

Newsletter

January 2025



Kong Blossom Nongrum: Advocate for Organic Farming and Mahila Kisan Awardee.

Watch her inspiring journey promoting organic practices and empowering her community. Scan the QR code for more!



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Projects and Programmes



Meghalaya Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project

Improving farmers' incomes and quality of life in rural Meghalaya.



Project for Community Based Forest Management and Livelihoods Improvement in Meghalaya

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



Protection of Vulnerable Catchment Areas In Meghalaya

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



Sustainable Land Management Meghalaya Project

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



GREEN Meghalaya Payment for Ecosystem

GREEN Meghalaya (PES) scheme is meant to support 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



Financial Literacy Programme at Krang Village, Sohiong C&RD Block.

On 4th January 2025, the Meghalaya Cooperative Apex Bank, Krang Branch, hosted a Financial Literacy Programme at Krang Village, Sohiong C&RD Block.

Key speakers included Shri P. Rani (Branch Manager), Shri K. Lyngdoh (BLCC Chairman), and Smt. A. Khongwet (Manager/EFC Sohiong In-charge), who shared valuable insights to empower the community.



Reviewing Progress on Key Initiatives in West Garo Hills

On 6th January 2025, the DPMU of West Garo Hills held a review meeting at the PRIME Hub in Tura to discuss Megha-LAMP activities, PRIME Hubs, FOCUS, CM ELEVATE, and Convergence Initiatives.

The session was chaired by Shri Manish Kumar, IAS, SDO, SADAR (Tura).

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Orientation Programme and Follow-Up Meeting Held for IVCS in West Garo Hills

On January 10, 2025, the District Project Management Unit (DPMU) of West Garo Hills conducted an Orientation Programme on the Members Mobilization Campaign and Corpus Fund for the IVCS under the 3rd Phase. The session focused on strategies for membership and savings mobilization and provided a platform for IVCS representatives to address their queries. Shri Manish Kumar, IAS, SDO, SADAR (Tura), attended the programme, commending the efforts of the IVCS and delivering an inspiring speech to motivate the participants.

Later that day, DPMU, West Garo Hills convened a follow-up meeting to discuss fund releases, particularly for trial marketing, monitoring strategies, and UC collection. The meeting also reviewed the AWPB and outlined plans for completing activities for the financial year 2024-25. Additionally, the collection of success story leads under the KM initiatives was briefly deliberated.



Team Visit to IVCS and Processing Units in East Garo Hills

On January 9, 2025, team East Garo Hills visited Dechakki IVCS and Bolchurani IVCS to inspect ginger aggregation for processing. A total of 60 MT of ginger is set to be processed at the Asil Dikagre and Bolmoram Adik Chibasal Ginger Processing Units. Additionally, raw ginger will be supplied by Haslong IVCS, Rongdu, Mangsang Bamil IVCS, Sundare, and Rongsak IVCS, boosting the district's production capacity.

PROJECT FOR COMMUNITY BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT IN MEGHALAYA



Progress continues on Soil and Water Conservation Initiatives in South Garo Hills

Progress continues on Soil and Water Conservation initiatives in South Garo Hills. Plastic tank platforms have been completed at Bolbokgre Village Project Implementation Committee (VPIC), Rongara Block and Bugakolgre VPIC, Chokpot Block. Platform work is underway at Dilsinggre, Rongara Block, while spring-tapped chamber painting has been completed in Rongara Block.



Sloping Agricultural Land Technology

On January 21, 2025, the SALT Nodal Representative visited Pedaldoba Rabha in Tikrikilla Block to evaluate seed collection efforts by the VCF at the SALT farm. The SPMU Nodal Officer also conducted hands-on training to refine seed collection techniques, focusing on improving agroforestry practices and promoting sustainable farming.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Strengthening Community Engagement and Sustainable Practices: Key Discussions on MegARISE



A meeting was held on the 16th Jan, 2025 with Shri Thomas A. Sangma, Hon'ble Speaker of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, and Shri Marcuise N. Marak, Minister of Soil and Water Conservation Department, to discuss on the MegARISE Project. The discussions included a brief introduction to the project, updates on progress made so far, and challenges faced during implementation.

