



Sunbird Trust
PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION

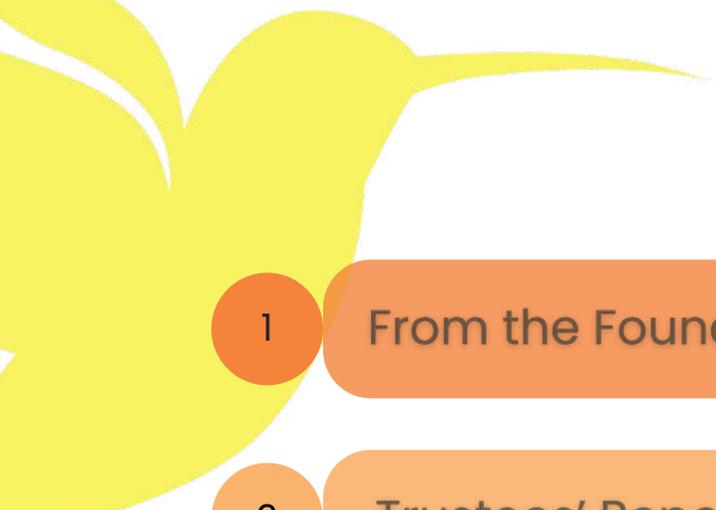
ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23





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From the Founder-CEO's desk



Dear Friends of Sunbird Trust,

As yet another year passes by, we look back in satisfaction at the successful rooting of many new initiatives in our venture of **Peace through Education**. We've seen considerable progress in many fields including capacity building, raising educational infrastructure and child sponsorship. Last year, at the invitation of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, we took over the administration of the Government Residential School at tiny Papikrung village near the Sino-Indian border. The visible success of this pilot venture has led to us being invited to scale this initiative to a District Govt. School Transformation programme that will cover the entire Shi Yomi District of the state. Our engagement with our partner schools in Assam, both in the beautiful riverine island of Majuli and the rolling hills of remote Mualdam Village in Dima Hasao District has considerably increased. In Manipur and Nagaland too, our projects have seen quantum leaps not only in physical infrastructure, but in the all-important capacity building of school stakeholders. Despite the immense challenges posed by the pandemic, our child sponsorship programme too has expanded to now **sponsor over 8454 children**. It is immensely rewarding for us that many of our very own graduate and post-graduate "alumni" are returning to the fold as either interns or full-fledged team members.

An important constant as we work across six North East Indian states is the barrage of challenges faced by our young team members; the vast diversity of identity, culture, language, social and economic status or our partner communities is just the starting point. Extreme remoteness of our chosen partner schools, absence of basic road, mobile and digital connectivity are frequent realities. Add to these, varying climatic conditions and the non-availability of basic provisions. To cap it all, many team members are embedded in conflict and insurgency-affected village communities amidst a poor security environment. These myriad challenges, a strong disincentive to joining Sunbird Trust for most aspirants, attract, on the contrary, exactly talent most suitable to thrive amidst this heady cocktail of deterrents.

Just a few of the attributes of a prospective “Sunbirder” therefore include deep courage, tenacity, passion and commitment. It is this team of our (mainly) young professionals that are the anchors and caretakers of the Sunbird identity in our continual course of exploration. All team members of course benefit from our wholly humanistic, pluralistic and inclusive ethos which make for a strong base to work from India’s North East, for the large part far behind the rest of the country in development has still largely been “out of sight, out of mind” for many donors. We are however fortunate to our generous partner organisations and individuals for choosing to work in this neglected geography using us as their vehicles to support the least privileged. We are committed to requiting their trust and faith in us through our own deep commitment to the people we serve. We are pleased to mention that, just as they have mentored and nurtured us, we too are continually on the mode of mentoring and raising other Civil Society Organisations. Together, we can humbly claim to be positively impacting the lives and destinies of tens of thousands of our fellow and less privileged countrymen, particularly the younger generation.

As many may have realized by now, education is only a means to the end of co-habitation and amity in an area that has seen deep wounds from decades of conflict and insurgency. We are most grateful to our host communities, leadership and staff of our partner school, and, most of all, our dear students at numerous locations for their participation, co-ownership and warm hospitality as we strive for towards our objective of **Peace through Education.**



Thank you, dear friends, for being our thoughtful and supportive co-travellers as we navigate more and more uncharted territory on our constantly metamorphosing journey,

With warm regards,
Col Chris Rego (Retd.)
Co-founder & CEO



Trustees' Report

It is our pleasure to bring on the record some of the large body of work executed by Team Sunbird during the past year. Some highlights of the year include-



Sponsorships & Nutrition Support

- **8454** underprivileged children from Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh benefit from our Sponsor A Child Scheme.
- Our Nutrition Scheme covered **864** children including **60** afflicted by HIV/AIDS.

Infrastructure activities:

- The schools inaugurated were Vianney Friendship School at remote Pinjang Village of Noney District in Manipur and two schools reconstructed at Majuli Island at our partner schools namely Arda Public School and Majuli Gurukul Academy.
- Hostels for Kulamua English Friendship School & Hummingbird School were constructed at Majuli Island and two dilapidated Girls and Boys hostels were completely reconstructed at Kachai in Ukhrul District of Manipur.
- During the year, three multipurpose halls were constructed at various locations. The Axis DilSe Multipurpose Hall with a capacity of 300 students was inaugurated at Khomunom in Churachandpur District of Manipur. Similarly, the old multipurpose hall at Alpha Friendship School in Kachai, Ukhrul District was completely reconstructed and the Yaapal Multipurpose hall was constructed at Khangshim Village for the Sunbird Trust's Yaapal hostel there.
- At the request of local communities, community water tanks were constructed at Ijeirong Village in Noney District and at Yaapal Friendship Hostel at Khangshim Village in Tengnopaul District, both in Manipur.
- Computer Centres were inaugurated at Mualdam, and Arda Public School in Majuli.

Awards & Achievements

- Sunbird Trust was selected amongst the **top ten NGOs** from across India for publication of our story "Peace through Education in Conflict Affected Areas of North East India" for the 4th Edition of **Stories of Change** (2022 – 23) of Azim Premji University. Col Chris Rego, our founder, received the certificate on behalf of the Sunbird Trust team on 17th February, 2022.
- Sunbird Trust was selected in January 2022 amongst the top 100 NGOs from across India for the award of the EdelGIVE GROW fund—under which team members attended several capacity building courses. EdelGIVE also contributed towards the administrative expenditure of Sunbird Trust.

Students' and Teachers' Exposure visits

- 46 students of Government High School at Oinam Hill village were co-sponsored by the Assam Rifles and Sunbird Trust for an educational tour to Shillong and back.
- 15 & 17 teachers from Alpha Friendship School, Kachai & Lyzon Friendship School, Singngat respectively participated in a week-long teacher exposure visit to Hummingbird School, partner school of Sunbird's in Majuli, Assam during October and December 2022.

Alumni Highlights

- Our alumnus Dollar Konjengbam Singh was awarded a free scholarship for his Masters in Information and Communication Technologies for Life and Health at the University of Padua in Italy. Our sponsored student Kshetrimayum Chittaranjan completed his Masters in Film Making from University of Creative Arts, UK-Farnham. Abokson Haobijam is promoted to junior site Engineer at a prestigious construction company.
- Meanwhile, as many as 18 of our alumni have returned as interns or joined us as employees.



As we expand our activities and build our organization, we thank you for your continuing support and solicit your help at this critical stage of our growth,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees,
Ryan Lobo,
Founder Trustee.



ABOUT US

Sunbird Trust is a non-religious and apolitical not for profit organisation working towards building bridges between various communities in conflict-affected North East India and between people here and their countrymen elsewhere in India, through the medium of education.





28,616

SPONSORSHIPS PROVIDED

99

INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS EXECUTED

over

100,000

POSITIVELY IMPACTED
THROUGH COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

Our IMPACT
so far



PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION

By 2025, Sunbird Trust, in collaboration with our partners and supporters, aims to **educate and empower 25,000 children** from conflict-affected areas of NE India, making them productive citizens of our country

&

Construct 50 School and Hostels for children in the remotest areas to provide physical access to education.

Towards this mission, we



SPONSOR

Through student sponsorships, 8454 children received **financial access** to school/college education in 22-23.

BUILD

Provided **physical access to education** through **26** infrastructure projects in 22-23—from classrooms to toilets to multipurpose halls to hostels.

