

# NEWSLETTER

**Updates of the Week**

13 December 2023



**THE MEGHALAYA COMMUNITY LED LANDSCAPE  
MANAGEMENT PROJECT (MCLLMP)**



**THE MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT  
THROUGH FOREST ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (MEGLIFE)**



**INSTITUTE OF NATURAL RESOURCES (INR)**



**THE MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS 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)**



# Community Led Landscape Management Project (CLLMP)



# UPDATES OF THE WEEK

MEGHALAYA BASIN MANAGEMENT AGENCY



Innovator Kong Kyrswiew Rynghlem passionately discusses her groundbreaking solution for mine-affected land reclamation at the People's Festival of Innovations - National Conference on Scaling Innovations in New Delhi.

## CLLMP Innovators Shine at National Innovation Conference

In a major success, CLLMP's visionaries showcased groundbreaking creations at the People's Festival of Innovations - National Conference on Scaling Innovations in New Delhi. Innovators like Nongstoin Social Service Society, Bah Hejew Klien, Shri Just Synrem, Smti. Lamuni N.Sangma, and Kong Kyrswiew Rynghlem presented eco-friendly solutions that captivated the audience and panelists.

Their ingenious ideas not only captured but enthralled prominent figures in the grassroots innovations sphere. During the conference, they shared heartwarming stories, discussed impactful contributions, and unveiled their future plans. The audience and esteemed panelists were left inspired and in awe of their unwavering commitment to society and the environment.

A standout moment occurred when Bah Hejew's innovation not only captivated the panelists but also garnered interest from the distinguished IIT Delhi. The prestigious institution expressed a profound desire to support his groundbreaking work, recognizing its potential for further study at premier institutions.

This accomplishment is a testament to the exceptional talent and dedication of CLLMP's innovators, who continue to make triumphant contributions to society. The celebration of their success resonates as they pave the way for a more innovative and sustainable future.



Chief Minister Shri Conrad K Sangma distributed cheques to six FOCUS and seven PES beneficiaries at the opening of the 3rd Farmers' Parliament in Shillong.

FOCUS recipients received tailored funds, acknowledging their unique contributions, while PES beneficiaries were allocated funds based on their commitment to environmental protection.

The two-day event serves as a vital platform for farmers to engage with agricultural and horticulture departments, providing insights into state livelihood and sustainability programs. The distribution of cheques underscores MBMA's commitment to rural empowerment and sustainable agriculture, anticipating positive impacts on the agricultural sector in Meghalaya.



The Centre of Excellence for NRM & Sustainable Livelihoods hosted a workshop on "Possibilities of Forest Certification for Community Forests in Meghalaya" at the Pastoral Centre Malki in Shillong. Speakers included Dr. S. Aushutosh, Co-Chairman & Director COE, Shri Gunanka D.B. IFS, Additional Project Director, CLLMP, Dr. Lavinia M. Dhar, Technical Specialist COE, and Dr. S. C. Gairola, Country Director Forest Stewardship Council, India.



# MegLIFE

Meghalaya Livelihood  
Improvement through Forest  
Enhancement Project (MegLIFE)

