

**VISION: Help establish a humane social order based on equity, freedom and justice in which human rights and the dignity of every individual is upheld.**



## Awareness Drive on Environment

Kashmir

**Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir:** Eidgah Youth Forum for Change, the youth group formed under the Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAP) in Eidgah collaborated with a local school to spread awareness about environment. The youth group members interacted with students and teachers to make them aware of their responsibilities towards the environment. They initiated a cleanliness drive within the school and the locality. The group members, students and teachers along with the members of YAP team cleaned the roadside, garnering widespread attention from the locals. The event was a way of making the youngsters learn through example and also to imbibe a sense of responsibility towards the development of the society.



## Advocating RIGHTS & ENTITLEMENTS

Home Initiative

**Agra, Uttar Pradesh:** IGSSS organized a meeting with the community members of Ravidas Nagar Slum to brief them about the major features of Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and to inform them about the locations of shelter homes in the Agra city.

The community members of the Ravidas Nagar slum were evicted during December 2012; they are now living in the Ramleela ground in shanty conditions. The slum is plagued with issues such as contaminated water, unsafe environment for women and frequent threats of eviction.

The participants were provided elaborative inputs on the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY). Especially in the context of its implementation in Agra, they were also informed that Ravidas Nagar is selected under the scheme and they are entitled to

access the benefits under the scheme. Pamphlets were also distributed on the scheme to the community members.

They were further taken for an exposure visit to the nearest shelters. This resulted in majority of the slum dwellers expressing their willingness to shift to the nearby shelter homes. The meeting was organised under the HOME (Having One and Many Empowered) Initiative supported by the FORD Foundation.

**Rajiv Awas Yojana:** The scheme proposes construction of about two million houses across the country to make India slum-free. The scheme envisages affordable housing for the urban poor, living in slums, through partnership and the scheme for interest subsidy and it will assign property rights to slum people.

**Conflict**

## TRAPPED CHILDHOOD

By: Rahul Dey, Field Coordinator, IGSSS-NE

“I would love to go to my school but I don’t know why my parents do not allow me to attend the school again?” shared a ten year old boy from Pakhriguri village in Chirang district, Assam.

Pakhriguri is one of the most affected villages by the conflict that broke out between the Bodo and the Muslim communities in July 2012. It led to massive destruction of life, livelihood and property.

The conflict had a significant bearing especially on the lives of the children and it is impeding their development. In the aftermath of conflict most of the natives are gripped by fear and consequently they are barring their children from attending school. Some families with better financial condition sent their children to hostel or to relatives’ house in nearby cities in a bid to ensure safe refuge for their children and also to continue their education. However, for children hailing from economically weaker families, whose parents are unable to afford the education, the future looks gloomy and uncertain as post conflict they are not able to continue their education.

