

9th August 2023

UPDATES OF THE WEEK

Newsletter

The Meghalaya Community Led Landscape Management Project (MCLLMP)



The Meghalaya Livelihood Improvement through Forest Enhancement Project (MegLIFE)



Institute of Natural Resources (INR)



The Meghalaya Livelihood and Access to Markets Project (Megha-LAMP)



Farmers' Collectivization for Upscaling of Production and Marketing Systems (FOCUS)



The Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA)



The Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA)



MCLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



Ri-Bhoi



DPM and Assistant Manager (KM) inspected a training program being conducted by Mr. Stephan Shadap, an innovator under Grassroot Innovation Fund. The training focused on crafting of beehives from straw and bamboo, valuable for beekeeping and ecological sustainability.

Beekeeping enhances biodiversity, pollination, honey production, and local income. The training aimed to equip participants with skills for making beehives from locally available, sustainable materials.



Mr. Stephen Shadap also discussed the proposed activities during the training program. The ongoing Bee-Museum cum Training Centre construction underscores Ri-Bhoi DPMU's commitment to beekeeping and knowledge sharing. This center can serve as a hub for training, exhibitions, and conservation awareness.



MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



Knowledge Management team aided journalist Cornilous Laloo in documenting Mawkyrdep Village's 2022 National Water Award win in the "Best Village Panchayat" category. Recognizing water management achievements is vital for sustainability awareness.



The journalist's village visit and interactions unveiled insights into their winning efforts. Sharing these successes inspires others for water sustainability.



DPM and Knowledge Management team inspected the NRM (Natural Resource Management) library at Mawkyrdep Village. An innovation, which is one-of-a-kind makes it even more exciting for the community and the broader region.

The Library will serve as centers for learning, research, and information dissemination related to environmental conservation, agriculture, forestry, water management, and more. Such initiatives are crucial for empowering communities with the knowledge and skills needed to manage their natural resources effectively and sustainably.

MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



On August 3rd, 2023, the District Project Manager visited Mawpun Village, under Bhoirybong Block, to conduct a follow-up on the Spring Chamber construction. During the visit, he found out that the construction of Spring Chamber had been completed successfully.

With the Spring Chamber in place, Mawpun Village can now look forward to increased water availability and a more sustainable approach to water resource management, which will benefit local residents and contribute to the region's overall development.



East Khasi Hills



On August 3rd and 4th, 2023, the KM teams from SMPU and DPMU visited Mawlynggot village in Mawkyntrew Block to meet with Executive Committee Members for a site inspection of the various interventions implemented in the village for video documentation.

MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



On August 3, 2023, a team comprising Training Specialists, Environmental Management and GIS, along with two Village Community Facilitators (VCFs) and the Sordar, visited Synnei Village in Mawsynram Block to initiate the Forest Management Plan (FMP) enumeration process. The total forest area to be surveyed is 172.98 hectares. Given the steep topography and dense forest cover, it is anticipated that the FMP exercise will require approximately 10 days for completion. The Community Forest has been nominated for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) as part of the Green Meghalaya initiative, and the forest has been found to be thriving and untouched.



On August 9, 2023, Knowledge Management (KM) team visited Mawlyngot village, located within the Mawkyntrew Block, to conduct video documentation of a check dam.

MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



North Garo Hills



Agroforestry efforts in Damit Dangra, led by VNRMC under Resubelpara C&RD Block, involved planting pineapple, papaya, and orange saplings on community land in 2021. Now, with these trees bearing fruit, the community can both consume and sell them, raising funds for ongoing sustainable development. The generated funds will be used to purchase more saplings, expanding the agroforestry plantation. This expansion will enhance the ecosystem, biodiversity, and environment of the area while promoting economic stability.