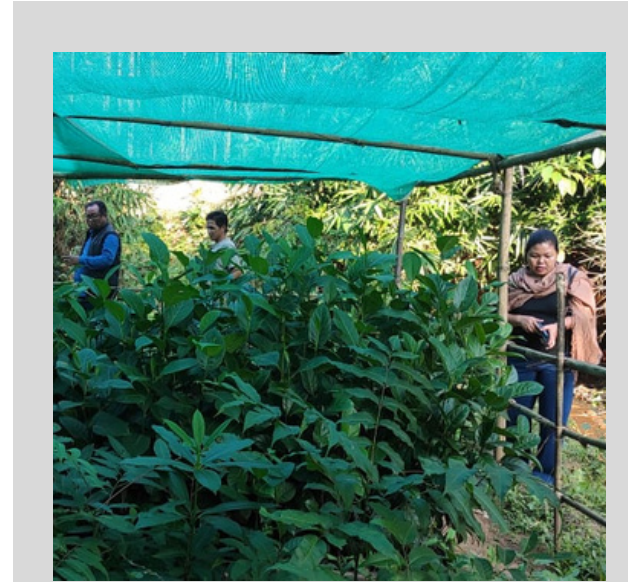


## Field Surveys and Springshed Management for Sustainable Water Resources



On November 29, 2023, the MegLIFE SPMU team kicked off a comprehensive field survey in Nongsangu village, Ri Bhoi district, focusing on spring recognition, type classification, discharge measurement, and on-site water quality testing training. The team also visited SALT farms in Nongrimjyrmie village, where Shri David Gandhi, Consultant SALT, briefed MegLIFE Spring Consortium (MLSC) partners on SALT farming efficiency.

The next day, November 30, 2023, witnessed a springshed management survey in Iapshyndeit village, Mawrykneng Block, with MLSC, SPMU, and BPMU teams. A SALT farm visit in Tynring village featured David Gandhi explaining SALT farming to MLSC experts. Additionally, a springshed management survey in Nongsangu, Ri Bhoi district, explored catchment areas for potential recharge interventions, considering surrounding geology.



Parsist K Marak, accompanied by the FE, recently conducted a Community Nursery inspection in Rompa and Bangsi Bokda. The team discovered a 95% survival rate in Bangsi Bokda Nursery, while Rompa Nursery showed a lower rate of around 75%. To address the issue, the PA suggested refilling the empty polybags in both nurseries with citrus indica, ficus elastica stump, and tetrameles nudiflora.

## Collaborative Seed Collection Boosts Garo Hills Community Nurseries



The Project Associate responsible for Dambo Rongjeng Block and Gambil Apal VCF of Resubelpara Block are actively engaged in the gathering of *Bischofia javanica*, a species known for its rapid proliferation. This strategic initiative is designed to address two key objectives. Firstly, it aims to fill gaps in the nursery, contributing to the overall enhancement and diversity of the plant collection. Secondly, the project seeks to harness the potential of *Bischofia javanica* for timber production, aligning with a broader sustainable development agenda. Additionally, the Village Community Facilitators (VCFs) in Renchagre Rongram village actively engaged in the collection of neem and azakari seeds. This involved meticulously gathering these seeds and carefully filling empty poly bags for further use or distribution.



Gnengkolsi Songgitcham VPIC's community nursery faces a germination rate below 100%, prompting swift actions such as seed gathering and substituting empty polybags.

## "Thangshalai Village Shines as a Model for Sustainable Water Resource Management"



In an inspiring initiative on December 7, 2023, BPM Marbakor Kharbyngar and the dedicated team orchestrated a holistic village interaction event in Thangshalai village, centering on the pressing concerns surrounding local springs. This impactful event was followed by an exhaustive survey of various springs within the village.

Community members exhibited remarkable enthusiasm and active participation, marking a significant moment for the Aquadam team. They expressed heartfelt appreciation for the substantial turnout, emphasizing that, in their five years of surveying in Meghalaya,

this event stood out as the first instance of such extensive community involvement.

In a gesture of gratitude, the Aquadam team expressed optimism that Thangshalai Village could serve as a blueprint for other villages within the state and beyond, especially in terms of effective Spring Shed Management. This acknowledgment highlights the exceptional commitment and cooperation demonstrated by the Thangshalai community, establishing a precedent for collaborative efforts in sustainable water resource management. Thangshalai Village is indeed paving the way for a brighter and more water-secure future.



On the 30th of November 2023, Savio Garey Marak paid a visit to the village of Rongreng Nokat. During this visit, he engaged in a meeting with the EC (presumably a local committee or governing body) to deliberate on strategies and plans for enhancing the nursery and plantation areas in preparation for the upcoming year. The discussions likely revolved around initiatives and improvements aimed at fostering growth and sustainability in these vital aspects of the community.

On December 1, 2023, Sir Ravishankar, a Consultant from the Project Management Consultancy (PMC), led an inspection of the Community Nursery and Community Hall in Lumdieng and Umshit, Umling block. Accompanied by the District Project Manager (DPM) and BPMU staff, the examination focused on evaluating the facilities' conditions and functionality to ensure they meet established standards. The goal was to guarantee that these community assets serve their intended purposes effectively.



