

"Our mission is to work with partners to achieve food security, economic justice, well-being, and gender equity for extreme poor community"

# Activity Report

2018-19

"We do this through research and innovation in science, technology, and capacity strengthening"

1 NO POVERTY



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



5 GENDER EQUALITY



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Asian Institute of Poverty Alleviation



## Foreword 2018-2019



**AIPA** helps people build better lives and more durable futures, community by community. We equip individuals, organizations and communities-our counterparts- to become solution creators in their own families, communities, regions and countries. We work with them in some of the world's most challenging places to tackle social, economic, environmental, health and governance issues that threaten their lives and undermine their futures.

AIPA embarked on our 6th year with determination to expand our impact around the region. From empowering citizens to advocate for more transparency and accountability in local, regional and national governments, to training the next generation of development leaders, to ensuring girls get to school and stay in school, extreme poor women are having sustainable livelihood, access to basic health and youth are empowered with skills and entrepreneurship. All of our programs have a singular focus — bringing citizen voices to the table with government to support citizen-driven solutions.

Without local communities identifying and solving local problems that are important to them, solutions won't last. And without government recognizing its role in working in partnership with citizens, the wrong kind of solutions are likely to be implemented, or, no solutions at all.

Helping people build better lives and more durable futures is a challenge we undertake each and every day, with the support of our partners and donors. With your support, we will create stronger, healthier and more inclusive communities around the world, allowing individuals, organizations and networks to take an active role in building the future of their choice. These are just a few initiatives where you and others have made and can continue to make a positive difference. We hope that you will agree that by building capacity in leaders, communities and networks to be solution creators, we can help create meaningful and lasting change.

Everywhere we work, we seek to save lives, help communities recover from food crisis, and leverage the power of innovative partnerships and technology to build sustainable livelihood opportunities for poor and initiate community health activity to promote public health, reduce the burden of water borne diseases as well as non-communicable diseases.

We could not do this without the support of our donors and partners. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank AIPA's funders, investors and all AIPA partners for their support. I also extend my appreciation to AIPA's management and staff for their continued dedication to the organization and to its important mission and making a better world possible.

Warm regards,

Amalendu Pal  
Honorary Director and Board Member

Kolkata, April 08, 2019



## AIPA MISSION

Its mission is to conduct research threatened situations and opportunities for growth within ecosystems worldwide, protecting human health, promoting education and inclusiveness, choosing solutions that are sustainable livelihood, reducing disease burden, based on sound science, programme design, methodology, programme implementation and which take into account human needs.



## AIPA APPROACH

AIPA's approach is powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In vulnerability, in hardship, in more than 700 women groups in country, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping women triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

The rural resilience livelihood activity will enable individuals and communities to engage in strong and sustainable market systems rather than continuing to rely on humanitarian assistance, and faltering with each new shock. To achieve this purpose, the Activity will have four components and four cross cutting elements:

- **Component 1:** Provide up-to-date evidence for selection of market systems, livelihoods and employment opportunities that contribute to inclusive and resilient economic growth, sustainable livelihood and improved nutrition.
- **Component 2:** Stimulate market systems growth and diverse economic opportunities
- **Component 3:** Build capacity to take advantage of market systems opportunities.
- **Component 4:** Sequencing, layering, integrating (SLI), collaborative and adaptive learning to improve activity effectiveness, sustainability, and scale.



### Fights poverty, hunger and ploughing prosperity

Why does restoring dignity matter in fighting on behalf of the poor? Dignity sustains the poor while defeating the circumstances of poverty. Sustainable livelihood for all especially for extreme poor women and men is the solution.





## WOMEN AND GIRLS DRIVE CHANGE

The team of AIPA believe women and girls are the agents of change for our country.

AIPA looks for opportunities to bring about the deepest, most effective impact. In rural areas of West Bengal especially districts of Purulia, Birbhum, Sundargarh district of Odisha, and Golaghat district of Assam that start with women and girls who carry the greatest burdens of poverty. When we saw girls dropping out at the start of high school, we piloted girls' groups to overcome challenges. We've learned that mothers determine the outcomes for their children. Supporting women with stable income opportunities puts food on the table, safe drinking water and health care for every stage of motherhood results in thriving families.

### Shanti's Struggle

Shanti has lived in Bamun Gaon village in rural Assam for her entire life. Because of where she lives, she shared the burden of millions of girls and women across rural India – spending hours each day collecting unsafe drinking water, instead of going to school or earning an income. Three times a day, Shanti collected water, carried a 40-litters jerry, shared with animals and family members. She brought home water contaminated with disease and faces that threatened the lives of her children. As did the other women and girls in Bamun Gaon, Shanti had visible wounds on her shoulders from the weight of carrying a jerry can for four hours every day. Like all the women and girls in her village, Shanti had little chance to thrive and change the course of her children's lives without clean water. She would have to do what many parents do here – marry her girls into families outside of Bamun Gaon. No one wants this life for their daughters. For years, Shanti advocated for clean, safe drinking water, menstrual hygiene for her children and community. Shanti's voice became louder and began to reach beyond Bamun Gaon. More and more people heard about the treacherous walk for water. Yet, everyone who visited told the people that clean water in Bamun Gaon is impossible. The village is too remote; the complexity of a deep well is too much.





