

CNI SBSS NEWSLETTER

JAN-JUNE 2026



CNI SBSS began 2026 with prayer and planning for this year to serve the marginalized communities across India. This was followed by a dedicated review and planning meeting, where team members came together to reflect on past work and align priorities for the year ahead. Thorough review of Evaluation was conducted, while also discussing upcoming challenges, refining our strategies, strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, enhancing impact measurement approaches to ensure sustainability across all intervention states, and addressing key operational areas including staff concerns, hiring plans, and financial management with a focus on budget allocations for project heads and their effective oversight.



VISITS & WORKSHOPS



T-B ↓ CBPI Visit at Mundala; Local Capacities for Peace - CC Meeting ; Synod Team Building Retreat Visit to Diocese of Calcutta

T-B ↓ BMZ Donors visit to Mundala village of Nagpur Project area; FMSF Workshop on "Designing Project Accounting System" at Vishwa Yuvak kendra, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi; Audit Visit at Amritsar Project Area

GOVERNMENT INTERFACE



Interface with Government officials across the project areas of Barrackpore, Nasik & Kolhapur

FROM THE PROGRAM

REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS



Republic Day was celebrated across Project Areas of Kolhapur, Barrackpore, Chotanagpur, Nagpur, Phulbani & Nasik, with great enthusiasm and participation, serving as a meaningful occasion to reinforce the values of unity & inclusivity while bringing communities together through local events, awareness activities, and collective reflection on the importance of justice and equality for all.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026

International Women's Day was celebrated on 8th March across all project areas with active community participation. This year's theme, "Cultivating Equity: Empowering the Women Who Feed the World," focused on recognising the vital role of women farmers in supporting livelihoods, food security, and sustainable practices. The campaign also highlighted their contributions and promoted greater recognition, inclusion, and support for women in agriculture.





Capacity-building trainings on nutrition were conducted across multiple project locations, including Pune and Gopalpur, facilitated by Ms. Subbalakshmi, Nutrition Expert and Youth Workshop on Leadership was held at Darjeeling aiming at strengthening community knowledge and promoting improved nutritional practices



L-R: Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Draupadi Murmu, being presented with cotton bags made by our SHG groups from the Amritsar project area; Awareness campaigning in the Barrackpore project area; allied activities from the Kolhapur project area; Women farmers from Chotanagpur and Barrackpore project areas; Support extended to vulnerable groups, where 13 persons with disabilities and widows received ₹10,000 each from the Red Cross Society at Amritsar Project Area; SHG group making bags; SBSS team visit to Shindewahi KVK, where they interacted with Dr. Mrs. Sonali Lokhande, Senior Scientist, on improved farming practices.



World Environment Day Celebration at CNI Bhavan, New Delhi, with a Tree Plantation Drive, and across Kolkata Project Areas through an Art Competition.



Free Education Facilitation for Rural Schoolchildren at the Leadership Development Centre in the Amritsar Project Area



3 days Workshop on LCP Peace Building at Shillong with participants from Diocese of North East India & Diocese of Eastern Himalaya



Youth Workshop on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion at Ranchi, fostering discussions on gender inequality, youth-related challenges in local communities, discriminatory social norms, and the promotion of a "Gender Transformative Approach"



"Land for the Landless" Campaign at Kolhapur Project Area, providing guidance on land rights, land record documentation, and access to government land entitlement schemes.



Women's Gender Equality Workshop on Empowerment, Resource Access, Decision-Making, and Addressing Early Marriage and Pregnancy



Awareness Campaigns on Organic & Nutrition across Project Areas of Chotanagpur, Barrackpore & Kolhapur promoting healthy diets & sustainable agricultural practices

YOUTH INITIATIVES



Open Air Sessions during Training of Youth and Community Leaders at Dalhousie.



New Batch of Skill development trainees from Diocese of North East India



Bethany Centre at Meghalaya providing training on tailoring



Welding Centre at Ratanjauli of North East Project Area



Training of adolescent youth on sexual and reproductive health



National Learning Visit to Member Organizations at Amritsar Project Area

OUR PUBLICATIONS

CNI SBSS Articles published in NICR for months **January - June 2026**

◆NEWS FROM CNI SBSS◆

RIISING FROM WITHIN

For many young people in Assam, life after education often felt like standing at a crossroads with no signposts. Degrees were earned with pride, dreams were nurtured with hope—but opportunities were painfully few. Families watched their children grow into capable young adults, only to see them sit at home, waiting for a chance that never seemed to arrive. Some left for distant cities, searching for work that would support their families. Others stayed back, torn between their ambitions and the reality around them. Every passing year deepened the worry: "What will happen to our children?"

