

Newsletter

February 2025



Inauguration of Bokashi Unit at East Jaintia Hills

IN THIS ISSUE

05 Inauguration of Bokashi Unit at East Jaintia Hills

08 Van Dhan Vikash Kendra (VDVK) Awareness Program

11 Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme in South West Garo Hills

17 Story of the Week: Jongksha Village's Shift to Natural Farming Leads to Lower Costs and Higher Incomes



PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Meghalaya Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project (Megha-LAMP)

Improving farmers' incomes and quality of life in rural Meghalaya

Project for Community Based Forest Management and Livelihoods Improvement in Meghalaya (MegLIFE)

Restoring and conserving natural resources through sustainable forest management, livelihood improvement, and institutional strengthening.

Protection of Vulnerable Catchment Areas In Meghalaya (MegARISE)

Improving water availability and security (productivity) by mainstreaming scientific participatory approaches to sustainable catchment protection and community forest management.

Sustainable Land Management Meghalaya Project (SLM)

Promoting agroecological and natural organic agricultural practices of Meghalaya's farmers.

GREEN Meghalaya Payment for Ecosystem Services

Supporting villages, communities, clans or individuals that commit to conserve and protect Natural Forests for a minimum period of 30 years.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Orientation Programme for IVCS Mobilization in Selsella Block



DPMU, West Garo Hills, hosted a One-Day Orientation Programme at Lower Shyamnagar for two Phase-III IVCS—Jakusan IVCS Ltd. and Bakrimesa IVCS Ltd.—in Selsella Block. With 45 participants, including non-members.

The focus was on mobilizing more members and promoting shares and savings. Non-members express their intent to purchase shares and join in the coming month.

Awareness-Cum-Orientation on Artificial Insemination for Bokashi Piggery and Poultry



An Awareness-cum-Orientation Program on Artificial Insemination for Bokashi Piggery and Poultry Units was held on January 28, 2025, at Kalchengpara IVCS, Selsella Block, West Garo Hills. Veterinary doctors from SPMU, Shillong (Eastern and Western Regions) shared their expertise, providing insights to the participants. This initiative aims to enhance livestock productivity in the region.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Programme on Plans & Execution of Working Capital and UC Submission



On 28th January, 2025, DPMU, West Garo Hills organized a Programme on Plans & Execution of Working Capital and Submission of UC at Lower Shyamnagar for the five IVCS that received the fund from MLAMP and LIFCOM. The programme was attended by 20 representatives of five IVCS and they were briefed on the proper utilization of the working capital, timely repayment and the processes of UC submission. 20 members from 5 IVCS that received the fund. During the interaction, the doubts were also cleared and the Chairmen and Secretaries of the IVCS said they will abide by the rules and utilize the fund well.



With the second tranche amount of ₹1 lakh , the Producer Group in Rerapara, South West Garo Hills, is expanding mushroom & turmeric cultivation, piggery, and canopy rentals—now selling mushrooms at ₹300/kg!

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Inauguration of Bokashi Unit at Jalyiah IVCS



The Bokashi unit of Jalyiah IVCS was inaugurated on February 3, 2025, by Shri Shivansh Awasthi, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, East Jaintia Hills District, in the presence of Dr. T. Shylla, BDO, Khliehriat C&RD Block, Smt. Pynhunlang War, DPM, along with staff of DPMU, East Jaintia Hills, and representatives of Jalyiah IVCS. The unit, which includes piggery, poultry, and a feed-making facility, was constructed at a total cost of ₹5,20,000, with ₹4,50,000 sanctioned under MLAMP-MBMA and ₹70,000 contributed by IVCS.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Field visits and Follow ups



On 30th January 2025, West Garo Hills team reviewed PG activities with FOCUS NGOs and visited Harinkata Mushroom PG in Resubelpara. The one-year-old group of 50 members, supported by a ₹1 lakh grant from FOCUS, MBMA, cultivates mushrooms for local markets and is also engaged in banana plantation and weaving.



On 3rd February 2025, the North Garo Hills team and Veterinary department conducted a field visit to bokashi poultry and piggy sheds at Mendima IVCS Ltd. A hands-on training on bokashi methods was also carried out. Additionally, the IVCS were also advised to select individuals for Artificial Insemination training.