COMMUNITY

Impacted more than **16,000** beneficiaries through **community projects**—solar light distribution, SALT farming, roselle tea marketing, etc. in 22-23.

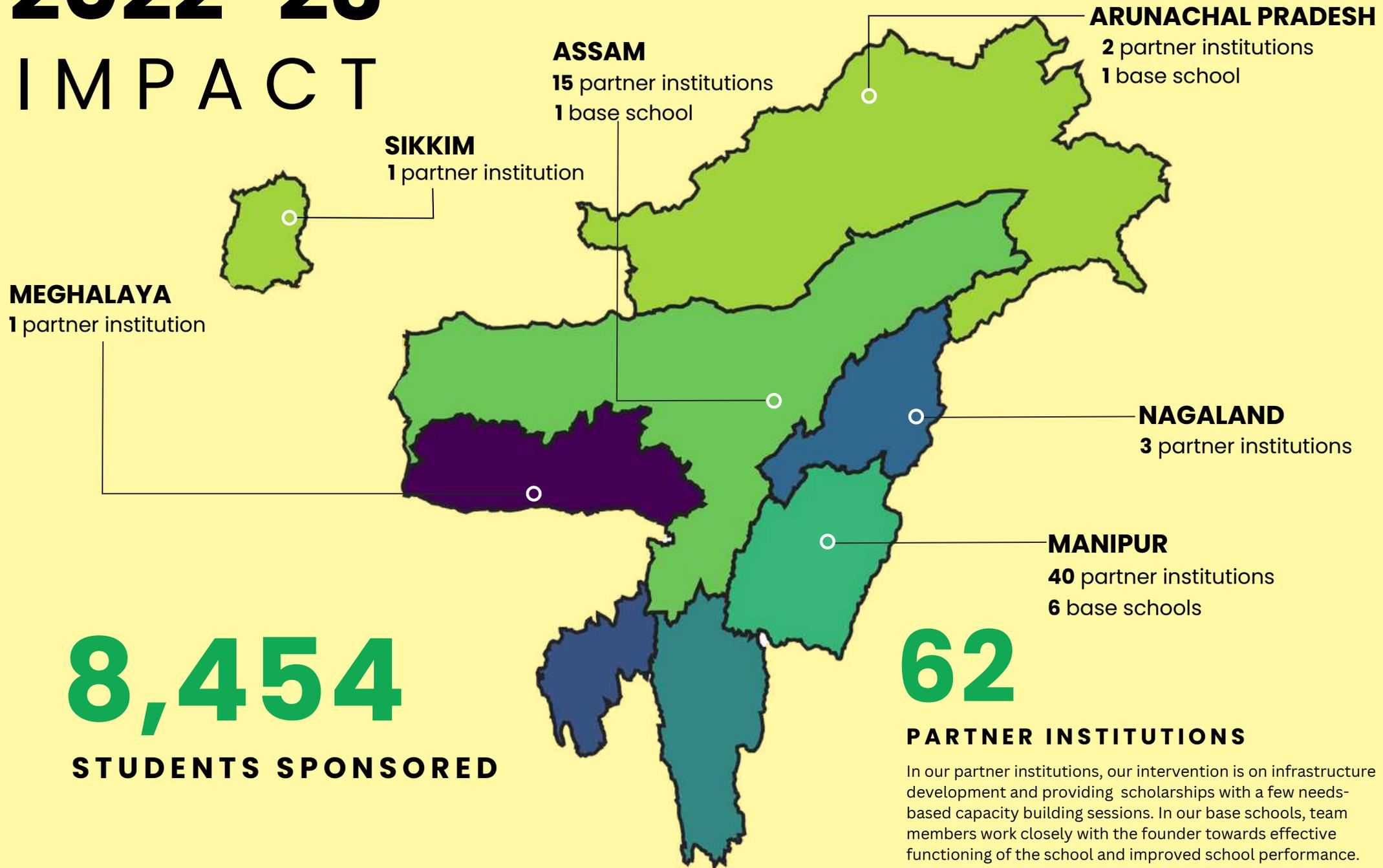
EDUCATE

Through direct intervention with children across our **8 base schools** & indirectly through empowering teachers and founders.

EMPOWER

By strengthening leadership in the local staff and founders and supporting organisations doing inspirational work & amplifying our impact.

2022-23 IMPACT



8,454
STUDENTS SPONSORED

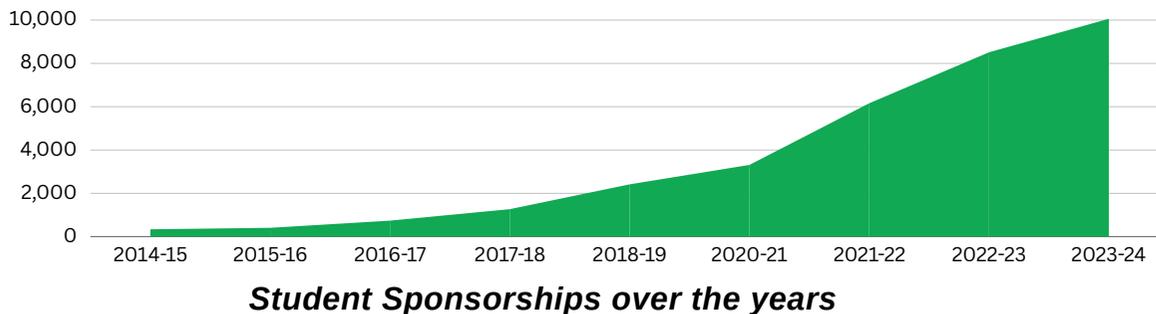
62
PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

In our partner institutions, our intervention is on infrastructure development and providing scholarships with a few needs-based capacity building sessions. In our base schools, team members work closely with the founder towards effective functioning of the school and improved school performance.

Peace-Building through Sponsorships

8,454 Student sponsorships provided

Sunbird's sponsorship model began in 2013 when Col. Christopher Rego (Retd.) and his wife Myrna Rego decided to bring a group of 35 bright, young children to Bangalore and give them access to education. Watch [this video](#) to learn more about how Sunbird Trust works actively towards peace-building in conflict-inflicted Manipur by providing as many children with access to school and college education. Aptly titled **White Bullets**, made by Luminous back in 2018, this video highlights the importance of our work.



NATURE OF SUPPORT

- Tuition fee - for school, undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Hostel fee
- Nutrition support
- Individual sponsorships

*Next year, we aim to provide **10,000+** scholarships to more and more deserving students.*



I found Sunbird when I was on the verge of giving up my dreams due to financial issues. It was impossible for my family to support me for my undergraduate course at Delhi University especially with the living expenses. The 2 years I have been sponsored by Sunbird Trust have given wings to my once dying dreams and I am now most confident of achieving my career objectives. I feel truly privileged to be a proud member of Sunbird family and I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the entire team for their support.

GRACE JAGOI

Sponsored student, third year student of BA History (Hons) at Delhi University





Hear from our Sponsored Students!



Coming from an under-resourced agrarian background in the river island of Majuli in Assam, I am truly grateful to Sunbird Trust for sponsoring my education at a prestigious IIT (Indian Institute of Technology). This opportunity has been life changing for me, providing me the chance to pursue my dreams and further my education. The support I have received has not only lightened the financial burden but also inspired me to work hard towards my goal."

PROBIN PEGU

Probin is currently in his second year of engineering at IIT Rourkee, sponsored by Sunbird Trust.



"I am incredibly grateful for the unwavering support I have received from Sunbird Trust throughout my academic journey. Sunbird Trust has been with me since my undergraduate years in Electronics & Communication Engineering, and their belief in my potential has been a driving force in my education. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Col Christopher Rego, who not only leads Sunbird Trust but also personally prioritized my needs during critical moments, ensuring that I had the resources I required. With Sunbird's assistance, I am now on the cusp of completing my Master's degree, and I am eager to give back and become a successful alumni and a generous donor, supporting Sunbird Trust in its mission to transform lives through education. My success is, in large part, a testament to the support and belief that Sunbird Trust has placed in me, and I look forward to paying it forward to future scholars."

DOLLAR KONJENBAM SINGH

Dollar is currently pursuing a Masters in Engg, specialising in Information & Communications Technologies for Life and Health from the University of Padua in Italy on a full scholarship, with Sunbird's Trust support for his accommodation and other needs at Italy.