Will their education ever truly change their lives? Amid this quiet struggle, CNI SBSS North East India Project team stepped in with a simple belief—every young person deserves a chance to build a life with dignity, right where they are. SBSS listened to their fears, understood their struggles, and recognized the growing frustration and uncertainty that unemployment brought into their homes. Many

youths shared how difficult it was to watch their parents worry, how helpless they felt when they couldn't contribute financially, and how thoughts of migration often felt like the only option left. SBSS knew that what these young people needed was not just encouragement, but real, practical skills that could open real doors. And so began a journey of transformation.

Through structured training in job-ready skills like computer education, welding, tailoring, beautician, driving, and teaching support, SBSS enabled 19 young men and women rediscover something they had almost lost—their self-confidence. The training gave them skills. But more importantly, it gave them belief. And as they completed their training,

SBSS took one more step forward—supporting selected youths with tools, equipment, and guidance to start their own small businesses. What once seemed unattainable suddenly felt within grasp. Today, these young people speak with pride, earn with dignity and support their families. Their stories remind us of a beautiful truth: When hope is restored in the life of a young person, an entire community begins to heal.

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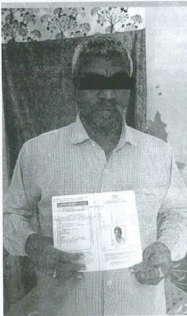
10 The North India Church Review January, 2026

◆NEWS FROM CNI SBSS◆

STANDING STRONG THROUGH THE FLOODS

Manga Masih, a resident of Village Kuraliyan, of Amritsar Project Area has spent much of his life overcoming challenges. Being visually impaired, life has never been easy, yet he remained determined to live with dignity and independence. To support himself, Manga worked as a helper at a local shop. The work allowed him to earn a modest income to manage his daily needs without depending on others. Life moved at its usual pace until severe floods struck Punjab in August 2025. The rising waters cut off his Village Kuraliyan from nearby areas, disrupting transportation and isolating the entire community. For Manga, the impact was immediate and extreme. Unable to travel outside the village, he could no longer reach the shop where he worked. With his only source of income suddenly gone, even meeting basic needs became a growing concern.

During this difficult period, the CNI SBSS team reached out to families affected by the floods in the village. When they learned about Manga's situation, they extended immediate support to help him manage through the crisis. He received dry ration



supplies and a utensil kit to ensure that he could continue managing his daily household needs. In addition, financial assistance of ₹6,000 under CNI SBSS - Punjab Flood Relief Program was provided to help him cover essential expenses. The assistance provided much-needed relief during a time of uncertainty to flood-affected communities in Punjab. The ration supplies helped ensure food security, while the financial support allowed

them to manage urgent expenses like medicines and warm clothing, without falling deeper into hardship. As the floodwaters gradually receded and the village reconnected with nearby areas, life slowly began returning to normal. The local shops reopened, and Manga was able to resume his work as a helper, restoring his source of livelihood and independence. Today, Manga continues his work at the shop with renewed hope, grateful for the support that helped him overcome a difficult time.

"When the floods stopped my work, I didn't know how I would manage. CNI SBSS's support helped me get through those difficult days. Now I feel relieved and thankful," says Manga.

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ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme in Punjab have been providing nutritious meals and early childhood care to children in the 0-6 age group to

Women were trained through the collective efforts of the local People's Organization in Amritsar and the CNI SBSS Amritsar project staff. Three Anganwadi Centres in the village had been operating from the houses of local



address malnutrition and morbidity. ICDS was envisaged as a community-based programme, relying heavily on active participation from Panchayats and local communities.

According to state reports, nearly 9.5 lakh children and around three lakh women are registered with these centres. Punjab became the first state in India to introduce pre-primary classes in all government primary schools. Following this initiative, Anganwadi Centres were mandated to shift to the nearest government schools. Although the move initially faced resistance from community members, it was considered a logical step by the state government to optimize the use of school infrastructure and resources, while also encouraging higher school

Zamindars for several years. These Zamindars exercised complete control over the functioning of these centres, owing to their ownership of property and their financial clout in the village. It was observed that members of the Zamindar families were appointed as Anganwadi Workers in these centres. They were engaged as domestic helpers in the Zamindars' households. As a result, efforts to relocate the centres to authorised and central locations were deliberately obstructed.