On 5th February 2025, the North Garo Hills team visited AGROFED Kharkutta Ginger Processing Unit. Supported by ₹20 lakh for infrastructure under the Ginger Mission and ₹1.25 lakh in working capital from MBMA, the FPC has stocked 5 tons of raw ginger and started drying sliced ginger.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Field visits and Follow ups

Under Dingampara IVCS Ltd., South West Garo Hills District, CMC members are aggregating raw arecanut, investing ₹7 lakh in procurement and advance bagan bookings for members at ₹2,600–₹2,800 per bag. The society has successfully processed 150 bags of supari, while 100 bags were sold raw to traders at ₹3,200 per bag.



CM Elevate Beneficiaries Trained on Piggery & Poultry



CM Elevate beneficiaries attended a one-day training on piggery and poultry at MMCS Hall, Mendipathar. The session covered insurance, breeding, fattening management, and business modules, equipping 60 participants with the knowledge to grow their ventures.

PROJECT FOR COMMUNITY BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT IN MEGHALAYA



Van Dhan Vikash Kendra (VDVK) Awareness Program at Lower Damalgre is a Village in Betasing Block in West Garo Hills District

The Van Dhan Vikash Kendra (VDVK) Awareness Program held on January 31, 2025, in Lower Rembigre village focused on promoting tribal entrepreneurship and improving livelihoods through sustainable use of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Attended by VPIC secretaries, VCF members, and IVCS secretaries, the event targeted self-help groups (SHGs), emphasizing the need for at least 200 members per cluster. It raised awareness about government schemes providing financial and marketing support, aiming to enhance tribal economic self-sufficiency while ensuring environmental sustainability.

Awareness programs on Bamboo Mission

On January 30, 2025, a one-day awareness program on bamboo resource management was conducted in Betasing Block, South West Garo Hills, with active participation from six villages across two clusters. Farmers demonstrated a strong interest in enhancing their bamboo plantations, establishing nurseries, and expanding cultivation under the bamboo mission. As part of the MegLIFE project in Meghalaya, this initiative seeks to strengthen the bamboo sector by increasing plantation coverage, improving post-harvest management, promoting value-added product development, and reducing the state's dependence on imported bamboo products.



PROJECT FOR COMMUNITY BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT IN MEGHALAYA

Progress on several community infrastructure projects



Community halls are under construction in Pashang and Laitdiengsai in Mawkyntrew Block, East Khasi Hills. In addition, RCC and plastic water tanks are being installed in Mynsang and Laitmynsang to enhance the local water supply. A vented check dam is also underway at Mawlali, East Khasi Hills to improve water management in the region. Furthermore, the construction of a water tank is advancing in Dildigre, located in the Gasuapara Block of South Garo Hills.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Awareness Programme under the Ganol Catchment in West and South West Garo Hills Districts



Awareness programme held at Kalakgre Village, West Garo Hills District



Awareness programme held at Bongparaa Village, South West Garo Hills District

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme in the Ganol Catchment, South West Garo Hills District



Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme at Andarkona Village, Rerapara Block, South West Garo Hills



Ground Truthing cum awareness programme at Balangre Village, Rerapara Block, South West Garo Hills



Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme at Chisregre Village, Rerapara Block, South West Garo Hills

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme in the Ganol Catchment, South West Garo Hills District



Ground Truthing and Awareness Programme at Chisregre Village, Rerapara Block, South West Garo Hills



Ground Truthing cum awareness programme at Old Harigaon Village, South West Garo Hills held on the 5th Feb 2025

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Awareness Programme under South West Garo Hills District under the Ganol Catchment



Awareness Programme at New Harigoan Village, South West Garo Hills, on 5th February 2025



Awareness Programme at Wakantagre, Rerapara Village, South West Garo Hills



Awareness Programme at Akkakkigre Village, Rerapara Block, on 5th February 2025

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT MEGHALAYA



Vermi Bed Installation Training at Project Villages in Ri Bhoi

Training sessions on Vermo Bed Installation were conducted in Raitong, Sohpdok, Thad, and Mawdiengngan in Ri Bhoi District, which aimed to provide participants with the necessary skills for effective composting and organic waste management. Farmers, local Farmer Producer Company (FPC) members, and Self-Help Group (SHG) members attended the training, which covered key aspects of vermi composting, from its benefits to practical demonstrations.

