

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



**Women, Queer, Trans led
Organisation**

 9892815573

 mataisociety.org

 mataisociety@gmail.com

ABOUT US

Matai Society is a registered, women, queer, and trans-led organisation based in Moirang, Bishnupur District, Manipur, founded in 2020. It integrates three core verticals – Sustainable Livelihood, Psychosocial Health, and Community Building – to empower marginalised communities such as women, queer and trans persons and conflict displaced persons.

OUR VISION

To create an inclusive, equitable and sustainable society.

OUR MISSION

- **Provide emergency support & long-term financial stability**
- **Build economic resilience through skill development & micro-businesses**
- **Advance gender & LGBTQIA+ inclusivity**
- **Build community strength amongst vulnerable groups**
- **Make psycho-social health support accessible to marginalised groups**

OUR APPROACH

Matai Society's work comes from the real lived experiences of women, queer, and trans leaders in Manipur, for whom marginalization and displacement are everyday realities. These people don't simply wait to be included—they make themselves visible and counted, they become their own centre. Leadership comes from within the community, from those who face the same risks, which builds trust and accountability. Instead of outside solutions, displaced people become trainers and leaders of their own recovery. Healing and skill-sharing happen in safe spaces built on care and solidarity. This is the approach: the margin ceases to be the invisible margins—it becomes its own centre, and empowerment grows collectively, from within.

OUR PEOPLE

KUMAM DAVIDSON SINGH
Founder - President

ROHANA MOIRANGTHEM
Co-Founder

DIANAROSE HAABIJAM
Co-Founder

MEGHAJIT SHIJAGURUMAYUM
Founding Member

LAISHANGBAM OPENDRO SINGH
Secretary

PUKHREM RUPABATI DEVI
Vice-President

MEINAM BHARATI DEVI
Treasurer

WANGKHEM JACKSON SINGH
Joint-Secretary

KUMAM RANJEETA DEVI
Managing Committee

HEIKRUJAM GOPAL MEITEI
Managing Committee

NGANGOM UMAKANTA SINGH
Managing Committee

MOIRANGTHEM BIDYASAGAR SINGH
Managing Committee

SITU ANGOM
Managing Committee

KUMAM AMUJAO SINGH
Board Member

KUMAM BROJENDRO SINGH
Board Member

PAONAM THOIBI
Board Member

HEMAM PUJA DEVI
Head Trainer, IYONG

MOIRANGTHEM MONIKA DEVI
Head Trainer, IYONG

SALAM BRAINY
Asst. Program Coordinator





Dianarose Haobijam

Co-Founder's word

There was no fixed roadmap when we began Matai Society. There was only a desire to respond to the realities around us, to be useful where we could, and to see what we could build together.

Much of the journey has been shaped by what was happening around us and by the people we worked alongside. What began as a response to COVID-19 grew into work around livelihoods, education, psychosocial wellbeing and community building. When conflict reshaped everyday life in Manipur, our work had to evolve again.

During COVID, we responded to immediate needs through relief, while also beginning to understand the longer-term effects on livelihoods, opportunities and social connections. Initiatives like the Mahei Centre took shape — a space where women, queer and trans persons could build skills, explore livelihoods and find community. Over time, we saw that these parts of the work could not be separated. Livelihoods connect to dignity. Education connects to hope. Mental health connects to safety and belonging. Community spaces can matter as much as the programmes within them.

Then came the devastating conflict of May 2023. Families were displaced, livelihoods disrupted, young people separated from familiar environments, and communities carried prolonged uncertainty and loss. We responded again with relief, education, livelihood support and psychosocial interventions. We created spaces for children and young people, supported trauma and psychosocial response, and helped people rebuild connection, agency and possibility where so much was beyond their control.

In many ways, we returned to where we started: responding to a crisis. But we were no longer the same organisation.

These years shaped how we think. Communities are not simply recipients of support. They carry knowledge, resilience, ideas and the capacity to shape their own futures. Our role is to listen, create spaces and opportunities, connect people with resources, and build alongside them. Meaningful work does not always follow a neat programme cycle. An immediate response can open something longer term. A livelihood initiative can create community. A conversation can begin someone's search for support. A safe place to gather, learn and feel heard can itself be an intervention.