The boundary demarcation carried out by the DPMU team members at Asim Apal village under Kharkutta C&RD Block on August 3, 2023, signifies a proactive move towards improved land management and conservation. This demarcation provides clarity to villagers and local authorities regarding the boundaries of the reserve forest, vital for its protection and sustainable use. The benefits of boundary demarcation extend to both the environment and community, enhancing biodiversity support, water regulation, and soil conservation. The utilization of the PES grant underscores the importance of encouraging community engagement in environmental preservation, potentially yielding far-reaching positive effects on the ecosystem and villagers' well-being.

MCLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



West Garo Hills



On August 9, 2023, a Block Review meeting was convened at Bado Hall, West Garo Hills District, for the President, Secretary, and 3 Village Facilitators of 17 VNRMCs (CLLMP Villages) under Dalu Block. This meeting aimed to assess progress, pending tasks, and areas for improvement in key components. It covered various agendas, including the status of Utilization Certificates for each VNRMCs, VCFs honorarium, Social Safeguard considerations based on fund balance, Forest Management Plan (FMP), allocation for damages or repairs, village-wise fund balance, addressing Permanent Community Nursery and convergence with the Block Development Officer, volunteer honorarium accounting, and the maintenance of project activities/assets within project villages.

Dr. Uttam T Ch Sangma, the BDO of Dalu Block, along with 6 DPMU staff, joined the meeting, totaling approximately 67 participants in attendance.



South West Garo Hills

DMPU team conducted awareness on FMP working scheme at Baladinggre VNRMC under Betasing Block

MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



Eastern West Khasi Hills



DPMU team conducted community mobilization and awareness on the FMP working scheme at various VNRMCs, namely: Mawblei VNRMC, Langtor VNRMC, Lyngdoh Maram VNRMC, and Mawkohngei VNRMC.



East Garo Hills



EE- Environment Management visited Nengmandalgre for monitoring SALT farming and Boundary survey

MCLLMP

DISTRICT WISE ACTIVITIES



West Khasi Hills



DPMU team conducted community mobilization and awareness on the FMP working scheme at Marngor and Mawlangkhar VNRMCs.



South Garo Hills



District team following up on Utilization Certificates and MIS updation at Bandapara village under Gasuapara block.

State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resource Management co-organized by NESFAS and MBMA

A two day State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches concluded on August 9, 2023 on the occasion of International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples at the State Central Library, Shillong. Shri Gunanka DB, IFS, Additional Project Director, MCLLMP, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Custodian farmers and representatives from more than 100 partner villages, like-minded organisations and various officials attended the two-day workshop on August 8 and 9, 2023 co-organized by NESFAS and MBMA in partnership with SURE, SSC.



The event witnessed community-led sharing of best practices and peer learning based on traditional farming methods and management of soil, pests, and seeds and also covered various topics such as Forest Management Plan, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Water Resource Management, Living Root Bridges etc. During these sessions, custodian farmers



and subject experts shared their experiences and testimonials which enhanced further learning and knowledge-sharing. The event also launched two relevant documents, namely the Community Seed Bank Catalogue and a booklet on Natural Pest Management.

The workshop aimed to create and strengthen partnerships between different stakeholders, celebrate the achievements of grassroots innovators and recognize the contribution of traditional knowledge holders.

The workshop also included an exhibition which showcased a variety of local seeds, biopesticides, biodiversity-based Midday meals initiatives and NRM practices implemented across communities. This was done to provide a platform for different stakeholders to come together and share and disseminate rich and unique traditional knowledge and information and the diversity of Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems in the state.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. DB Gunanka congratulated the efforts of NESFAS, its partner communities and CLLMP for the successful implementation of the ALC project, and also drew similarities between Meghalaya and his home state of Karnataka, as both being staple consumers of millet which gradually shifted to rice. Addressing the audience, he said, “We need to maintain and strengthen our rapport with the community so that the project does not end here. We need to keep the movement alive”.



Resonating on the same note, Mr. Pius Ranee, Executive Director, NESFAS, highlighted that ALC has also become a creative and collective space where community members and experts meet to share and learn from each other on how to enhance local agroecology practices, food sovereignty and social transformation through local food initiatives. The project “Empowering indigenous communities through Agroecology Learning Circles (ALCs) for resilient, integrated and innovative natural resource management”, funded by the World Bank and supported by Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA) under the innovation fund has enabled NESFAS and its partners to establish and consolidate 100 ALCs across Meghalaya.