Thank You from
Malobika Doley
studying in our
partner
Karchang
Public School,
to her sponsor



I Love school ❤️
Thank you for helping me reach school
Malobika Doley class-3



On December 11, 2022, Sunbird Trust celebrated its 8th Foundation Day at several locations across the North East. In Bangalore, the event was attended by donors, well-wishers, Sunbird team members and sponsored students from Bangalore and Mangalore as well as their families. The guests were given a presentation on Sunbird Trust and enjoyed several cultural performances from the Northeast.



Peace-Building through Community Interventions

AT A GLANCE

9,798

Haqdarshak Project's Beneficiaries

6,148

Solar lamp beneficiaries

66

Roselle project beneficiaries

74

SALT farm project beneficiaries



What is Roselle Project?

Roselle tea project is a Livelihood enhancement intervention in Singngat Block, Churachandpur District, Manipur under the aegis of Sunbird Trust. It acknowledges the contribution of Tnbal Women Farmers in Agriculture, and aims to enhance their capacities and increase their income.

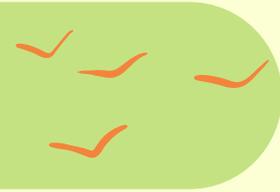
ROSELLE PROJECT is now actively engaged with 23 Women Farmers from across 6 different Village of Singngat Block, Churachandpur District. All of the profit generated through this intervention is directed towards the sustainability of the Local Community School, wherein the Children of these Women Farmers are acquiring Education. Every purchase of Roselle Tea (Lyzon Naturals) is a contribution towards the development of this community.

Reach out to Lyzon N

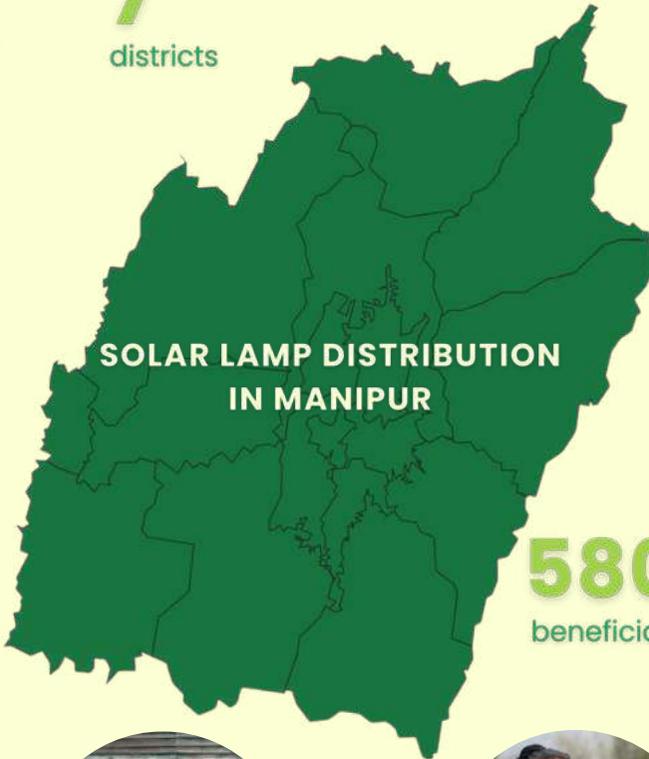
Roselle tea stall, Sangai festival 2023



Solar Lamp Distribution across 24 villages in Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh



7 districts



5804 beneficiaries



ABEN VILLAGE



WAPHONG VILLAGE



IJEIRONG VILLAGE



MUREI VILLAGE



PUICHI VILLAGE



KHUNDONG VILLAGE



SINAM KOM VILLAGE



CHADONG VILLAGE

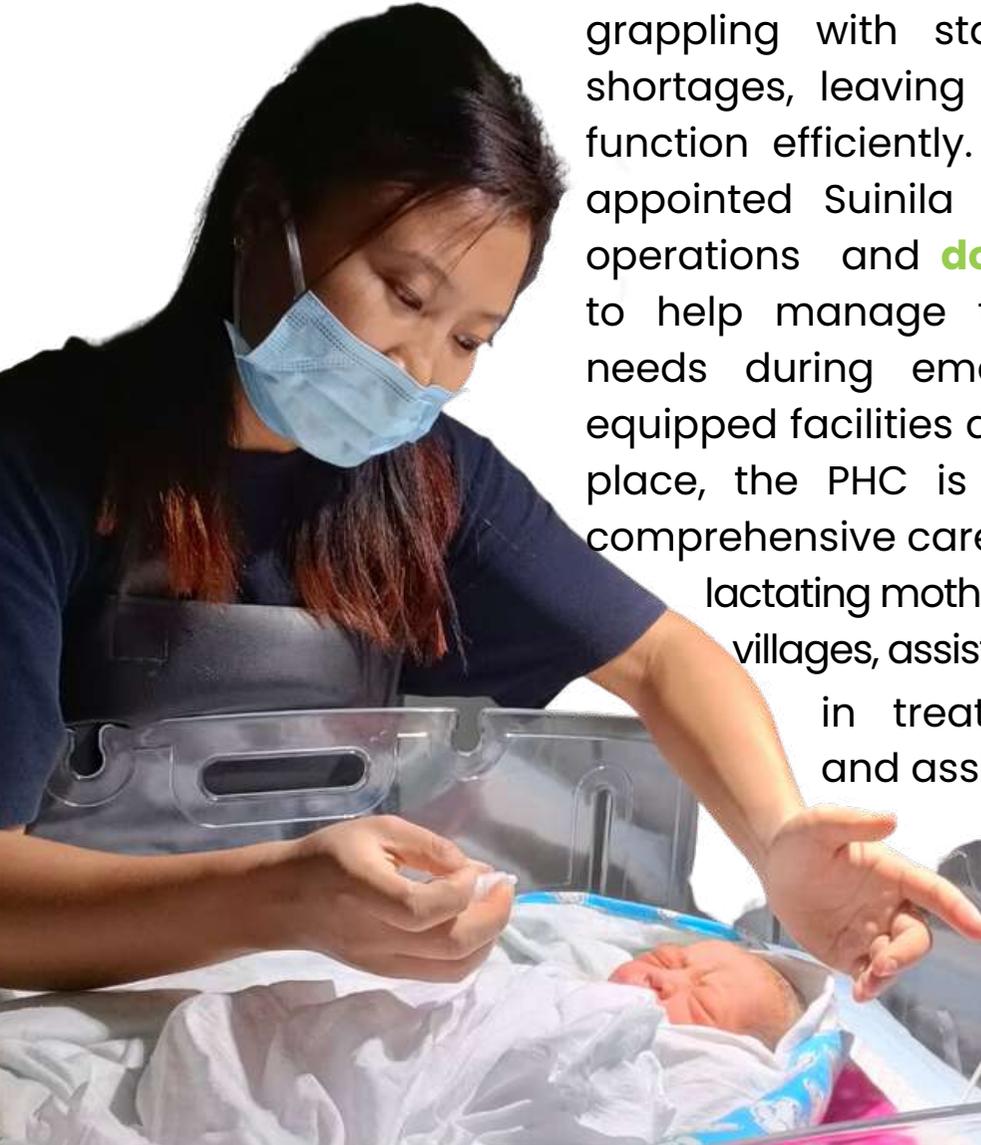
Thanks to the generous support of Schneider Foundation, Sunbird Trust was able to distribute solar lamps to 1200 households across several districts in Manipur and around our base school in Arunachal Pradesh. With limited or no access to electricity, these lamps were well-received by the villagers! Now, children are able to study better at night!



“I’m so grateful for this lamp! My entire village Papikrung is literally in darkness after sunset. Now, not only my home, but the life of my family is lit up! Thank you Schneider Electric and Sunbird Trust!”



Sunbird Trust Supports Oinam Hill Primary Health Center (PHC)



The Oinam Hill PHC had long been grappling with staff and infrastructure shortages, leaving the facility unable to function efficiently. In 2021, Sunbird Trust appointed Suinila to support the PHC's operations and **donated an ambulance** to help manage the area's healthcare needs during emergencies. With well-equipped facilities and trained staff now in place, the PHC is now able to provide comprehensive care to expecting and lactating mothers from 33 nearby villages, assistance to the villages in treating accident victims and assisting with deliveries.

The PHC also conducts monthly vaccine immunization drives while also offering bi-monthly



Sunbird Team Member Suinila Joseph with the ambulance donated by Sunbird Trust

health sanitation and nutritional programs. Thanks to the efforts of Sunbird Trust, the Oinam Hill PHC is now able to facilitate at least five baby deliveries every month, ensuring the safe arrival of newborns into the world.



