

SEEDS OF CHANGE

Community-Led Success Stories from
Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP)



NAGALAND FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECT (NFMP)
Kohima, Nagaland – 797001



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NAGALAND

About the Book

This book is a curated compilation of success stories emerging from the implementation of the Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP) across Project villages in the state as of 2025. It documents tangible outcomes achieved in selected villages spanning all eleven Project districts and highlights the range of activities undertaken under the Project along with their successful implementation and results. The narratives encompass interventions in forestry and biodiversity conservation, livelihood enhancement, water security, community infrastructure and institutional strengthening, demonstrating how participatory planning, convergence and local ownership have translated into measurable ecological and socio-economic gains at the grassroots level. Collectively, the stories showcase the transformative impact of NFMP in strengthening community resilience and promoting sustainable forest and livelihood management in Nagaland. Notably, the promotion of women-led Self Help Groups (SHGs) has emerged as a significant livelihood strategy under the Project.

Foreword

It is my privilege to present this compilation of Success Stories under the Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP). These stories reflect the commitment, hard work and resilience of the Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Village Councils, FNGOs and the dedicated NFMP teams working across the state.

Each story featured here is a testament to how community-driven forestry interventions, sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance can bring about meaningful and lasting change. From rejuvenating forest intervention sites and improving water security to empowering rural communities and strengthening local institutions, these achievements demonstrate the transformative potential of collective action.

What makes these stories significant is not merely the outcomes achieved, but the processes adopted, rooted in collaboration, inclusion and capacity building. The successes documented here serve as valuable learning resources and motivation for all stakeholders as we continue to scale community-led conservation and development initiatives.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all the communities, partners and field teams whose continuous efforts have made these accomplishments possible. I hope this compilation will encourage continued community participation, stronger JFMC-led management, cooperation and commitment towards creating resilient ecosystems and sustainable rural livelihoods across NFMP villages.



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ABBREVIATIONS

ASF	African Swine Fever	MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
DAO	District Agriculture Officer	MINC	Made in Nagaland Centre
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer	NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
DMU	Divisional Management Unit	NDO	Nagaland Development Outreach
ECS	Eleutheros Christian Society	NEIDA	North East Initiative Development Agency
EPA	Entry Point Activities	NFMP	Nagaland Forest Management Project
FMU	Field Management Unit	NH	National Highway
FNGO	Field Non-Governmental Organization	NRB	Nagaland Rural Bank
FPO	Farmer Producer Organisation	NSRLM	Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission
IFS	Indian Forest Service	PEC	Protection and Expansion of Community Conserved Area (CCAs)
IGAs	Income Generation Activities	PHED	Public Health Engineering Department
JAF	Jhum AgroForestry	PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
JFM	Joint Forest Management	QPM	Quality Planting Materials
JFMC	Joint Forest Management Committee	RCC	Reinforced Cement Concrete
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	RF	Revolving Fund
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission	SHG	Self Help Group
KTWS	Konyak Tribal Welfare Society	VCC	Village Council Committee
LCS	Life Care Society	WHS	Water Harvesting Structure

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OVERVIEW OF NAGALAND FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Introduction

Nagaland, one of the northeastern states of India, is located along the eastern border with Myanmar and has a population of approximately 1.9 million as per the 2011 Census. The state lies within the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot and is endowed with rich forest resources. Nearly 60% of Nagaland's population is engaged in Jhum cultivation (slash-and-burn agriculture), a traditional practice that has evolved over generations and remains deeply rooted in Naga culture. Jhum cultivation contributes to around 60% of the state's food production. This agricultural system typically involves a cropping phase of one to two years, followed by an extended fallow period, which helps restore soil fertility and supports nutrient cycling to sustain land productivity. The climate of the state is humid tropical and sub-tropical with steep terrain

and Jhum cultivation results in depletion of micro-nutrients from the soil. The shortening of the Jhum cultivation cycle characterized by reduced fallow periods has significantly impacted soil health and agricultural productivity.

As a consequence, there is growing pressure on forest resources for commercial exploitation to supplement the incomes of rural communities. This increasing dependency has led to the degradation of forest ecosystems and a significant loss in biodiversity. According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR, 2023), Nagaland had a forest cover of 12,222.47 sq. km. However, more than half of this forest area falls under the "open forest" category. Furthermore, the report highlighted a net loss of

125.22 sq. km of forest cover between 2019 and 2023, the fourth highest decline among all Indian states.

The biodiversity of Nagaland holds not only intrinsic value but also plays a vital role in delivering essential ecosystem services such as food and water provision, soil formation, nutrient cycling and primary production. Therefore, the sustainable restoration and rejuvenation of Jhum-affected areas are crucial for the broader goals of forest regeneration and biodiversity conservation in the state.

Nagaland Forest Management Project

Nagaland Forest Management Project is an Externally Aided Project supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) started during 2017-18, with the aim to improve forest ecosystem and support income generation by rehabilitation of Jhum area and provision of livelihood support, thereby contributing to sustainable forest and environmental conservation and livelihood improvement in the target villages in Nagaland State. The project has

a target to cover 185 villages in 22 selected Forest Ranges and 11 Forest Divisions namely Dimapur, Kiphire, Kohima, Longleng, Mokokchung, Mon, Peren, Phek, Tuensang, Wokha and Zunheboto.

Project Objective

1. Strengthening Conservation regime through Community Participation

This is the main objective of the Project which envisages to expand area under tree cover, increase tree density in selected areas and to conserve (and augment) the biodiversity of the state through community participation.

2. Livelihood Opportunities for Enhanced Household Incomes through Convergence

To promote and strengthen livelihood opportunities for enhancing household incomes, while seeking active synergy and complimentarily with other governmental and non-governmental programs. This will also aid food security and reduce vulnerability to climate change while reducing pressure on natural resources.

3. Institutional Strengthening

To support extension and strengthening of infrastructure at various levels. The Project aims to develop, build and strengthen existing community and institutional capacities to plan, implement, monitor and report.

Project costs and components

With a total estimated cost of Rs.533 Crores, the Project is being implemented in the 185 targeted villages. The main approach is to undertake need based and village specific interventions in the Joint Forest Management (JFM) mode through the JFM Committees (JFMCs).

The Project has four main components

- i. Forestry Interventions and Biodiversity Conservation,
- ii. Livelihood Improvement and Community Development,
- iii. Institutional Strengthening and
- iv. Support activities

Ranges/Independent Beats were selected by applying the criteria of Jhum intensity and forest cover. Villages within selected ranges/independent beats were selected batch-wise spanning over a period of 4 years, (30: 60: 60: 35 villages in batch 1, 2, 3 & 4 respectively). Selection of the target villages follow a cluster-based approach i.e. a group of villages sharing the same geographical and vegetation landscape requiring similar forestry interventions, with a view to enhance project impacts in a tangible manner and to reduce administration cost and facilitate cohesive management.

A MID-TERM CONSOLIDATION REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF SHG ACTIVITIES

NFMP-JICA has been implemented with the primary objective of improving forest ecosystems and supporting income generation through the rehabilitation of jhum areas and provision of livelihood support. A key intervention under the Project is the promotion of women-led Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Livelihood Improvement and Community Development component. Three SHGs are selected from each targeted village to undertake Income-Generation Activities (IGAs) and related activities.

These selected SHGs receive capacity building, training and financial assistance in the form of a Revolving Fund of ₹1,50,000 per SHG. This fund acts as seed money, enabling members to undertake profitable activities, which are not only profitable but also help them to unlock the opportunities, independence and economic growth. Access to the Revolving Fund has enabled many SHG members to not only generate income but also build financial literacy, savings discipline and entrepreneurial skills. The Project enables and facilitates the selected

SHGs to establish credit linkage with banks/financial institutions for mainstream credit augmentation.

Self Help Groups (SHGs) are small groups of around 8-15 people exclusively women, socially homogeneous and located contiguously. SHGs can be formal or informal depending upon the need and capacity to manage themselves as an institution. The selected SHGs function under the overall guidance of the Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), whose Executive Committee supports them in maintaining records, assessing performance, providing loans from the Revolving Fund and formulating business plans, as well as facilitating credit linkages with banks and financial institutions.

The Field Management Unit (FMU) and FNGO engaged under NFMP play a crucial role in enhancing SHG functionality. They support SHGs in forming and developing business plans, organizing need-based training programmes, accessing credit facilities and forming SHG clusters (FPOs).

In cases where new SHGs are formed, membership is voluntary and based on mutual agreement among members to achieve shared social and economic goals. SHGs regularly hold meetings, decide on savings and lending terms, maintain records and coordinate with the JFMC and Village Council. To manage daily operations, each SHG selects or elects a Chairperson/President, Secretary and Treasurer. New SHGs formed under the Project must open a savings bank account at the nearest bank branch to receive the Revolving Fund, while existing SHGs adopted under the Project use their current accounts for fund transfers.

Although the Project is to be implemented over a five-year period, the underlying goal of forming SHGs in the targeted villages is to ensure their continued existence for livelihood enhancement beyond the Project's duration.

