



INDIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY NETWORK

Monthly Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2024



CEO'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends, Member Organisations, Donors, and Stakeholders,

Greetings from the Indian Social Responsibility Network!

As we reflect on the progress ISRN has made over the past months, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the positive impact we have collectively created. The dedication and hard work of our team, partners, and stakeholders have been essential in driving meaningful change, and our shared efforts continue to make a profound difference in communities across India and beyond.

In agriculture, we have made a significant impact by working with Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), particularly in empowering women farmers. By providing training in branding, packaging, and digital marketing, we have helped them access new markets, boosting their income and community growth. Our training programs on government schemes, subsidies, and sustainable practices have also equipped farmers with the knowledge and tools to adopt innovative techniques, ensuring lasting success and resilience.

In Health, USAID- supported PRERANA project has been instrumental in advancing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services at Arunachal Pradesh. ISRN's active participation in workshops and youth-led initiatives has been critical in shaping strategies to address pressing issues such as teenage pregnancy and family planning. Through creative community outreach activities, including our engagement at the Ziro Festival of Music, we have connected with diverse audiences, fostering greater awareness and involvement in these crucial topics.

Additionally, in partnership with the Delhi Premier Rotary Service Foundation, ISRN is conducting a baseline and feasibility study across four states—Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra. This study focuses on improving agricultural productivity and sustainability by assessing key factors such as crop yields, farmers' income, irrigation practices, and soil and water health. With a special emphasis on gender inclusivity, the study ensures that both men and women actively contribute, providing valuable insights for guiding sustainable interventions in agricultural practices and environmental sustainability.

On the international stage, ISRN's participation in COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, was a significant milestone in our commitment to tackling climate change. Our contributions to the discussions on equitable climate financing and sustainable environmental practices underscored our dedication to global environmental responsibility.

These milestones reflect ISRN's commitment to empowering communities, promoting innovation, and creating sustainable futures. From supporting women farmers to producing podcasts like "Child-Centric Sustainable Development" and conducting capacity-building sessions, our efforts drive progress, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.



SANTOSH GUPTA

As we move forward, let us renew our commitment to building an inclusive and equitable society. Together, we have the strength, vision, and determination to turn challenges into opportunities, inspire positive change, and ensure no one is left behind.

Thank you for your continued trust, collaboration, and support as we work towards a brighter and more sustainable future.

Warm regards,

Santosh Gupta

CEO, ISRN



Formation & Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) under the Central Sector Scheme for Formation & Promotion of 10,000 FPOs

The Krishi Bharat Mela held in Lucknow from November 15 to 18, 2024, provided an excellent platform for women farmers and directors from the INWAANYAN NAGRI ORGANIC FARMERS PRODUCER COMPANY LIMITED of Kumbhi Gola block of Lakhimpur Kheri District of Uttar Pradesh formed by ISRN with the support of SFAC to participate and share their insights. Inaugurated by the Honorable Chief Minister of UP, Shri. Yogi Adityanath, the event featured a farmers' seminar addressing critical agricultural topics.



The program highlighted the pivotal role of Farmer Producer Companies (FPOs) in empowering farmers, enhancing product quality, and strengthening supply chains. Women farmers received valuable guidance on improving the marketing of their agricultural products, emphasizing branding, packaging, and leveraging digital platforms to access broader markets.

Detailed information was also shared on government schemes, subsidies, loans, and training programs aimed at boosting farmers' economic prospects. This initiative proved to be a transformative experience, inspiring women farmers to adopt innovative techniques and make better use of available resources for sustainable growth.



Baseline and Feasibility Study for enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability in collaboration with Delhi Premier Rotary Service Foundation

A Collaborative Initiative by ISRN and Delhi Premier Rotary Service Foundation

Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN), in partnership with Delhi Premier Rotary Service Foundation, has embarked on a pivotal project encompassing a baseline and feasibility study across four states in India namely Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. In these 4 states, the study spans five districts, covering 36 villages, with the aim of assessing critical parameters such as crop yields, farmers' income levels, irrigation practices, groundwater status, and cultivation patterns. Additionally, the feasibility study offers an in-depth evaluation of soil and water health in the targeted areas.



In the month of November'24, after pilot testing of the tools, the team initiated the study with detailed briefings to District Collectors of the respective geographies, supported by official communication letters. Subsequently, in-depth interviews with district/block officials and Village Panchayat leaders were conducted providing valuable insights into the current situation. Utilizing the digital application for household surveys, the team ensured the collection of robust, data-driven insights. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) further enriched the study's qualitative dimension.

