

MARCH  
2026

# UDGAM “XXI” EDITION

20-year celebrations of FST: unveiling of coffee-table book



FST celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> year on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 with its members, community members, funders, past fellows, and past staff. At the celebration, we unveiled the coffee table book, a testament to our journey. We also conducted a panel discussion with different development sector experts on the topic **“Bridging the Development Gap in the Northeast by Enhancing”**

Unveiling Our Legacy: Coffee Table Book Launch! As we celebrate 20 incredible years of FST, we are thrilled to unveil a special coffee table book that captures the heart and soul of our journey. From humble beginnings to remarkable achievements, this beautifully curated book tells our story through inspiring moments, unforgettable milestones, and the people who made it all possible. Thank you to everyone—past and present—who has been part of this journey. Here’s to 20 years of innovation, community, and excellence and to many more ahead.

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## Session for the young adolescents on digital usage & cybercrime

On 9<sup>th</sup> october 2025, we conducted an engaging session with the boys and girls collective in Pub-kalgachia village, Barpeta, on "Use of Internet: Advantages and Disadvantages". A total of 12 participants explored the benefits and risks of internet use through activity-based learning.

After a lively discussion, they weighed the pros and cons, gaining valuable insights on how to harness online resources for education and personal growth.



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## Our Actions: #16 days of activism against gender-based violence

From November 25 to December 10, the world unites to challenge gender-based violence (GBV). These days symbolise a call to ACT, AWARE, and AMPLIFY – because GBV is a shadow no community can ignore.

### Our Action in Barpeta, Assam:

We organised a 3-day campaign from 28<sup>th</sup> November, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December in three Gaon Panchayats in Barpeta with the Social Welfare Dept and Piramal Foundation!

- More than 330 girls & boys participated.
- Skit on GBV & Dowry: Shaking stigma, sparking dialogue.
- Menstruation Session: Dismantling taboos, empowering dignity.
- Schemes Demystified: *Matru Vandana Yojana* and more – rights made simple.

### Why It Matters:

1. Youth as Agents: When more than 330 teens question GBV, change is seeded.
2. Systems & Safety: Linking schemes to lives ensures no girl and woman is left behind.

### GBV thrives in silence. Break it. Report it. Act on it:

- Women Helpline: 181
- Childline no: 1098 (24/7 free helpline for children in distress)

“  
Together, let's turn 16 days into 365  
days of zero tolerance



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Our Actions: #16 days of activism against gender-based violence



## Our action in Guwahati :

We conducted a session on cybercrime and digital safety for the adolescents of Solapara Road, Guwahati, as part of the [#16DaysOfActivismAgainstGenderBasedViolence](#) campaign!

About 25 enthusiastic participants came together to learn about the importance of digital safety and how to protect themselves online. The interactive session focused on the theme "UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls".

Through group activities and discussions, participants prepared a comprehensive list of safety toolkits to navigate the internet safely. They also discussed real-life incidents of cybercrime in their families and neighbourhoods, making the conversation even more impactful!

We also shared local and national helplines, including POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) helpline numbers, to ensure that adolescents know where to seek help in case of any distress.

### Key takeaways from the session:

- ~ Created a list of safety toolkits for digital safety
- ~ Discussed real-life incidents of cybercrime
- ~ Empowered adolescents to take control of their online safety
- ~ Shared local and national helplines for support

LET'S WORK  
TOGETHER  
TO CREATE  
A SAFER  
DIGITAL  
WORLD FOR  
ALL!



To know more about our work, follow us on our social media platforms -----



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## Strengthening Our Team: Facilitation Skills Workshop for the girl leaders and staff

We concluded a two-day (11-12th November 2025) intensive workshop aimed at strengthening the facilitation capacities of 14 community leaders and staff members. The workshop equipped participants with tools to foster participatory and accessible engagement with communities.