Since the inception of NFMP, a total of 428 SHGs (as of 2025) have been formed or adopted in 143 targeted villages (Batches I-III) across the 11 Divisional Management Units (DMUs). The DMU-wise distribution of SHGs is provided as follows:

Total number of SHGs formed (Batch I-III) under NFMP

SN	DMU	Total No. of Villages/JFMC	Total No. of SHGs
1	Dimapur	7	21
2	Kiphire	14	41
3	Kohima	10	30
4	Longleng	9	27
5	Mokokchung	14	42
6	Mon	15	45
7	Peren	9	27
8	Phek	13	39
9	Tuensang	22	66
10	Wokha	14	42
11	Zunheboto	16	48
Total		143	428

The formation/adoption of SHGs under NFMP has become a cornerstone of the Project's livelihood enhancement strategy. The SHG model has enabled members to access training, credit and support services, helping them take up sustainable and locally viable Income Generation Activities (IGAs). As a result, many women who were previously without a stable source of income now contribute significantly to their households and communities.

Income Generation Activities (IGAs)

SHGs have been proactively involved in a diverse range of IGAs that are aligned with local needs, resources and skills. These include activities such as agriculture, piggery, poultry farming, weaving, tailoring, value addition and food processing, handicrafts, kitchen gardening and other viable rural enterprises. To bring structure and clarity, the IGAs undertaken by SHGs under NFMP have been classified into the following categories:

Categorisation of Income Generation Activities (IGAs) under NFMP

SN	Category	Activities
1	Agriculture	Crop cultivation, farming, vegetable & fruit farming
2	Livestock	Poultry, piggery, duckery, cattle rearing
3	Agri and allied	Mushroom, floriculture, beekeeping, silkworm, etc
4	Value addition & Food Processing	Pickle making, dry fish, rice mill, jaggery, fruit juice, etc
5	Non-Farm Activity	Grocery shop, second-hand business, detergent, soap making, etc
6	Handloom/ Handicraft	Weaving, earring & necklace making, traditional hand bag, basket, traditional seat

IGA Participation Analysis

An analysis based on the SHG IGA shows that livestock-related activities are the most preferred IGAs, with 45.09% of SHGs engaged in this category, followed by agriculture-based activities, involving 31.07% of SHGs. A smaller but significant portion of SHGs are engaged in value addition and food processing (6.07%), handicrafts/handlooms (4.44%) and non-farm activities (4.21%). There are also SHGs involved in combinations of these activities, such as agriculture + livestock, non-farm + value added, etc., reflecting diversification and evolving economic strategies.

Percentage of SHGs Involved in Various IGA Categories

SN	Category	% of SHGs involved in various IGA
1	Agriculture	31.07
2	Livestock	45.09
3	Non-Farm Activity	4.21
4	Agri and allied	2.1
5	Value added and Food Processing	6.07
6	Handicraft/Handloom	4.44
7	Non-Farm Activity + Value Added	0.71
8	Non-Farm Activity + Agriculture	0.93
9	Agriculture + Livestock	4.44
10	Livestock + Handicraft/Handloom	0.94
Total		100.00

The SHG initiative under NFMP continues to play a transformative role in the lives of women across the targeted villages. It has provided access to essential resources, training, financial support and most importantly, a sense of collective identity. With improved financial literacy and exposure to income-generating opportunities, many SHG members have begun contributing significantly to household incomes, improving food security and improving their overall socio-economic well-being. Many women from Batch I–III villages have emerged as local entrepreneurs and community leaders, proving that grassroots empowerment is a key to sustainable development. As the Project progresses, SHGs in Batch–IV villages are in the process of initiating their activities, and similar positive outcomes are expected as they become fully operational.

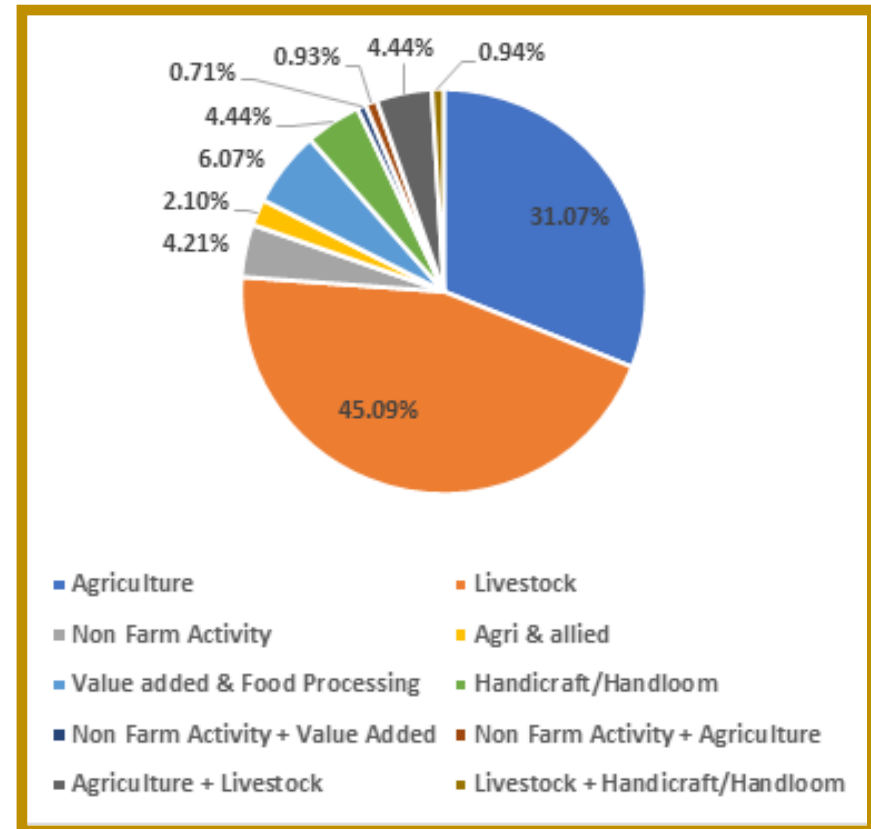


Fig 1 : % of SHGs involved in various IGA



Ngupdang SHG member harvesting the betel leaves

NGUPDANG SHG :

Improving their Lives Through Betel Leaf Cultivation and Microcredit



Harvested betel leaves

Wanching village, located 37 km from Mon headquarters, falls under the Naginimora Range in Mon Division and is under Batch-I of Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP). In 2019, the Ngupdang SHG, comprising 10 women, was formed under the Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM)

to address socio-economic challenges faced by women. In its formative years, the group faced several obstacles such as low financial literacy and inadequate financial support, knowledge and skill gap, low confidence and restricted access to raw materials. These limitations hindered the group's

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The SHG's betel leaf cultivation generated approximately ₹2,40,000 within a year. The group earned ₹1,35,000 by selling bundles at ₹40 each. Their micro-credit activities earned ₹7,000 in interest and ₹3,000 from vegetable and cash crop sales.

”

capacity to effectively pursue Income Generation Activities (IGAs).

In 2022, with support from NFMP, the group received a revolving fund of ₹50,000 at 5% interest rate following the approval of their business plan. Under the guidance of DMU Mon and FNGO KTWS, the SHG acquired 1 acre of land for betel leaf cultivation, investing ₹15,000 in cultivation and ₹22,500 in labour. Betel leaf cultivation was strategically selected for its strong market demand and seasonal profitability. To ensure consistent cash flow, the group also engaged in vegetable farming and launched micro-credit initiatives.

The SHG's betel leaf cultivation generated approximately ₹2,40,000 within a year. During

the 2023 harvesting season, the group earned ₹1,35,000 by selling bundles at ₹40 each, with off-season (April-June) prices rising to ₹100 per bundle, further enhancing profitability. Additionally, their micro-credit activities earned ₹7,000 in interest, while vegetable and cash crop sales contributed an additional ₹3,000. On 6 January 2023, they repaid their 1st loan installment of ₹17,000 to JFMC Wanching and completed the final repayment by November 2023. This financial success empowered the SHG to support their children's higher education, increase inter-lending services and attain financial stability.

The success of the Ngupdang SHG demonstrates the potential of combining targeted financial support with agribusiness planning and grassroots institutional mentoring. Further scaling can be achieved through structured exposure visits, knowledge-sharing platforms and convergence with relevant line departments. With continued technical support and market linkage facilitation, the group is well-positioned to become a local role model for sustainable, women-led livelihood development.

THEKREJUMA'S WATER HARVESTING EFFORT : A Step Towards Water Security

Thekrejuma village, situated approximately 45 kilometres from Dimapur district and under Piphema Beat, Batch-I of the Project, is home to 91 households and a population of 510, with 80% living below the poverty line. The community primarily depends on spring water, shallow wells and an irrigation canal to meet its domestic and agricultural water requirements. However, these sources often prove insufficient during the dry season, leading to acute water shortages and compelling villagers to spend 2–3 hours daily fetching water from distant locations.

To mitigate water scarcity and improve water security, a Water Harvesting Structure (WHS) was constructed as part of Entry Point Activity (EPA) under NFMP. The initiative was led by DMU Dimapur and JFMC Thekrejuma, with site selection prioritized based on spring water availability. The WHS, measuring 10 feet in breadth, 16 feet in length and 5



WHS of Thekrejuma village



Water Collected at the WHS through Pipelines

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This initiative has reduced the time villagers spend fetching water by 2–3 hours daily and ensured a more consistent water supply for both household and limited agricultural use.