## ***"What is the day like for your children? Why is it this way?"-Shanti asked Chandra, Researcher of AIPA***

Together, Chandra and Shanti met other women members of community, heard their struggle in collecting water, accessibility of health care services. They talked about their love for their children – and the great injustice of the different worlds in which they lived. Chandra told Shanti that no woman, no person should ever have to bear this burden. Then Chandra promised to work with Shanti and her community.

### **OUR INTEGRATED APPROACH CHANGED LIVES**

This year 2018-2019, AIPA expanded its work in economic empowerment, and improved health, nutrition and education for the most vulnerable.

#### **559 FARMERS EMPOWERED**

AIPA expanded support for rural farmers through agriculture extension programmes like business trainings, irrigation and microloans. By investing in family farms, we improve nutrition and food access for the entire community.

#### **FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS-129 LOANS FOR WOMEN**

AIPA provided access to microloans through banks and trainings to women who, in turn, supported their families and community markets.

#### **EMPOWERING GIRL LEADERS-242 TRAINED AT GIRLS' GROUPS**

Girls learned about menstruation, early marriage, safety and hygiene at AIPA's school-based groups. Students then shared lessons with their peers and families, increasing the groups' impact. Our interviews with the girls' groups in the villages of Amdahara, Bejra show how a small group can create a big change.

#### **MATERNAL CARE-432 BIRTHS THROUGH AIPA COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVE**

AIPA's community health -total health care services provided prenatal, delivery and postnatal care along with government public health centres for mothers and essential care for their families. The community health care services were provided by community volunteers of Amdahara, Bejra villages of Birbhum district, West Bengal and Bamon Gaon of Golaghat district, Assam.







## WV-WE: WOMEN'S VOICE-WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

AIPA's Women's Action for Voice and Economic Empowerment (WV-WE) is a civil participation programme focusing on equal representation and visibility of women and men.

WA-VE is also a movement, bringing women's organisations and the public together to challenge widespread imbalances of power and priority that negatively affect women and their human rights. WA-VE has a plan to deliver on its promise to

women, including two women already in politics, women and young women with potential for political or civil leadership, and advocates for women's empowerment spanning all genders and tiers of society.



**Women must have equal power and opportunity to make and act on economic decisions and share in economic benefit.**

AIPA supports decent and safe work for all, equal pay for equal work, full and productive employment choices and respect for the substantial unpaid and informal work that women do around the world, because we know that gender equality and sustainable economic management go hand in hand. We generate new evidence and bring visibility to valuing women's unpaid work, reproductive roles and the care economy. Our program and project partnerships and our research work improve women's opportunities to earn and save and gain skills and knowledge in financial management and business or organisational development. We promote labour rights and land rights for women and resource organisations protecting the environment, the workplace or legislative settings to close the gender gap.



AIPA confronts the economic dimensions of gender inequality.

We support individuals and organisations to become independent thinkers, to drive their own agendas for sustainable livelihoods and access to financial services for all.

By investing in women-focused organisations we can achieve lasting community gains by addressing the root causes of social, political and economic problems. We can transform systems, structures and the social norms that create the present exclusion of the majority of citizens.

## OUR IMPACT IN 2018-2019

### HOW OUR APPROACH SUPPORTS SUSTAINABILITY

To create the greatest impact, AIPA invests in village communities for six years, aligns with the government's priorities and engages community members as partners in our work. We focus on four lifesaving services (clean water, education, health care and livelihoods) that hold up a community and build resilience. Here's how we plan and implement our work in rural India (Assam, Odisha and West Bengal).

#### STEP 1:

**SELECT:** AIPA engages the people of rural India from villagers to local government leaders in deciding where and how we do our work. We dedicate significant time to understanding the areas of deepest need and the local commitment to supporting our projects.

#### STEP 2:

**PLAN:** AIPA brings together the lifesaving projects proven to create real change in rural India. We customize our project plans to the critical needs and natural resource opportunities in each new community where we work. We prioritize our clean water, education, health care and livelihoods projects to create the deepest impact in each community.

#### STEP 3:

**IMPLEMENT:** Our long-term investment in India means we are deeply knowledgeable about how to impact change in the country.



We know the ecosystem of need and we eliminate bureaucracy through our established relationships at every level. We hire local NGOs to construct projects, we engage the government to provide support like qualified teachers and skilled health workers, and we lead custom trainings to elevate the impact of our projects. All of our work is led by our in-country staff of Indians who are experts in our projects.

#### STEP 4:

**EMPOWER:** In our work, everyone has a stake. Our process empowers community members to contribute cash and labour to the projects, and local government offices to provide staff and resources. AIPA's hand-over trainings and establishment of village committees support projects over the long-term.

#### STEP 5:

**EVALUATE:** AIPA is committed to monitoring our work and sharing the amazing stories of change with our supporters through village updates. We are constantly learning, applying our findings and sharing our work with the world.

“Social Responsibility is not a charity.  
Doing work for vulnerable, our fellow neighbour, and citizens'  
of neighbouring countries is a long term investment leading to  
social harmony, peace and sustainability.

If we don't help create our own future, we're in trouble.  
We regard it as an important human development task  
for the benefit of global mankind.”



## Asian Institute of Poverty Alleviation

Promoting models that are self-replicating and sustainable to reduce poverty

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