



Annual Report

June 2013 – March 2014



Forum for Learning
and Action with
Innovation and
Rigour

FLAIR - Forum for Learning and Action with Innovation and Rigour
C - 102, J. M. Orchid
Plot No. GH-01/C
Sector 76, Noida – 201304



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Our Vision

We envision a society that is developing sustainably and where people are participants and beneficiaries in the process of economic and technological development in an equitable manner for ensuring justice, liberty, and dignity.



Our Mission

FLAIR's Mission is to promote and engage in processes of participatory learning and action with innovation and rigour, leveraging the benefits of economic and technological development, for ensuring health, nutrition and education of poor, marginalized and vulnerable people and/or communities and ensuring for them a life with equity, justice, liberty and dignity.



FLAIR AS A FORUM

FLAIR is a forum of expert individual researchers and practitioners as well as organizations. It was formally registered as a Society in June 2013 and it draws from the experience and expertise of the founding individuals and organisations. It is a membership based organisation where all stakeholders work together in the true spirit of partnership and membership is open to all individuals and organisations. Our foray into creating, nurturing and operating spaces for actions

are through – (a) participation in the processes of policy and programme formulation through research and development of protocols and SOPs based on a combination of learning from grassroots and inputs from sector and subject experts, (b) programmes in the social development sector that have an interface with Information and Communications Technology (ICT). We work on the dimensions of -

- (a) Health and Nutrition,
- (b) Education,
- (c) Agriculture, Renewable Energy and Environment, and
- (d) Skills Development and Livelihoods.

We work through – (a) Research and Documentation, (b) Trainings, Workshops, Consultations, Conferences and Advocacy (c) Programme Implementation for Model Creation, and (d) Technology led Innovative Solutions for Social Development to create, nurture and operate spaces in triumvirate, viz. (i) young people from the poor and marginalised communities, (ii) the government, and (iii) the technocrats and their associations. These are the spaces where all the thinking, learning and action happen and solutions emerge and get implemented. We have been working with the poor and the marginalised and the technocrats to develop sustainable solutions for eradication of poverty and marginalisation. We work with the corporate sector in helping them design and implement their strategies for social responsibilities and also for developing and implementing their CSR Policy and Programmes.

FLAIR'S ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

Main focus areas in the first year of FLAIR's inception varied across different activities and programs, research studies, partnership promotion, organizing workshops and training programs as well as seminars and consultation with partner organizations, academics, education and nutrition experts and parliamentarians. The specific activities during June 2013 to March 2014 include –

1. Research and Documentation

- (a) Mapping of Resource and Support Structures and Creation of Children Database and Tracking System in South and North-East Districts of Delhi
- (b) Study on Status of Women in Mining and Power Sectors in Jharkhand, UP, MP and Chhattisgarh
- (c) Budget allocation and Cost Requirement Calculations of ICPS, ICDS and RTE Act, 2009 for Rajasthan, Bihar and Union of India (FY2012-13- FY2014-15)
- (d) EXTERNAL Evaluation of Urban Development Project / Rural Development Project and System and Governance of YWCA of Delhi
- (e) End line Evaluation of SATHI's Project on Children in Homes and Railway Platforms in Delhi, UP, Bihar and Jharkhand

2. Trainings, Workshops, Consultations, Conferences and Advocacy

- (a) Capacity Building and Methodology Development Workshop on Child Budget Analysis with Specific Reference to ICDS, ICPS and SSA-RTE Act, 2009 at A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Sciences, Patna.
- (b) Capacity Building Workshop on Budget Analysis and Costing study on ICDS, SSA and ICPS at Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur
- (c) National Consultation on Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition
- (d) Consultation on Usage of ICT in Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition

3. Programme Implementation for Model Creation

- (a) Teach India Programme – Skills Enhancement for Employability
- (b) Vocational Training Centre at Indian National Public School, Sorkha Village, Noida
- (c) Mainstreaming of Children at Construction Sites into Regular Schools

4. Technology led Innovative Solutions for Social Development

- (a) Voice Integrated Browser - VIB

1. RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

FLAIR's research is guided by its core value of rigour. Our researches are done with clear objectives, which are developed in consultation with all concerned stakeholders. We conduct all our research within the ethical framework towards both – (i) Our clients and partners who are users of the research, and also (ii) The subjects and respondents in the research.