Empowering farmers towards sustainable solutions

In the hope of building lasting relationships with the community and ensuring accessibility to diverse growth avenues, Sunbird Trust organised a **15-day training workshop** in collaboration with Goat Trust (Lucknow) for farmers of Aben and Puichi cluster villages in Manipur in August 2022. The workshop was attended by 16 farmers from these villages, in addition to two Sunbird staff members, Imran (Farm Manager) and Anthony (Intern). The participants were briefed on the nuances of goat rearing practices; farmers encouraged and equipped farmers to take up goat rearing; and educated on integrating this practice in SALT farms. The workshop also covered sustainable alternative means of nutrition, meat sources and dietary practices, which can cut down dependency on agricultural and forest produce, which is the global need of the hour.

The SALT (Sloping Agriculture Land Technology) initiative has been started by Mr. David Gandhi, Sunbird Trust's partner and valued Advisor. Sustainable agriculture being Mr. David's subject of interest, the traditional practice of *jhum* cultivation caught his attention back in 2020. He decided to slowly replace this technique with an eco-friendly alternative to preserve the environment and natural heritage of these villages. Mr. David has now successfully introduced the SALT to Puichi, Aben and also neighbouring villages in Manipur, as a sustainable farming technique.

Many old and new farmers showed keen interest in adopting SALT farming as an alternative to Jhum cultivation in many of our partner locations, under the guidance of Mr. David Gandhi.

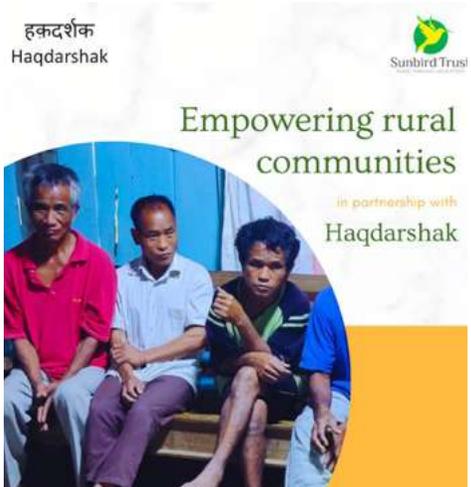


We harvested 385 kgs of ginger from our SALT farm



Session on making goat milk

Community Intervention Highlights at Singngat



9,700 beneficiaries benefitted from the Haqdarshak drive (sponsored by Sunbird Trust) to empower villagers with documentation (like Aadhar cards) and access to government schemes.



26 Roselle farmers in Singhat in Manipur produced 101 kgs of dried Roselle flowers. They were assisted to market this produce across India. The team was invited to participate in an import-export conclave. NEST (North East Sunbird Trust) Fellows put up a roselle stall at the renowned Sangai Festival 2022 in Imphal.



Sunbird Trust's livelihood-enhancing **Mushroom Project** with oyster mushrooms was successfully piloted in 3 households in Lanchah Village of Manipur. The project will now be scaled to several more households in the area.

Sunbird Trust and WeTheChange Join Forces to Promote Menstrual Hygiene Awareness in Singngat, Ijeirong, and Puichi

Sunbird Trust, in collaboration with *WeTheChange*, organised a Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Campaign and Management Training in September 2022 at three of our partner schools—Singngat, Ijeirong, and Puichi. We are working towards introducing a healthy outlook towards menstruation and menstrual hygiene in remote parts of NE India, and these workshops play a pivotal role in realising this dream. All the workshops witnessed a **turnover of over 100 participants** in each of the locations. The workshops proved to be interactive, encouraging the students,

parents and teachers to ask questions and overlook the taboo surrounding the topic. Introspective and reflective discussions motivated the participants to step back and recognise biases and judgments surrounding menstrual health. Sunbird Trust would like to thank Farheen Naaz (founder, *WeTheChange*) and her entire team for creating a safe space for dialogue in our communities and taking a collective step forward in spreading menstruation health and hygiene awareness.





Myrna Rego Women's Group Donates 500 T-Shirts to Children in Remote Parts of Manipur

Sunbird Trust distributed about 500 T-shirts for children aged 1 to 5 in remote and underserved areas of Manipur. The T-shirts were donated by Sunbird Trust Co-Founder Myrna Rego's friends and were distributed to children from villages of Haijang, Behiang (border village from India), Cikha (border village from Myanmar), Saichang and Singngat in Churachandpur district; in the villages of Ngarian, Gamnom Sapermeina, Oinam and Puichi. The clothes were sent from Bangalore and distributed to different schools and villages. Our deep gratitude to the donors for their thoughtfulness and generosity! Thanks to the support of the Women's Group, we were able to provide T-shirts for children in remote & underserved parts of Manipur.

Thanks to the support of Myrna Rego Women's Group, we were able to provide T-shirts for

500

children in remote & underserved parts of Manipur



Philanthropic Efforts of RK Mission in Manipur

For over a century, Ramakrishna Mission, a non-political and non-sectarian organization, has served society in various humanitarian and social service capacities. In Manipur, they have partnered with Sunbird Trust to undertake several social ventures, with a special focus on distributing relief materials. As part of their winter relief program, they handed out **600 blankets across 10 Sunbird Trust partner villages.**

Bedding material from Kurl-On

Over the past three years, our esteemed partners Kurl-On have contributed a large quantity of mattresses, bedsheets, blankets and dohars that have been a boon for our children across 5 North East states. During the current year, besides mattresses, they have provided much-needed laptops and desktops for our partner schools in Majuli Island in Assam.

We're extremely grateful for their humanitarian efforts in helping us achieve our vision of **Peace through Education.**





Peace building through Infrastructural Development

AT A GLANCE

26 INFRASTRUCTURE UNITS
CONSTRUCTED IN 2022-23



Renovated Boys Hostel at Alpha Friendship School, Kachai



Axis Bank DilSe Outreach and Sunbird Trust



Axis Bank team on a visit to LFS, Singngat



Newly constructed toilet block at LFS, Singngat



Inauguration of Community Center



Classroom Block, Lyzon Friendship School

Under their *DilSe* programme, Axis Bank has partnered with Sunbird Trust since 2020 to support the education of lesser privileged children in conflict-affected Manipur state.

The work has centred around development of the Lyzon Friendship School at Khomunnom Village near Singngat town in Manipur. The partnership has resulted in a dramatic improvement in capacity and educational infrastructure, but more importantly significant empowerment and opportunity to the over 300 beneficiary children. This would certainly positively impact their lives and destinies and steer them to being productive and self-sufficient citizens of our country. Significantly, this programme has made obvious and tangible progress towards “mindset change” in the insurgency-affected communities they hail from thereby contributing to **national integration**.



Inauguration of Renovated Student Hostels, Assembly Hall and Toilet Blocks

Alpha Friendship School



Inauguration of the Boys' Hostel at AFS, Kachai

Sunbird Trust is deeply indebted to **Manas Foundation** for funding the reconstruction of the entire school. The renovation of the toilet block project was undertaken with generous contributions from Mr. Mihir Doshi, Mr. Rajkumar Singhal, Mr. Shivpreet Tathgir, Mr. Pankaj Naik, and Executors to the Estate of Late Freny K Parakh.

The 75th Independence Day was celebrated in style at our partner Alpha Friendship School. Senior officials from the Somsai Assam Rifles Battalion and local dignitaries attended the programme. An array of infrastructure projects including both the boys' and girls' hostels, toilet blocks and the multipurpose hall were reconstructed.



BEFORE

Girls' Hostel



AFTER



BEFORE

Toilet Block



AFTER

The students' hostels at AFS house 209 students—132 in the girls' hostel and 77 in the boys' hostel.

**Inauguration of School Building
& Rain Water Harvesting System
at Vianney Friendship School, Pinjang
by Col. Chris Rego on 15th August 2022**



Pinjang and its neighbouring villages in Manipur have a recent history of violent ethnic conflict. Most children did not get a chance to go to school due to the lack of viable schools in the area. In 2017, the local Army Brigadier requested Sunbird Trust to consider building a school here.

With the generous help of the **Learn for Life Foundation** (Mr Thomas Thekkethala), the contribution of many generous donors and the facilitation of Sunbird Trust, a new school building, Vianney Friendship School was constructed and inaugurated at Pinjang in Manipur on 15th August 2022, Independence Day. We were honoured with the presence of an Assam Rifles guard as the national flag was unfurled by Sunbird Trust Founder & CEO Col Chris Rego.



