Now Manu Giri is deepening the pond so that he can put more fingerlings in the pond and production can be increased.





SOCIETY AFFAIRS

Governance of KABIL: The Governing Board of KABIL comprises eight members, including the Executive Director, who serves as the Ex-officio secretary to the Governing Board. The Governing Board convened three times during the year, while the General Body had one meeting.

Staff of KABIL: At the start of the year, KABIL had a total of 12 full-time staff. Among them, 8 were classified as professionals, and the remaining four were associates. Additionally, three experts work on a retainer basis. With the project supported by the Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation (BRLF), KABIL has added eight more professional staff members. By the year end KABIL had 13 full-time staff.

Kabil systematically trains its staff. In this FY 2023-24 six staff members have recently completed a weeklong Group Process Laboratory (GPL). The lab helps a participant to become aware of her patterns of behaviour and the impact these have on the group. This also helps the participant to improve her effectiveness in group and interpersonal interactions, and derive greater satisfaction from these.

Finance: Throughout the year, KABIL received grants amounting to Rs 169.84 lakh and allocated Rs 164.62 lakh towards its activities.

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