Key recommendations from the Hon'ble Speaker and Minister included organizing community sensitization meetings with senior district administrative officials and inviting the Hon'ble Chief Minister to participate in such programs to enhance impact. Additionally, they emphasized the need to explore sustainable alternatives to curb the expansion of areca nut plantations in the Garo region by promoting crop diversification and sustainable agricultural practices.

VLMAP Program Conducted at Mandal Nokat under Samanda Block



In January 16, 2025, the Village-Level Micro Action Plan (VLMAP) program was successfully conducted at Mandal Nokat under Samanda Block. The program provided detailed guidance to VPIC members, Executive Committee (EC) members, and the local community using maps and information gathered during the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise.

The event was facilitated by the CMU, Ganol team, with key support from Shri James Kharkongor, Deputy Project Director (DPD), MegARISE, and Smt. Evamary Diengdoh, Deputy Manager, M&E, MegARISE, SPMU. Their presence and insights greatly enriched the program, ensuring clarity and engagement among participants.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE CATCHMENT AREAS IN MEGHALAYA

Orientation and Training Programs for VCFs by Umiew and Ganol CMU Teams



The Umiew CMU team organized a two-day Orientation and Training Program for Village Community Facilitators (VCFs) at Bethany Society, Laitumkhrah, Shillong, starting on January 16, 2024. The program witnessed the participation of 29 VCFs representing 29 VPICs under Myllem, Khadarshnong-Laitkroh, Mawryngkneng, and Mawphlang C&RD Blocks. The training covered crucial topics, including the project purpose, environmental and social considerations, bookkeeping, MIS, and M&E.

Similarly, the Ganol CMU team conducted a two-day Orientation and Training Program for VCFs at the Extension Training Centre, Tura Dakopgre, on January 13 and 14, 2025. The session was attended by 49 participants from 53 VPICs under Rongram, Samanda, and Rerapara C&RD Blocks. Alongside covering key topics such as project purpose, environmental and social aspects, bookkeeping, MIS, and M&E, the second day (January 14, 2025) included a field visit. This visit provided participants with practical experience in demarcating plantation areas and spring mapping, offering hands-on insights to enhance the implementation of their training.

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT MEGHALAYA



Visit to Collective Marketing Centre (CMC) sites in EKHD and RBD

The Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) team of the SLM project visited three Collective Marketing Centres (CMCs)—Khrang and Mawlyndiar in East Khasi Hills, and Umwang Pyllun in Ri Bhoi—to monitor ongoing construction and ensure adherence to ESMP standards and procedures.

Various Activities facilitated by MSRLS in Umkrem, Eastern West Khasi Hills District

Several activities were undertaken in Umkrem Village in Mawthadraishan Block of Eastern West Khasi Hills District. Relay sowing was carried out in the agri-nutri garden model using a diverse selection of cole crops, including radish, coriander, lettuce, carrot, mustard, turnip, and peas. This strategic approach enhanced biodiversity, optimized space utilization, and naturally supported pest management, contributing to healthier crop growth.

All seeds and seedlings were treated with Beejamrutham, a natural bio-stimulant that strengthens plants against diseases and pests. Farmyard manure (FYM) was enriched with Ghana Jeevamruth, which enhanced soil fertility and promoted beneficial microorganisms vital for sustainable farming.

The lead farmer successfully harvested cabbage, cauliflower, mustard leaves, and carrots, marking a significant milestone in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. The activities were attended by ICRPs, promoting teamwork and facilitating the exchange of sustainable farming techniques within the community.

This initiative highlights the impact of sustainable practices and collaborative learning. By promoting the ATM Model and natural treatments, the community is collectively building a resilient and productive farming ecosystem, ensuring long-term benefits for all stakeholders.