BEFORE



Classrooms

AFTER



Inauguration of Friendship Water Tank at Puichi village supported by **Anaha Trust**



Inauguration of Multipurpose Hall and 50,000 ltr water tank at Yapaal Friendship School at Kakching, Manipur, sponsored by **HDFC Credila**.



Inauguration of Community Library at Mao Karong village, Senapati District in Manipur in May 2022, by Founders Col. and Mrs. Rego

Community-led Initiative Establishes One-Stop Learning and Resource Center



With Sunbird's support, the good folks of Mualdam, Assam raised a brand new Community Centre! And what's inside? A library and a computer lab, bursting with priceless knowledge and equipment. The best part? It's all for the community to use! The facility was inaugurated on 15th August as a grand celebration of Independence Day. The SMC President, village

head, and Mr. Remsiana Ngamlai, the guest of honour attended. Parents and children from neighbouring villages trekked to Mualdam to join in the celebrations. Traditional dances of the Biate and Zemi Naga tribes and folk songs were performed by the local students. Overall, an apt celebration of the community's hard work and dedication!





Thank you
Project
Chirag for
your help



Hats off to Chirag Rural Development Foundation and our team members in Mualdam for setting up a 5KV solar grid in the school! The move is a gamechanger given the village's inconsistent electricity supply.



Inauguration of Senior Boys' Hostel at The Hummingbird School



With the kind support of **Prestige Foundation**, Sunbird Trust was able to construct a hostel for senior boys at The Hummingbird School at Kulamura Village in Majuli Island run by Ayang Trust. The inauguration was done on 15th August, Independence Day. The hostel has been specially constructed on stilts in view of the annual flooding by the mighty Brahmaputra River. The hostel is one of many projects facilitated over the past four years through the generous support of Prestige Foundation.



Inauguration of Arda Public School Classroom by Sri Sri Paramananda Dev Goswami, 17th Satradhikar, Garamur Satra

2 Hostel Blocks Classroom Block Renovation Toilets

across our 7 partner schools in Majuli



Inauguration of Hostel block at one of our partner schools, Kulamura English Friendship School on 15th August



PEACE BUILDING THROUGH ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS

Team members are placed at each of our base schools and work full-time on building the capacity of the founders, staff and the local communities!

8 base schools
across
3 states



GOVT. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, PAPIKRUNG



HAITE MEMORIAL FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL MUALDAM



PAANGKRIANG FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL IJEIRONG



LYZON FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL SINGNGAT



AGAPE FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL NGARIAN



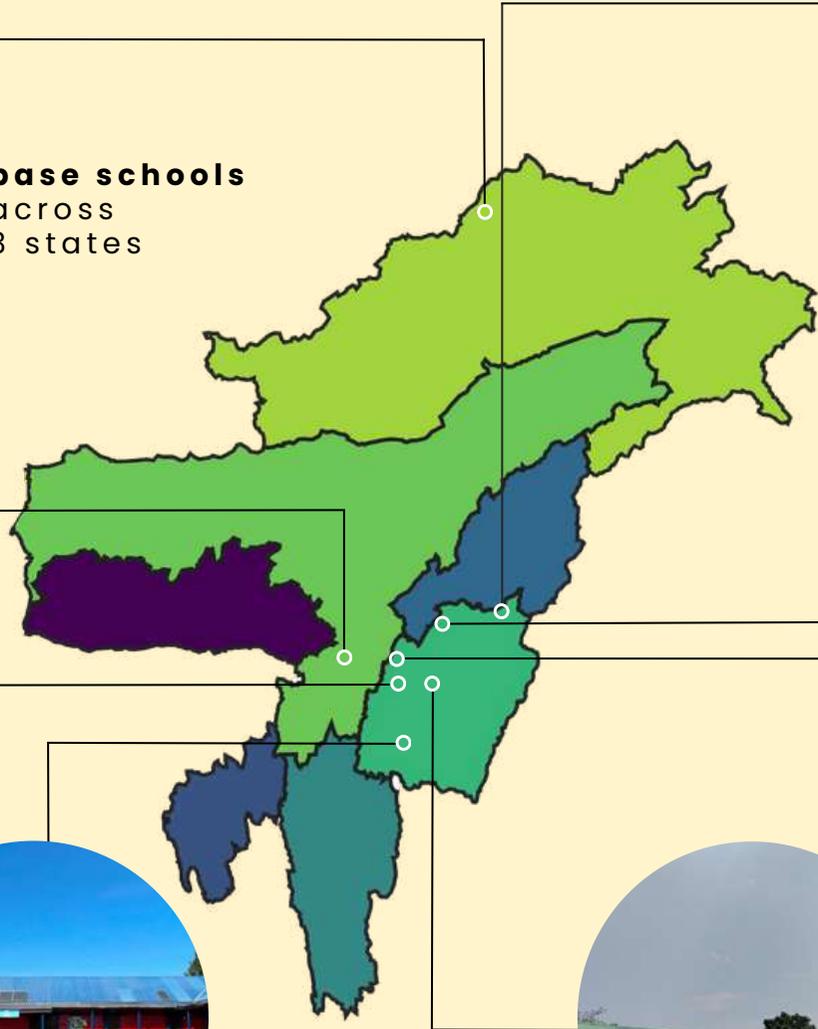
ALPHA FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL, KACHAI



HOPE FOUNDATION ACADMEY, LANGMEI



SUNGCHAM FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL PUICHI



Peace building through Academic Interventions



Letter Exchange – Kachai <-> Singngat

In a world where handwritten letters are a long-forgotten art, our base school students at Alpha Friendship School at Kachai and Lyzon Friendship School in Singhat exchanged letters. Coming from two different tribes in different parts of the state, the students discovered how much they had in common as they shared stories about their families, hobbies, and school life.



Newsletters – Ngarian

In an attempt to give students a voice and project their school life, a monthly school newsletter of our base school—Agape School at Ngarian, Manipur—was launched in September. The goal of the newsletter is to communicate school updates efficiently and consistently to all stakeholders, including parents, villagers, organizations like Sunbird Trust and donors.





In continuation of Sunbird's many efforts to promote cultural diversity and harmony, the team members celebrated the first-ever Yaoshang/Holi at Alpha Friendship School, Kachai with the students. The students collected all the local resources and waste material to bring in colors to their day.



Educational Tour of Grade 10 students of Oinam Hill Village, Manipur



Inhabited by the Poumai Naga tribe, Oinam Hill village is renowned for its unique pottery. With its unfortunate recent history linked to the insurgency, Oinam had, at best, a tenuous relationship with the uniformed forces. With its background, the village was chosen as a key partner in Sunbird's work of **Peace through Education**.

Sixty-three lucky participants from Oinam Hill Govt. School—students and teachers went on an educational tour to Nagaland-Meghlaya. Flagged off by Col. Arnab Mitra, Commandant of AR and our CEO-Founder, Col. Chris Rego, the trip was a blast from start to finish! Importantly, after 35 long years, it marked a seminal moment of reconciliation and moving forward after the unfortunate events of the past.

Educational tour of students flagged off

CORRESPONDENT

SENAPATI: Maram Battalion Assam Rifles of Inspector General Assam Rifles (East) on Monday flagged off a six-day study tour of Government High School, Oinam in collaboration with Sunbird NGO.

The study tour team started off from Oinam Hill on Monday and reached Maram wherein a grand reception was organised by 33 Assam Rifles. The group was received by Maram Battalion followed by an interactive session between students and ranks of 33 Assam Rifles.

The tour was jointly flagged off by 32 AR commandant colonel Arnab Mitra and Sunbird NGO



Col Rego (Retd).

The study tour will proceed to Kohima covering various places of historical importance and further to Dimapur, Cherrapunji and Shillong. The efforts and support of Assam Rifles to the

government school children was applauded by the school staff and the members of the NGO.

A total of 63 members, including 21 girls, staff members of the school, are part of the study tour.

Our sincerest gratitude to Lt. Gen Pradeep Nair, the Director General of the Assam Rifles for his personal interest and facilitation of this trip.





Alpha Friendship School Explores Manipur Valley for a Two-Day Study Excursion



In February, Alpha Friendship School students visited Manipur valley for a two-day study excursion. The experience was our aim to impart holistic education which would allow hill dwellers to experience the valley and plains for the first time. The trip included visits to Loktak lake, Keibul Lamjao National Park, INA Museum, Manipur State Museum, and Kangla Fort. The students learned through experiential and hands-on methods, making school both educative and adventurous. These academic-oriented study tours give students rich exposure to other cultures and places.