A community hall spanning multiple blocks(Dalu, Dambo rongjeng) is currently being constructed and is anticipated to be completed by January next year.

## Transformative Visit by Sir Dr. R.S. Thupalli and Dr. Rupak De in Umsning Block



In a notable two-day event on December 6th and 7th, 2023, Sir Dr. R.S. Thupalli and Dr. Rupak De visited the Umsning BPMU as part of the PMC MegLIFE Project. Their exclusive focus on the Umsning BPMU highlighted the crucial role of the Community Nursery and various project interventions.

Their involvement proved instrumental, offering invaluable guidance and leadership, ensuring the success of transformative initiatives. Positive changes in communities showcased the efficacy of their hands-on approach. Sir Dr. R.S. Thupalli and Sir Dr. Rupak De's unwavering dedication to sustainable development and community empowerment is commendable and inspiring. Their leadership remains a driving force behind the ongoing triumphs of the MegLIFE Project.

During the visit, BPM Peacefulda Ryntathiang suggested enhancements for the Community Nursery's effectiveness:

1. **Neem Oil Spraying:** Introducing neem oil spraying for pest control and overall plant health is a noteworthy contribution, given its environmentally friendly properties.

2. **Sapling Care:** Prioritizing the identification and care of infected saplings is crucial for the nursery's success. This attention to detail ensures the production of robust, healthy plants, positively impacting the environment.

3. **Tools and Equipment:** To optimize nursery operations, providing essential tools and equipment, such as pruning shears, watering cans, and protective gear for workers, is recommended. This step creates an environment conducive to optimal plant growth.

Implementing these recommendations, guided by the expertise of Sir Dr. R.S. Thupalli and Sir Dr. Rupak De, promises to significantly contribute to the long-term success of the Community Nursery, fostering positive effects on the surrounding communities.

**Expert Tip: Sustainable Sloped Plantations**  
BPM Peacefulda Ryntathiang recommends proper sloping for saplings on hillsides, involving evaluating gradient and directing water runoff. This strategic approach identifies the optimal slope, preventing soil movement and promoting water penetration for thriving plant life.

## MEGLIFE COMMUNITIES ARE HARD AT WORK TO ACHIEVE THE PROJECT'S GOAL OF COVERING 22,500 HECTARES OF PLANTATION. PLANTATION OF SAPLINGS ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.



Chokpot's Group 2 village is actively engaging in a plantation initiative at Waro Songgitcham and Daji Adugre villages. In Waro Songgitcham, there are 33.69 hectares of culturable waste land and 1.7 hectares of barren land, motivating villagers to pursue plantation activities.



Meanwhile, in Daji Adugre, the villagers are offering a minimum of 20 hectares of land for plantation, with a total culturable waste land of 33.69 hectares. The collective effort aims to enhance agricultural productivity and make effective use of available resources.



Malika R. Marak visited the Renchagre Rongram plantation on December 5, 2023, and observed significant progress. The community, consisting of 46 individuals in 3 to 4 groups, completed the 3rd weeding, established a fireline, and constructed a 3 km inspection path in the Reserve forest. The overall work quality is commendable. However, it was noted that out of the 6000 planted saplings, approximately 350 to 400 did not survive, according to information provided by the VCF.



On November 29, 2023, Alynda N Arengh and PA conducted an inspection of the Community Nursery in Memilam Village. The team discovered a 90% survival rate, a 10% incidence of pest attacks, and identified the need to fill vacancies.



Community nurseries have been set up in different Blocks across various villages, managed by VPICs, to grow plants for the upcoming year in specified plantation areas.





On December 12, 2023, Savio Garey Marak, accompanied by the Project Associate (PA) and BPM, DPM, conducted a visit to Dangkong Tasekgre village to engage in discussions regarding the nursery and plantation plans for the upcoming year, 2024. The primary focus of the meeting was to address the challenges related to land availability for plantation activities.