(a) Mapping of Resource and Support Structures and Creation of Children Database and Tracking System in South and North-East Districts of Delhi

The project was to give a baseline situational analysis of the MLC – Mobile Learning Centres¹ project of Save the Children, which is being implemented in two districts of Delhi – South District and North-East District and a profile of children living in the project areas. Objectives of this study were

- i. To create access to education on the doorsteps of 1,000 hard to reach out-of-school children per year and engage them in learning;



¹Mobile Learning Centres are a departure from the usual reading within the four walls of schools, reaching the un-reached and motivating these children to engage their minds in an exciting learning process. By creating access to quality appropriate learning materials for children in traditionally underserved slum settlements, we can gradually motivate them to start or go back to mainstream education, or begin appropriate vocational skills training. Each year, two Mobile Learning Centres will reach up to 1,000 out-of school children, providing education, counselling and referral services (e.g. appropriate care for children at risk) and also linking them with some skill development programs linked to marketing / employment opportunities.

- ii. To protect and prevent vulnerable children from being forced into exploitative labour through engaging with communities, parents, employers and municipal government and increasing their awareness of children's right to education;
- iii. To ensure the gradual withdrawal of 200 (year one) – 500 (year two) children per from their current engagement in unsafe and exploitative work by integrating them into formal education or skill training programmes.;
- iv. To design, develop and advocate for municipal government and other key stakeholders to take up a replicable model of education for hard to reach children, across cities which have a high concentration of street and working children in the country;

To fulfil the objectives of the project, a profile of children's issues and concerns along with the magnitude of problems related to slum children and street children, mainly related to their protection and education has been developed through this study. As a part of the study support institutions in the area were also mapped through a participatory method

(b) Study on Status of Women in Mining and Power Sectors in Jharkhand, UP, MP and Chhattisgarh

The study explored how one can assist in significantly increasing the ability of women in the mining and power sectors to control their futures and in the process lead to noteworthy reductions in poverty and evolving a paradigm and process of sustainable development that has inclusion as its core principle. The overall objective was to 'engender' the mining industry in India – sensitisation of all stakeholders to incorporating a gender lens in mining related measures – leading hopefully to culture-specific policy interventions to formally involve women in the development processes in the mining areas.

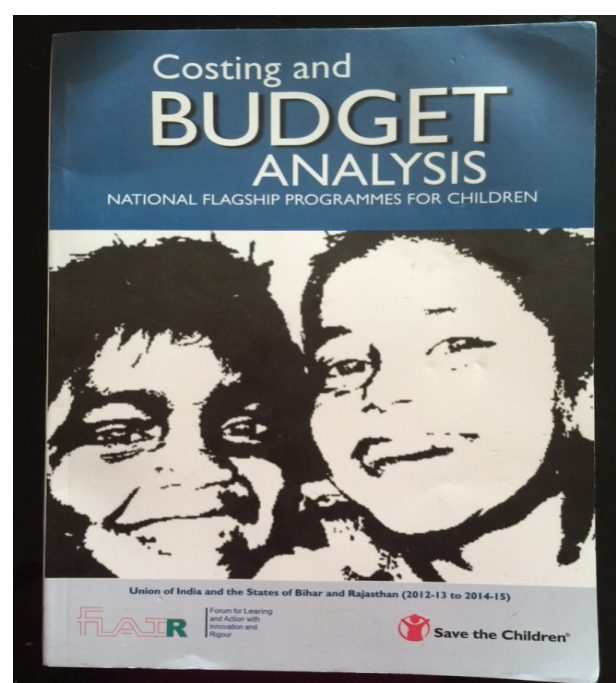


The research indicates towards an equitable and inclusive sustainable development for the mineral-rich tracts of India, incorporating gender equality and mainstreaming of all types of mining work as the ultimate means of achieving sustainable development. Since, energy in India is majorly sourced from coal; the more specific objectives of the research are to examine women's roles and participation in a range of mining practices in coal mines in the country, in view of gender, labour and mining rules and policies.