Matai grew not through one fixed idea, but through experiences, relationships and responses. Mahei Centre came from one moment of need. Iyong from another. The Trauma Response Centre came from recognising that relief alone could not address what conflict was doing to children and young people. Wakhong came from the need for spaces where people could listen and feel heard. Our work today across sustainable livelihoods, psychosocial health, education and community building carries pieces of all we have learned.

I am grateful to the communities who trusted us, colleagues who stayed through uncertainty, volunteers and partners who gave their time and ideas, and everyone who supported Matai in visible and unseen ways.

As a co-founder, I do not look back simply as a list of programmes or milestones. I think of the people, the stories entrusted to us, what we got right, what we had to learn, and the moments we found our way without all the answers. Much uncertainty remains, and much work is still to be done. But perhaps that is part of what has defined Matai from the beginning: the willingness to remain present, to listen, to learn and to respond.

There was no fixed roadmap when we started. There still isn't one. And I think that is okay. What matters is that we continue building that road together, with the communities we work alongside, and with the belief that even in difficult circumstances, there is always room to create something more hopeful, dignified and possible.

Dianarose Haobijam
Co-Founder

LIVELIHOOD

1. IYONG, Livelihood Project

IYONG is a livelihood initiative by Matai Society designed to support conflict-affected weavers and tailors in Manipur, India. Through comprehensive training, resource provision, and market linkages—often developed in partnership with local organizations—IYONG aims to create lasting economic stability for vulnerable communities impacted by displacement.



The project specifically targets weavers and tailors who have been affected by the ongoing conflict in Manipur, with a particular focus on those forced to flee their homes. Its core objectives include rebuilding disrupted livelihoods, preserving traditional handloom skills at risk of being lost, and offering economic stability to some of the state's most vulnerable residents. Activities center on structured training programs, the production of traditional fabrics, and establishing reliable market access to ensure participants can earn sustained incomes.

IYONG is supported by different organizations including the Sarat Chandra Kagti Charitable Trust (CKST), NSRCEL, Manipur Weddings, LIKLA and Dweller Teas which have enabled the project to provide essential resources and training infrastructure. The initiative centers on the production and marketing of "Iyong"—a traditional, durable fabric native to Manipur—helping connect this cultural product with contemporary markets while ensuring that traditional knowledge and skills are passed on to future generations.

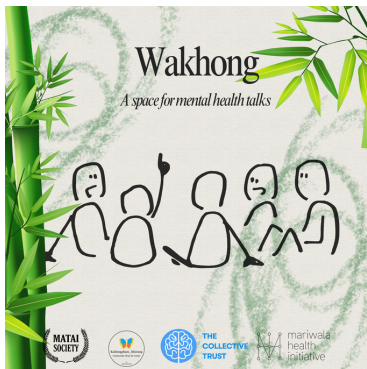
2. THE Mahei x iHEAR Project

The Mahei x iHEAR Project is a collaborative initiative launched in late 2024 to support LGBTQIA+ individuals in Bishnupur district Manipur, India, through an integrated approach combining skill-building, economic empowerment, and mental health support. This partnership brings together the iHEAR team (Sangath) and the Mahei Centre—a collective of women, queer, and trans youth under the Direct Aid Program (DAP) from the Australian Consulate-General in Kolkata.

A total of 127 training sessions were conducted with 50 participants across 4 different indigenous crafts throughout the project: 37 makeup and potloi (bridal embroidery) sessions, 41 beginner tailoring sessions, 21 advanced tailoring sessions, and 28 handloom weaving sessions. The participants were aged 19 to 60 and comprised of women, trans and queer persons from semi-urban and rural areas of Bishnupur districts such as Kwakta, Moirangkhunou, Ithai, Tronglaobi as well as IDP (internally displaced persons) displaced by the recent armed conflict and taking shelter at relief camps in Moirang. Three mental health workshops were held with the Mahei team in January and April 2025 led by psychologists from The Collective Trust and iHEAR, focusing on mapping community mental health needs, building support into organizational structures, and promoting self-care and mutual support. The Mahei team also went on exposure visits to Solidarity Foundation in Bangalore and Akam Foundation in Dibrugarh to share learnings on queer-trans livelihood work, community mobilization, and leadership.

PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH

1. Wakhong : Listening Circles



Wakhong is a recurring therapeutic listening circle based in Moirang, Manipur, jointly initiated by Matai Society and The Collective Trust to provide a safe, non-judgmental space for community healing and mental health support. The sessions are designed to be inclusive, welcoming LGBTQ+ individuals, allies, and internally displaced persons to engage in open conversations about mental health in catastrophes, personal struggles, generational gaps, and breaking the silence around trauma.

The circles are community-led, with facilitation often provided by individuals with lived experience, ensuring participants feel truly seen and heard. The practice emphasizes "listening without interruption" and offering empathy rather than immediate solutions, fostering healing through presence and shared understanding.

Sessions typically take place twice a month, at the Kaidongpham Moirang Community Drop-in Center. Special editions have also been organized, including a session on "Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies" commemorating World Mental Health Day, reflecting the initiative's responsiveness to the community's evolving needs.

2. Arts Practices for Inclusion (API)

Arts Practices for Inclusion (API) is a one-year certificate course offered by Snehadhara Foundation. Snehadhara Foundation trained six fellows from Matai Society, Manipur across the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic sessions. These fellows focused on arts-based interventions to address severe psychosocial challenges, PTSD, and mental health crises affecting communities in relief camps, particularly in the Moirang-Bishnupur area.

The program's core objective is to create safe, healing spaces through play, music, drama, movement, and visual arts, fostering long-term community resilience amidst ongoing conflict. The course structure involves in-person training sessions in Bangalore, after which fellows return to Manipur to implement these practices on the ground with ongoing supervision and support from Matai Society, ensuring they are equipped to work effectively with vulnerable populations.



The impact of this initiative is already visible, as fellows work directly in relief camps using arts to aid the emotional and social recovery of children, youth, and adults. This collaboration is part of the broader API program's 9th batch (2025-26), which includes 20 participants from eight cities across India, with a specific focus on strengthening community support in Manipur through this dedicated cohort of locally based practitioners.

PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH

3. Trauma Response Centre

Trauma Response Centre for Conflict Affected Youth & Children is a holistic, community-based initiative operating at Khoyol Keithel Relief Camp in Bishnupur District, Manipur, that integrates psychosocial support, educational continuity support, and creative healing for populations displaced by conflict. For the third consecutive year, the Centre has provided continued educational support to internally displaced students from Class 1 to 12, distributing textbooks, notebooks, and essential supplies to ensure learning continues despite displacement. In 2026, this educational initiative was expanded to include marginalized students living in and around the town, further increasing access to basic learning resources for vulnerable children in the region.



The Centre places strong emphasis on child protection and safe environments, exemplified by the successful functioning of Trauma Response Centre at Khoyol Keithel Relief Camp, where children and youth can experience safety, normalcy, and emotional security amidst the chaos of displacement. Recognizing that healing from trauma requires moments of joy and collective expression, the Centre organized a dedicated Children's Day sanctuary event for conflict-affected children, fostering emotional relief and creative expression. These efforts are complemented by regularly conducted art-based inclusion sessions that engage not only children and youth but also mothers' groups, fathers' groups, and other community members across various relief camps in Bishnupur district.

Trauma Response Centre's work is grounded in the understanding that effective trauma intervention in protracted displacement situations must extend beyond clinical approaches. By integrating educational support, creative arts therapies, and family-centered community engagement, the Centre creates nurturing environments where education, creative expression, and community connection become pathways to resilience and long-term recovery. This comprehensive approach ensures that healing is not an isolated clinical event but a sustained process woven into the daily fabric of community life in the relief camps.

PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH

4. Helpline Service

Matai Society's Helpline continues to serve as a vital lifeline for individuals in need of support, operating Tuesday through Saturday from 10 AM to 4 PM at 9892815573. The service specializes in distress support calls, ensuring that no caller has to face a crisis alone. Peer support remains available, offering understanding from individuals with lived experience. For urgent situations, the helpline provides referrals to temporary safe-space shelters, with immediate safety as the priority. Additionally, callers can receive referrals for affirmative clinical counselling tailored to their specific needs. Every service is delivered with sensitivity and respect for diverse identities. Whether a person is experiencing emotional distress or requires a secure place to stay, this helpline serves as a compassionate first point of contact. We encourage those in need to reach out during operating hours, reminding them that they do not have to bear the burden by themselves.