PEACE BUILDING THROUGH FRIENDSHIP TOURS



In April 2019, IGAR North, Assam Rifles organized a Friendship-tour for students from Lyzon Friendship School and Khongjom Standard English School (KSES) in Kohima, Nagaland. The tour was a rousing success, as it produced new friendships between the children from different tribes. After the success of the first, a second Educational and Cultural exchange program was organised from 10-12 Dec 2022 at KSES. During the event, the students performed traditional dances, music, and games, rekindling their old friendships. They also received sessions on career counselling, de-stressing mechanisms, and board exam preparation. Mr Davidson, Founder of Matai Society, an educator and a writer, and Diana, an ex-Sunbird member interacted with the students. They inspired and motivated the children to work towards creating an impact in the Northeast. The students also visited Langol Peak, Khongjom war memorial, and Kakching garden, in addition to the other program activities.

NEST FELLOWSHIP

Internship Program



**From Manipur to Rajasthan!
The internship programme
was an eye-opening and
enriching experience.**

The North East Sunbird Trust (NEST) Fellowship is a two-year leadership program to build social change-makers within the local community. The NEST fellow work closely with the school education and community development by working in conflict-affected areas in North East India. The fellows are placed at a Sunbird Trust-supported school and initiate or strengthen at least one community development project at the location.

The second NEST (North East Sunbird Trust) Fellowship chapter ran from 4th to 23rd January, 2023 in Jhunjhunu district, Rajasthan. This **20-day Learning Journey and skill internship program** included 41 participants from across India: These included 15 Gandhi Fellows, 23 Piramal Industries employees, 3 NEST Fellows, and 2 Sunbird employees. The programme was conducted in collaboration with the Piramal Foundation for Education Leadership (Gandhi Fellowship), and aimed to expose participants to different cultures. Sunbird Fellows exchanged notes with the Gandhi Fellows, tried conversing in Hindi, visited schools, engaged in self-reflection, soft skills development, and ventured 300 meters underground in India's 2nd largest copper mine in Khetri, Rajasthan. During the programme, participants were treated to traditional Manipuri dances.





Sunbird Trust Sponsored Sportsmen Winning Accolades

Sports is a powerful tool for empowerment and building team spirit and inclusiveness. Recognizing this, Sunbird Trust has sponsored several youth sports initiatives. From paddles to pedals, fists to feet, and soaring dreams, Sunbird is helping youngsters pursue excellence in achieving their fullest potential! The sports include canoeing and kayaking, football, boxing and cycling.



Lachenga bagged bronze at the Youth Games!



Our team of 4s won bronze at the Youth Games



Napoleon won silver medals both in the nationals last year and at the Youth Games!



Sunbird Trust-Sponsored Creative Vision Football Academy Making History

Sunbird Trust proudly partners with Mang Taithul, founder of the Creative Vision Football Academy in Churachandpur. All 50 children in the academy are sponsored by Sunbird and recently won the championship of the District U-13 Tournament 2022, organized by the Churachandpur District Sports Association.



"I want to become an Olympian one day. I'm so thankful to Sunbird Trust for giving me this chance and getting me into boxing. I hope to fulfil all Sunbird's hopes and dreams for me one day. I want to make Sunbird Trust proud!"

GUNSHALU

Gunshalu, a student from a Sunbird Trust partner school in Manipur, was admitted to the Mary Kom Academy in Imphal and has won multiple gold and silver medals in state-level boxing championships.



To promote canoeing in the state, the Kayaking & Canoeing Association of Karnataka (KCAK) brought down 9 youngsters from Manipur for training and requested the sponsorship of these athletes by Sunbird Trust. During the year, representing Karnataka, these sportsmen performed exceptionally well.



Manipur - Team Conclave



Taking stock and strategizing for a productive year ahead!
Sunbird Trust Conclave, May 2022, Imphal, Manipur



Menstrual Hygiene and General Hygiene Awareness Workshop on World Health Day

Our team member Suinila conducted Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Sessions on the occasion of World Health Day for 75 young girls from classes 5-10 to break the stigma around menstrual health and create a safe space for them where they feel empowered and encouraged to discuss their menstrual health concerns or experiences. The workshop focused on educating the girls on the safe use and disposal of sanitary napkins, myths around periods and the importance of a healthy diet. Importantly, boys in the same age group attended the session.



CAPACITY BUILDING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Teacher training is a critical component of the education system to prepare educators for the challenging and rewarding task of nurturing the next generation.



Team member Ruby facilitating a Teacher training at Mualdam



Our team members conducted teacher training and founder capacity building sessions for local teachers across our base schools and partner schools. The sessions were held on lesson planning, goal setting, ICT training, etc. Sunbird Trust is currently developing an in-house teacher training curriculum to provide holistic education skills.



STAFF EXPOSURE TRIPS

Exposure visits allow us to learn from others outside our community through direct interaction in a new setting—which is why in all our partner locations, we make it a point to bring our teachers to new schools to gain new perspectives on school leadership and pedagogical practices. Given the diversity of cultural contexts, locations and demographics of our partner schools, there is much to learn from each other, and these exposure visits provide a chance to do just that.



Staff of Lyzon Friendship School, Singngat visit The Hummingbird School known for its creative approach to contextual classroom structures!



Staff of Alpha Friendship School, Kachai visited Majuli as a part of their exposure visit.



Staff of St. John Bosco English School on a picnic to Khonoma, Nagaland



COLLABORATIONS WITH THE INDIAN ARMY AND ASSAM RIFLES



Improving Water Access for AFS Kachai with the support of 35AR



The residents of AFS Kachai (over 200 people) were relying on a decade-old water supply system that had deteriorated due to exposure to extreme weather conditions. Fortunately, the 35 Assam Rifles generously provided the materials for a new GI pipeline that spans 5 km from the source to the school campus; parents pitched in by laying the pipes. We are extremely grateful to 35 AR for their support over the past two years, which has helped make life easier and better for everyone on the AFS campus.

Electrification of the school!



Thanks to the Indian Army, we now have solar equipment, lights, fans and a generator to meet the electricity needs of our remote base location in Papikrung, Arunachal Pradesh—which has no electricity!



Special Thanks to the Assam Rifles and The Indian Army for coordinating transportation and material for all our Community building initiatives—from solar lamp distributions to blanket and mattress distributions to planning exposure trips for our children and management of accommodation and food, they have gone over and beyond the call of duty to help the children of the NE.



The CO of 5 Kumaon, Col D S Rathore donated sweaters to our tiny tots from a tiny hamlet in remote Arunachal! These sweaters were a godsend during the bone-chilling winters we have here.



Sunbird's Pilot in Papikrung village in Arunachal Pradesh

At the initiative of Mr P D Sona, the Hon'ble Speaker of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in July 2022 between Sunbird Trust and the Govt of Arunachal Pradesh (GoAP). Under this MOU, Sunbird Trust was to take over the administration of the Government Residential School at Papikrung Village near the Sino-India border in Shi Yomi District of the state. This move was part of the Govt's initiative to strengthen border

villages and stop the migration of residents inland for better education of their children. Sunbird members will be involved in handling the day-to-day functioning of the school and hostel and capacity building of the govt. school teachers. Sunbird team members will also assist in infrastructural development and community engagement. Sunbird's engagement with the Papikrung school is a pilot project, success of which will govern scaling of this concept to other Govt schools.



Initial meeting with the Speaker, Legislative Assembly, GoAP - Shri P D Sona, introducing him to Sunbird Trust



Receiving immense support from the Govt of Arunachal Pradesh Sunbird uses a multi-pronged approach to support the school bringing together all important stakeholders including parents, teachers, the children, local community, and, importantly, the Indian Army in this border area. We are fortunate to receive overarching support for our work from all these stakeholders.



Signing of MoU with Commissioner of Education & Shri P D Sona





OUR ALUMNI

From full time Sunbirders to amplifying our reach by working with other development organisations to lawyers to engineers to nurses to agriculture specialists, Sunbird sponsored students are high flyers when they go out of our nests!