It was revealed during the meeting that there is a scarcity of individual land suitable for plantation purposes. Furthermore, the households within the community were reluctant to allow plantation activities in the community reserve. Consequently, the community members acknowledged their inability to demonstrate sufficient land area for the proposed plantation in the following year. Subsequently, a collective decision was reached, and the community opted not to proceed with the project. It is worth noting that the individual lands within the community are already dedicated to arecanut cultivation, further limiting the available space for alternative plantation initiatives. This comprehensive discussion and decision-making process highlight the intricate challenges faced by the community in sustaining plantation projects and the impact of existing land use practices on such endeavors.



On December 9, 2023, David Gandhi conducted a visit to four salt farms located within the Tikrikilla block. His positive and motivating remarks served as a catalyst for inspiring the team to enhance their work. The genuine gratitude expressed by the team is a testament to the profound impact of his incredible kindness.

During his visit, David's encouraging comments resonated deeply with the team, igniting a renewed sense of purpose and dedication to excellence. His uplifting energy became a source of inspiration, fostering a collaborative spirit and reinforcing the importance of shared goals.

David's words not only acknowledged the team's efforts but also instilled a collective commitment to continuous improvement.



The heartfelt gratitude expressed by the team reflects the genuine appreciation for his visit and the positive influence it had on their work environment.

As a result of David's presence, the team felt invigorated and motivated to surpass expectations, driven by a newfound determination to uphold the standard of excellence set by his encouraging words. The enduring impact of his visit extends beyond the immediate context, leaving an indelible mark on the mindset and culture of positivity within the salt farms of Tikrikilla block.

## 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.**



David Gandhi and Raisabao A Momin visited Megogre Nokat village in Rongjeng block, EGH, where 3 SALT farms are located. Despite 5 farmers attending the Block level Orientation Program, none implemented SALT. Three new farmers received on-site training for SALT, but NFP plants are still in the vegetative stage due to August sowing. Winter onset might affect flowering and seed production, yet sufficient seeds are expected for their SALT farms.

In 2024, based on VCF, around 5 more farmers may adopt SALT, needing a total of 10 kgs of NFP seeds. Raisa reported 3 hectares ready for Agroforestry, requiring 7.5 kgs of NFP seeds.

Overall, the NFP seed requirement is estimated to be 10 kgs. Additionally, the team visited 7 SALT farms in Marakapara and Bugakolgre villages, Rongram block, EGH.

Farmers show interest, but more training is needed for successful scaling up. Exposure and Training for existing and new SALT farmers are planned for Feb 2024, and NFP seeds must be procured from outside the block.

In Bugakolgre village, the team discovered a local *Tephrosia* species. While taller with slightly different leaves and seeds, its acceptability and uses for fodder should be discussed with the community. Limited seed is available for collection and experimentation in SALT next year.

## 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.





Ongoing construction of community halls in Various Districts.

# Institute of Natural Resources

(INR)



## CENTRE FOR BIO-RESOURCES



In a remarkable journey towards self-sufficiency and community empowerment, the Iaiminot Self-Help Group (SHG) has achieved a significant milestone by successfully distilling their own geranium oil. Their journey began in May 2023 when they received a mobile distillation unit, and after months of dedication and hard work, the fruition was witnessed on December 2, 2023. On this day, the Bio-Resource staff had the pleasure of collecting 20 ml of the freshly distilled geranium oil. This achievement not only showcases the group's ability to adapt and embrace innovative technologies but also underscores their commitment to sustainable practices. The geranium oil, now poised for the value addition process, represents not just a product but a symbol of local empowerment and the potential for economic growth within the community. The Iaiminot SHG's success is a testament to the power of collaboration, determination, and the transformative impact of utilizing local resources.

# MEGHALAYA LIVELIHOODS AND ACCESS TO MARKET PROJECT



IVCS \* INRM \* ISC-ED

*Megha***LAMP**

Meghalaya Livelihoods Access to Market Project

In Partnership With IFAD



From November 27 to 29, 2023, the **ISC&ED team, MBMA**, collaborated with Arogyam Medisoft Solution Pvt. Ltd. to organize a training session on soil and water testing. The event took place at the conference hall, MBDA, Shillong.