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feet in depth, with a storage capacity of 21,600 litres, was built collaboratively by the JFMC and villagers, supported technically by FMU staff. The total cost of the project was ₹3,00,000, a grant-in-aid allocated under the project, with the community contributing unskilled labour and raw materials such as stones, thereby reducing the financial burden and enhancing community ownership. Construction commenced on January 28, 2020 and concluded on April 24, 2020.

The WHS has significantly improved water accessibility, providing a reliable supply for

domestic and agricultural use. Eight households are now directly connected to the WHS via pipelines, while the remaining households benefit through Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) pipelines. This initiative has reduced the time villagers spend fetching water by 2–3 hours daily and ensured a more consistent water supply for both household and limited agricultural use. Additionally, the WHS has contributed to groundwater recharge, raised awareness of water conservation practices and improved the village’s overall resilience during the dry season. The project also instilled a strong sense of collective responsibility and community engagement, evident in the active participation of villagers throughout the planning and execution phases. In 2022, minor renovation work was undertaken to repair a structural crack, ensuring the structure’s continued functionality.

The successful implementation of the WHS in Thekrejuma exemplifies the value of community-driven, technically supported interventions in addressing rural water scarcity.

UNITY SHG :

A Model of Women-Led Enterprise in Hekheshe Village

Hekheshe, an NFMP-JICA village under Medziphema Beat (Batch-I) is situated 42 kilometers from Dimapur district headquarters. With 84 households and a population of 519, the village is endowed with fertile soil, offering significant potential for livelihood generation. Among the three SHGs selected under NFMP-JICA, Unity SHG formed in February 2020 under the NSRLM stood out for its entrepreneurial initiative. Comprising 10 members, the group engaged in processing locally available raw materials into value-added products such as pickles, gooseberry and ginger candies and floral-based items. Despite the superior quality and affordability of their products, the SHG faced significant challenges related to poor packaging standards, which limited their appeal in the market and hindered customer engagement.

In April 2022, NFMP-JICA provided Unity SHG with a Revolving Fund Loan of ₹50,000 to strengthen their Income Generation Activities. This financial



Unity SHG members engaged in packaging their products

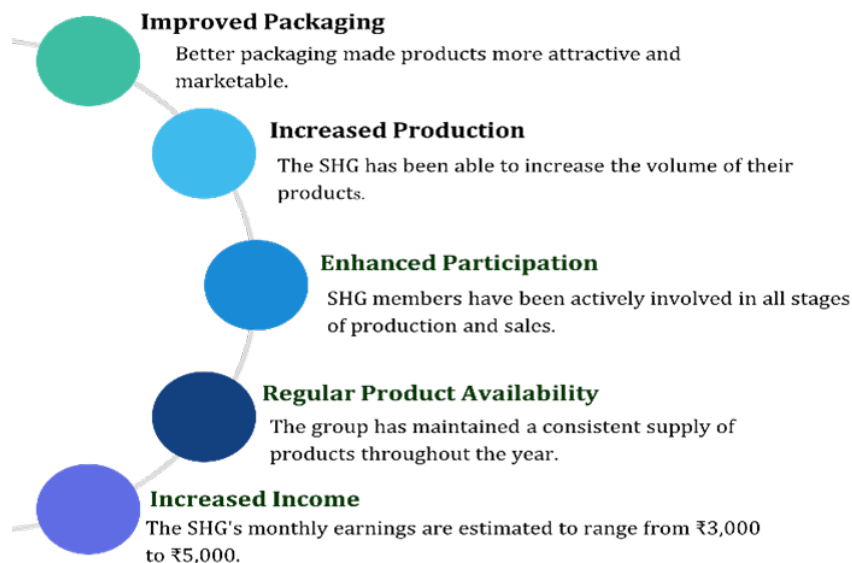


Fig 2 : Positive Impact of the Intervention

support enabled the procurement of a sealing machine (₹6,000), packaging pouches, jars, bottles and customized product labels. The technical partner FNGO YouthNet played a pivotal role in supporting the SHG to improve packaging aesthetics and quality, making the products more attractive to customers. Furthermore, collaboration with NSRLM helped the SHG establish mechanisms for bulk sales on a bi-monthly basis, based on demand. DMU Dimapur and FNGO YouthNet facilitated the launch of Unity SHG's products at the Made in Nagaland Centre (MINC) in Kohima for broader market access.

The initiative has significantly enhanced Unity SHG's market visibility and product demand. Since the launch, the group has dispatched two successful consignments to MINC, both of which were sold out. The opening of YouthNet's second MINC outlet at Chumukedima offers additional collaboration opportunities, encouraging the SHG to expand its reach and sales further. The intervention has not only increased the group's income potential but also improved their confidence and operational efficiency.

Unity SHG's journey highlights the importance of targeted financial and technical support in rural enterprise development. However, logistical challenges remain particularly in the procurement of packaging supplies, such as jars, stickers and plastic pouches, which are primarily sourced from Dimapur. The group often depends on others travelling to Dimapur to collect these materials, leading to production delays. In the absence of a production unit in Dimapur, Unity SHG continues to operate through its existing rural setup. Nevertheless, ongoing support from the FNGO team has alleviated some logistical constraints by facilitating procurement. With continued capacity building and infrastructure support, Unity SHG is well-positioned to further scale its operations and contribute to local economic development.



Packaged products of Unity SHG for sale

INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE, EMPOWERED VOICES : A Milestone for JFMC Meluri

Meluri, which translates to “overflowing in abundance,” the largest and one of the oldest villages in the newly formed Meluri district (formerly part of Phek district), is home to the Pochury tribe and lies on Nagaland’s eastern border with Myanmar. The Village Council Hall is a central venue for community events, decision-making and administrative meetings. However, the absence of a functional and hygienic toilet especially for

women, within the Council Hall posed a significant barrier to inclusive participation. The existing facility was in a dilapidated state, discouraging women from attending meetings and public events, leading to their marginal representation in key village-level decisions. Prior to the intervention, women’s participation in Council and JFMC meetings remained below 15%.

To address this barrier, the JFMC of Meluri village prioritized the construction of a new toilet facility at the Council Hall as an EPA under NFMP. A grant-in-aid of ₹3,00,000 was allocated under the Project, with the decision largely influenced by inputs from female JFMC members and community representatives, who underscored the importance of basic sanitation for ensuring equitable participation. Construction began in April 2022 and was completed in July 2022, with the community actively involved in site preparation, material handling and construction. The new facility comprises four rooms within the Council Hall premises,



Toilet constructed under EPA at Meluri

two toilets and two urinals, with designated sections for men and women. Each unit is equipped with electricity, running water and cleaning facilities to ensure hygiene and accessibility.

The new toilet facility has significantly improved the inclusivity and functionality of the Council Hall. Women's participation in JFMC and council meetings has risen to at least 35%, as reflected in attendance records and observations. The NFMP's encouragement of women's involvement led to the election of a woman as Vice Chairperson of the JFMC, empowering female voices in local governance. The upgraded facility has also enabled Meluri village to host major events, such as the district-level Miss. Phek 2022 pageant for the first time, an achievement credited by the Meluri Students Union to the improved infrastructure made possible through EPA.

The success of this intervention demonstrates the importance of inclusive infrastructure in fostering community participation and gender equity. Going forward, the Village Council has committed to the regular maintenance of the facilities, ensuring their cleanliness and usability for future events and meetings.

“ Women's participation in JFMC and council meetings has risen to at least 35%. ”

UPLIFTING RURAL WOMEN THROUGH MARKET ACCESS : **Community-led Marketing Shed in Lampong Sheanghah Village**

Lampong Sheanghah village, located 13 km from Mon district headquarters and home to approximately 150 households with a population of around 900 is socially structured into one Morung and three Khels; Chingkho, Chingchong and Chinglen and falls under Batch-II of NFMP-JICA Project. Despite its strategic position along National Highway-702, the village lacked a dedicated and accessible marketing facility for local produce, particularly for women vendors. Women, especially

the elderly, were forced to travel nearly 2 kilometres to the existing market shed in the village centre, facing inconvenience, poor infrastructure and limited vendor space. This hindered their ability to participate in Income Generation Activities (IGA) and market their farm produce efficiently.

To address this challenge, the JFMC of Lampong Sheanghah, in consultation with the Village Council, Goan Buras and community stakeholders, proposed the construction of a marketing shed under the EPA component of the Project. The site was selected at the village gate in Chinglen Khel, directly along NH-702, to ensure better accessibility for both vendors and travellers. This initiative received a grant of ₹3,00,000 from NFMP-JICA and supplemented by a voluntary contribution of ₹1,00,000 from villagers, primarily in the form of labour and



Marketing Shed at Lampong Sheanghah village



SHG members selling fresh harvest at the marketing shed

materials. Despite encountering minor logistical challenges during construction, the community demonstrated strong ownership contributing around ₹15,000 in cash and volunteering for tasks such as site preparation, unloading and loading raw materials and painting.