The workshop concluded with a closing ceremony whereby Dr. Dhruvad Choudhury, Adviser, NESFAS, congratulated NESFAS and MBMA for organizing the workshop and reflected on the need for continuity, and the need to set up for knowledge network to share issues to co-learn and co-create solutions. He highlighted that MBMA is well-placed to support the setting up of knowledge networks with different peers and urged them to work on the same.



Mrs. Otilia Mukhim, a custodian farmer from Jatah Lakadong, shared her thoughts on behalf of her fellow farmers and thanked MBMA for giving opportunities to them to have a common ground for knowledge-sharing. “We have received a lot of information from the two-day workshop. There is a need for the conservation of forests and water resources and we must strengthen our food systems for a sustainable future. We wish to carry this knowledge further as ALC members through SHGs and awareness programmes, especially for the youth since we need to showcase our traditional food systems to the world”, she was quoted as saying.

The closing ceremony concluded with a musical rendition performed by ALC members of Khliehumstem and an entertaining couplet performed by Mr. Nestar Kharmawphlang, Chairperson of NESFAS. Thus, the fruitful workshop came to an end on a promising note for a better, food-secure, self-sufficient tomorrow with custodian farmers taking the lead with their enriched knowledge and renewed dedication.



PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The DPMU EKH TEAM visited Laitmysang Village on August 4th, 2023. The village is situated in the Mawkynrew Block and was accompanied by members of Asian Confluence. The primary purpose of this visit was to gain a deeper understanding and acquire firsthand information from the communities about the implementation process of Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES). During the visit, a discussion took place between the Asian Confluence members and the communities, during which the following points were highlighted:

1. The communities possess a forest cover of over 40 hectares, which has been included in the PES program.
2. Various activities have been undertaken as part of the PES initiative, including Fireline Control, Plantation, Demarcation, and installation of signboards.
3. The community expressed that the inclusion of PES in their community has been a blessing.

In the course of discussing income generation activities and livelihood issues, the following activities were mentioned:

- a. Livestock rearing
- b. Mushroom cultivation
- c. Fish farming

Following a lengthy and engaging discussion, the program concluded with a site visit to the Plantation site that had been established under the PES program



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PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES



Connecting with the Village Elder of Khlieh Umtrew in Umsning Block: Community Aims to Enroll Community Forest in Ecosystem Services Payment Scheme



Meeting the Sordar of Lawsiej: Exploring Community Forest Application and Willingness to Participate



In a combined effort, the DPMU team and GFA visited Laitmysang, delving into its diverse ecosystems. The day brought engaging discussions, data collection, and a shared commitment to conservation.



PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Meetings are underway for beneficiaries of the payment for ecosystem services scheme. The sessions encompass guidance on effective fund utilization and timely submission of Utilization Certificates (UC).



North Garo Hills



Khliehriat block



Amlarem block



Khliehriat block



Saipung block

PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES



Umsning block



Khliehriat block

Collection of Application Forms and Utilisation Certificates



Gasuapara block



Demdema block



Demdema block



Gasuapara block

PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES



A visit was conducted to the Rem Megapgre forest reserve to assess the progress of designated tasks, and the Village Community Forests (VCFs) also undertook Forest Management Plan (FMP) activities during the visit.



PES verification at Umsning



PES verification at Mawshut



Setting up of signboard at Bramagre Community Reserve



Setting up of signboard at Nongbak Apal Community Reserve

MEGHALAYA
LIVELIHOOD
IMPROVEMENT
THROUGH
FOREST
ENHANCEMENT
(MegLIFE)

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

PLANTATION

MegLIFE communities are hard at work to achieve the project's goal of covering 22,500 hectares of plantation. plantation of saplings is currently underway.