On December 7 and 8, 2023, the **ISC&ED team** from the District Project Management Unit, Mawkyrwat, **South West Khasi Hills District**, organized a two-day exposure visit for pepper farmers at Dimiligre IVCS, Ampati, **South West Garo Hills District**.

## Ripples of Change: Embracing Integrated Village Cooperative Society (IVCS) Awareness Campaign

Throughout November and December 2023, a series of impactful Integrated Village Cooperative Society (IVCS) awareness programs unfolded across various locations in Meghalaya. On November 27, 2023, Umkrem Village in Pynursla C&RD Block, **East Khasi Hills** hosted a program featuring Smt. M. Rapphap, Senior Cooperative Officer (SCO), as the honored guest and Shri. Mustar Khongsit, Secretary of Laitmawroh IVCS, as the Resource Person. Another significant awareness initiative took place on December 1, 2023, at Sakwang Community Hall in Mawkyrwat C&RD Block, followed by FOCUS-led IVCS awareness programs on December 2 at Shngimawleñ Village and Nongbrei Nongdom Village in Mawkyrwat C&RD Block, **South West Khasi Hills**. EFC Mawlai organized an impactful awareness event on November 29, 2023, in Umrynjah, with Teibor Roy Kharshiing (Consultant, Rural Finance) contributing as the Resource Person. Laitkyrhong Village also witnessed a noteworthy IVCS awareness program on November 27, organized by EFC Mawpat, featuring Shri. Sainkupar as the Center Manager and Resource Person. The momentum continued with awareness programs on November 28 in Umsyiem Village, on November 29 in Lynshing Village, and on November 30 in Wahlyngkhat Village—all organized by EFC Pynursla, EFC Mawkyrnrew, and EFC Mawpat, respectively. Additionally, a village-level sensitization program unfolded on December 1, 2023, at Mawlong Village, led by EFC Mawpat and attended by Bah Teibor Roy Kharshiing as a Resource Person. Mawkasiang Village experienced a similar program on December 2, 2023. Wrapping up the awareness endeavors, an IVCS program was held on December 3, 2023, for the village heads of Umsaw Village, Myllem C&RD Block, by the FOCUS team,

### Campaign

EFC Myllem, responding to the request of the village Headman. These initiatives collectively contributed to fostering awareness and engagement within communities regarding the significance of Integrated Village Cooperative Societies.







A District Review Meeting cum Training on Bookkeeping for Phase-3 IVCS was successfully conducted at the LBI Training Centre in **West Khasi Hills District** from November 28 to November 30, 2023. The event aimed to enhance bookkeeping skills and provide a comprehensive review of the ongoing initiatives within the district.



On December 4, 2023, a meeting was convened with members of the Integrated Village Cooperative Society (IVCS) at Umdiengpoh, **East Khasi Hills**. The discussions centered around crucial topics such as savings, loans, and the enrollment of new members.



On December 7, 2023, a consultative meeting took place at the office of the District Project Management Unit in Resubelpara, **North Garo Hills**. The meeting involved discussions with the district team, Megha LAMP, and SeSTA NGO team on various issues related to Producer Groups, IVCS formation, and other pertinent matters.

## Cultivating Capacities: Meghalaya's Three-Day Intensive Orientations Elevate Service Providers in IVCS Networks



A series of three-day Orientation Programmes were conducted to empower Service Providers (Credit Linkage) responsible for Integrated Village Cooperative Societies (IVCS) across various districts. The first session, held from November 28 to November 30, 2023, focused on Financial Literacy Programme implementation at the village level, with a specific emphasis on individuals from **South West Khasi Hills** and **Ri Bhoi Districts**. The second orientation, spanning November 29 to December 1, 2023, targeted Service Providers linked to IVCS in **West & East Jaintia**, taking place at Bishop House Lumbih Syntu, Jowai. Lastly, from December 5 to December 7, 2023, another three-day Orientation Program unfolded at Lamjingshai Youth Centre, concentrating on Service Providers operating in **East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, and Eastern West Khasi Hills Districts**. These initiatives collectively aimed to enhance the capacity of Service Providers for effective program implementation and financial education within their respective regions.

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