The newly constructed marketing shed accommodates up to six vendors and has become a valuable community asset, particularly for elderly women. It allows them to purchase produce from farmers and sell it directly to customers, boosting their income while eliminating the burden of long-distance travel. Located along the frequently used

NH-702, the shed has increased the visibility of local products and enabled faster turnover of goods. It also offers comfort and protection from adverse weather, an improvement over the previously overcrowded and less accessible market shed. Moreover, travellers passing through NH-702 now have access to fresh, organic vegetables at reasonable prices, creating a win-win situation for vendors and consumers alike.

The success of the Lampong Sheanghai marketing shed demonstrates how community-driven infrastructure can significantly enhance rural livelihoods, promote women's economic empowerment and foster inclusive development.

PUBLIC DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE REVITALIZING MOPUNGCHUKET TOURISM



Public drinking water facility at Mopungchuket village

Mopungchuket, one of the oldest and largest Ao Naga villages in Mokokchung district, is located at an altitude of 1,324 meters and spans approximately 55 square kilometres. Officially declared a Rural Tourism Village by the Government of Nagaland in 2007, it is renowned for its rich historical, cultural and mythological significance, in addition to its pristine natural beauty and extensive forest ecosystems. The village is situated 16 kilometres from Mokokchung town and is well-connected via all-weather roads, making it easily accessible to tourists. Despite its growing popularity as a tourism destination, Mopungchuket village faced a critical gap in basic public infrastructure namely, the absence of reliable public drinking water facilities, especially in frequently visited public spaces such as schools and community halls. This gap led to increased dependence on bottled water, contributing to environmental pollution and rising plastic waste in the village.

Following a consultative meeting involving the JFMC Mopungchuket and the Village Council, the construction of two public drinking water facilities was prioritized. In 2019, with an allocation of ₹3,00,000 under NFMP-JICA, the facilities were installed at Pongener Mepu near the Student Library Hall and Anungsa Mepu near the Primary School. Construction commenced on February 28, 2021, and was completed

by March 31, 2021, with the community contributing 25% of the costs through labour. The Project leveraged the village's abundant water resources, utilizing an 80,000-litre tank near Etiben Tower to ensure a consistent supply of clean water.

The establishment of these drinking water facilities significantly improved access to free, clean drinking water for both residents and visitors. It particularly benefited students, who now have access to water near the library, school and tourists, who can conveniently refill reusable water bottles, reducing reliance on single-use plastics. This initiative directly contributed to reduced plastic waste in the village, promoting a cleaner, more sustainable environment. The facilities were well-received by the community, with no major challenges encountered during planning or implementation. The success of the intervention has not only addressed a vital need but also enhanced Mopungchuket's appeal as an environmentally conscious tourism destination.

Mopungchuket's drinking water initiative serves as a model for other villages with tourism potential, demonstrating the value of sustainable infrastructure in enhancing community well-being and environmental stewardship.



School students utilizing the drinking water facility



DMU Mokokchung team at the drinking water facility

TACKLING WATER SCARCITY THROUGH CONVERGENCE IN PHERIMA A VILLAGE



Water storage tank under construction



Water storage tank in Pherima A village

Pherima A village, situated within the Pherima Beat under DMU Dimapur, is home to 125 households and a population of 535. Situated 37 kilometres from the district headquarters and 7 km from Medziphema, the village benefits from proximity to National Highway-29, offering convenient accessibility. Despite its connectivity, the region faces severe water scarcity. The village depends primarily on surface water sources such as springs, rivers and ponds, which tend to diminish or dry up during the winter months, leading to acute shortages and increased hardship for residents, particularly women, who spend up to two hours daily fetching water from distant sources.

To address these challenges, the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched in 2023 under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, aiming to provide functional household tap connections to all rural homes by 2024. Following this, in collaboration with the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), a bore well was excavated in the hilltop area of the village, at a depth of approximately 295 feet. NFMP DMU Dimapur in collaboration with the JJM, renovated the existing water

storage tank with Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC), addressing prior leakage issues that had rendered it unusable. The renovated tank, now capable of storing approximately 25,000 litres of water, is located close to the bore well, facilitating efficient water pumping and storage. The NFMP Team, JFMC members and the Village Council also supported the efforts. Funding for the project included a ₹3,00,000 contribution under NFMP-JICA and a ₹2,00,000 contribution from the community members.

This integrated water infrastructure initiative has significantly mitigated water scarcity in Pherima A village. Approximately 50 households now benefit directly from the improved access to potable water. With newly installed pipeline connections, clean water is available at

“ The water tank has enabled efficient water storage, mitigated water scarcity issues by ensuring a year-round supply, and received positive community response and active participation. ”

household doorsteps, substantially reducing the physical burden on women. The availability of water also supports other livelihood activities such as backyard farming and livestock care. As of now, through convergence with JJM, pipeline connectivity has reached 60 households, ensuring a reliable water source during the critical dry season between January and March.

CONVERGENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS : Community Fishery Ponds in Penkim and Yingshikiur Villages



Community Fishery Pond at Yingshikiur village



Community Fishery Pond at Penkim village

In Kiphire district, Batch-II and Batch-III villages of Penkim and Yingshikiur were identified for livelihood enhancement through a convergence initiative with the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. The selection was made based on the availability of community-owned land and perennial water sources essential for sustaining aquaculture. Penkim village under Batch-II has ample land and a reliable water source, while Yingshikiur village (Batch-III) also features favourable conditions with perennial streams near the proposed site. Despite the potential, these villages had limited access to structured income-generating opportunities, necessitating targeted interventions to promote economic resilience.

To address this need, DMU Kiphire, FMU and FNGO EWS (Evergreen Welfare Society) collaborated with the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to construct two community fishery pond units. The Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources provided financial support of ₹95,000 to the two villages, while the two JFMCs led the implementation and contributed through community labour and covered additional costs

for food and logistics. Technical guidance and specifications were offered by the department to ensure the proper design and functionality of the ponds. Construction in Penkim village commenced on March 13, 2023 and completed by March 24, 2023. In Yingshikiur village, the construction began on April 20, 2023, and was completed by April 24, 2023.

The successful establishment of fishery ponds has created a sustainable livelihood avenue for both villages. The JFMCs are responsible for managing the ponds and the revenue from fish sales. A transparent benefit-sharing mechanism has been instituted, whereby 60% of the proceeds are allocated to the JFMC's Forest Sustainability and Development Fund, while the remaining 40% supports operational needs such as procurement of fingerlings, feed and maintenance. This initiative have also created opportunities for SHGs in both villages-Penkim has 31 SHG members and Yingshikiur 26 (3 SHGs each), who can participate in fish rearing, potentially evolving into Producer Groups. With perennial water sources and strong market demand, the fishery ponds are positioned to significantly enhance household incomes and promote fish rearing as a viable Income Generation Activity (IGA).

“ This initiative has created opportunities for SHGs in both villages-Penkim with 31 SHG members and Yingshikiur 26-to participate in fish rearing, potentially evolving into Producer Groups. ”

Buoyed by the success of the initial phase, two more fishery units have been approved for implementation. The initiative holds strong potential to scale up as a sustainable livelihood model, with SHGs potentially evolving into Producer Groups. Future partnerships with Village Councils are being considered to secure contributions through MGNREGA, which could support expansion of the ponds, currently measuring 15x70 feet in Penkim and 18x50 feet in Yingshikiur. The NFMP Kiphire Division is also exploring collaborations with other departments and agencies to finance a dedicated water pipeline, further securing the long-term viability of the ponds. The Penkim and Yingshikiur fishery ponds demonstrates the effectiveness of convergence and community management for sustainable livelihood improvement and resource conservation.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NURSERY ESTABLISHMENT IN MERANGKONG VILLAGE



JFMC Merangkong Nursery

In 2020, the Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP), funded by JICA, was introduced in Merangkong village to support sustainable forest management and improve rural livelihoods through community participation. A JFMC was established as part of the initiative, with the dual objective of enhancing biodiversity through forestry interventions and creating alternative income sources for villagers. However, the community initially lacked the technical knowledge and infrastructure needed to manage large-scale nursery operations. This limited the village's ability to generate Quality Planting Materials (QPM) and participate effectively in afforestation programmes.

To address these challenges, with funding from NFMP and support from DMU Mokokchung, the Merangkong JFMC successfully set up a nursery strategically located near the National Highway, benefiting from favourable site conditions and considerable expansion potential. Further

strengthening the initiative, a grant from the Australian Consulate enabled the construction of a permanent germplasm depot-cum-nursery (80 x 30 sq. ft.) on community land, equipped with a greenhouse, irrigation system and technical guidance from multiple departments. This facility serves as a centre for conserving local wild edible fruits, medicinal plants and horticultural crops, and as a demonstration site for training SHGs in modern nursery practices. In collaboration with FNGO NDO, farmer groups, youth, SHGs and agripreneurs were identified with village council consultation to receive training in modern nursery practices, focusing on skill development and raising high-Quality Planting Materials (QPM).