Participants were introduced to the step-by-step process of installing vermi beds, the materials required, and essential maintenance practices to ensure optimal composting. The sessions also addressed common challenges, such as pest control, and highlighted best practices for handling organic waste.

Discussions also focused on the economic advantages of vermi composting, its integration into existing farming methods, and the role of community participation in sustaining the practice. Proper record-keeping and monitoring techniques were also emphasized to help participants track compost production effectively.

The training were facilitated by the Directorate of Horticulture as part of SLM project activities

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT MEGHALAYA

Virtual Conference to Review Project Progress and Plans

A Virtual Conference (VC) to review the project progress and plans under SLM was held on 30 January 2025. The meeting was chaired by Smt. Isawanda Laloo (IAS), Project Director, SLM. Discussions included the status of project implementation, updates on the preparation of the loan component documents, and other matters. Participants included Shri. Augustus Suting, Additional Project Director (APD), SLM; Shri. Debashish Rudra, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), MBMA; Shri. Jun J. Momin, Deputy Project Director (DPD), SLM; Mr. Antonio Sartorius, Chief Technical Officer, Implementation Management Consultant (IMC); as well as other members from MBMA, the partner agencies of MBMA—namely MSRLS, BRDC, and DoH—and the IMC.



Harvesting of Ginger in Thad village, Ri Bhoi District



Inspections at lands of various Community Based Organization(CBOs) in Laskein to evaluate the progress of Farm Yard Manure(FYM) preparation

GREEN MEGHALAYA PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Green Field Associates conducted PES Awareness Program and collected applications for Green Meghalaya.



The PES Awareness Programme on Meghalaya Green, organized by Green Field Associates, reached communities across Meghalaya, spreading awareness about the initiative. Sessions were held in Tongseng (Saipung Block), Mynri Umsning (Bhoirymbong Block), Syntiewmaw Umsning (Umsning Block), Aritakgre (Gasuapara Block), Mawdwar (Bhoirymbong Block), Mawskeithem (Jirang Block), and beyond. The program engaged villagers, highlighting the importance of sustainable practices under the Green Meghalaya initiative.



Green Field Associates gathered 12 application forms from villages across multiple blocks, including Katuligre, Arigre, Ranikor, Wahsarang, Kama Dumindikgre, Bataw, and Suchen Dhana, as part of the Meghalaya Green initiative.

STORY OF THE WEEK

Jongksha Village's Shift to Natural Farming Leads to Lower Costs and Higher Incomes

Jongksha Village in Mawkynrew Block, East Khasi Hills District, has 760 households, with most residents engaged in farming, daily labour, and animal husbandry. While agriculture is a primary livelihood, only a few initially practiced Natural Farming (NF).

In July 2023, Jongksha officially began adopting NF. To support this transition, SHG members received training from NF livelihood cadres known as Internal Community Resource Persons (ICRPs) who had attended a training programme in Andhra Pradesh, organized by the Meghalaya State Rural Livelihoods Society (MSRLS). The experts from Andhra Pradesh provided further training to SHG members. Upon returning, these trainers were able to teach local farmers how to prepare organic manure and cultivate crops without chemicals.

Previously, farmers relied on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which increased yields but harmed the environment and reduced profits due to middlemen controlling prices. Seeking a more sustainable approach, they began transitioning to organic methods, starting with kitchen gardens growing radish, mustard, cabbage, coriander, onion, and beans, along with wild edibles.

Today, Jongksha has 4.94 hectares under NF and has become one of the leading villages in Mawkynrew Block promoting the practice.

Farmers have since reported additional income from selling organic produce, lower costs by replacing chemicals with natural inputs, and improved health due to reduced chemical exposure. Their shift to NF has also encouraged nearby villages to adopt similar methods.



WHAT ARE THE CORE PRACTICES OF NATURAL FARMING?

1

BEEJAMRUTHAM (BJM) Seed Treatment

- Enhances seed germination.
- Strengthens seedlings for healthy plant growth.

2

GHANAJEEVAMRUTHAM (GJM) Organic Manure

- Mixed with Farm Yard Manure (FYM) to enrich the soil.
- Provides essential nutrients, improving soil fertility and plant health.

3

DRAVA JEEVAMRUTHAM (DJM) Liquid Organic Fertilizer

- Boosts soil microbial activity.
- Enhances nutrient availability and plant immunity

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