

INDIA
COUNTRY STRATEGY
2015–2019



*After his own
cataract operation
Mr. Nripendra Rabha
became a voluntary
helper at outreach
camps in Assam*



Introduction

	INDIA	NORTH-EAST INDIA
Area:	3,287,000 km ²	262,000 km ² (8% of total) ¹
Population:	1.2 billion	46 million (3.8% of total) ²
Human Development Index (HDI):	0.467	0.485 ³
Population below national poverty line:		33.61% ⁴
Life expectancy (India):	63 years ³	
Blindness Rate (above 50 years):		2.45% ⁵



Although India has shown important progress in its socioeconomic development in recent years, regional disparities remain high and the North-East constitutes one of the most under-developed regions of the country. For this reason, LIGHT FOR THE WORLD exclusively focusses its country programme on North-East India.

Disability in India

The Government of India has made outstanding efforts to ensure the access of persons with disabilities to a range of poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes with the aim of achieving inclusive development.

Despite the government’s initiatives, persons with disabilities in North-East India are still among the most marginalised and excluded population groups and the need remains to continue joint efforts towards an inclusive society.

- 1 The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2015
- 2 Census 2011
- 3 India Human Development Report 2011, with population weighted HDI data from 2007/8
- 4 Weighted according to population; Ministry of Development of Northeastern States
- 5 NPCB: Rapid Assessment of Blindness in North Eastern States of India 2003



Dr. Tsetim Lobsang examines a patient referred from a rural area in Arunachal Pradesh

The Guiding Framework of LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's Overall Strategy

Our vision is an Inclusive Society for All where no one is left behind and all persons participate equally in the cultural, social, political and economic environment.

Our mission is to contribute to a world in which persons with disabilities fully exercise their rights. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) guides us. We engage in empowering persons with disabilities to take development in their hands. We strive to overcome all barriers in society and create access for persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities living in poverty – who are amongst the most excluded groups in society – are at the centre of our work. They drive the change. We pay specific attention to women with disabilities, children with disabilities and more excluded impairment groups within the disability community.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's core areas of work are:

Eye health/prevention of blindness:

We aim to remove the physical, social, cultural, and communication barriers that prevent equal access to high-quality eye care services for all, especially for those living in poverty.

Rehabilitation:

We aim to use comprehensive and sustainable intervention systems to address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities and ensure that they can use their potential, skills and abilities to participate fully in society. Through community-based rehabilitation (CBR), an essential part of this strategy, we involve communities, support special needs interventions and promote inclusion in community activities.

Inclusive education:

We consider inclusive education as the bedrock for sustainable development: an investment to reduce poverty, generate sustainable livelihood, improve long-term health benefits, ensure gender equality and promote democratic governance. Children with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.

Inclusive development and the rights of persons with disabilities:

We aim for inclusive development cooperation that ensures the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. Our mission for an Inclusive Society for All requires changes in policies, practices and attitudes that express the voices of persons with disabilities. To promote equity and establish such changes, sensitisation and raising awareness at individual, community, national, regional and global level is essential.

Livelihood:

In order to support different types of livelihood opportunities around the globe we aim to strengthen income generating activities. That includes work at home and in family smallholdings, individual production, small enterprise activities or paid employment in public or private organisations.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s overall objective for the country programme in North-East India is:
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LIGHT FOR THE WORLD strengthens its position as a competent and resourceful expert organisation engaged in the promotion of rehabilitation and education of persons with disabilities and in comprehensive eye care. LIGHT FOR THE WORLD will work to ensure that mainstream programmes and services are disability-inclusive and empower persons with disabilities and their organisations to successfully promote their rights as laid down in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD exclusively focusses its country programme on North-East India (except the state of Sikkim), with a particular focus on remote and rural areas within these seven states.

Supporting Inclusive Development in (North-East) India 2015–2019

Eye Health / Prevention of Blindness

OBJECTIVE: Innovative public-private partnership models for comprehensive eye care showcasing qualitative and effective service provision in rural areas with referral systems from primary to secondary/tertiary level across government and private service providers.

In North-East India, accessibility for the poor remains a key challenge, particularly for those living in rural areas. Strategies will thus focus on access to primary eye care as well as on cooperation of government and non-government partners aiming at joint initiatives to promote eye health for all.



Apart from examination and diagnosis, counselling of the patients is important.

RESULT 1: NGO hospitals provide high quality comprehensive eye care services to the remote rural population and improve general awareness levels on eye health in the communities.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's support will focus on:

- Support for comprehensive outreach programmes for the rural poor population especially those in remote areas

RESULT 2: A clear strategy of collaboration with the public sector is defined based on comprehensive research and stakeholder consultation.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's support will focus on:

- The elaboration of strategic eye care plans with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and Vision2020 India based on situational analysis
- Identifying entry points for cooperation with government eye care structures to address gaps and opportunities for improving performance, quality and outreach/access to the rural poor population

Rehabilitation

OBJECTIVE: Persons with disabilities have access to rehabilitation, education, health and livelihood and participate actively in society. Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) play an essential role in ensuring the sustainability of CBR programmes.

Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programmes are an effective way to empower and capacitate persons with disabilities from an early age onwards. In addition, the continuation of the CBR programmes by Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) promotes participation in the community.