A total funding of ₹7,43,928 was utilized to establish the nursery, resulting in the successful cultivation of 1,10,000 saplings across all Model sites. The nursery propagated diverse species such as *Duabanga grandiflora* (Khokon), *Cedrela odorata* (Langpangchitsu), *Chukrasia tabularis* (Bogiboma), areca nut and *Prunus avium* (Wild cherry). Indigenous

“ The nursery propagated diverse species such as *Duabanga grandiflora* (Khokon), *Cedrela odorata* (Langpangchitsu), *Chukrasia tabularis* (Bogiboma), areca nut, *Prunus avium* (Wild cherry) and indigenous fruits like *Canarium resiniferum*, custard apple (*Annona reticulata*), *Terminalia chebula* (Nüngka) and *Spondias* spp. (Nüngjalashi). ”

fruits like *Canarium resiniferum*, custard apple (*Annona reticulata*), *Terminalia chebula* (Nüngka) and *Spondias* spp. (Nüngjalashi) were also propagated. Saplings are priced at ₹20 each for highway sales and ₹10 each for local farmers and the public, which generated a total of ₹40,000 from 2,000 saplings sold along the highway and ₹50,000 from 5,000 saplings sold locally, totalling ₹90,000 in earnings. Nursery maintenance is managed by former JFMC members, who volunteer their services with watering conducted thrice a week and weeding and transplanting on a



JFMC Nursery equipped with irrigation facilities

monthly basis. While the nursery has yet to become fully self-sustaining, the existing revenue with average quarterly earnings of ₹10,000 helps covers operational expenses of around ₹1,000 per month for electricity and maintenance. As revenues increase, stipends for nursery workers are being considered to ensure continuity.

This nursery initiative has equipped the villagers with skills, built institutional capacity and inspired local engagement in environmental conservation. As awareness and technical expertise continue to grow, the nursery is poised to expand operations, increase sapling production and serve as a regional hub for sustainable agroforestry and biodiversity conservation.

SEIVI SHG:

Building Livelihoods Through Bamboo Shoot Processing and Piggery in Thekrejuma Village



SHG members slicing the bamboo shoots



Fermentation process of bamboo shoot



Fermented bamboo shoot

Located 45 kilometres from Dimapur district headquarters, Thekrejuma village falls under the Piphema Beat of Dimapur Forest Division. The village comprises 91 households and a population of 510, with approximately 80% of the population living below poverty line. Despite the availability of natural resources, income-generating opportunities remained limited particularly for women due to lack

of capital, market linkages and technical guidance. Among the locally available resources, bamboo shoots are abundant, yet market saturation within the village has hindered profitability for small-scale producers. This posed a challenge for local women seeking to improve their household income through value-added bamboo-based products.

As part of NFMP initiative, Seivi SHG, an 11-member women’s group was selected to carry out Income Generation Activity (IGA). In 2020, the group received a Revolving Fund of ₹50,000 and developed a business plan, prioritizing piggery as their primary livelihood activity, while also pursuing fermented bamboo shoot production as a supplementary source of income. With the revolving fund, the group purchased six piglets at ₹5,000 each and successfully repaid the loan after completing their initial sales cycle.

SHG members utilized their indigenous knowledge of bamboo shoot fermentation, specifically the traditional process called “Kese”. Harvested in August, the SHG members prepare the bamboo shoots by sorting them by size for various culinary applications, with the option to store them for up to a year or sun-dry them for long-term preservation. The fermentation process, which takes 4–5 days, produces a culturally valued product that is ready for market by December. In 2021–22, the group harvested



Fig 3 : Bamboo shoot fermentation ('kese') process



SHG members at their piggery unit

approximately 250 bamboo shoots and sold packets of fermented product at ₹350 each, generating a profit of ₹9,000 with distribution within the village and at the nearest market in Medziphema town.

This initiative significantly enhanced both the economic and social standing of Seivi SHG members. Their success in repaying the revolving fund demonstrated strong financial management and business viability. The low-cost fermentation process yielded high returns, while the sale of value-added products such as fermented bamboo shoots supported household incomes. SHG members

reported improved financial independence and greater participation in community activities, attributing their empowerment to collective decision-making and active engagement in group activities. Despite these gains, the group has faced constraints in scaling its bamboo-based business due to market saturation within the village and limited access to external buyers. There is clear potential to expand operations and increase profitability by tapping into wider markets beyond Thekrejuma. With continued institutional support and strengthened market linkages, Seivi SHG's approach holds strong potential for adoption in similar bamboo-rich, underserved areas of Nagaland.

MORE THAN A GUEST HOUSE: Community Empowerment in New Phor Village



Guest House constructed under EPA at New Phor village

New Phor is a remote forest-dependent village located in the newly established Meluri district of Nagaland. The community relies heavily on forest resources and traditional agriculture for their sustenance. Despite its ecological richness and cultural heritage, the village lacked basic infrastructure to support eco-tourism or host external visitors, limiting its potential for alternate livelihoods. New Phor was identified as a target village for intervention under NFMP.

With the formation of the JFMC, the community of New Phor became actively engaged in participatory planning and forest conservation efforts. Under the EPA component of NFMP, the JFMC facilitated a village-level needs assessment that identified the construction of a guest house as a key development priority. The proposal was collectively agreed upon to serve both immediate infrastructure needs and long-term income generation objectives. The guest house, consisting of four fully furnished rooms, was envisioned as a multi-purpose facility to accommodate visitors such as eco-tourists, researchers and officials, while also serving as a platform to promote forest conservation awareness.

The construction process was marked by decision-making, efficient fund utilization and active community involvement at every stage from planning to execution. EPA funds were used judiciously, with a strong emphasis on employing local materials and labour. Both men and women from the village contributed as skilled and unskilled workers, ensuring inclusive participation and job creation during the implementation phase. The initiative led to multiple positive outcomes:

- **Eco-Tourism Promotion:** The newly constructed guest house now enables the village to host visitors, facilitating cultural exchange and raising awareness about local biodiversity and conservation efforts.
- **Sustainable Livelihoods:** Managed by the Village Council, the facility has become a source of recurring income, with profits reinvested into maintenance and other community development activities.
- **Capacity Building:** The Project significantly enhanced the managerial and technical capabilities of the JFMC, empowering them to independently implement future community-led initiatives.

“
Managed by the Village Council, the facility has become a source of recurring income, with profits reinvested into maintenance and other community development activities.
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The guest house represents more than just an infrastructure; it is a stepping stone toward sustainable eco-tourism development in the region. This initiative exemplifies how participatory planning, local ownership and strategic investment under NFMP can lead to sustainable community transformation. The success of New Phor’s guest house stands as a model of resilience, cooperation and the tangible benefits of community-government partnership in forest management.

FROM HARVEST TO HIGHER RETURNS :

Aiko SHG's Betel Nut Preservation Initiative under JFMC Hekheshe



Hekheshe village under Medziphema Beat, DMU Dimapur known for its fertile soil, has been cultivating Areca nut (*Areca catechu*) for over two decades, making it a cornerstone of the local economy. The crop's adaptability to the region's agro-climatic conditions has made it a consistent source of income, with wholesale buyers regularly visiting the village. However, despite this agricultural advantage, women had limited access to structured income-generating opportunities linked to Areca nut production. Preservation techniques were underutilized and market access remained constrained by poor transport infrastructure. These challenges limited the potential for value addition and economic empowerment, especially among women.



Harvested betel nuts

Under Income Generation Activity (IGA) of NFMP, Aiko SHG comprising 10 women members was selected in Hekheshe village and provided with a Revolving Fund of ₹50,000. Leveraging the local availability and market demand of Areca nuts, the group adopted Areca nut preservation as their primary IGA. The SHG devised a structured business plan to carry out the preservation process in a phased manner, ensuring quality control and profitability. Preservation begins after harvesting seasons in May–July and October–December. Nuts are procured locally at ₹380–₹400/kg and packed into plastic sacks and bags, an investment of approximately ₹800 per season. The nuts are soaked in water and stored in sealed bags; water is drained and replenished every 10–15 days, which is repeated monthly for 2–3 months. Post-preservation, the nuts are ready for sale at improved market rates.



Processed betel nuts for sale

During the first season, completed in October 2022, each SHG member preserved 4.5 kg of Areca nuts. The group purchased at ₹360/kg and sold the preserved nuts at ₹500/kg, yielding a collective profit of ₹20,000, despite minor losses due to spoilage. Encouraged by the results, the group repeated the activity (May–September 2023), this time lower yields raised procurement costs to ₹400/kg, but the group managed to sell 45.3 kg at ₹700/kg, generating ₹35,000 in revenue. In 2024, with improved experience and market awareness, the group increased allocations to 9 kg per member and strategically

timed sales for peak market demand in September–October, positioning the SHG for higher returns. The simplicity and flexibility of the preservation process have enabled the women to engage in economic activities without disrupting their daily responsibilities. The financial gains have enhanced their economic self-reliance, strengthened their role in household income and fostered a stronger sense of community participation and empowerment.

Areca nut preservation has proven to be a scalable and sustainable livelihood activity for Aiko SHG. Any



Processed betel nuts

inconsistency in the preservation process can lead to spoilage, limiting the group's storage capacity. Moreover, the lack of public transportation restricts SHG members from accessing nearby markets, thereby affecting timely sales and broader outreach. With continued support and market facilitation, the SHG can expand operations and serve as a replicable model for other rural women's groups looking to convert local crops into profitable ventures.