The research undertaken by FLAIR's Executive Director Mr. Ajay. K. Sinha was focusing mainly on impact of Coal Mines and associated minerals of Iron and allied activities of Power Generation and Steel manufacturing on women, particularly those belonging to the marginalized communities of Dalits and Adivasis. The research was based on literature review, experience survey (discussion with experts), and empirical research combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

(c) Budget allocation and Cost Requirement Calculations of ICPS, ICDS and RTE Act, 2009 for Rajasthan, Bihar and Union of India (FY2012-13- FY2014-15)

The project on costing and budget analysis of the three national flagship programmes (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Integrated Child Development Services and Integrated Child Protection Scheme) for children has been carried out by FLAIR in partnership with Save the Children, India, as part of the organisation's policy work on child rights. Recognizing that children need greater attention and priority in policy planning and budgeting of the programs meant to address them, this study was carried out for the State of Bihar, Rajasthan as well as Union of India to offer component-wise estimation on how much resources are required for implementation of the national flagship schemes viz, ICDS, ICPS and SSA. The financial provisioning of these schemes/programmes in were analysed in two broad ways:



- i. The study analysed these three schemes in terms of the Unit Cost set for each scheme under different financial memorandum and revised norms provided by the Government at different point of times. The physical gaps with respect to access and coverage and progress of each scheme has been taken from state government's own record or physical data of respective states which are then used to calculate actual fund requirements if those gaps are to be filled. Fund requirement to fill up component/intervention wise physical gaps and actual budget allocations for those components in the FY 2013-14/FY 2014-15 by respective state's governments are compared to conclude how much more to be allocated for a particular scheme.
- ii. Secondly, an Alternative Costing methodology taken up based on planning and programme implementation experience – Apart from the unit costs laid down in the various financial

memorandums and the planning documents of the scheme. We collected data and information on the cost requirements to implement those components of the three National Flagship Programmes that have a direct bearing on the children. This estimation was done on the basis of programmatic experience of the practitioners and implementers of the scheme at the grass roots level as well as at the management level. Once the details of the programmatic components were estimated we estimated the financial cost on the basis of prevailing market price of the components at the time of data collection, i.e. March 2013.

(d) EXTERNAL Evaluation of Urban Development Project / Rural Development Project and System and Governance of YWCA of Delhi

The community outreach programmes of YWCA of Delhi are administered through the Rural Development Project (RDP) and Urban Development Project (UDP). It has integrated approach to development with components of shelter, nutrition, health, education, vocational and life skill training enhancing livelihoods along with components on advocacy on civic and human rights.



On completion of 100 years of its existence YWCA of Delhi commissioned an external evaluation of its UDP and RDP programmes where FLAIR's Executive Director was involved in carrying out the evaluation with support from the Evaluation team consisting Ms. Mridusmita Bordoloi, Ms. Shweta Verma, Ms. Ranjana Srivastava, Ms. Shabnam Ara and YWCA of Delhi Team. The external evaluation was carried out with the objectives of:

- i. Analysis of the relevance and appropriateness of the project in the light of the problems of the communities where the outreach programmes of YWCA of Delhi are operational.
- ii. Evaluation of community participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programmes of YWCA of Delhi.
- iii. Assessment of the impact of the projects in the life of the beneficiaries.
- iv. Assessment of efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the outreach programmes of YWCA of Delhi.
- v. Recommendations for improvement

(e) End line Evaluation of SATHI's Project on Children in Homes and Railway Platforms in Delhi, UP, Bihar and Jharkhand

SATHI's work on children in "difficult situations" that has been supported by SDTT in the year April 2012-April 2013 covers 3 States – Bihar, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, FLAIR team did an endline evaluation of the actual programme carried out in Delhi, UP and Bihar, and accompanying strategies based on which recommendations were presented. The evaluation of activities was based on four methods – (a) Discussion with the management and staff of SATHI, (b) Meetings and discussion with allies and stakeholders of SATHI in Delhi, UP and Bihar, (c) Visits and observations of SATHI's intervention at Outreach, Camp, Shelter, Government Children Homes, CWCs and visit to repatriated/reunited child, (d) Study and Analysis of project documents and formats available at SATHI as well as with its allies and stakeholders. The project under evaluation started in April 2012 to be rolled out in the following areas: Delhi, Patna and Gaya in Bihar and Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. The components evaluated include:

- i. Activities towards Rescue and Rehabilitation of Children
- ii. Work in Government Children's Homes
- iii. Strengthening the Child Welfare Committees

2. TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS, CONSULTATIONS, CONFERENCES AND ADVOCACY

(a) Capacity Building and Methodology Development Workshop on Child Budget Analysis with Specific Reference to ICDS, ICPS and SSA-RTE Act, 2009 at A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna.

January 7 & 8, 2014 at A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna

The capacity building workshop Child Budget Analysis with Specific Reference to ICDS, ICPS and SSA-RTE Act, 2009 organised jointly by FLAIR and Save the Children, India on 7th January 2014 at A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna with participants from different NGOs, academic institutions and child rights organizations. The workshop was to share with the participants that Save the Children and FLAIR's partnership in the project of Analysing Union and State Budgets of Bihar and Rajasthan where three important child specific Centrally Sponsored Schemes



such as ICDS, ICPS and SSA(post enactment of RTE Act 2009) are taken up to study the implementation status and conduct empirical field study to find out the project unit cost for ensuring rights of the children as promised. Main objective of this capacity building workshop, therefore, was to to inform the civil society's advocacy for budget allocation and expenditure, based on empirical evidence and analysis of State and Union Budgets, build capacity of CSOs on child budgeting analysis, share field level data collection formats and work out in collaborative way the possible areas for unit cost analysis, that can further be studied to come up with final financial memorandums for the selected schemes.

(b) Capacity Building Workshop on Budget Analysis and Costing study on ICDS, SSA and ICPS at Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur

28 and 29 March 2014, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur

The second capacity building workshop was convened by FLAIR on 28th and 29th March, 2014, at the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur with representatives of different CSOs in Jaipur as well as partner NGOs of Save the Children and International NGOs such as, UNICEF, Plan International, Action Aid, World Vision, Room to Read, Aid et Action, Sight Savers. The main objective of the meeting was to train the participant on doing the costing exercise based on our ICDS and ICPS costing sheets. The First day of the workshop was about budget process training, to inform participants about the definition of government budgets, introduction of budget documents of Union Budget and terminologies, entire budget making processes from initiation to execution, analysis and advocacy, how Union budget influences state budgets. This included group exercises on how to read technical documents of government budgets, data entry from major head till detailed object heads and identifying expenditures in the state budget from demand for grants of respective departments in both Union and State Budgets.

The Second day of the workshop was to share with the participants the template of costing exercise on ICDS and ICPS and trained on how to undertake these exercises in Rajasthan as part of the study, based on those templates.

(c) Consultation on Usage of ICT in Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition

The workshop on Usage of ICT in CMAM has been jointly organized by ICCW, Rajasthan, IDS-Jaipur and FLAIR (Forum for Learning and Action with Innovation and Rigour) at IDS, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The aims of this workshop were i) *Capacity Building on Early Detection and Management of Acute Malnutrition* and ii) to share with the participants the *Voice Enabled ICT based Tools for Input, Collation and Transmission of Data on Malnutrition of Children* which will enable workers even with low educational background to use it compatibly with their mobile



phones and it is designed and developed to be user friendly. It was shared that in the context of identifying a child as Malnourished; the technology will uniquely identify that in which level of Malnutrition the child is by just feeding the required data about the child. The workshop identified important future plans that need to be focused on that include, emphasizing community organization, capacity building of the community, trainings to community workers and community for identification of malnourished child.

