



NEN NEWSLETTER

April - July 2024

Dear Readers,

At North East Network (NEN), each step we take is a collaborative journey towards a gender-just and sustainable future. This quarter, we've seen the rise of grassroots leaders, the resilience of young changemakers, and the unity of voices against injustice. Here's a glimpse into the stories that continue to shape our shared vision.



Remembering Birubala Rabha

Padma Shri Awardee Birubala Rabha, who passed away on 13 May 2024, was an activist from Goalpara, Assam, who tirelessly raised her voice against witch-hunting. She also led an organisation - Mission Birubala that raises awareness about the dangers associated with witch-hunting practices. Her sketch was made in 2022 by Parishmita Konwar from NEN's youth collective in a workshop celebrating women's leadership.

Freedom in Rhythm: Rise in Resistance



The Mirdan Youth Collective of NEN Assam participated in a transformative dance workshop led by Dr. Anjana Moyee Saikia. As a dedicated Odissi and Satriya dancer, Anjana Moyee guided our youth to express themselves through the powerful medium of dance drama. This workshop resulted in a performance, held on 12th July, highlighting the gendered realities and discrimination women have faced for generations and promoting women's leadership. All the participants passionately brought these stories to life, raising awareness and envisioning a brighter future.

Bridging the Farm-To-Plate Gap: NEN Farm School



59 young explorers from Nagaland and Assam embarked on an immersive journey to learn about indigenous food systems and traditional farming. From sessions on soil and food webs, to hands-on experiences in composting and paddy transplanting, this journey was guided through experiential learning. Immersive storytelling by community knowledge holders, a visit to the Community Seed Bank and Agrobiodiversity Walks offered deep insights into traditional farming practices, their interconnection

with the environment, and indigenous knowledge associated with it. The sessions inspired actions in rebuilding a resilient future.

Sowing Seeds of Sustainability: Organic Farming in School Gardens



Meet NEN's community mobilisers & school cooks from Laitkseh Government Upper Primary School, Meghalaya, who demonstrated and implemented organic farming techniques in their school garden, creating bio-intensive raised beds and zero tillage beds using self-made liquid & solid composts. This initiative is an outcome of the valuable knowledge gained from a 3-day training at SPREAD NE, Sonapur, organised by NEN.

World Environment Day (WED) 2024

"Our land, Our future: We are #GenerationRestoration"

North East Network joins the global community for WED in actions to raise awareness on land and ecosystem regeneration, involving diverse stakeholders and communities. We aimed to take steps to protect and restore our land through community decisions and actions.



ASSAM

Women leaders from 5 districts of Assam introduced their communities to natural compost heap making and dispersing of seed bombs and led discussions about how communities can conserve land and its resources in this campaign attended by 190 participants.

MEGHALAYA

51 participants from 11 villages gathered in Mawlangsu, West Khasi Hills, for WED to discuss environmental safeguarding, sharing insights on changes in land usage and its impact, traditional conservation practices, & seasonal farming.



NAGALAND

Around 110 participants took part in the campaign with insightful discussions on land restoration and climate resilience, sharing of experiences about community-led initiatives, and melodies celebrating nature.



Young Changemakers Creates IEC Kits Promoting Menstrual Health

Members of youth collective in Assam were trained to develop IEC Resource Kits and take lead in initiatives aimed at breaking menstrual taboos.



From Grief to Hope: The Journey of Rebuilding NEN Resource Centre in Chizami



The main building of NEN Resource Centre in Chizami collapsed due to a 2-lane road expansion project in 2022. Through collective efforts and the support of many individuals and institutions, we managed to dismantle the damaged building and started the rebuilding work in October 2023. On June 5th, "Hope Hall" - a meeting cum accommodation space was inaugurated. It's a testament to our collective hope and commitment to restore and regenerate the damaged land, foster connections between communities and the earth, and strengthen resilience of communities. We express gratitude to Urgent Action Fund Asia & Pacific (UAF A&P), Chizami Community, organisations and individual donors for their support in this journey.




A Unified Appeal Against Interstate Trafficking

A grim news surfaced on 15th May 2024, involving the sex trafficking of young women and minor girls from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh. Various instances of violence, torture and bondage also came to light as one of the survivors escaped and reported it. North East Network along with women's groups, activists, individuals and academics made an appeal to Assam Police to express concerns regarding interstate trafficking and sex crimes. The Appeal also made suggestions to address the issue.

Heartfelt Congratulations Junumoni Das


Junumoni Das, NEN's Community Mobiliser from Mirza, Kamrup (R), was felicitated by Sarpara Milan Sangha during their Golden Jubilee. We take great pride in celebrating her years of dedication and invaluable contributions to women's rights, and this well-deserved award.



 WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY
#OurLandOurFuture

"I'LL COVER UP YOUR LAND" - THE STORY OF ALDER TREES

"Even if there's a landslide, I'll cover the land up" - that is how Alder Trees are known to the Community Elders from the village of Chizami during a time when the practice of alder-based cultivations is slowly fading away.



Credits: Vilazonuo

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 WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY
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PLANTS THAT HEAL: THE STORY OF KONG JUSTINA

In the village of Wahlieulong, Eastern West Khasi Hills, Kong Justina Marwein, a school teacher and traditional healer, is well known in the local community, neighbouring villages and beyond for her knowledge of traditional medicines for humans and animals.



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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Changing Patterns of Climate Change & Gendered Vulnerabilities: Feminist voices from NE India - North East Regional Dialogue & Exchange

(10th -11th September 2024, Guwahati, Assam)

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