RESULT 1: Community-based rehabilitation interventions are comprehensive, sustainable and correspond to the regional identity.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Access to services in the area of health, education and livelihood, with particular focus on gender aspects and child protection
- Supporting CBR partners in making their own development programmes accessible and inclusive
- Promoting regional networking and awareness raising initiatives involving CBR programmes and DPOs

RESULT 2: DPOs that have participated in CBR programmes continue to support persons with disabilities to sustain awareness in their communities and to have access to government and NGO services.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Capacity building of local DPOs to gradually take over local lobbying for access to government services
- Promoting the development of a regional disability network from local to state level

RESULT 3: Access of persons with disabilities enrolled in CBR programmes to income generating activities and social security schemes is enhanced.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Programmes that link up CBR clients, their families and communities to rural income generating activities
- Facilitating access to both mainstream and disability specific social security, microfinance and rural livelihood schemes on different levels by awareness raising and information campaigns.



Through the regular visits of a CBR worker, Rahul Mijar has learned to move on his own.

Inclusive Education

OBJECTIVE: Successful models of quality inclusive education for children with disabilities in government schools in rural areas of North-East India are showcasing effective cooperation between civil society partners and government systems.

NGO-run special, integrative and inclusive schools provide good quality education and learning environments for children with disabilities. By supporting them to turn into resource centres that are linked to government primary schools, their good practices can be disseminated and replicated.

RESULT 1: Resource centres developed to contribute to the expansion and quality improvement of inclusive education for children with disabilities in rural areas.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's support will focus on:

- Development of existing special, integrative and inclusive schools and rehabilitation centres into resource centres for inclusive education that support mainstream schools in rural areas
- Evaluating and systematising inclusive education projects as models for learning and exposure

RESULT 2: Mainstream education providers in rural areas develop their human resources and institutional capacities to provide high quality inclusive education to children with disabilities.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's support will focus on:

- Identification of entry points for collaboration with government and private education authorities for inception, expansion or quality improvement of inclusive education practices in village schools and CBR projects
- Piloting public-private cooperation models between NGO resource centres and mainstream schools

RESULT 3: Promote access for youth and young adults with disabilities to vocational training opportunities and support job placements or self-employment of persons with disabilities.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's support will focus on:

- Capacity building of mainstream vocational training programmes to accommodate persons with disabilities
- Facilitating access for young adults with disabilities to vocational training opportunities
- Fostering initiatives to promote inclusive workplaces and disability-friendly recruitment policies and practices in the corporate sector.

Inclusive Development and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

OBJECTIVE: Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) from local to regional level demand and monitor the fulfilment of legal rights of persons with disabilities based on the UNCRPD. An increasing number of mainstream as well as disability specific government and NGO programmes are accessible for persons with disabilities.

Initiatives to mainstream disability into general development and social protection programmes still require intense awareness raising and sensitisation. Therefore, capacity building and networking of DPOs is a key issue to foster the capacities of persons with disabilities to demand and make use of access to general development processes.



8-year old Suro Hodo enjoys the regular home visits of the CBR worker and teacher.

RESULT 1: A disability network of DPOs is promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in North-East India

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Capacity building of local NGOs for developing DPOs into self-representing organisations of persons with disabilities
- Facilitating district, block, state, regional and national level networking to promote exchange between DPOs

RESULT 2: Persons with disabilities are able to access and benefit from mainstream government and NGO programmes in the focus areas of education and livelihood.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Developing joint campaigns on access to education and livelihood
- Training and consultancy for mainstreaming disability in education and livelihood programmes of both civil society and government
- Supporting project partners in making their own organisational structures and programmes inclusive and accessible

RESULT 3: General public awareness and media presence of inclusive development.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD’s support will focus on:

- Supporting the use of media by partner NGOs and DPOs to create awareness on inclusive development.

Making the (North-East) India Strategy a Reality

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD supports the initiatives of local partner organisations to safeguard local ownership and cultural as well as structural sustainability. In our work with partners we put an emphasis on capacity development while respecting the needs expressed by our partners.

Partners

- Bosco Reach Out, Guwahati
- Sri Sankaradeva Nethralaya, Guwahati
- Operation Eye Sight Universal, Hyderabad
- Ramakrishna Mission Hospital, Itanagar
- Vision 2020 India, New Delhi
- Caritas India, New Delhi, hosting the CBR Forum
- CBR Forum, based in Bangalore with NE office in Guwahati, which further reaches out to the following organisations:
 - Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST)
 - Voluntary Health Association (VHAT)
 - Blind and Handicapped Association
 - Organization for Rural Survival (ORS)
 - Prodigal's Home
 - Grace Society
 - Care and Support
 - Zoram Entu Pawl (ZEP)
 - Ferrando Integrated Women's Development Centre (FIWDC)
 - Fransalian Agency for Social Care and Education (FASCE India)
 - Holy Cross Sisters of Chavnod
 - Bethany Society
 - Agency for Sustainable Development Initiatives (ASFDI)
 - Franciscan Clarist Society of North East (FCS)
 - Assam Centre for Rural Development (ACRD)
 - Deshabandhu Clubs
 - Seva Kendra Silchar (SKS)
- Shishu Sarothi, Guwahati
- Institute of the Brothers of St. Gabriel, Province of North-East India
- Montfort Centre for Education, Tura
- Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians and their Ferrando Speech & Hearing Centre, Barapani
- Society for the Welfare of the Disabled, Shillong
- Franciscan Clarist Congregation, Bongaigaon
- Bethany Society, Shillong
- MANEDA Manipur North Economic Development Association, Senapati
- Cherry Blossoms Society, Nagaland

Our work is aligned to government policies and strives to work in close cooperation with public actors, technical experts and international partners such as CBM and Liliane Foundation.

Financial Resources

The total financial support of partners of LIGHT FOR THE WORLD in India is expected to stay constant at around 600.000 EUR per year, with a slight increase expected over the next five years, depending on outside funding generated during this period. Detailed figures are published in the LIGHT FOR THE WORLD annual activity report, which can be accessed on our website.

Abbreviations

CBR	Community-based rehabilitation
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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