Special emphasis was placed on gender inclusivity, ensuring active participation from both men and women. This approach aimed to capture diverse perspectives, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of community dynamics.

This study represents a significant step in addressing agricultural and environmental challenges, reinforcing ISRN's commitment to sustainable development through evidence-based interventions.



PRERANA: PROMOTING EQUITY AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACCESS FOR NORTH EAST INDIA

ISRN proudly participated in the "Regional Workshop for Lead CSOs" organized under the USAID-funded PRERANA project, held in Guwahati, Assam, from November 12th to 14th, 2024. The workshop brought together Lead CSOs from eight North-Eastern states to advance community-driven approaches to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).

The event commenced with an inspiring address by Ms. Monica Wahengbam, Chief of Party for the PRERANA Project, setting the stage for in-depth discussions on PRERANA's objectives, critical Family Planning (FP) and SRH concepts, and the strategic roles of Lead CSOs. Through focused sessions on SNA mapping, deliverables review, and the importance of youth engagement, participants gained valuable insights to guide their initiatives.

The second day fostered collaboration and innovation through dynamic group activities, including analyzing Appreciative Inquiry (AI) exercise findings and co-creating actionable indicators for the Public Initiative. These exercises laid the foundation for a stronger, youth-driven movement to expand FP-SRH access across the Northeast.

The final day of the workshop emphasized turning plans into action. Lead CSOs worked closely with PROJECT PRERANA Consortium partners to refine their strategies, aligning activities and indicators to maximize impact. The day culminated in impactful presentations of their work plans, incorporating feedback to ensure effective implementation.

This workshop underscored the power of collective effort and shared learning in addressing SRH challenges. ISRN, alongside other Lead CSOs, remains committed to advancing SRH access across Northeast India, empowering communities and fostering sustainable change. Together, we are creating a future where SRH resources are accessible to all.





Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, this five-year initiative is dedicated to strengthening sexual and reproductive health services in the eight northeastern states of India by developing innovative solutions and supporting local government, private sector and civil society. By co-designing locally relevant strategies and evidence-based family planning, sexual and reproductive health (FP/SRH) solutions for youth, PRERANA seeks to create a responsive health system to address sexual and reproductive health rights of youth through community participation and delivery of equitable, comprehensive, client-centered services. The project aims to significantly improve health outcomes for marginalized and vulnerable populations such as gender-based violence survivors and people living with HIV/AIDS. Apart from strengthening health systems and harnessing innovative models to increase the equitable delivery of quality, adolescent- and gender-responsive, resilient FP/RH and gender-based violence services in public and private sectors, PRERANA also works toward fostering vibrant, engaged, supportive and resilient communities that empower youth, women and vulnerable and marginalized populations, and effectively engage men and local leaders to shift community norms and attitudes, leading to increased demand and voluntary use of FP/SRH services.

The program was launched in Guwahati in the presence of MD NHM Arunachal Pradesh, USAID officials and other project partners.



In a joint collaboration between NHM, APSACS, the District Administration of Lower Subansiri, and USAID-PRERANA, a health stall was set up at the Zero Festival of Music (ZFM) 2024. The stall attracted over 3,000 visitors who participated in activities such as the "SRH/FP Wheel of Myths and Facts" and the "Snake and Ladder Game," which conveyed important messages about teenage pregnancy and early marriage. Additionally, APSACS and NHM provided HIV/AIDS information, education, and communication (IEC) through interpersonal



interactions, pamphlets, and family planning posters along with "basket of choice" displayed. Prominent visitors included the Honourable Minister of Health and Family Welfare, the Chief Secretary, the Health Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner of Lower Subansiri, and representatives from USAID India.

Also, to enhance Health and Wellness Officers skills in family planning, logistics, MIS and modern contraceptive methods, the State Family Planning Division-National Health Mission (NHM) organized "One-day orientation training for Community Health Officers (CHO) on the Family Planning Logistic Management Information System (FP-LMIS) web portal and new contraceptives" at Golden Orchid, Naharlagun. The event was held across three batches on November 4, 6, and 8, 2024, catering to 150 nominated CHOs from the districts of Arunachal Pradesh.



Together, we're advancing SRH access in the NE region!

