

Dhemaji Area Development Programme

India



Geographical Location

Sisiborgoan Block, District of Dhemaji, Assam in India.

Brief Information

Land Area: 93301 sq. kms

Phased out date: 2017

Total population: 155,000 persons

Target direct beneficiaries: 34,593 persons

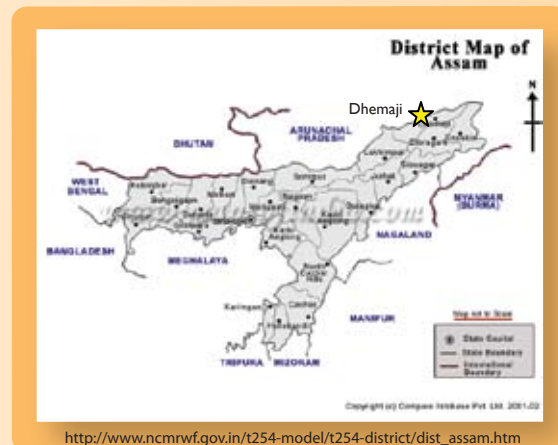
Project lifespan: 1996 – 2017 (20 years)

Indicative budget: SGD \$6,300,000

Project Goals

The overall goal of Dhemaji ADP is to enhance livelihood security at the household level through various integrated development interventions.

With the support and care of Singapore Child Sponsors, World Vision aims to help the children and families attain self-reliance by September 2017.



Map of Assam showing Dhemaji

Background

Dhemaji Area Development Programme is a project of World Vision of India working in the Sisiborgoan, Development Block in the District of Dhemaji, Assam. World Vision has found that Dhemaji district is one of the most backward and poorest districts in Assam. The target villages are inhabited by different people groups, such as Mising, Deories, Bodos, Assamese, Adivasi and Muslim. The Mising community constitutes the largest number of the area.

The Mising people are active agriculturists. Agriculture is their main occupation for livelihood. In the past, they had a practice of shifting cultivation in the hills but after settling down in the plains, they are now practising settled cultivation. They have produced rice for domestic consumption and commercial purposes. Rice is used for food and brewing rice beer.

The literacy rate of the Mising people is poor. The state literacy rate has gone up to 53% percent whereas the Mising literacy rate is at 30% in the target area. This is due to a lack of proper educational institutions and a lack of awareness. Education has been given very little priority.

The health status of the people is very poor. Water-borne diseases in the area are rampant due to floods and stagnant water after the disasters.

The government has identified this District as the most backward and poorest district of the state, mainly due to the fact that a portion of the area is affected by yearly floods.

World Vision selected Sisi Tongani Tribal Block as the operational area as it has been most affected by floods. World Vision's involvement with this area started in the year 1993 -94 as a relief programme in response to floods in the area. World Vision has found that the people in the area were very in need and except for the Rural Volunteers Centre, there were no other NGOs working in this area for holistic development. Recognising their needs, World Vision started the Dhemaji Area Development programme on October 1, 1996.

Key Challenges

1. Lack of adequate food and safe drinking water for survival
2. Poor healthcare and sanitation in communities
3. Children's lack of opportunity in education
4. Lack of a community organisation structure and leaders



Key Interventions

Health, Sanitation & Water

The health status of the people in Dhemaji ADP is very poor due to many reasons including annual floods, stagnant water after the floods and a lack of access to medical facilities such as hospital and dispensaries. Many people suffer from water-borne diseases due to stagnant water and other sicknesses such as malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, typhoid, pneumonia, epilepsy and stomach problems.

Due to the rainy season that turns fertile land into barren land in the area, people are further impoverished and children also suffer from malnutrition. World Vision seeks to provide appropriate health aid and health promotion programmes for the poorest of the poor community and especially for women and children through activities such as:

- Installing tube wells and hand pumps in the target villages;
- Creating awareness on immunisation, malaria and tuberculosis in the target villages;
- Assisting to provide proper drainage systems;
- Creating health awareness in the communities in collaboration with government health departments, NGOs, the state's education department, doctors and nurses from the local areas and health volunteers;
- Conducting health camps and health appraisals for children and communities;
- Informing mothers on the importance of immunising their children and caring for their own health;
- Providing training to mothers on nutrition, diarrhoea management and the use of oral rehydration salts;

Education

World Vision has found that the people in Dhemaji ADP have inadequate access to education due to a lack of infrastructure facilities and teaching staffs. World Vision seeks to develop and implement appropriate formal and informal education programmes through activities such as:

- Renovating schools in the community;
- Assisting to bring informative and motivational programmes on education to the community;
- Assisting to bring regular and systematic tutorial classes for identified weaker school-going children, and providing study materials and financial aid to children;
- Providing coaching class for needy children in the community who are taking a board examination;
- Providing leadership training to community leaders;
- Supporting children's sports events and talent searches;
- Providing career guidance to youth;
- Providing of school infrastructures (like desk & benches, blackboards, chairs and tables);
- Assisting to organise parent-and-teacher meetings;
- Constructing toilets for schools.





Key Interventions

Food Security and Economic Development

World Vision has found that the Mising people are active agriculturists and agriculture is also their main occupation of their livelihood. Though agriculture is the people's main source of income, flood and soil erosions in the area affect the land, causing them to have very little income.

World Vision seeks to implement selected income generation, enterprise development, vocational training and employment assistance programmes with the poor community, especially with women and orphans. World Vision also aims to introduce appropriate technology for modern methods of cultivation to the community in order to increase the household per capita income and improve food security of the people in Dhemaji. World Vision will implement these through activities such as:

- Forming Self Help Groups (SHGs);
- Training SHG members in group management, bookkeeping, accountancy, and networking;
- Supporting families to start new or expand small businesses (e.g. piggery business);
- Constructing inter village roads, wooden bridges and culverts;
- Training farmers in scientific methods of cultivation, supplying improved seeds and assisting them to collaborate with the district Agriculture Department to achieve better yields;
- Providing seedlings to farmers;
- Implementing the Food for Work programme;
- Assisting the community in cattle rearing, setting up piggery units and dairy farms;
- Training community youths to assist in piggery and dairy farms;
- Helping SHG members to go on exposure trips to learn about activities related to areas such as food processing and piggery farming;
- Providing of Tent House Materials (e.g. chairs and tarpaulins);

Community Organisation and Leadership Development

World Vision has found that there is no community platform where the community can address issues in Dhemaji ADP. The community also lacks leaders who can lead in development work. World Vision seeks to increase the community's participation in the development of their community through leaders from the community who know and have a burden for the poor through activities such as:

- Organising get-togethers of various groups for discussion of common concerns towards the development in the area
- Conducting various programmes on leadership development for the community;
- Identifying enthusiastic leaders for different types of training as needed;
- Incorporating leadership development into the activities or programmes that World Vision seeks to introduce to the community;
- Conducting consultations, seminars and meetings to discuss about leadership development;
- Conducting exposure programmes for the community leaders;
- Equipping village leaders with skills (e.g. administration, management, monitoring, evaluation accounting);
- Training of existing partners and stakeholders who are part of the development of the community so that they can own the development process by using both their local resources and tapping on external resources.

Conclusion

Through these community interventions, World Vision aims to strengthen the leadership in the community by increasing their self-esteem and developing their potential in managing their own development process, moving them towards making sustainable change, development and building a better future for their children.

With the support and care of Singapore Child Sponsors, World Vision aims to help the children and families attain self-reliance by September 2017. The children and families in Dhemaji ADP can only do this together with your help!

Thank you for walking this journey of faith and transformation with the children, families and World Vision!