Aiko SHG members harvesting betel nuts

STRENGTH IN UNITY: Akhen Village's Community Hall Initiative

Akhen village, under Meluri district situated in a remote forested region near the international border with Myanmar, has long grappled with limited infrastructure and connectivity. The absence of a dedicated community space hindered the ability of the villagers to conduct meetings, organize trainings, celebrate cultural events, host administrative functions, women's and youth group gatherings in a dignified manner. Without a proper venue, such activities were often held in open or makeshift spaces, limiting participation and engagement. Recognizing this need, the NFMP supported the construction of Community Hall through its EPA component.

In 2019, through joint consultations involving the JFMC, Village Council and community members, the construction of a multi-purpose Community Hall was identified as a priority intervention. A grant of ₹3,00,000 was sanctioned under the EPA fund to support this initiative. However, the defining success factor of this project was not merely financial input,



Community Hall constructed under EPA at Akhen village

it was the convergence approach and the strong collaboration between NFMP and the Akhen Village Council that led the project's planning, resource mobilization, coordination and execution.

Despite facing significant challenges like remote geography, poor road conditions and high material transportation costs, the project steadily advanced, driven by a resilient community spirit. Over the course of five years, the village consistently mobilized voluntary labour, contributed locally sourced materials and co-financed a significant portion of the construction costs.

The Community Hall was formally inaugurated on 24 November 2024, marking the culmination of years of effort, determination and collective ownership. The Community Hall has become a vital space that not only facilitates social, cultural and governance activities but also exemplifies strengthened community ownership, inclusive participation and collective resilience. The Hall is poised to play a long-term role in Akhen's development as a functional space for both formal and informal activities, support better governance, increase civic participation and

“The Community Hall in Akhen village is more than a physical structure, it is a living example of what can be accomplished when a community leads with determination, unity and vision.”

provide a platform for local trainings and awareness programmes.

The Community Hall in Akhen village is more than a physical structure, it is a living example of what can be accomplished when a community leads with determination, unity and vision. Rooted in participation, supported through convergence and driven by resilience, this initiative has delivered both infrastructure and inspiration. As Akhen village continues to grow and evolve, the Community Hall will remain a cornerstone of its social fabric, reinforcing collective identity, enhancing grassroots governance and promoting inclusive rural development.

ANGANGBA VILLAGE:

Reviving Landscapes and Securing Water through Community Conservation

Nestled in the hilly terrain of eastern Nagaland, Angangba is a vibrant village under Tuensang district, surrounded by lush forests and rich biodiversity. The village lies within a region of ecological importance, serving as a critical catchment area for several downstream settlements. Home to a community deeply rooted in tradition and closely connected to the forest ecosystem, Angangba is known for its collective spirit and strong community-based governance.

However, prior to the intervention of NFMP, the area now designated as the Angangba Protection and Expansion of Community Conserved Areas (PEC) was predominantly used for mithun rearing, which had adverse effects on the local ecosystem. The free-range Mithun grazing led to extensive vegetation loss, soil degradation and deforestation, placing immense pressure on the surrounding environment. Of particular concern was the deterioration of a spring water source located in the area, which serves as the primary drinking water supply for Angangba,

three adjoining villages and a town; Sangsomong, Lirise, Chungtor and Longkhim town. This unchecked degradation not only endangered local biodiversity and water security but also threatened the community's long-term ecological resilience and overall well-being.

Recognizing the urgent need for restoration, NFMP team in consultation with the Angangba Village Council and the JFMC, identified the site for ecological intervention. With full community backing, the area was demarcated as protected and reserved forest, initiating a community-led conservation effort.

Today, Angangba PEC covers 300 hectares and protects wide ranges of wildlife as well as provides basic community needs in terms of continuous water supply, recreational and educational spot. A team from NABARD recognized the site's potential and recommended it as a great spot for tourism and public recreation.

In addition to the conservation area, a key component of the intervention was the construction of the Amrit Sarovar Singkongkyungah, a moisture retention pond with an adjoining watch tower under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative. Funded through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and implemented by the Department of Rural Development, the structure spans 0.57 acres and 37 meters in length and was completed on 16 July, 2022. Community members and the Village Council continue to maintain the area and has plans to introduce fish hatchlings in the pond and undertake landscaping to further enhance its educational and recreational value. To reinforce forest conservation vital for protecting wildlife, retaining moisture and ensuring a continuous water supply, the community installed signage in local language warning against tree cutting, with fines for violations.

The convergence of NFMP-JICA, MGNREGA and local governance structures resulted in a significant positive transformation in water security, ecological restoration, recreational and educational uses and community empowerment.

With its growing appeal as a nature-based tourism site, Angangba's PEC holds promise as a model for integrated community-led conservation and eco-development. The moisture retention pond not only conserves water but also enhances soil moisture, improves vegetation growth and supports biodiversity contributing to climate resilience and landscape sustainability.

Angangba stands as one of the best-performing villages under the NFMP, characterized by community unity, voluntary contribution and responsible leadership. The synergy between the Village Council, Church, JFMC and other stakeholders has led to a grassroot transformation that balances ecological health with human well-being. The success of the PEC and the Amrit Sarovar Singkongkyungah is a testament to what can be achieved when people and institutions converge around a shared vision of sustainability. This initiative not only rejuvenated a degraded landscape but also strengthened community resilience, water security and environmental stewardship, making Angangba village a beacon for participatory conservation.



Overview of the moisture retention pond and watch tower

BEYOND LIMITS:

The Transformative Journey of Lunshe SHG from Kuthur Village

Formed on 18 September, 2014 under the NSRLM, Lunshe SHG of Kuthur village consist of 10 committed women from the Yimkhiung community. Despite being active for over a decade, the group had limited exposure and lacked opportunities to showcase or sell their agricultural produce at major public platforms. This limited visibility and market access hindered their growth and income-generation potential.

Located 11.2 kilometres from Tuensang town via NH-202, Kuthur village is well known for its high-quality kidney beans and other agricultural produce. Although the village holds potential for agricultural and allied activities, SHGs like Lunshe lacked the institutional support, market linkage and financial access needed to transform the ability of SHGs to pursue sustainable livelihood ventures.

Under the NFMP initiative, with support from the Tuensang Forest Division and FNGO LCS, Lunshe SHG was selected as one of three SHG for focussed

intervention. In convergence with the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department, the group received capacity building and financial assistance to initiate piggery as their primary Income Generation Activity (IGA). On March 2, 2023, the group received a Revolving Fund (RF) loan of ₹50,000 through NFMP, which enabled them to purchase seven piglets.

Despite facing a major setback due to the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) that led to the loss of three piglets, the group persevered. They successfully reared the remaining piglets and sold three fatteners for ₹95,550. One sow gave birth to four piglets, which were sold for an additional ₹42,000.

Recognizing the importance of income diversification, the group expanded into vegetable cultivation and marketing. By participating and selling their products through NFMP stalls during public events such as Independence Day (2023) and Republic Day (2024) in Tuensang town, they earned a total of ₹10,000.



Lunshe SHG member engaged in sorting their produce from the field

During the one-day Metümnyu Festival held on August 8, 2024 in their village, they earned an additional ₹12,000 from vegetable sales.

Their agricultural ventures were further supported by Eleutheros Christian Society (ECS), an FNGO who worked in collaboration with NFMP, provided quality seeds for cabbage, carrot and peas in 2021 and 2022. With hands-on training, the group achieved good yields and generated an additional income of ₹10,000.

The interventions under NFMP enabled Lunshe SHG to strengthen their livelihood strategy and improve their economic standing by gaining recognition and income through product sales at public events, diversifying into piggery, vegetable cultivation and festival-based sales, building skills and confidence through trainings and exposure and achieving greater economic empowerment by supporting household needs. Their story under NFMP reflects the powerful impact of combining grassroots initiative with structured external support transforming limitations into livelihood opportunities and long-term development.

Lunshe SHG's evolution from a low-profile group to a successful, income-generating collective is a powerful example of what women's groups can achieve when supported with the right resources, opportunities and encouragement. Their determination, unity and willingness to embrace new ventures have enabled them to overcome limitations and contribute meaningfully to their households and community. It also reaffirms that with vision, hard work and collaboration, even the most modest beginnings can lead to sustainable and inspiring outcomes.

QUENCHING THIRST: Water Security through Convergence in Hukphang Village



Community members of Hukphang village installing pipelines from the water source

Hukphang village, located at the foothills of Yingnyushang Mountain under DMU Longleng, had long faced a persistent challenge; lack of access to clean and safe drinking water. Despite the proximity to natural water source, the absence of proper water infrastructure compelled the people of Hukphang village to live without reliable access to

clean water even after walking for long distances to fetch water. The situation worsened during the dry winter months, leading to acute scarcity.

With the introduction of the NFMP–JICA in the village, a convergence effort between NFMP–JICA and PHED’s JJM led to the construction of a piped

water supply system, including a pipeline connection from the water source at Yingnyushang Mountain to a Water Harvesting Structure (WHS) in the village. This well-coordinated intervention addressed the long-standing issue with a sustainable and community-driven solution.