### Key outcomes :

- ~ Promoted jargon-free, inclusive communication to bridge gaps
- ~ Enhanced skills to manage group dynamics and encourage equitable dialogue
- ~ Aligned practices with FST's core values: equity, inclusion, and grassroots empowerment



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## Empowering homestays of Mawmluh village, Meghalaya



On 23rd October 2025, we conducted a workshop on House Rules for the homestay owners in Mawmluh village, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya. The workshop focused on sharing and discussing house rules to promote professionalism and smooth operations for both hosts and guests. We're thrilled to see 13 out of 14 homestays in Mawmluh participate, along with a Village Council member overseeing the proceedings.

The Village Council emphasised that having a set of house rules is mandatory for all homestays in Mawmluh. They also highlighted that the rules received from the village Dorbar are to be followed as a standard and must be kept common across all homestays, in addition to their individual rules.

We aim to support the growth of responsible and sustainable tourism in Meghalaya. Kudos to the Village Council and homestay owners for their commitment to this journey!

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## Celebration of National Girl Child Day



Menstrual hygiene  
is a human right 🌸



We organised an awareness programme on January 24 to celebrate the National Girls Child Day.

### Participation:

- 20 members of the Girl Collective, Balikuri village, actively took part
- Presence of a few parents reflected strong community support and engagement

### Program Highlights:

- Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) worker of Balikuri conducted a session on menstrual health and hygiene

### Outcomes:

- Enhanced knowledge and confidence of adolescent girls regarding menstrual hygiene
- Encouraged parental involvement in adolescent health and well-being
- Reinforced the importance of girl collectives as platforms for awareness, empowerment, and advocacy

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## Scientific Poultry Farming: Building Sustainable Livelihoods

On 16th October 2025, we organised a training session on scientific poultry farming at Balikuri village, Barpeta, under our Livestock Project. The training was attended by 12 participants, including the FST staff, community mobilisers and *pashu sakhis*.

Our resource person, Dr Azijul Islam from Kalgachia Veterinary Department, shared insights on

- Poultry farming as a sustainable income-generating practice
- Disease management and feed optimisation techniques
- Barn management and breed selection best practices

The objective of this training was to equip the participants with the knowledge on how to improve poultry farming practices and boost the livelihoods of the community. This training is part of our ongoing efforts to support community development and sustainable livelihood initiatives.





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## Najira’s story of Change

Najira was hurrying along a muddy path in Kakching, worried she might be late. The sky looked heavy with rain, and she had just enough vegetables in her basket for a few households. As she passed a group of women waiting near a handpump, they stopped her.

“Najira, how do your vegetables look so fresh, even in this weather?” one of them asked.

She then smiled. **“It wasn’t always like this,”** she said, sitting down with them.

Two years ago, things were difficult. Her land was small, the soil was losing strength, and sometimes even after using chemicals, the crops didn’t grow well. During dry days, her plants would struggle. During rains, they would spoil quickly.

After harvesting, she had to walk around the village to find a roaming buyer.

“It was tiring,” she said. “And I wasn’t sure if farming would really support us.”

Then she came to know about khutlang project and started participating in the meetings and workshops. There, she learned how to make rice husk charcoal, plant juice, fruit juice, and bokashi fertilizer.

“At first, I doubted if these would work,” she admitted.

“But I had no other option, so I tried.”

Gradually, things changed. Her soil improved. Even in changing weather, her crops stayed healthier. She grew coriander, beans, beetroot, cabbage, and mustard, this time with better results.

And something unexpected happened.



“Before, I used to go looking for buyers,” she said. **“Now, even on rainy days, people come to my house asking for vegetables.”**

The women exchanged glances. “But your land is still small, right?”

Najira nodded. “Yes, that hasn’t changed. I can’t grow enough for everyone yet. But my thinking has changed.”

She looked at them and said, “Land size doesn’t matter to me now. My goal is to stop using chemicals, for my family and for others.”

One of the women said softly, “We also want to learn this.”

Najira’s face lit up. “That’s what I want too. Our group has learned so much. Now we want to go to other villages and share it.”