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT MEGHALAYA



Model Garden Emerges in Nartiang

Farmer's kitchen garden in Nartiang Village, Thadlaskein Block, West Jaintia Hills showing remarkable results after being sprayed with Neemastram three times. The garden is now in excellent condition and has been classified as an A-grade model garden.



Visit to Dambo Rongjeng, East Garo Hills District

A visit was made to Dambo Rongjeng Block, East Garo Hills District, to document the activities of lead farmer Ketharin Sangma. During this visit, 25 liters of Dravajeevamrut were prepared for her model garden. This natural preparation played a key role in supporting the successful cultivation and harvesting of five varieties of vegetables.

Among the produce, Chinese cabbage and Pokchoi were harvested from her A-grade model garden. The harvested crops were then sold to the Rural Mart in Dambo Rongjeng Block, contributing to local market integration and fostering economic sustainability.

The activities were conducted collaboratively by lead farmers and their teams, promoting active participation and knowledge sharing within the farming community. This initiative continues to strengthen sustainable agricultural practices and build a resilient farming ecosystem.

GREEN MEGHALAYA PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM

Celebrating Meghalaya's 53rd Statehood with PES Support



On the occasion of Meghalaya Day, the foundation stone for the new Secretariat building was laid, and beneficiaries of the state's flagship programs were celebrated. The event was graced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri Conrad K. Sangma, as the Chief Guest, along with the Hon'ble Deputy Chief Ministers, Shri Prestone Tynsong and Shri Sniawbhalang Dhar.

21st January 2025, marks a historic moment, as we celebrate the 53rd anniversary of Meghalaya's statehood since gaining independence in 21st January, 1972.

An amount of Rs. 1.97 crore was disbursed to 126 beneficiaries under GREEN Meghalaya+ Payment for Ecosystem Service across the state on the occasion of Meghalaya's 53rd statehood anniversary.

From the Khasi and Jaintia Hills Region, Khlaw-Shnong Umlaper from Bhoirymbong Block of Ri Bhoi District has received the highest reward of Rs. 15,21,275/- (Fifteen Lakhs Twenty-One Thousand Two Hundred and Seventy-Five rupees only), covering an area of 408.51 hectares.

From the Jaintia Hills region, Dorbar Shnong Nongkhroh from Thadlaskein Block of West Jaintia Hills is also receiving a reward amount of Rs. 7,74,650/- (Seven Lakhs Seventy-Four Thousand Six Hundred Fifty rupees only) for today's event, with an area of 109.86 hectare.

While from the Garo Region, Dobakkol Village Forest Reserve from Resubelpara Block of North Garo Hills has been rewarded Rs. 3,91,175/- (Three Lakhs Ninety-One Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Five rupees only), covering an area of 112.94 hectares.

GREEN Meghalaya + under the Payment for Ecosystem Model aimed to address the problem of high rates of deforestation due to changes in land use and practices by providing financial support to the villages, communities, clans and individuals willing to conserve existing natural forests for a period of 30 years.