ISRN's Participation at COP29, Baku, Azerbaijan

Sadhguru Advocates for Soil Health and Climate Action at COP29

At COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, Sadhguru highlighted the critical importance of soil health and its direct connection to climate change and human sustainability. As part of his Save Soil movement, he emphasized that 95% of life on Earth depends on soil, which has been suffering from degradation due to intensive agricultural practices. He stressed that restoring soil health can be a game-changer for addressing climate crises, food security, and biodiversity.



Sadhguru also discussed the role of green cover, stating that "every extra green leaf" contributes to climate mitigation by nurturing soil ecosystems. He advocated for more inclusive climate financing, pointing out that small-scale farmers—key stakeholders in sustainable agriculture—currently receive only a fraction of global climate funding. He called for greater support to enable these farmers to adopt eco-friendly practices.

Additionally, a significant achievement at COP29 was the signing of an MoU between the Save Soil initiative and Uzbekistan's Ministry of Ecology, focusing on restoring degraded lands, including the Aral Sea region. This collaboration underscores the global impact of Sadhguru's efforts.



Participation in the World Climate Summit

The CEO of ISRN and team of Harit Bharat (India) participated in the prestigious World Climate Summit held at the Baku Convention Center, Azerbaijan. This global event focuses on driving systemic change by 2030, featuring impactful discussions, updates from key coalitions, and partnerships across various sectors.



One of the standout sessions, "World Climate Summit: Accelerating Green Finance – The Climate Investment Roadmap to 2030," brought together finance experts, policymakers, investors, and stakeholders to strategize on scaling climate finance



Insights from Meeting with Additional Secretary, MoEFCC, Govt. of India at COP29



Team Harit Bharat had the privilege of meeting Shri Naresh Pal Gangwar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India, along with Namita Ji, Joint Secretary, MoEFCC at the India Office. As India's Lead Negotiator at COP29, Mr. Gangwar emphasized the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, disproportionately affecting the Global South.

During negotiations, India delivered a statement on behalf of the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) at the High-Level Ministerial on Climate Finance. India underscored that principles of equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capacities (CBDR-RC) are pivotal for shaping the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG). The nation advocated for mobilizing at least USD 1.3 trillion annually by 2030 without imposing growth-restrictive conditionalities on developing nations.

This strong stance reaffirms India's leadership in addressing global climate challenges through equitable and inclusive policies.

During the off day on Sunday, 17th November, few delegate members representing Team Harit Bharat visited the famous Ateshgah Fire Temple at Baku, Azerbaijan. The chanting of Om Gam Ganpataye Namah in the temple and eternal flame (Akhand Jyot) energised the mind, body and soul. It is a place of Ma Durga Shakti and Ganpati Bapa. Happy that the Government and Indian Community, Azerbaijan is preserving this spiritual, historical heritage.



Personal Bulletin

Jagat Kinkhabwala (Let's Go Back to Nature)

'Cattle Egret', living in symbiosis with cattle



All lives have a purpose to fulfil and a role to play. One has to find out why you born and follow the path.

Cattle Egret, a beautiful bird is an important life in the food chain. Food chain balances the population of other lives eating them as food. Hence, they do not go over population. Insects and warms are a feast for Cattle Egret and they serve the purpose of controlling the population of insects and warms. In turn, Cattle Egret save the agriculture crops from insects and warms who eat the crop and thus help more crop productivity.

All trees and crops play are basics to control the temperature, moisture giving oxygen by absorbing gases and thus contribute reduce climate change.

'Cattle Egret-what a curious name! They are found mainly near the cattle and live with them in commensalism. They roam around the places where the cows graze and the insects that come out due to the grazing of the cows, become their food. While roaming around fearlessly and eating, they sometimes perch upon the cows and keep an eye on the ground to spot an insect or a worm to catch it and eat it. When the cows pull the grass to eat, the insects and worms come out with it and are scattered and while roaming around in the field, the cattle egret catches these insects and eats them. For this habit of them, they are named 'Cattle Egret'.



In today's time, the lawn mower is used to cut the grass, and cattle egrets find out such places also and start flying there for their food. Similarly, in today's time, the number of cattle has reduced and tractors are used to cultivate the fields, cattle egrets are found perched on these tractors to look for their food. Due to this people have joking given it a new identity of 'Tractor Heron'. Generally, they are found sitting on top of all such animals that graze in the field. Cattle egrets even eat the insects that come out during the watering of the fields.