 **South Garo Hills**



The planting of a second set of 2 lakhs citronella slips in Agrenggitim village has resulted in the appearance of fresh leaf growth.

 **North Garo Hills**



Weeding in progress at Ajasiram village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

East Garo Hills



Weeding in progress at Thaugittim village.



Completion of fencing at Mejlgre Nokat village.



Fencing at Sonmagre village.

East Jaintia Hills



First ring weeding began in Tuidam village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

South West Khasi Hills



Mawrap VPIC completed ring weeding at the AR plantation on August 7, 2023.

West Garo Hills



Weeding in progress at Rangdapara village.



Weeding in progress at Abendagre village.



Daranggagiri village.



Fencing at Songmagre village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



Ring Weeding at Songmagre village.



Fencing at Kopogre village.



Fencing at Renchagre village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

COMMUNITY NURSERY

433 Villages under MegLIFE Project have elected to set up community nurseries.



South Garo Hills



Ring weeding at Darang Akepgittim village.



North Garo Hills



Seeds sourced from Nanil Apal village's extension nursery are currently in the germination process.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



East Garo Hills



Toona ciliata species
at Mejolgre village.



South West Garo Hills



Golmangre village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

 Ri Bhoi



Khongwing village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

SALT - SLOPING AGRICULTURE LAND TECHNOLOGY

SALT training is being imparted to farmers of the MegLIFE Project wherever feasible to improve land productivity and fertility. The technique is enthusiastically being adopted by the trainees.



East Garo Hills



Mejolgri Nokat village.



North Garo Hills



Nokatgre village.

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MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



West Garo Hills



On August 8, 2023, MegLIFE consultants, Mr. Gautam Chakravarti and Dr. Reddy, visited Balupara village with the aim of identifying a farmer and a suitable piece of land for conducting experimental research on cotton. Mr. Rasen Sangma, the President of MegLIFE Balupara VPIC, generously offered his land for this project. Approximately forty years ago, cotton cultivation flourished in Garo Hills, even amid the practice of shifting cultivation. Its renown emanated from trade routes through Bangladesh prior to the country's independence.



The distinctiveness of cotton from Garo Hills lies in its remarkable durability, short fibers, and coarse texture. Presently, the Central Agriculture University (CAU) is placing considerable emphasis on conserving germplasm to safeguard the diversity of forthcoming crops. CAU is deeply involved in comprehensive research aimed at creating a high-yielding cotton variety. This endeavor is projected to extend over a span of 7 to 8 years, with its successful culmination holding the promise of substantially augmenting farmers' income.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

ENTRY POINT ACTIVITY - COMMUNITY HALL

The construction of 370 community halls has been sanctioned under EPA of MegLIFE. Initial phases of site preparation is underway.

 **South Garo Hills**



Dobakol Awemong VPIC.



Rongkandi Dengjama village.



Rongkandi songgital village.

 **North Garo Hills**



Galwansa village.



Dokasaram village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



Thapa Darenchi village.



Nanil Apal village.



Thapa Ragolgre village.



Dokongsi C village.



Nokatgre village.



Ajasiram village.



West Garo Hills



Nayapara village.



Goeragre village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



Land preparation for constructing a community hall in Silsekgre village.



Land preparation for constructing a community hall in Chinapgre village.



Excavation and site levelling in Sandongpara village.



Site levelling and excavation in Sanjeng Nokat village.



Excavation and site levelling in Rangapara village.



Excavation and site levelling in Dopananggre village.



Lower Khongrapara village.



Bibragre village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



Rongrongre village.



Danal Dasik village.



Dagal Nokat village.



Thaugittim village.



Kalak Songital village.



Simseng Balkol village.



Danal Apal village.



East Garo Hills

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



South West Garo Hills



Kolkatola village.



Eastern West Khasi Hills



Sohtyngkhur VPIC.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)



Ri Bhoi



Nongjymie village.



Nongdewsaw village.



Umden Khasi village.



