

*REPORT ON
VISIT TO AIZAWL, MIZORAM DURING 22-23
JANUARY, 2015*



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Krishi Bhavan
New Delhi*

Report on visit of Dr. Jose C. Samuel, Chief Consultant (MIDH) to Aizawl, Mizoram during 22-23 January, 2015 to review MIDH & VIUC

The visit was primarily made to:

Review the progress under HMNEH component of MIDH and VIUC,

Update web posting of HMNEH progress.

A. Horticulture Mission for North East & Himalayan States (HMNEH)

Under HMNEH scheme, Mizoram has been allotted a sum of Rs.50.00 crore during 2014-15, as per approved Annual Action Plan (AAP). Against this, first installment of Rs. 26.00 crore was released to the State Government in the month of July, 2014. Summary details of funds released during 2014-15 under various components of HMNEH scheme are given below:

Details of Target under HMNEH in Mizoram

Rupees in lakh

S. No.	Activity	Unit	Total Outlay		Release		Progress*	
			Phy Target	Fin. Outlay	Phy Target	Fin. Outlay	Phy Ach	Fin. Ach.
1	RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT	No.						
2	Plantation Infrastructure and Development	No.	7	340.00				
3	Establishment of new gardens / Area Expansion+Mushrooms	Ha.	2172	8667.70	2172	8667.70		
4	Maintenance 1 & 2 Year	Ha.	1825	174.56	1825	174.56		
5	Rejuvenation/ replanting	Ha.	2000	400.00	2000	400.00		
6	Promotion of IPM/INM	Ha.	12310	177.72				
7	Organic Farming (VC Unit)	No.		43.50				
8	FLD+ PFDc+GAP	No.						
9	Post Harvest Management	No.	652	86.40				
10	Markets	No.	21	153.75				
11	Creation of Water resources	No.	596	681.00	596	681.00		
12	Protected cultivation	Ha.	35.30	875.24	7.90	348.00		
13	Horticulture Mechanization	No.	1120	240.00				
14	Beekeeping	No.	2740	28.04				
15	Human Resource Development (HRD)	No.	18442	217.17	4834	32.34		
16	Centre of Excellence for Horticulture	No.	1	500.00				
17	Awareness+Survey, etc		136	134.00				
18	Mission Management TSG			280.92		120.86		
	G. Total			5200.00		2600.00		

* Progress for 2014-15 is yet to be reported.

State Horticulture Mission (SHM), Mizoram could not get the funds till recently. A sum of Rs. 7.00 crore was released to the districts directly. Balance amount of Rs.19.00 crore is pending release from the State Government.

Discussions with Shri Zotwana, Director of Horticulture & Mission Director revealed that despite best efforts they were unable to get the funds released state Treasury. He added that, with the launching of MIDH in 2014-15, they have moved a proposal to the State Government to open a new bank account for implementing the scheme. It was, however, clarified to the Director that since HMNEH was under operation since 2001-02, there was no need for opening another bank account. They need to operate the existing SB account. Moreover, funds were released during 2014-15 after taking into account the available unspent balance, including interest accrued from the bank.

Chief Consultant called on Shri B. Lalthmingthanga, Secretary Horticulture, Govt. of Mizoram on 23.01.2015 along with Director of Horticulture. He was apprised about the fact that delay in release of funds from the State Finance Department has slowed down the progress of HMNEH in Mizoram state. Compared to expenditure of Rs.48.00 crore during 2013-14, progress during 2014-15 was practically nil. If no action was taken immediately to get the funds released, State may loose substantial funds during the current year. This could affect the allocations for 2015-16, as well. First installment was released during 2014-15 to take up season bound activities for which the entire amount released by Government of India need to be placed at the disposal of SHM. Moreover, for claiming the second release, it will be necessary for the SHM to provide provisional UC along with the progress report. It was also informed that the SHM could operate the existing bank account. Secretary Horticulture agreed to pursue the matter.

Web posting of progress

Details of release and expenditure during XI plan, 2013-14 and 2014-14, as reported on HMNEH web site are given below:

Year	Rs. in crore		Remarks
	Release	Expenditure	
2007-08	30.95	28.73	
2008-09	30.50	28.23	
2009-10	28.36	27.84	
2010-11	38.90	34.81	
2011-12	39.85	37.29	
2012-13	43.10	137.49 41.96	Updated
2013-14	48.00	47.50	
2014-15	26.00		Progress need to be posted

It was brought to the notice of Mission Director and Joint Director of Horticulture that erroneous posting of progress has been made during 2012-13, as the expenditure posted was abnormally higher than release made. It was observed that, although district level progress was being posted at State HQ, they were unable to locate the source of error. Chief Consultant demonstrated the method of locating the source of error by scanning the progress for each district. It was noted that financial progress was wrongly posted in Aizawl district in respect of HRD component during the months of July and September. Thereafter the data was reconciled.