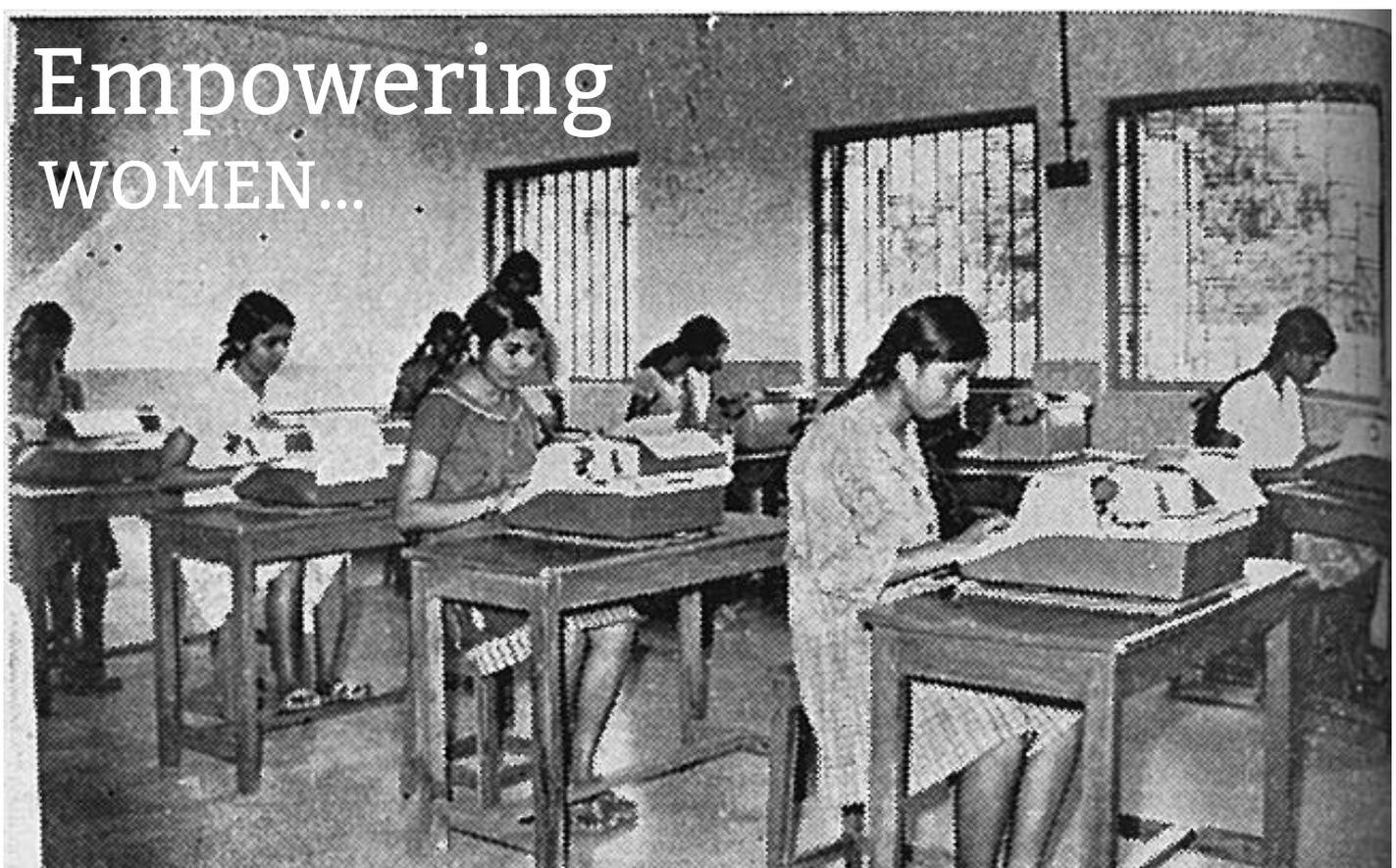
Most of the school buildings are also damaged and all these factors together have led to an alarming increase in the drop out ratio of the children. The government institutions like the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) centres have also become mostly dysfunctional leading to the children being deprived of nutritional diet.

Furthermore, the loss of livelihood has reduced the income of the households and it has directly affected the food requirement of the families. As an agrarian society, the community used to consume varied vegetables

and other food items as part of their diet. But now the situation has changed drastically and one can observe that the community is dependent only on the basic food items such as rice and dal; sometimes the quantity is also insufficient to meet the need of the entire family. A large number of people also lost their livestock, which adversely impacted the availability of milk at the household level.

An atmosphere of mistrust and uncertainty is still highly prevalent among the locals. The fear and insecurity is so deep that people from different communities, even after so many months since conflict, they do not share the common public spaces. The children, who do not even understand the meaning of conflict, are not allowed to speak to the children from other communities. There are many children from affected families and communities who are growing up with the same question in their mind, "Why do our parents not allow us to go to school"?

IGSSS, under 'Ethnic Conflict Emergency Response in Lower Assam' is providing psychosocial care and support to families and individuals who have undergone the trauma and stress and are affected by the conflict. The programme is supported by Dan Church Aid (DCA).



## Empowering WOMEN...

**FRI** DAY  
**FRITTERS**

*Year 1974 – A group of young girls attending Typing classes in the Vocational Training Centre for Girls, Andheri, Bombay. The Centre was supported by IGSSS.*