**A BRIEF NOTE ON ACTIVITIES**

**OF**

**STATE INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION AAYOG ASSAM**

**State Innovation & Transformation Aayog (SITA) Assam** came into being in the year 2016. It has been entrusted with various responsibilities and the expectations have been to act on certain deliverables for the overall benefit of the state through good governance initiatives in the form of innovative ideas and policies that might help in transforming the service delivery mechanism in the most desired lines.

As SITA is still in its formative years, it is our huge responsibility to shape it into a full-fledged institution to serve the mandate specified and work as a catalyst of change for a better tomorrow. With the support of Hon’ble Chief Minister and his team of dedicated ministers and officials of Government of Assam since inception of SITA, we have been trying to work out an effective methodology to meet the challenges in introducing good governance practices in decision making process for socio economic empowerment.

In spite of our limitations in initial take off stage, we can boast of a few initiatives, which, if properly implemented, can help in redefining our goals in the light of new thoughts that might help in restoring our dwindling confidence and lost hope in the system.

1. During the year 2017-18, SITA decided to intervene in a few areas requiring special attention as case studies and to effect administrative and structural reforms. e.g. Revival of APOL Mill and ASCARD Bank, both having significant impacts on our society in their respective roles.
2. Another area of concern for the state is the prevailing credit flow and management system of banking and financial institutions. To analyse and suggest improvements in the system, SITA reviewed the issues with the concerned banks and financial institutions through SLBC. In the process, SITA organized meaningful discussions and recommended review of policies practiced by banks and financial institutions through SLBC.
3. SITA also organised a brain storming session on Agriculture. In the deliberations the main issues that took the centre-stage were, production and productivity gaps, market accessibility, problem of soil erosion, irrigation facility, empowering farmers.
4. Tea sector has been playing an important role in the State’s economy since pre independence era. Presently, the sector is facing a number challenges, which confronted the growth of the industry. SITA organised a two days Tea Conclave in March, 2018 at Guwahati to arrive at some decisions to act upon.
5. The 8th Round India Bangladesh Friendly Dialogue was organised by SITA at Guwahati in July, 2017 in collaboration with India Foundation, Bangladesh Foundation and MAKAI. The objective of holding the dialogue was to ensure sustainable political goodwill and trust, economic growth and mutual sharing of prosperity of the people of Bangladesh and India, greater people to people and business to business contact between the North East region of India and Bangladesh, in matters relating to innovation, entrepreneurship, human resource development, technology, finance, power generation, etc.
6. As for the year 2018-19, SITA has taken up a number of Project Studies in diverse fields concerning the state’s socio economic interests. To name a few-

* Low cost technology for control of River Erosion and Floods.
* New and Renewable Energy sources especially in developing solar energy in Assam
* Muga - Rearing to silk production with special focus on Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Jorhat and Golaghat districts.
* Impact of flood on the livelihood of the people of Assam and their poverty.
* Revival of Tea Sector in Assam- Revival of Toklai Tea Research Centre
* A study on per capita income of farmers to formulate strategies to achieve the target of double farm income by 2022 by the state.
* A comprehensive study on the status of the Rural Primary Markets (RPMs) to understand their functioning and infrastructural facilities available and gaps.
* India’s Connection with South East Asia: The Historical and civilization link.
* Study on Skilling of Youths in Assam.
* Study on the status of existing infrastructure/network of PWD in Assam.