Matai Society HELPLINE



CALL: 9892815573
AVAILABLE: TUESDAY- SATURDAY, 10 AM-4 PM

Our Services

- Distress support calls
- Peer Support
- Referrals for urgent safe-space temporary shelter
- Affirmative clinical counselling referral

COMMUNITY BUILDING

1. Kaidongpham Moirang : Community Drop-in Centre

Kaidongpham Moirang : Community Drop-in Centre, is a dedicated safe space in Moirang Lamkhai that serves as a hub for community gatherings, peer support, and resource distribution. Through its initiatives, the society creates regular opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals and allies to share experiences, heal collectively, and find mutual support in an inclusive environment.

The Centre runs several targeted programs addressing the specific needs of the community. The year-long SPLGBTQ Program, supported by the Mariwala Health Initiative, focuses on suicide prevention, queer leadership development, and accessible clinical counselling. Advocacy efforts include practical workshops on applying for Transgender ID cards and fostering school inclusion, while it promotes economic independence through free skill-building initiatives for women, queer, and trans individuals seeking sustainable livelihoods.

Beyond its LGBTQ+ community-building work, Matai Society extends deeply into humanitarian response amid Manipur's ongoing conflict. It provides essential psychosocial support and emergency relief to internally displaced persons, with particular attention to the unique vulnerabilities faced by queer and trans individuals living in relief camps. This dual focus on community empowerment and crisis intervention reflects the society's commitment to holistic, intersectional support for those most marginalized in times of both stability and upheaval.



EVENTS

1. Manipur LGBTQIA+ Pride 2025

The Manipur LGBTQIA+ Pride 2025 event, co-organized by Matai Society, Manipur LGBTQ+ and SAATHII, took place on June 22, 2025, at The Castle Hotel in Imphal's Palace Compound, serving as a powerful culmination of diverse queer and trans voices from across the state. The day-long gathering, held from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, brought together approximately 80 community members and allies, focusing on empowering inclusion through arts while creating space for authentic representation and meaningful community building.



Earlier in 2025, Matai Society participated in the Pride Walk in Kakching on June 29 themed "Visibility, Equality and Justice," building momentum toward broader visibility and advocacy. The society also maintained its commitment to mental health through regular various community, art initiatives that reflect Matai Society's ongoing dedication to creating visible, supportive spaces for Manipur's LGBTQIA+ community through advocacy, mental health support, and collective celebration.

2. MATAI RUN 2025

The Matai Run 2025, organized by the Matai Society supported by Mariwala Health Initiative, took place on Friday, August 29, from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm in Bishnupur District, Manipur. The run was flagged off from Sendra and concluded at Khoyol Keithel, bringing together community members and allies in a powerful demonstration of solidarity.

The event carried a dual focus: promoting LGBTQ+ visibility and raising awareness for suicide prevention, addressing an issue that disproportionately affects queer and trans individuals due to pervasive societal stigma. By creating a visible public platform, the Matai Run sought to challenge this stigma and foster greater acceptance and support for the community.



The run exemplified the Matai Society's commitment to community engagement and mental health advocacy, using collective action to send a clear message that LGBTQ+ lives matter and that suicide prevention remains a critical concern requiring ongoing attention and compassion.

32

MAHEI iHEAR trainees now earn from their skills—10 in makeup (some out-of-state), 16 in tailoring, 5 in weaving, and 1 in potloi making.

10

IYONG Trainees gained certified skills in tailoring, digital tools, and finance through a 40-day program, boosting income and enterprise potential and community strength.

1

Earned formal acknowledgment Certification from Bishnupur District Administration, strengthening credibility and trust on the Independence Day Celebration, 2025.

246

IDP and marginalised students get free access to essential educational resources, supporting continuity in their studies.

3

IYONG Livelihood Centre launched at Tourist Resort at Sendra Hillock Relief Camp, jointly run by Matai Society and Relief Camp Committee, adding to the two other units operational at Khoyol Keithel Relief Camp and Horticulture Relief Camp Sendra.

12

Conducted Listening Circle Sessions amongst IDP and LGBTQ persons promoting community well-being

500+

Co-conducted mental health camps with District Mental Health Program Bishnupur district, and reached more than 500 persons at relief camps.

600+

Individuals from marginalized communities—including displaced persons and children with special needs—have been reached through Arts Practices for Inclusion (API), an arts based therapeutic models.