(d) National Consultation on Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition

Date: 25th February 2014

FLAIR (Forum for Learning and action with Innovation and Rigour) and Save the Children organised a National Consultation on 25th February 2014 at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi, to discuss the different approaches and models of Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition. The main purpose of the consultation was to learn from the recent experiences and evidence primarily from India on community based management of acute malnutrition. The general points of deliberations and suggestions from the participants are listed as follows -

- i. The Strengthening of Nutrition Surveillance System and its functioning are important.
- ii. Special Nutrition Support is important with proper care and feeding support.
- iii. Food, Care giving and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, and treatment for illnesses - all have to work simultaneously for results.
- iv. Appropriate breast feeding practices are absolutely important to deal with malnutrition.
- v. Both Facility based and Community based approaches are important. They are complementary to each other. There cannot be a situation of either / or, it has to be both. We are discussing the community based approach in greater detail as it has still not come in the government system's planning and strategies.
- vi. After discharge from facility based care, follow up is very necessary and it requires community based structures and their linkages with the facility based systems.
- vii. Community based approaches are to be handled mainly by the Department of Women and Child Development. Its integration with healthcare systems is necessary to ensure sustainability and replication.
- viii. Care of girls and their development is important.
- ix. Prenatal and post natal care is important.
- x. Sensitisation and Capacity building programmes of women and men have to be integrated in the programmes.
- xi. Identification, Treatment, Monitoring and Follow-up should be looked as a continuum.
- xii. The issues of methods for identification of SAM children base on MUAC or Z scores are still unresolved but should not come in the way of getting on with the need to identify and treat SAM children.
- xiii. Research based evidences are important and should be taken into account but till the time that we get results the programme should start and go on to help those in need.
- xiv. There was an emphasis on district level and block level programming and implementation under the overall framework.



- xv. There is a need for operational guidance on how to prevent and manage acute malnutrition at the community level as a continuum of care. The facility based guidance is available.

3. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MODEL CREATION

(a) Teach India Programme – Skills Enhancement for Employability

FLAIR has been implementing Teach India Programme in Indirapuram (Ghaziabad), Shaheen Bagh (New Delhi) and Sector 20, Noida. Teach India is Times Group's initiative of "English for Employability"

Our strategy on community mobilisation and motivation has been very carefully designed and is meticulously implemented. We hold weekly evening meetings with the youth in our communities where we show motivational clips from mainstream Hindi films and talk around them and build groups who in turn act as the carriers of the message in the community. We then organise camps in the school on quarterly basis where all community members are invited. These camps also have components of medical checkup and medicine distribution and referrals. These camps also double up as enrolment drives for children in schools (both private and government), whichever is the nearest. Thus we have connect with the whole community and doubled with our regular visits and meetings in the community and our interest in their lives as a whole and not just the matters of employment and livelihood ensures that we understand our trainees and learners better and vice versa thereby minimising dropout rates. However, those who have genuine reasons for opting out, we counsel them and encourage them in their other avenues in education and career.

(b) Vocational Training Centre at Indian National Public School, Sorkha Village, Noida

In this programmes, we are working on Vocational Education and Training for past many years, specifically in trainings on accounts and book keeping and computer hardware and software. We have been able to place more than 80 per cent of youth in sectors like airports, catering and hospitality, retail food chain tele calling for mobile and insurance companies.

Based on our learning that the youth are not only interested in jobs in sectors like tele calling and retail food chains but also in industrial trades like plumbing, masonry, electrician etc. that are better paid and the availability of jobs are also higher, we reached out to the learners

coming from the nearby villages of Noida and the slum settlements of colonies of construction workers in Nodia. We organised a camp with them at another branch of Indian National Public School in Sorkha Village of Noida. Sorkha is uniquely placed as it is a traditional village of Noida and amidst the real estate development in the Sector like 76, 77, 78, 74, 75, 119, 120 of Noida with the upcoming prestigious “North Eye” project of Super Tech being just 200 metres away. The camp witnessed a huge interest and turn out from the migrant workers, service providers (like security guards, washer men house maids) in the nearby apartments and they got enrolled in our free programme of soft skills and spoken english at the Indian National Public School at Sorkha. Many of our learners have gone on to accomplish growth in their careers as motor mechanics, plumber, electrician and similar trades.