500

students sponsored
through college

280

students sponsored
through college
in 2022-23

21

Alumni have interned
with us

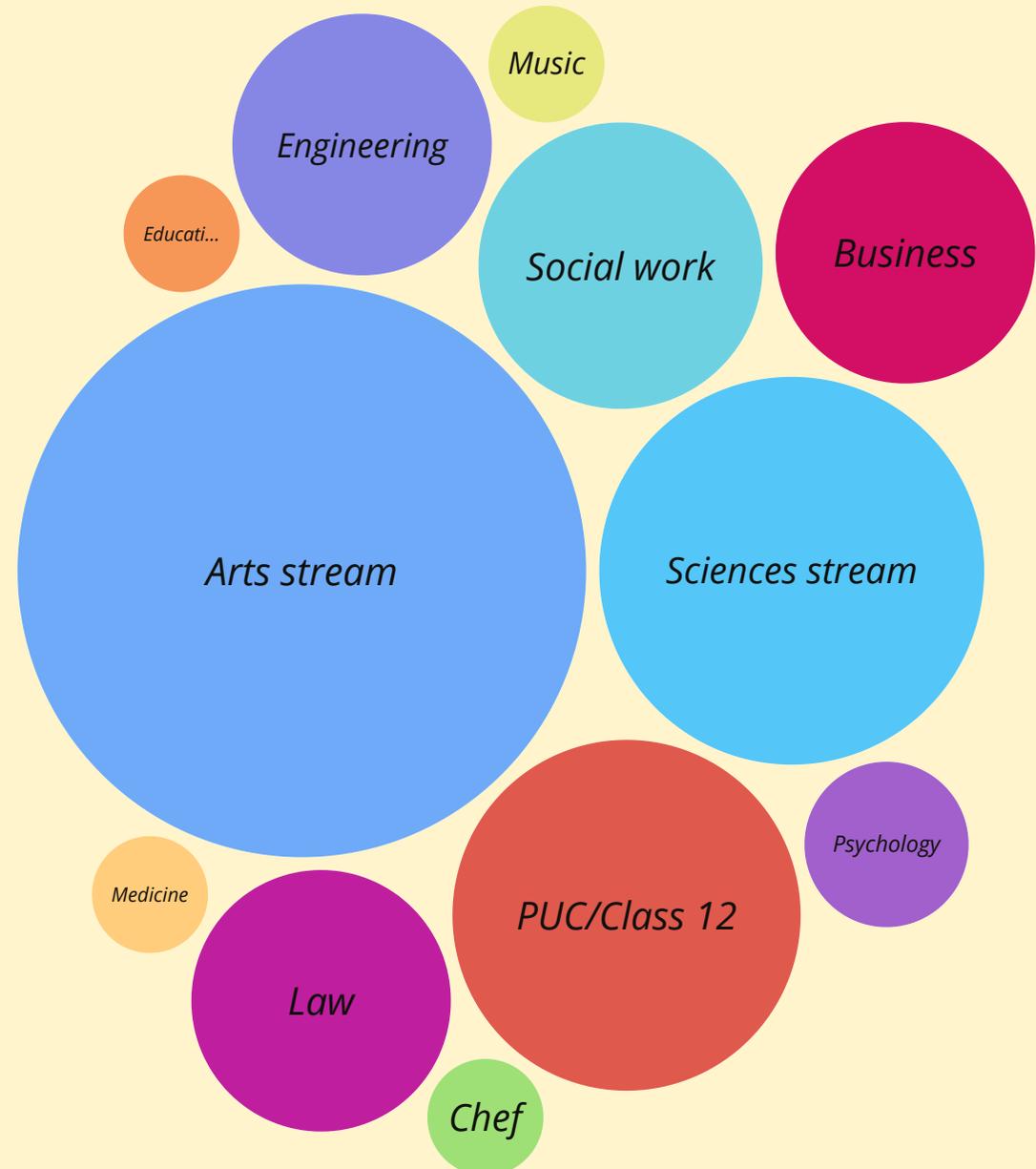


Sunbirders hitting the high notes

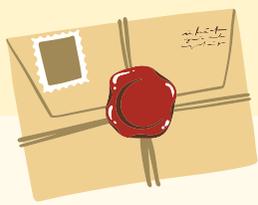


Coming from a subsistence tribal cultivator family from a very remote part of the Garo Hills in Meghalaya, there seemed little possibility that I would be able to attend college. I reached out to Sunbird Trust to support my graduate course in Music at Shillong and post graduate course at Asia's best known music academy – the Music Conservatory at the Santa Isabel College in Manila in the Philippines. Despite the huge cost, I am most grateful for the trust and financial support I received. Today, working in Dubai, I am proud that I have not only returned the entire amount spent for my graduation and post-graduation, but am also that I able to support my entire family back home. This miracle would never have been possible without the immense support from Sunbird Trust.

Kresitha Momin



What our almuni are currently pursuing...



MESSAGES FROM OUR ALUMNI

Being from a middle-class family, enrolling in a professional degree course like B Tech was a far-fetched dream for me. Sunbird has given me and numerous other youngsters the wings to fly and explore the world. Right from Day 1 to the last day of my course, Sunbird has been there for me physically, financially and mentally. Even after my studies Sunbird has supported me in my career journey by helping me get a summer internship with The Prestige Group at Bangalore which was a stepping stone to being selected to join the company as a graduate trainee and now a Junior Site Engineer. This was only possible because of the rock-solid and dependable support of Sunbird. To all budding Sunbirders, I will say that we should always remember that the baton will be passed down to us some day in the future and it is up to us to carry forward this incredible work of **Peace through Education**. With my learning, I can advise the fortunate Sunbirders to give your best in whatever you are doing be it sports, studies and life skills. Hope you will be blessed with curiosity to learn more and more, so that when the appropriate time comes, we can take forward the work of Sunbird Trust as its ambassadors and anchors in our society.

-Abokson, Former Sunbird sponsored student

Abokson is currently working as a Junior Site Engineer at Prestige Project Private Ltd.



Sunbird has been a great source of support and guidance for me in my educational pursuit. I lost both my parents at a very young age, and Sunbird helped me pursue my Master's education in psychology, by financially supporting me.

My message to other Sunbird sponsored students is that,

Not everyone will understand the journey you are on, since many have not walked your path, but have faith in yourself which is the most important. Be open to new learning and experiences, you have a huge support system in Sunbird.

-Moses Joseph,
Sunbird sponsored student

Moses Joseph is working in an under-resourced school in Bangalore as a part of the Teach For India fellowship.



Straight from the heart...



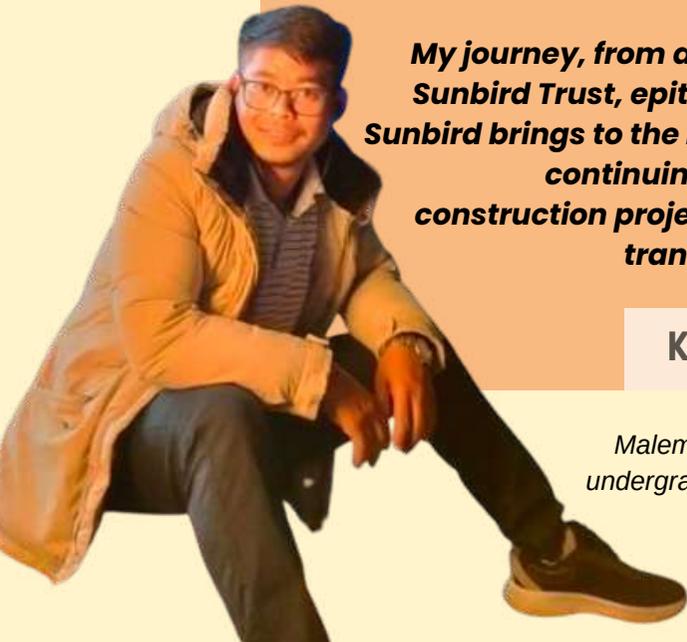
Hear from some of our alumni graduate (sponsored) students who have joined us as full-time team members

I see myself as a living testament to the seeds sown by Sunbird Trust a few years ago. My journey at Sunbird Trust has been a tremendous learning experience. I've acquired the skills to effectively organize work, manage construction projects, collaborate with contractors and laborers, and overcome numerous challenges, especially in remote locations. What deeply resonates with me and keeps me dedicated to this organization is Sunbird Trust's pivotal mission of sponsoring underprivileged students. This initiative has the power to transform not only an individual's life but the entire society. I have personally experienced the profound impact of being sponsored, and it fuels my commitment to contribute my skills and service towards ensuring quality construction in our remote locations, where underprivileged students stand to benefit the most.