The successful completion of the water supply system has significantly transformed lives in Hukphang village. Today, approximately 110 households benefit from reliable access to clean drinking water. The reduction in time spent collecting water has allowed students to focus more on their education and has improved productivity in households. Moreover, the availability of safe water has minimized the incidence of water-borne diseases, contributing to improved public health. The community now regards this as one of the most impactful and successful initiatives implemented in the village by any government agency.

The success of this intervention highlights the value of cooperation between departments and the importance of community participation.



Community members of Hukphang village installing pipelines from the water source



WHS constructed in the village

FROM DEMONSTRATION TO ADOPTION : Strengthening SHGs Agriculture under JFMC Seiyhama



Line sown peas and radish in the demonstration plots

‘Seeing is believing’ is particularly true for farmers as the effectiveness of new agricultural practices is best validated through practical, observable outcomes. This is especially true for smallholder farmers who may be hesitant to adopt new methods without evidence of success. In Seiyhama village under DMU Kohima, one of the target villages under NFMP, traditional cultivation practices were limiting crop productivity and income generation, particularly among SHGs engaged in agriculture-based livelihoods.

To address this challenge, in October 2023, DMU Kohima, in convergence with the District Agriculture Office (DAO) Kohima, distributed vegetable seeds of peas, beans and radish to three SHGs (Dieze SHG, Kezekevi SHG and Sisa SHG), all selected under NFMP for Income Generation Activities (IGAs). Two demonstration plots were established to cultivate rabi vegetables using recommended agronomic practices. The intervention aimed to showcase the benefits of techniques such as proper spacing, integrated pest and disease management, maturity

indices for harvest and post-harvest handling. A field-level training was organized by FNGO NEIDA, where hands-on training sessions on land preparation, sowing time and methods, crop spacing and the importance of intercultural operations such as weeding, staking and earthing up were covered. The training sessions continued throughout the cropping cycle with timely follow-up and support. Key cultivation practices followed in the demo plots were land preparation, sowing method, irrigation, weeding and thinning and application of organic manure. The team regularly monitored the demo plot to assess the performance of the crops.

The demonstration plots delivered significant improvements in crop yield compared to traditional farming methods. Farmers observed radish yields increased by 25%, while bean yields rose by 10% compared



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Harvest of radishes at demonstration plot



Training on Radish Pickle making for IGA to 3 selected SHGs of NFMP

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Farmers observed radish yields increased by 25%, while bean yields rose by 10% compared to conventional plots.

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to conventional plots. These tangible improvements convinced the SHG members of the effectiveness of recommended practices, leading to their expressed intent to replicate these methods in their own fields in the next cropping season. Moreover, the bumper harvest of radish provided an opportunity for the SHG members to undertake value addition—radish pickle. FNGO NEIDA conducted hands-on training for the SHG members on radish pickle making and as a result, the SHG members are now equipped with the skills to produce radish pickle, which they can pursue as an additional IGA.

The success of the Seiyhama demonstration plots with improved agricultural practices have proven to be an effective approach for encouraging sustainable farming and accelerating the adoption of modern technologies among farmers. By equipping the farmers with practical knowledge and hands-on training, they were able to successfully cultivate crops independently with technical guidance from experts. Documenting and collecting data by adopting data-driven approaches enable farmers to make informed decisions, boost productivity, reduce risks and support the long-term sustainability of agriculture in an increasingly unpredictable climate. This initiative demonstrates the power of convergence, knowledge transfer and experiential learning in enhancing rural livelihoods and strengthening climate-resilient agriculture.

MUGHANI SHG : From a Diminishing to a Flourishing Self Help Group

Mukalimi, one of the oldest villages in Zunheboto district, Nagaland, is predominantly inhabited by the Sumi Naga tribe. Despite the rich cultural heritage and agricultural tradition, economic opportunities, especially for women remained limited. In 2018, 10 determined women from the village came together to form Mughani SHG under NFMP. Initially, the group first opened their official bank account in Nagaland Rural Bank (NRB) at Pughoboto town, Zunheboto. Thereafter, the group with the collection of ₹250 from each member which they earned through one day labour deposited ₹2,500 in their bank account to begin their entrepreneurial journey. They started their first activity on ginger farming and earned them a profit of ₹2,000. Monthly collection of ₹50 per member helped the group gradually build financial discipline and savings.

Under the aegis of NFMP, Mughani SHG received a Revolving Fund (RF) of ₹ 50,000 in the year 2022, with the interest of 8% annually (4% of the interest



Mughani SHG members at work in the field



Products of Mughani SHG

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With ₹1.5 lakh in bank savings and net monthly income of ₹20,000, the group is now an inspiring example of what rural women can achieve through collective effort, strategic financial support and entrepreneurial spirit.

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are returned back to the SHGs for their office functioning and maintenance). This enabled its group members to venture into other micro-business and took up their 1st cycle Business Plan on Ginger and Purple rice cultivation and other food processing products as their secondary Income Generation Activity (IGA). The SHG also participated in value added trainings such as oyster mushroom cultivation, pickle and candy making and detergent/dish wash making, facilitated by FNGO YouthNet. The FNGO YouthNet also directed and assisted the group in making the product label with NFMP logo and price tag. One important activity of the SHG is obtaining FSSAI certification for their product which has greatly increased demands for their products.

The SHG generated ₹1.2 lakh in revenue from their 1st business cycle, making a net profit of ₹80,000 and successfully repaid the full revolving fund amount with interest. Building on this success, Mughani SHG moved to its 2nd business cycle, focusing on food processing business like king chili pickle, yongchak pickle, ginger candy and wild fruit candies. Their visibility and reputation grew through their participation in events. During the 76th Republic Day (26 January 2025), NFMP under DMU Zunheboto facilitated SHGs Exhibition Stall. The group among one of the participants sold their products worth ₹59,920. The group was also part of the SHGs selected under Zunheboto district to participate and open a stall during the Hornbill Festival 2024.

The socio-economic impact on the group and surrounding community has been profound. Group President Miss. Kaholi Wotsa self-financed her training in candy and pickle processing at the Renaissance Vocational Institute in Dimapur from the income she earned through Mughani SHG. One of the group's major investments and achievement was the procurement of a solar dryer worth

₹63,000, purchased from their 1st Cycle Business plan profits. This purchase has not only helped the group increase their production rate but also generates additional income. The SHG rent the machine at ₹100 per use to individuals and other similar micro-entrepreneurs. With the increase in the group's net-worth, Mughani SHG is able to loan money to its members and other individuals at a low interest rate of 2%. For instance, a struggling mother from their village was able to get the loan from Mughani SHG for her daughter's higher education, without which her hopes of sending her daughter for further education were likely, impossible. Similarly, a member of Mughani SHG and her family facing financial hardship after a failed harvest, secured loan from the SHG. The SHG is also able to financially help other groups by buying raw materials from them and using it to manufacture in their food processing activities such as king chilly, ginger, roselle flower, yongchak, etc, building a cluster-based initiative and supporting other rural entrepreneurs.

From humble beginnings in 2018, Mughani SHG has evolved into a thriving, self-reliant enterprise. With ₹1.5 lakh in bank savings and net monthly income



Solar dryer purchased by Mughani SHG

of ₹20,000, the group is now an inspiring example of what rural women can achieve through collective effort, strategic financial support and entrepreneurial spirit. Their products particularly ginger candy have become popular at weddings and community events and their brand continues to grow in the market. Mughani SHG's journey showcases how NFMP-JICA framework, when combined with local dedication and effective training, can significantly enhance women's livelihoods, promote rural entrepreneurship and build economically resilient communities.

SAFE WATER ACCESS BY INSTALLATION OF WATER FILTRATION PLANT IN YACHEM VILLAGE



Located on a hilltop under DMU Longleng, Yachem village, like many traditional Naga settlements, has long struggled with limited access to clean and safe drinking water. A Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) conducted under the NFMP–JICA highlighted this as a pressing concern. The situation was further underscored by a prior study conducted by the Department of Soil and Water Conservation, which reported high concentrations of iron in the village’s natural water sources, making them unfit for regular consumption.



Water Filtration Plant installed at Yachem village

To address the issue, the JFMC of Yachem village, in collaboration with the Village Council and the JJM of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) initiated a targeted solution. With technical assistance from a specialized team-based Guwahati, Assam, three water filtration plants were constructed and installed at three key locations within the village. This effort was facilitated under the NFMP–JICA framework, ensuring an integrated, community-led



Water Filtration Plant installed at key locations at Yachem village

and technically sound approach to water security. The village now have access to clean and safe drinking water, improving the village's quality of life.

The successful implementation in Yachem village demonstrates that with continued collaboration between community

institutions, government departments and technical partners, such interventions can effectively ensure safe drinking water access in remote areas. The experience from Yachem village sets a compelling example of how integrated planning and community engagement can lead to sustainable and impactful solutions.