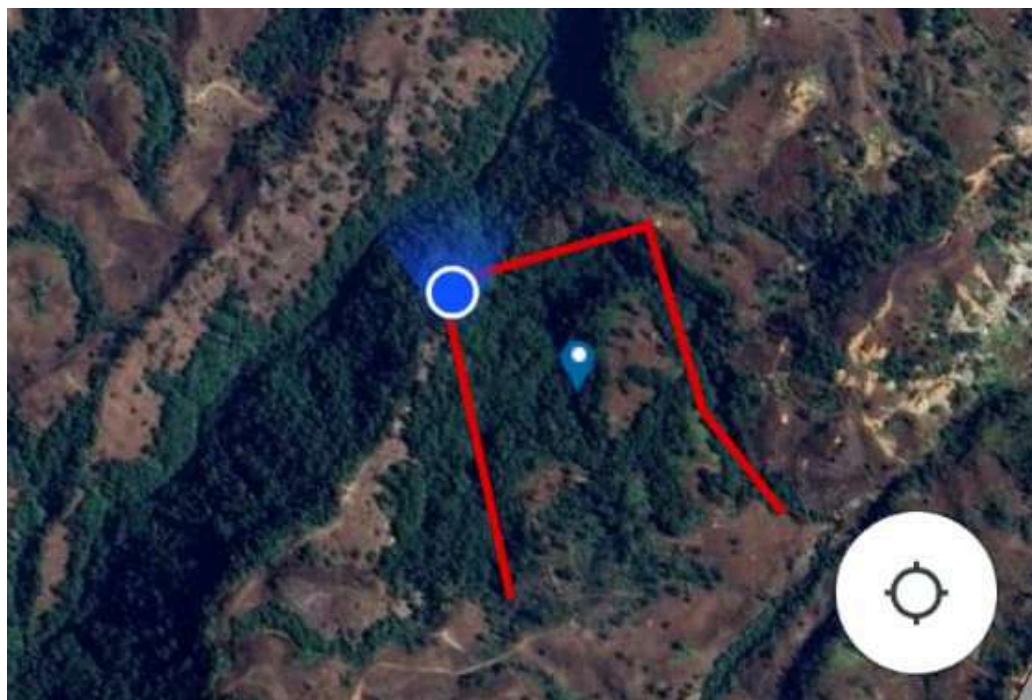
Launched in 2022, so far more than 3,000 beneficiaries owning more than 51,000 hectares of natural forest have benefitted.

Building on the success, Government of Meghalaya is now expanding the scheme in its commitment towards ensuring long-term ecological balance, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience.

Now an additional 50,000 hectares will be covered under this initiative to cover a total of 100,000 hectares or 1000 Sq. Km. of natural forests.

GREEN MEGHALAYA PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Monitoring Reporting and Verification activities conducted by the Green Field Associates



The Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) activity was successfully conducted across a wide geographical area, covering several blocks and villages.

Key locations included Tiniang in Mawshynrut Block, Rongasigre in Chokpot Block, Pamra Kmai and Kairang in Khliehriat Block, Shuthim in Pynursla Block, Mawpiah in Mairang Block, Khongrapara in Tikrikilla Block, Kudeng Thymmai in Amlarem Block, Nginiong in Mawthadraishan Block, Sonamite in Rerapara Block, Nokbak Ading in Dambo Rongjeng Block, Weiloi in Mawsynram Block, Upper Jambalaya and Kalwe in Kharkutta Block, Patharlyndan and Lawdisai in Mawthadraishan Block, as well as Sonapyrdi, Shymplong, and Lahalein in Khliehriat Block, Sohryngkham in Mawryngkneng Block, Thangbnai in Mawkynew Block, Saphai and lawthymme in Laskein Block, and Mawlangren in Mawthadraishan Block.



STORY OF THE WEEK

Smt Suklin Dohling: Connecting Tradition with Modern Food Processing

In the small village of Nongtraw, East Khasi Hills, Suklin Dohling is quietly working to bring back millet farming and preserve her community's traditions. Motivated by her connection to her roots, Suklin started "Marbin Food Processing," a small unit named after her parents where she processes millet into products like health drinks, flour, and snacks.

Suklin's path has been anything but easy. Balancing household chores, caring for her ailing father, and overcoming financial challenges, Suklin worked hard to complete her education, taking up teaching jobs to support herself. Later, she gained skills in food processing through the Megha-LAMP project. In 2021, she began experimenting with millet. Initial feedback was tough—her first millet malt was too bitter for some—but Suklin persevered, refining her technique to create a product loved by many.

Suklin's efforts have encouraged millet farming in Nongtraw, a village with steep terrain and challenging weather conditions. She supports local farmers by purchasing their produce and creating a range of products, such as pickles, juices, and jackfruit chips, which are sold in Shillong, Assam, and even Mumbai.

Her work has earned her recognition, including the Mahila Kisan Diwas Award and acknowledgment for her innovative millet-based products. For Suklin, it is about more than business—it is about preserving traditions and supporting her community to build a sustainable future.

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