1. ***District Resource Mapping and State Planning Atlas:*** in the 2nd GB Meeting Hon’ble Chief Minister/Chairman SITA advised to take up project for detailed mapping of district resources so that necessary action plan for all round development could be prepared taking into consideration the resource strength of each district. District Administration have been requested to submit status on their e-readiness based on a list of parameters/ indicators in a format designed by SITA. A Committee is constituted by SITA with Commissioner & Secretary Finance Department as Chairman and members from departments/agencies viz. IT, Science & Technology, T&D, NHM, NIC, AMTRON, NESAC, ARSAC etc. The committee will facilitate implementation of National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) and prepare a planning atlas for the state with data analytics and monitoring facilities on a portal designed for the purpose with the support from all stakeholders.
2. **Workshop/Seminar:**

During the year 2018-19, under the aegis of SITA following workshops/Seminars are being conducted in collaboration with some State Government departments and other organisations-

1. A Daylong Seminar on ***Underwater Domain Awareness (UDA) Framework for Effective ‘Security and Growth for all in the region (SAGAR)’ Vision for the River Ecosystem in the North East*** in association with Assam Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) at Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati on 21st February, 2019.
2. Workshop on ***Rastriya Kisor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) Learning Lab District Initiative*** in collaboration with UNICEF on 1st March, 2019 at Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati.
3. One Day Brainstorming Session on ‘***Animal Husbandry & Veterinary and Fisheries’*** in collaboration with Assam Agriculture University on 6th March, 2019 at Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati.
4. **SITA is in the process of taking up a Project with the aim to use optimally the water hyacinth resources in Assam. The project will promote South-Asian Cooperation by Establishing Strong Partnerships in PPP  framework:**

* The proposed project which is aiming to use optimally the water hyacinth resources in Assam (estimated dry resources of 25 lakh tons per annum which is so far not harnessed), to open up sustainable livelihood for a good number of people and also to create alternate energy resource,  has potentially an alignment  to  integrate the  activities to SDGs. As India will continue to focus on nurturing partnerships at the regional and global levels where Assam wants to play a pivotal role keeping in view of  ‘Act East Policy’ of Govt of India, there is immense  and definitive possibility of  flow of adoptable  technology from  South Asian Countries in this context. It is believed that with combined and sustained efforts, it will indeed be possible to eradicate poverty and ensure a prosperous  communities for a large section of people.
* To achieve the objectives in a framework of shared prosperity and destiny, particularly in the state of Assam , the principles of  South-Asian Cooperation of Govt of India in its bilateral and multilateral engagements comes into picture. The collaboration of Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) India through  knowledge sharing partnership in this proposed journey would  help to foster the southern Asian narrative on development and sustainability at multilateral fora. This South Asian Cooperation shall particularly be beneficial on sharing of the best practices, sustainable use of resources available regionally and joint development projects  encountering the  common challenges. Since, India has one of the largest Public-Private Partnership (PPP) programmes globally  and  a continued focus on PPP initiatives as well  will pave a new dimensions for strengthening micro financing for these proposed activities. The states / local bodies and recognized NGOs will be at the frontline of operation. This relationship between the national government and the sub-national governments shall boost  a paradigm shift for harnessing these water hyacinth resources in different value added products with potentially export propositions.

1. **Intervention in Veterinary, Dairy and Fishery sectors:** These sectors require special intervention to create livelihood options in the light of emerging technologies, exploring possible applications and collaborating with external experts in the field. Assam is basically an agrarian economy endowed with abundant natural resources. Assam Agriculture University at the behest of SITA prepared two project proposals on both the Veterinary & Dairy and Fishery sectors. The project proposals have been shared with concerned departments of Assam Government for finalisation of work plan and road map. SITA is also organising a Brainstorming Session on Livestock, Dairy and Fishery sectors in association with Assam Agriculture University involving state government departments concerned. Banking sector, academicians/researchers from universities, NGOs working in the field and from among progressive farmers will participate in the session.
2. **Our Knowledge Partners:** In taking forward our innovative ideas in development agenda SITA is in knowledge partnership with Assam Agriculture University, Gauhati University, Tezpur University, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, North Eastern Space Application Centre (NESAC) and several other premier and research institutions.

It is high time we take to the latest concepts of governance and in ground-breaking work ethics to enable us to keep pace with other advanced societies. The role of ICT and scientific thought process in service delivery through G2G, G2C and G2B have become synonymous with development and growth of a society.