12

Trained 12 young LGBTQ+ activists in collective functioning and fundraising (Dec 2025), and empowered 30 young queer leaders from three districts through a 3-day workshop on advocacy, legal rights, and self-care (Oct 2024).

1

Attended at International Conference on Psychosocial support and Mental Health organised by NIMHANS, Bangalore.

1. INTERN

“What stood out to me most was how Matai Society’s approach prioritizes local leadership, peer-based healing, and genuine community participation. Their rapport with camp residents shows that trust and respect form the foundation of effective psychosocial work.”

Melinda Hemam, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai
Intern at Matai Society

2. FUNDING PARTNER

“Despite facing immense logistical hurdles, resource constraints, security risks, and volunteer burnout, the team demonstrates remarkable adaptability and perseverance. Their ability to deliver consistent support in an unstable environment is a testament to their organizational dedication and grassroots connectivity.”

Mariwala Health Initiative, Mumbai

3. BENIFICIARY

“We keep overthinking and we have a hard time feeling happy. In these 4-5 hours of training by Matai everyday, all these feelings disappear and my mind is filled with happy thoughts. Also as long as Matai provides support, it makes us feel safe for our income generation.”

Rk Ranjana Devi, IYONG Trainee,
Tourist Resort at Sendra Hillock Relief Camp

4. COLLABORATOR

Working with Matai Society has made us truly appreciate the spirit of collaboration and teamwork. What stands out is not the absence of setbacks, but how the team responds—seeing challenges as opportunities to learn, reflect, and grow together. We also see members stepping up as equal stakeholders in a democratic, participatory setup.

At The Collective Trust, it is a pleasure and privilege to be mental health partners with Matai Society. They bring the essence of community work, lived realities, and grassroots engagement, helping make our psychosocial support more grounded, relevant, and complete.

For us, this partnership is not just about working alongside each other. It is about learning from one another and bringing different strengths together to create something neither of us could do alone.

The Collective Trust, Imphal

MATAI SOCIETY

MOIRANG LAMKHAI, WARD NO 1, BISHNUPUR-795133, MANIPUR-INDIA

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2026

Liabilities	Sch No.	Amount (Rs.)	Assets	Sch No.	Amount (Rs.)
General Fund	1	1,121,149	Fixed Assets	5	145,360
Loans (Liability)	2	120,000	Other Current Assets	4	1,215,789
Current Liabilities	3	120,000			
Total		1,361,149	Total		1,361,149

Schedule 1 to 5 forming part of Balance Sheet and Notes to Accounts are forming part of Financial Statement

KUMAM DAVIDSON SINGH
(President)

[Signature]
President
MATAI SOCIETY
Moirang Lamkhai

LAISHANGBAM OPENDRO SINGH
(Secretary)

[Signature]
Secretary
MATAI SOCIETY
Moirang Lamkhai

MEINAM BHARATI DEVI
(Treasurer)

M. Bharati Devi
Treasurer
MATAI SOCIETY
Moirang Lamkhai

AS PER OUR REPORT ON GIVEN DATE
For SSTM & Company
Chartered Accountants
Firm's Reg. No. 035819n

[Signature]

(CA.Md Tabrez Siddiqui)
Partner

Membership No: 553989

Place: Aligarh

Date: 30/7/2026

UDIN: 26553989KZFYRZ9758



OUR PARTNERS

- 1** **Sarat Chandra Kagti Charitable Trust (SCKCT), Guwahati**
- 2** **Snehadhara Foundation, Bengaluru**
- 3** **MaolKeki Foundation, Imphal**
- 4** **Azim Premji Foundation, Bengaluru**
- 5** **Nadathur S. Raghavan Centre for Enterpreneurial Learning (NSRCEL), Bengaluru**
- 6** **Dwellers Tea, Imphal**
- 7** **Paamel Foundation, Imphal**
- 8** **The Collective Trust, Imphal**
- 9** **Mariwala Health Initiative (MHI), Mumbai**
- 10** **District Mental Health Programme (DMHP), Bishnupur**
- 11** **Varta Trust, Kolkata**
- 12** **Thangjam Agro Industries Pvt. Ltd. (LIKLA), Imphal**



CONTACT US



Registered Office Address

Moirang Lamkhai, Ward No. 1, Bishnupur District, Manipur - 795133



<https://www.mataisociety.org/>



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