Umpyrdong village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

PLUP And Microplanning Exercises



On July 3rd, 2023, micro planning began in Kosi Chora group II village.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT (MegLIFE)

MIS and Procurement Training



Conducted on August 8th, 2023 at SMELC Tura, the inaugural training day for MegLIFE VCFs encompassed guidance in Accounting, Register Maintenance, MIS, and Community Procurement.



On August 8th, a specialized training workshop was conducted in the Jaintia Hills District, concentrating on Accounting, Register Maintenance, MIS, and Community Procurement, specifically highlighting the East Jaintia Hills District.



Institute of
Natural Resources
(INR)

CENTRE FOR BIO RESOURCES (MEGH AROMA MISSION)



An Awareness Programme was conducted by the Bio-Resource team on promotion and cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic plants on 5th August 2023 at Mawkyrdang, Mairang Block, EWKH.



A field visit was conducted by the Bio-Resource team to Wahstew, Steplakrai, Synrangsohnoh, and Mawbeh located at East Khasi Hills district, Khadarshnong Laitkhroh block, in order to study the population of wintergreen and mapping areas for cultivating Medicinal and Aromatic plants.

Training on Skill Development on Primary Processing of essential oils and Management



A training on Skill Development on Primary Processing of essential oils and Management was conducted at Khliehrangnah village by the Bio-resource team. A group of 20 farmers took part in the training, where they were also provided with a demonstration of the Field distillation unit's usage.



A supplementary training session aimed at improving proficiency in the primary processing of essential oils and their management was arranged in Lad Wah Wapung, within the Wapung block of East Jaintia Hills. Over 30 participants from the village experienced their first practical demonstration of the application of the Field Distillation unit, which included observing the distillation process of citronella essential oil.

CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ADAPTATION & MITIGATION (GREEN ENERGY)



A site inspection was carried out by INR Director, Shri L Shabong, in conjunction with a site electrification initiative led by the Green Energy team at Lumthangding village, situated in the Laitkroh block of the East Khasi Hills district.



On 8th August 2023, the Green Energy team was engaged in assisting the Team of Mawphlang Block EFC for site feasibility study of Water lifting device at Weilyngkut Kohphet village.



Site inspection and meeting with the members of Smowkkoki Village, Jirang Block, Ri Bhoi District.

Meghalaya
Livelihoods And
Access To Markets
Project
(MeghaLAMP)

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

RURAL FINANCE



A successful Awareness Program and Training on Community Procurement was held at Lad Mukhla Hall, Thadlaskein Block, West Jaintia Hills, on August 3, 2023.



Scan for Insight! Witness Jabar Lumtop Jaud IVCS Ltd's services boosting finances, farm inputs, and income, all for village betterment.

Farmers'
Collectivization for
Upscaling of
Production and
Marketing Systems
(FOCUS)

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Evaluating Best-Performing Producer Groups (PGs)



A comprehensive assessment of the Best Performing Producer Group (PG) was carried out on August 4th, 2023. The evaluation took place at Mawsiatkhnem and Umthlong Villages, led by the SPMU team alongside the Mawlai EFC team .

Furthermore, a similar inspection was executed for PGs within the Mawryngkneng Block. The process encompassed a thorough review of PGs' bookkeeping practices, ensuring accuracy and transparency.

Upon completion of the assessments, the inspection team convened in a joint session with the corresponding EFC teams to discuss findings and insights.

MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKETS PROJECT

Empowering Women: New Project Launch for Producer Groups.



A new project for women of Producer Groups (PGs) across six villages in Mawryngkneng Block, Meghalaya, has taken off. Backed by "Friends of Women's World Banking (FWWB)", Ahmedabad, the launch on August 3rd saw active participation from 100+ PG members, with support from community leaders. This pioneering initiative, approved by previous Block Development Officer (BDO), Dr. Brightstar Langbang, MCS and the current BDO, Smt. A.R. Kynta, MCS, is guided by EFC Mawryngkneng team (MBMA). Key speakers, including FWWB's Shri. Sumit Soni, presented the project's vision.

Knowledge Management
knowledge.mbda@gmail.com

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