Following the state government's directive to shift AWCs to nearby government schools, local community members initiated dialogue with the concerned authorities to facilitate the relocation. An application was submitted to the district authorities in Amritsar, which was accepted and forwarded to the Child Development Project Officer. After sustained efforts

spanning one year, the Anganwadi Centres were finally shifted from the Zamindars' houses to government school campuses. The Anganwadi Workers also extended their support to this initiative. The relocation of the centres has led to several positive changes. Regular monitoring by the Village Education Committee has improved oversight of ration supplies and food quality. School teachers have become more actively involved and are constructively supporting children's learning and development. In addition, food prepared on school premises is periodically reviewed by CNI SBSS Amritsar project staff and community members.

This collective struggle to improve the education and well-being of children was made possible through strong community mobilization, supported by the knowledge and facilitation provided by CNI SBSS Amritsar project. Active community participation remains the cornerstone of any successful social and development programme aimed at bringing sustainable and positive change in people's lives.

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08 The North India Church Review February, 2026

◆NEWS FROM CNI SBSS◆

SMALL STEPS, BIG CHANGE: PUSHPA'S ENTERPRISE STORY

Pushpa, a resident of Dhote village in Nasik district of Maharashtra, lived in a joint family of ten, including her 2 children, who filled the household with laughter and responsibility in equal measure.



For years, she and her husband worked tirelessly to raise their two sons. Her husband ran a small hair-cutting shop in the village, while the family's routine revolved around balancing household responsibilities with agricultural work. As time passed, their sons grew up, got married, and moved out. The load on Pushpa's shoulders finally lightened, giving her a rare moment to pause. Yet the simple pause was not her destination; it was merely a turning point.

With a quiet determination to contribute to her family's financial stability, Pushpa started exploring ways to boost their income. Around this time, she met the field staff of CNI SBSS Nasik Project. She learnt about the organization and its work with minorities & marginalized communities through social development initiatives. The staff could sense Pushpa's enthusiasm; therefore, they motivated her to join a

Self-Help Group (SHG), explaining how such groups helped women pool their savings, access small loans, and explore income-generating activities together. Together, they showed her how collective effort could provide both financial stability and social support, helping women like her take control of their livelihoods. Guided by their advice, Pushpa joined Gulmdhar SHG.

Her dedication quickly made her an active member, making her learn and take part in SHG activities. With the group's support, she took a bank loan and invested in two machines, a Vermorel-making machine worth ₹48,000 and a Masala-making machine worth ₹55,000 to start her micro-enterprise.

Pushpa began producing Vermorel and homemade Masala (turmeric, chilli, coriander, etc.), carefully managing production with the help of her family. The initial three-month period brought encouraging results, with earnings reaching nearly ₹90,000. Even though the extra expense of electricity each month was considerable, the business remained profitable. Yet the months of January

and February tested her patience, as producing both Vermorel and Masala relied heavily on sunlight for drying as a reminder that every new beginning comes with its own challenges. "I feel I am moving closer to achieving many things, and I am willing to face these challenges," shared Pushpa. Despite the challenges, Pushpa's hard work paid off. The money from her business allowed her family to buy a piece of farmland, which brought them both financial stability and a sense of security.

Today, Pushpa enjoys not only improved financial stability but also a newfound sense of respect within her family and community. Her initiative has given her a special place in the household decision-making process and inspired others in the village to think beyond traditional roles of women.

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◆NEWS FROM CNI SBSS◆

OPPORTUNITY IN SCARCITY

Ravindra Shinde, a small farmer from Jamnagon village of Nasik Project Area, had long struggled to make ends meet. Living off just one acre of land, his livelihood depended heavily on uncertain rainfall. Although he owned a dug well, it would often dry up during the summer months, leaving him with little to no water for irrigation. With such limitations, he cultivated crops like wheat and cotton, choices that require somewhat less water but also brought in very limited income. Despite his hard work, his annual earnings remained around ₹30,000, barely enough to sustain his household.

The lack of reliable water sources was the biggest hurdle in Ravindra's farming journey. It restricted him from exploring better crop options and kept him trapped in a cycle of low productivity and income. Over time, this uncertainty began to affect not only his farm output but also his confidence in improving his situation.