FRESHLY WOKHA : Building Market Linkages and Empowering Rural SHGs



In the rural areas of Wokha district, despite the growing potential of SHGs in producing high-quality local goods, a lack of consistent market access and visibility remained a major hurdle for sustainable income generation. Many SHGs faced challenges in reaching consumers beyond their villages, resulting in constrained income opportunities and minimal recognition for their work.

To bridge this market gap, DMU Wokha launched the “Freshly Wokha” initiative in 2024–2025 under NFMP, aiming to establish sustainable market linkages

and build consumer trust in SHG products under a unified brand name. The “Freshly Wokha” initiative has yielded tangible and far-reaching outcomes, significantly improving the economic landscape for rural SHG members. By bridging the gap between producers and consumers, this initiative not only created new income avenues but also strengthened a culture of entrepreneurship, quality enhancement and community pride. Its success is evident in women and economic empowerment, increased market visibility, consumer trust and institutional support and brand value.

Through active participation in key events such as Independence Day 2024, Mini Hornbill Tokhü Emong Festival 2024, Run for Hornbill 2024, Kohima, National Integration Camp 2024 and Republic Day 2025, the SHGs collectively earned a profit of ₹82,600.

“The “Freshly Wokha” initiative has yielded tangible and far-reaching outcomes, significantly improving the economic landscape for rural SHG members.”

Establishment of “Tssentsü Nature Outlet”

To institutionalize market access, DMU Wokha inaugurated the “Tssentsü Nature Outlet” on 2 February 2025. This outlet serves as a permanent retail space for the SHG products under the “Freshly Wokha” brand. It also functions as an inventory and processing hub for sorting, grading and packaging of SHG products, enabling better market readiness. Moreover, it represents a sustainable business model that ensures year-round income generation for the SHGs.

With the operationalization of the “Tssentsü Nature Outlet”, DMU Wokha has laid the foundation for sustainable and scalable marketing infrastructure. The outlet not only provides a stable source of income for SHGs but also sets a precedent for replication across other DMUs under NFMP.



Visitors at the Tssentsü Outlet

EMPOWERING JFMC SITAP THROUGH COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE



Community Hall constructed as an EPA at Sitap village

Sitap village, located in Longleng district, was identified as one of the target villages under NFMP-JICA. As a rural settlement, the village lacked proper facility to host public meetings, social events and community programmes. After much deliberation, the JFMC and community members collectively

prioritized the construction of a community hall as their most prioritized need.

In response to this community-identified need and as part of Entry Point Activity (EPA), the construction of a community hall was undertaken as a



Community Hall, Sitap village

convergence initiative with the Rural Development (RD) department. A total amount of ₹3,00,000 was allocated from the NFMP-JICA fund, while the local community contributed voluntary labour during the construction phase, ensuring strong community ownership of the project.

The construction was successfully completed by the end of June 2022. Today, the community hall serves as a vital infrastructure for the village, hosting meetings, training programmes, various cultural and social events. The active participation of the villagers in both the planning and construction phases has fostered a sense of pride and responsibility in maintaining the facility.

This initiative is one of the notable infrastructure developments supported by NFMP-JICA. It reflects the effectiveness of convergence and community participation. With continued maintenance and active use, the community hall is expected to serve as a useful space for village meetings, training sessions and social gatherings, contributing to improved coordination and engagement at the local level.

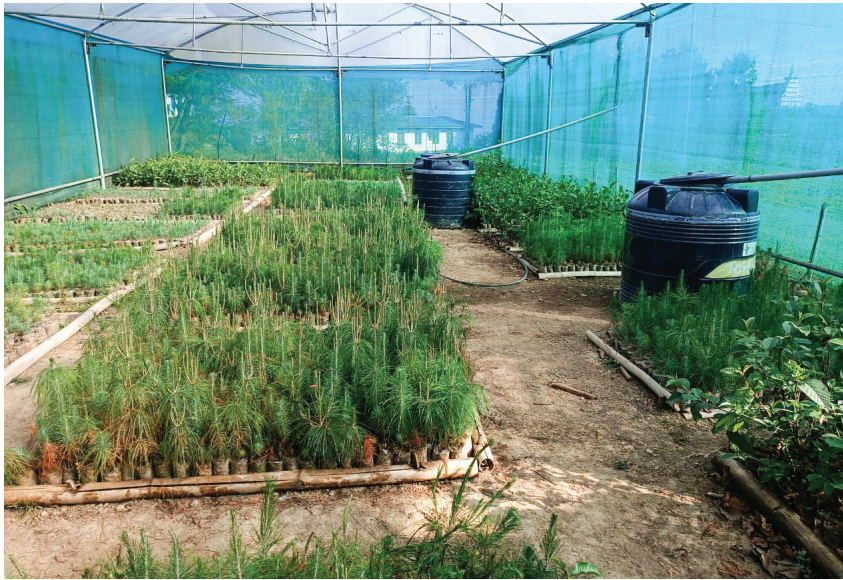
GROWING WITH PURPOSE: JFMC Angangba's Self-Sustaining Nursery



Angangba Nursery with adjacent kitchen

Angangba village of Tuensang district was selected as a target village under NFMP-JICA in 2019. As part of the Project's mandate to strengthen community institutions and enhance biodiversity through forestry interventions, a JFMC was formed with equal community representation. One of the core challenges was the absence of a community-owned nursery to support sustainable plantation and livelihood activities in the village.

To address this need, the JFMC established a nursery at a very convenient location in the village, well connected by road, close to NH-202, with water source for the nursery and good sunlight exposure, allowing scope for future expansion. With technical and financial support from the Horticulture Department, a permanent greenhouse structure (80x30 ft) was constructed along with NFMP-JICA fund amounting to



JFMC Angangba Nursery

₹5,19,037. Additional infrastructure including seedbeds and a kitchen shed was also constructed. The nursery is maintained by JFMC members, and a mali has been appointed for daily maintenance of the nursery and community volunteers for weeding, transplanting and sapling packaging.

The JFMC Nursery has become a model of successful convergence and community ownership. More than 1.5 lakh saplings comprising native and economically beneficial species like Pine, *Cryptomeria* and Alder have been raised. Of these, more than 5,200 saplings were sold, over 7,000 and 15,000 donated to community organisations and Forest Department respectively during various events. Over ₹78,000 has been generated from the saplings sales, which supports the nursery's maintenance, ensuring partial self-sufficiency. Species such as *Cedrela odorata*, Pine, *Cryptomeria*, *Trema orientates*, *Hovenia dulcis*, *Macaranga indica*, *Macaranga denticulate*, Cherry, Alder, *Listea citrate*, *Spondias axillaris*, local neem, etc has been raised in the nursery.



Women of Anganba village working in the JFMC Nursery

Women of the village play an active role in nursery operations, particularly during weeding and packaging. The JFMC has also taken innovative steps by constructing a compost pit using organic waste from saplings to produce manure, promoting sustainability. In celebration of their 5-year milestone, the committee raised 100 Rhododendron saplings and planted around the village in 2025. Despite annual monsoon-induced landslides affecting model plantation areas, the JFMC's commitment remains strong, they regularly replant saplings along affected roadside stretches, showcasing their dedication to the Project's vision.

This initiative highlights the value of combining scientific nursery practices with traditional knowledge. The well-functioning nursery serves as a foundational asset for further greening efforts and the community's demonstrated ownership and participation open doors for additional livelihood projects and capacity-building initiatives in the future. The nursery at Anganba stands as a cornerstone of the NFMP's success. Their collective efforts not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also instill a sense of ownership, unity and responsibility.

WATER HARVESTING STRUCTURE BRINGS NEW LIFE TO PELETKIE VILLAGE



Completed Water Harvesting Structure (WHS) and pipelines at Peletkie village

Peletkie, a small village with 74 households under Peren district, has long struggled with acute water scarcity, especially during lean seasons. The absence of a reliable water source significantly impacted daily life, with women bearing the brunt of the burden, spending hours fetching water for household use. This challenge posed a major obstacle to health, productivity and overall well-being in the village.

To address this critical issue, NFMP facilitated a convergence initiative with the Jal Jeevan Mission

(JJM), Department of Power and the Peletkie village community. The intervention was initiated in 2022 and completed in 2023 following Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises, where the villagers collectively identified the need and location for a Water Harvesting Structure (WHS).

An approximately 100-meter power line was extended to the water reservoir tank ensuring a steady power supply for the water pumping system. A submersible water pump was installed to facilitate the efficient

extraction and distribution of water from the reservoir. A 500-meter pipeline was laid to pump water uphill from the WHS reservoir tank to the main distribution tank. Water taps were connected to every household, ensuring direct access to clean water for all families in the village even during the lean season.

The JFMC played a key role in coordination and implementation. A major contribution also came from the local residents in the form of free wages which not only helped in early completion of the work but also minimized the total cost.

The convergence initiative has brought about transformative changes in Peletkie village. Today, every household has access to clean and reliable water throughout the year. This has significantly improved living conditions, with the most notable impact seen among women, who are now relieved from the daily chore of water collection, allowing them to engage in more productive activities.

This intervention stands as a testament to the power of community-led planning and inter-departmental convergence in achieving sustainable rural development outcomes, setting precedence for sustainable development and community-driven initiatives.

“ Today, every household has access to clean and reliable water throughout the year, including the lean season. ”



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