My journey, from a small village in Manipur to a Project Engineer at Sunbird Trust, epitomizes the positive change and empowerment that Sunbird brings to the lives of underprivileged individuals. I am committed to continuing this mission, making a difference one construction project at a time, and offering the same opportunities that transformed my life to others in need."

KHANGEMBAM MALEMTHABA

Malem has been sponsored by Sunbird from his Grade 12 through his undergraduate degree at Visweswaraya College Bangalore. He now works as a Project Engineer at Sunbird Trust.



Sunbird Trust has supported me since right after my PUC in 2017. Sunbird Trust sponsored my Undergraduate degree in St. Joseph's College in Bangalore. With the help of Sunbird Trust I joined college. I also took part in St. Joseph's College football team. I also took part in the District Football League in 2019.

Not only in the academic field, I could also explore extra curricular activities at the college level—all these things happened in my life with the help of Sunbird Trust.

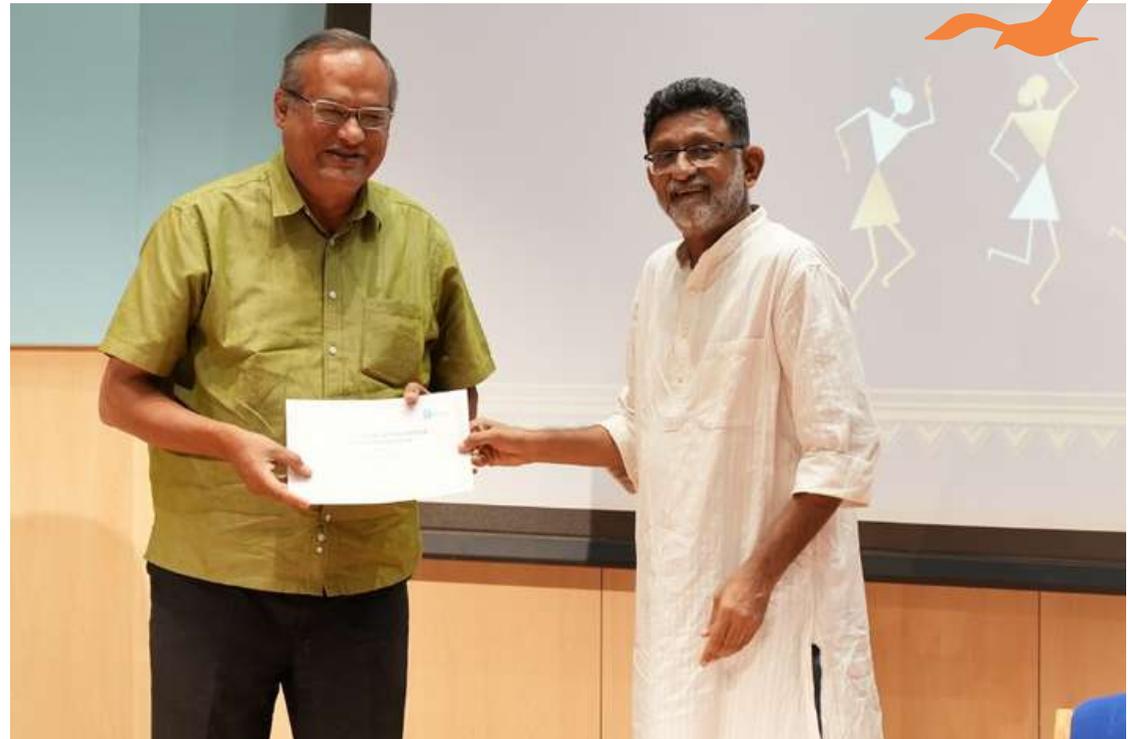
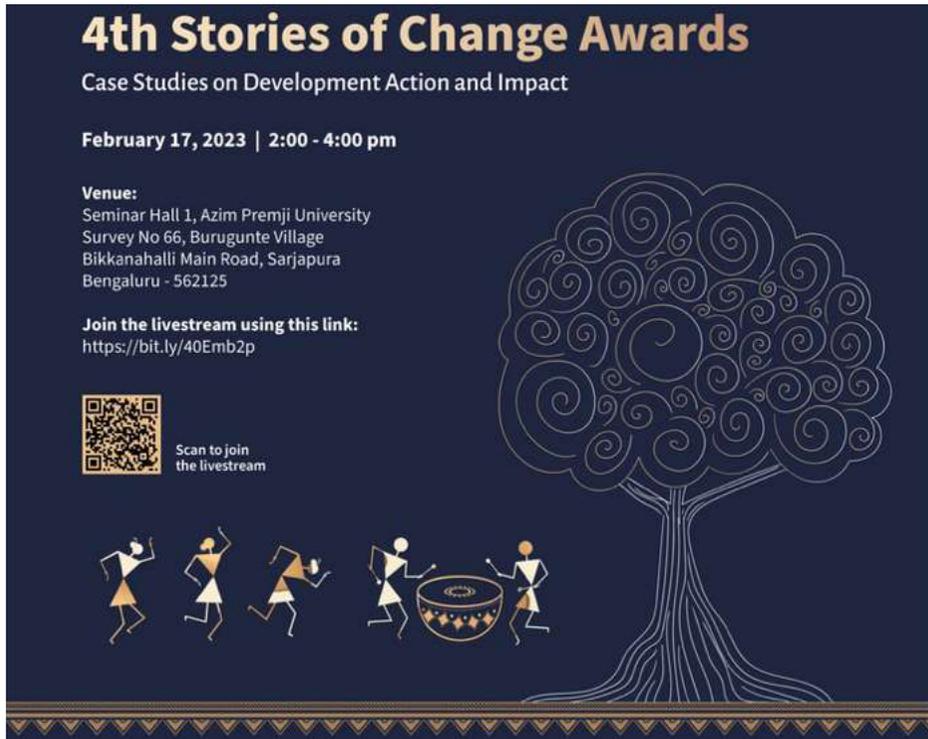
KHOLI ANTHONY LP

Anthony works as a Programme Coordinator in the SALT farming project at Puichi





SUNBIRD AMONG TOP 10 NGOs SELECTED FOR STORIES OF CHANGE AWARD



Sunbird Trust was selected for the 4th Edition of **Azim Premji University's 'Stories of Change: Case Study Challenge'** competition, which documents the work, challenges, and learnings of NGOs across India. Our story "Peace through Education in Conflict Affected Areas of North East India" was recognized for the compendium. The award encourages us to continue our work and engagement with children and host communities. The compendium is expected to be published by June 2023. We are grateful for our donors, mentors, and team members for their contribution.



Click on the **play** icon to watch →



Mr Dave and Mr Ben from Doordarshan visited Puichi and Ijeirong, Manipur in May 2022. The team recorded footage of students in school and also took group photographs. Interviews of the CEO, Mr Christopher Rego, the school principal, Mr Mordecai Riamroi, village authority chairman, Mr Achao Bariamtak, Assistant School Leader, Ms Henna Chanu and those of the interns, were conducted.



One step closer to Financial Self-Sustainability

3.3 lacs

raised for library and textbooks

6.5 lacs

worth solar grid set up by external org. support



95 % fee collection



65 % funding raised by school

Our sponsorship model provides financial access to quality education for children in areas with poor public education, such as hill districts in Manipur and parts of Assam. A base school of ours in the Dima Hasao district of Assam—**Haite Memorial Friendship School**—where our team member Ravi handles day-to-day operations with the founder, has taken this model one step further by striving for financial self-sustainability through fundraising campaigns, seeking support from other organizations, promoting financial freedom to parents and even by teachers setting up tea shops.

This school is on a roll!



Click [here](#) to know more about their fun fundraising campaigns and to support them.

Bangalore - Counseling Session



Sunbird Trust organized a three-hour-long session on “Self-Awareness” on 26th February 2023 for our sponsored students studying in Bangalore. Resource persons Bhavana Ananth and Seema were invited to conduct these sessions for our Bangalore students.



The **Team** that
makes it all
possible!



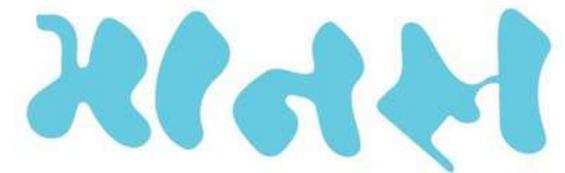
Partnerships and Collaborations





Donors and Supporters

“We would like to express our gratitude for the incredible support from our donors who have joined us on this journey.”



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