CNI SBSS Nasik Project team visited his village during their interaction with Ravindra. They understood his challenges and introduced him to the possibility of installing a drip irrigation system through a government-supported subsidy scheme. With the team's encouragement and guidance,

Ravindra began to see a way forward that could help him make better use of his land and available water. Motivated to improve his situation, Ravindra applied for the scheme to install drip irrigation system. After the necessary



verification process, his loan was approved within a few months. The sanctioned amount of ₹1,00,000 included a subsidy of ₹35,000, making it feasible for him to install a drip irrigation system on his farm.

With the new system in place, Ravindra made a significant shift in his farming practices. Moving away from traditional crops, he started cultivating vegetables such as brinjal, okra, cluster beans, spinach, fenugreek, and pigeon pea. The drip irrigation system ensured efficient water usage, allowing him to grow crops even during periods of water scarcity. The results were encouraging. Within just five to six months and two cropping cycles, Ravindra earned over ₹1,00,000, which was more than three times his previous annual income. This increase not only

improved his financial condition but also brought stability and confidence into his life. He was now able to manage household expenses more comfortably and plan for the future. However, the journey was not without challenges. Adjusting to a new irrigation system and shifting to vegetable cultivation required learning and consistent effort. Initially, there were uncertainties about crop management, market access, and the system's maintenance. But with persistence and support, Ravindra gradually overcame these obstacles.

Ravindra's story stands as an example of how the right guidance and timely support can transform livelihoods. His experience has inspired other farmers in the village to explore modern irrigation techniques and make better use of available resources. What once seemed like a limitation has now become an opportunity just for him, but for many around him.

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08 The North India Church Review May, 2026

◆NEWS FROM CNI SBSS◆

ACCESSING RIGHTS, BUILDING LIVELIHOODS

Ritay Jajo, a resident of Village Ela in Bano District of Sindge district. Chonapur project area, works hard to support his family. Living in a household



of six members, including his wife, brother's family, and children, his life has been shaped by responsibilities. One of his daughters has been unemployed for a long time, requiring continuous treatment in Kolkata. Managing household needs along with medical expenses has been a constant challenge.

To strengthen his livelihood, Ritay joined a government-supported irrigation well construction scheme. The well built on his land was expected to improve farming opportunities and bring stability to his income. However, the journey was far from easy. During the construction period, he faced severe delays in receiving his wages. With no steady income and increasing financial pressure, Ritay was forced to mortgage one of his fields just to manage daily expenses.

During this difficult period, Ritay heard about the CNI SBSS through village-level meetings and awareness campaigns

being conducted in the area. He reached out to the team and shared his situation. He further participated in an MGNREGS awareness campaign organized by CNI SBSS. Through this platform, he learned about common issues related to wage delays, job cards, and payment issues. More importantly, he found a space where his concerns were heard. With the support of SBSS staff, a formal application was prepared and submitted to the Block Office, requesting the release of pending payments. Through the wages are still awaited, continuous follow-ups are being made, ensuring that his voice is not lost in the system.

Despite these ongoing struggles, Ritay did not lose hope. With guidance and support from SBSS, he began rebuilding his livelihood through innovative and sustainable farming initiatives. On the same land where the well was constructed, he started horticulture activities, growing seasonal vegetables and other crops suited to the region. Alongside this, SBSS supported him in establishing a poly house by providing the necessary materials for plant nursery development. Through the poly house, he began preparing vegetable seedlings and nursery plants using low-cost and sustainable practices, which supported both his own farming and nearby farmers through sale of quality seedlings locally.

The diversification of these livelihood activities reduced his dependence on uncertain daily wage work and strengthened his ability to manage household and medical expenses more steadily. Adopting new practices required patience, especially while dealing with financial stress and family health concerns. Yet, step by step, Ritay continues to move forward. Today, Ritay Jajo stands as an example of determination in the face of hardship. While challenges remain, his efforts toward building sustainable livelihood options have started to show the way forward. His journey reflects not just struggle, but the strength to adapt.

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Today, Ritay Jajo stands as an example of determination in the face of hardship. While challenges remain, his efforts toward building sustainable livelihood options have started to show the way forward. His journey reflects not just struggle, but the strength to adapt.

"I had to go through many difficulties, but with the support and guidance I received, I have started finding new ways to move ahead," Ritay shares.

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