

The teacher from ASSAM

Background

Sushmita grew up in a **traditional Assamese family in Sonaripara village in the Helem Tehsil of Sonitpur**. Her father, a daily wage labour earned **INR 200 per day** and was the only earning member of the family.

Growing up in an orthodox set-up, she has always seen the male members in her community owned the sole preserve of earning. ***"It was only after the pandemic which made us violate the tradition."***



Sushmita, the eldest of the daughter in the family, took the lead on learning that her aged father travelled far-off places in search of work. ***"Post pandemic my family could not even afford two square meals to eat."*** Sushmita looked up for NGOs who worked frontline in/post the lockdown for families of migrant labours. Though food insecurity was high, yet Sushmita insisted ***"I could opt for an immediate aid but I wanted a support which could help me with a viable option in the longer run."***

In action

When the ANUDIP volunteers shared information on rebuilding smart livelihoods for zero-income families, Sushmita signed up for their employability -driven English and IT skills training at Kamrup designed for resource-poor young aspirants. ***"Being a girl going for a job-training when food was the need - made all fingers point towards me"*** Despite odds, she continued to dedicate her efforts to hone her communication and computing skills. Coming from a local Assamese school, Sushmita found English to be an intimidating space. ***"My faculty made me read English newspapers every day and insisted me to speak only English during classes."***

Post three months of job-training, the corporate relationship cell of ANUDIP made the aspirants sit for their on-campus placement interview. ***"My interview was scheduled with Orient EduTech, an education institute and I got short-listed as their Soft Skills Trainer"***. She got an offer of **CTC ₹1, 44,000 per annum** and became the first in her family to go out to work in an organized sector. ***"More than my salary it was my profession as a teacher which bought me fame in our community"***.

The Transformation

Within 8 months of her service, Susmita trained and groomed **300+ impoverished students in Orient**. ***"My students could resonate with me since we shared the mutual low-income background while I could empathize with them on how to break the ice ceiling."*** Her dedication and passion to teach won hearts of not just her students but her organization, making her win the **"Women Empowerment Award"** at work and a promotion letter which offered her a **CTC of ₹ 216,000 per annum**.

At home, she bought a **mediclaim policy** covering all her family members to inhibit any financial stress during medical emergencies. ***"Pandemic taught me how critical times are and investing in health was my priority."*** What she did next was the talk of her town - ***"I purchased a laptop in EMI -and a study-table for my sister, and marked it as my first investment in education which is considered unusual for a family like us."***