Due to this habit of theirs, less harm is done to the fields and so they are referred to as the friend of the farmers. They settle on the treetops with their group. It is a lovely sight to see countless herons on a single tree. They are seen making their settlements on the banks of the pond, on the trees inside the pond, on the water bodies, or in the garbage dumps of the village where insects are found.

Cattle egret has a unique way of flying. When it takes off, it keeps its head between the shoulders and pulls it, while the other species of heron keeps the neck open and stretched out while taking the flight. This makes cattle egret different from other heron species. This is an easy way to identify a cattle egret while flying. Male and female cattle egrets are similar in appearance. Their legs are short and black and their beak is small and yellow. The whole body is very beautiful white. In the rain, small orange-coloured feathers emerge on their head and back, which are scattered around the neck and on both sides of the body. Their back feathers are long and that is why those long feathers keep coming out of their tail. Its call is a deep throaty voice sounding 'rick rack, rick rack'. They eat grasshoppers, spiders, frogs, flies, insects, crickets, caterpillars and earthworms, etc. It is a very opportunistic bird. They eat eggs from the nests of lizards, rats, snakes, and other birds. Generally, they do not hunt birds, but if they are very hungry then they hunt small birds.

They are found in North America, South America, Spain, Eurasia, Australia, and Africa. Basically, they are considered to be the inhabitants of Asia, Europe, and Africa. It has quickly spread almost all over the world and has been settled in many places.

In the breeding season, the colour of the head, neck, and back of the male cattle egret becomes light yellow. Mainly they have a monogamous relationship in one season. Sometimes two female egrets are seen with one male egret. Males mark their own territory together and do different activities to attract the female egret. The female who is attracted comes closer and bows before the male, seeing that the male allows her to come near him for a few hours and after that, they pair up. After that, both find their separate place, where they mate, and then conceive.

Both male and female egrets build the nest together. Sometimes the old nest is also used. Mainly the male brings dry or green shoots and the female builds the nest. Sometimes they even steal the twigs from the neighbouring nest. They have a habit of adding twigs to the nest even after laying and hatching eggs. They can lay 3 to 4 white eggs in a season. One egg is laid every two days. Until all the eggs are laid, the female's entire focus is on the eggs and ignores the male egret at that time. As an exception, the matter of laying 9 eggs has also come to the fore. On the third and fourth days, the colour of the egg becomes a little blue. Both male and female egrets, in turn, incubate the eggs, and around the 24th day, the eggs start to hatch.



In the first week of laying eggs, they protect the eggs from direct sunlight by spreading their wings during incubation. For 10 days, both male and female egrets take turns incubating the eggs. In 14 to 21 days, little chicks become capable enough and start flying on the branches. In the beginning, the small chicks behave very aggressively for the food and remain close to the food. It becomes independent in 45 days and starts flying on the 50th day. They start taking longer flights after 60 days.

ISRN's NGO Clinic Podcast- Episode – 10



Episode 10 of ISRN NGO Clinic Podcast: "Child-Centric Sustainable Development"

ISRN is thrilled to share Episode 10 of the ISRN NGO Clinic Podcast on the critical topic of Child-Centric Sustainable Development in India. This enlightening episode features an engaging conversation between Mr. Santosh Gupta, CEO of ISRN, and Mr. Mohammed Asif, Executive Director of Plan India and a leading expert in child-centric sustainable development.

Through this discussion, the episode sheds light on impactful strategies to advance child rights, foster inclusive community development, and strengthen child welfare policies in India. Key takeaways include actionable insights into creating a sustainable future that prioritizes the well-being of children and empowers communities.

🔊 Watch the full episode here: <https://youtu.be/OPMnADAwJxI?si=FaTLPdW3hItLYHSH>

This episode is a must-watch for professionals in the social development sector, NGOs, policymakers, and anyone passionate about building a better future for children.

Together, let's make child-centric sustainable development a priority in India's growth story.

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ISRN believes that having a right to live in equality is something each human deserves and with support from people like you, we are transforming the lives of thousands of fellow citizens. We have held workshops and training sessions for more than 800 member organisations, fostering a symbolic growth system

We genuinely appreciate all of your help, love, and support for ISRN.

We humbly ask that you continue to provide us with support, advice, and invaluable assistance that will enable us to ensure that each and everyone is empowered to grow and flourish in their own unique way.

Please scan the QR code to donate towards these causes, as your small contribution will help maintain smiles on million faces.



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Thank you for reading!



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