With regard to posting of progress for 2014-15, Director of Horticulture informed that it will be done in a week's time.

B. Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters (VIUC)

VIUC scheme is being implemented in Mizoram since 2011-12 for addressing supply chain issues of vegetables in Aizwal city. Districts of Aizwal, Lunglei, Champhai, Kolasib, Mamit and Serchhip have been included in the catchment area for vegetable production and supply to Aizwal. So far, 700 farmers have been mobilized into 35 FIGs and one FPO is being formed.

During 2014-15, an outlay of Rs.2.00 crore has been earmarked for Mizoram

against which a sum of Rs.1.00 crore has been released. Summary details of activities proposed to be taken up during 2014-15 are as under:

Sl.No	Item	Phy.	Fin. (Lakh Rs.)
1.	Cultivation of Hybrid vegetables	286 ha	71.50
2.	Protected cultivation	1.705 ha	104.00
3.	Promotion of INM/IPM	710 ha	8.52
4.	HRD	600 nos	6.00
5.	Mission Management		9.98
	Total		200.00

The Action Plan did not include components of PHM and marketing, which are essential for addressing supply chain issues. This was pointed out at the time of providing comments by DAC.

Field Visit

Visit was undertaken to Sihphir village, located about 15 kms from Aizawl city, to review progress under VIUC. The following officials were present during the visit:

1. Shri Kungen, Deputy Director, Aizawl
2. Shri Zosqangliana, Circle Officer Aizawl,
3. Shri Hmangaihthanga, Horticulture Officer,

In Sihphir village, Aizawl, eight FIGs have been formed in 2012-13 and another seven FIGs are being formed. Each FIG has about 20 members. All the members of the FIG have opened bank account. Each FIG have been provided an assistance of Rs.1.60 lakh as revolving fund for taking up activities like training, procurement of inputs etc. Besides direct funding, vegetable seeds, manures, sprayers and green house (120 sq.m, fabricated) are also provided to the beneficiary members. Indian Grameen Service (IGS), engaged by Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) have been providing supporting in forming FIGs.



Seen above are Office bearers of Mizoram Iskut Growers Association, which has been formed by different FIGs, Shri C. Biaksanga, Chairman (Member of FIG No 8), Shri H. Rinzuala, Vice Chairman (Member of FIG No 7), Shri Zoliana, Secretary (Member of FIG No 3) and Shri Remmawia, Treasurer (Member of FIG No.4).

Different kinds of vegetables are being grown by the farmers in Sihphir village (by adopting terrace cultivation), of which Chayote or Iskut is a major crop. About 1370 ha of land is being cultivated under Iskut by about 750 farmers. Under VIUC, 1506 farmers are cultivating iskut @ one ha each. At the time of visit, most of the plants had dried up due to off season, and is expected to regenerate by itself by June-July, with the onset of monsoon. A typical Iskut farm is seen in the picture below.



The Sihphir Village Development Council market is presently being used as a collection centre for collection and sale of vegetables of Sihphir. The building belongs to Trade & Commerce Department, Government of Mizoram.



A cold room has been established during 2013-14 at a cost of Rs.10.00 lakh on the terrace of the market building. The cold room, having a capacity of 3 MT, is owned by the Horticulture Department.



It is proposed to store vegetables overnight before transporting for sale to Aizawl or local market. The cold room has been fabricated by a Bangalore based firm RINAC India Ltd.

Discussions with the members of FIG revealed that they have to make their own arrangement for marketing the produce, as there was no market aggregator. They

were, however, getting most of the inputs at 100% subsidy. In the case of green house, farmers' contribution was being calculated in the form of labour, accounting for about 25% of cost.



Points needing attention of SHM, Mizoram

1. Release of full amount released by Government of India under HMNEH need to be expedited from State treasury. Existing bank account with SHM could continue to be operated for servicing HMNEH component of Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).
2. Progress for 2014-15 need to be uploaded of HMNEH web site for the amount released by the State Government.
3. Officials at District level need to be trained to post the progress of HMNEH at the respective districts.
4. Progress under Post Harvest Management and marketing component has been negligible in the State. Hence efforts are needed to popularize cold chain concept. An amount of Rs.1.4 crore earmarked for this purpose in Action Plan for 2014-15 need to utilized, for which project proposals need to be expedited for approval of competent authority.

5. Under VIUC, while good efforts have been made to form FIGs, last mile connectivity is missing. Farmers have to market their produce by themselves, as no market aggregators exist. Moreover, there is need to create retail outlets and supply vending carts for selling the vegetables to the consumers.
6. Cost norms and pattern of assistance as envisaged under HMNEH and VIUC schemes need to be adhered to, duly ensuring farmers' contribution also.
7. MIDH logo need to be used extensively wherever interventions under the scheme are made. Soft copy of the logo has been provided.