In order to boost the Vocational Training among youth as part of Teach India Programme, FLAIR is implementing in the operational area around Sorkha Village of Noida where we are already working on community mobilisation, motivation, soft skills and spoken English and linkage with employment. Youth in the area who are migrants and have completed basic education and want to find employment in factories and construction companies in the industrial trades as they find it more remunerative, with better job security and most importantly they do not find the work environment alien as they do in the tele calling, retail chains etc. Therefore, Vocational Training component of the programme had to organize systematically as the learners wanted to be trained in a structured manner.

(c) Mainstreaming of Children at Construction Sites into Regular Schools

FLAIR carried out a study on the living hazards and working condition of the children of migrant workers who left their villages to escape extreme rural poverty and find a job in big cities and working at the construction cities in big cities. Construction workers are unskilled and illiterate workers, which make them very vulnerable to exploitation. Construction workers live with their family in temporary shelters built on the construction site. The children living on construction sites often suffer from malnutrition, under nourishment, accidents, and innumerable health problems. FLAIR is working with these children to mainstream them into regular Government Schools as well as the Private Schools under the EWS category under the RTE Act, 2009.

The objective of this program was to mainstream the children into the educational net. FLAIR's innovation has been the roster of children and their admission and mainstreaming in EWS quota of private schools and government schools. The mainstreaming has been through bridge classes based on OELP Model. FLAIR is working on building an IT based roster of all children in

Noida construction sites so that they could be traced and sent to schools even when they migrate within the city with their parents when their parents move for work.

4. TECHNOLOGY LED INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Voice Integrated Browser - VIB

Voice Integration Browser (VIB) is a windows application that allows users to access Web via verbal commands by tagging on to any normal internet browser. VIB is a two way communication application i.e. it accepts Voice as Input Commands to navigate the web through any normal internet browser and reads text on the web as Output. This application will be especially advantageous for the physically disabled people, particularly those with visual impairment as it will enable them to access websites through voice commands.

The World Wide Web contains huge information from all over world. It has information about simple things as well as very complex things. This makes it very useful for everyone. Nevertheless this enormous useful information is always accessible through browser which requires use of mouse and keyboard. Hence, it always remains unreachable to people with disability, especially to the people with visual impairment.

The concept of voice browser is not new, however we have used naïve approach to make an efficient Voice Integrated Browser (VIB). All existing voice browsers need VoiceXML page. The conversion of existing web pages to VoiceXML pages is very tedious task and it requires lots of extra effort. In this approach we have removed the need of VoiceXML pages. VIB is a wrapper on in-built normal browser where wrapper uses voice command to invoke corresponding command of normal browser and it also reads the content of loaded web page in normal browser.

This approach doesn't require conversion of existing web pages to VoiceXML. This reduces lots of effort required for this conversion, eventually it's going to save extra cost.

The Internet is used in every corner of the World and lots of people have benefitted with the vast amount of information available on the internet. However, the visual impaired people have not been able to avail the benefits of the internet due to their inability to use the current technology.

The Voice Integrated Browser is an application which allows the people to use their voice to access Internet. This application would be especially beneficial for blind people as they can hear the text written in the pages as Voice and access the internet content through voice command.

The innovation is past the POC (Proof of Concept) stage and has been accepted and recognised in the research as well as user community as is evident from (i) the awards and conference

presentation, and (ii) publication based on the research for the development of the Application. We are working with prominent NGOs in India for the testing and feedback of the Application to enable its robust development. We are mainly working with AADI, Muskan and NAB and have received very encouraging feedback on the solution from them. We are working together to make this application as per the need and expectation of end users. Eventually this will have an impact on the people with visual impairment as this will enable them to access the internet like any other user.

The Architecture for VIB is Portable and Scalable, i.e. it is able to support any speech library. Best practices and appropriate patterns have been used to make VIB maintainable and reusable. A layered architecture along with various design patterns is used to make VIB highly cohesive and loosely coupled.

VIB is developed by Mr. Vinay Krishna and his team.

**GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS (2013-14)**

1. Prof. Abdul Matin – President
2. Mr. Ajay Kumar Sinha – Secretary
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3. Ms. Soni Prabha – Director, HR and Admin
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5. Ms. Mridusmita Bordoloi – Adviser, Research