

Livelihood Recovery Initiative during and post Covid-19 Pandemic

Ms. Nilima Narzary, a 23 years old girl hails from one of the remotest villages called Gwjwnpuri Forest Village, Saralpara of Kokrajhar district. Her family falls under the below poverty line (BPL) category. Nilima's parents are unable to provide adequate facilities to all four of their children. Raising them was very difficult due to their low economic condition. Nilima's elder brothers and younger brothers once had to quit their studies because their parents were unable to afford their school expenses.



It so happened that prior to Ms. Nilima's matric exam, ethnic conflict occurred in their area and the whole family along with the villagers had to stay at the relief camp for almost three months away from home. In spite of all the hardships faced at home, Ms. Nilima continued her studies and appeared the 10th final exam but was unable to clear the exam. Due to failure in the exam, Ms. Nilima was totally frustrated and remained at home losing hope of re-appearing for the exam. At such point of time, a trafficker from West Bengal visited the conflict affected villages and lured the girls who were unable to pass the metric exam. The trafficker visited nearby villages and gathered the girls in the pretext of providing jobs in the far away metro cities. Ms. Nilima along with her friends was directly approached by the trafficker and so they believed in him and planned to opt for job in the city. A couple of day's later NEDAN team happened to visit the affected villages and received the information regarding the trafficker's news. NEDAN team immediately took necessary steps to prevent the trafficker from transferring the vulnerable girls to the cities. NEDAN team informed the police of Kokrajhar district and made the villagers aware of the grim situation and thus prevented the unpleasant incident. Ms. Nilima was brought to Transit center of NEDAN Foundation and later restored with her family. She was provided skill training in Auxilium Convent, Kokrajhar supported by Nedan Foundation and completed 6 months training in tailoring.

She had set up her own tailoring Centre at Gwjwnsri market, Saralpara in Indo-Bhutan Border. Due to Covid-19 pandemic and nationwide lockdown her business got weakened. But Nilima found an



opportunity during this Covid 19 crisis. Government of India had made wearing face mask and maintaining social distancing compulsory to stop the spreading of corona virus but most of the people from Assam could not afford to buy a face mask. So, Nedan Foundation started distributing mask among the poor and needy people of Kokrajhar District.

Nedan Foundation placed order to Nilima to make Face masks which will be distributed among the 10,000 adolescents' boys and girls. Stitching materials were provided for making masks. Nilima along with her friend Eliza Basumatary started stitching masks during

the lockdown period. Nedan Foundation had paid Rs.20/- for each piece of face mask. She produces 40 pieces per day which makes her daily income Rs.800/- (40*20). So by only stitching the masks Nilima is earning Rs.19200/- (800*24) per month during this lockdown period.

The masks produced by Nilima and her friend were distributed among the adolescent boys and girls of different villages of Kokrajhar district along with the dignity and hygiene kits. At present Nilima and her friend is actively involved in producing facemasks which is not only lending a hand towards her livelihood but also helping people from the spread of Corona Virus.