

Sustainable Development in the North East India – *A Case of NERCORMP*

DOCUMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICE

December 2011

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oneworld.net

OneWorld Foundation India

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP) is a rural development project working in three states of Northeast India with the overall objective of improving the livelihood of vulnerable groups in a sustainable manner through improved management of resources.. The project is a joint effort between North Eastern Council (NEC), Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and IFAD.

The genesis of NERCORMP can be drawn back to the lack of governmental service delivery mechanism, and the absence of sustainable development initiatives viable for the hilly regions. Through building of partnership with both the community, NGO and the government agencies, the project channelised demand driven and financially sustainable livelihood options in the region. A major highlight of NERCORMP has been its successful implementation in the poorest and insurgency affected areas. Community institution building through Natural Resources Management Groups (NaRMGs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs) largely shielded the projects from insurgents' interventions. As the entire fund for projects is managed and utilised by the community for their own socio-economic benefits, the insurgents had no avenue nor desire to demand for compensation.

NERCORMP is looking at participatory, sustainable, and viable community based institutions that are expected to carry out a people driven mode of rural development. They have been concentrating on building up community building organisations at the grassroots level called NaRMGs and SHGs. One of the significant achievements, through the creation of these organisations, is the emergence of a bottom-up planning approach by the village communities based and perceived on their felt needs.

NERCORMP works in the North Eastern Region of India and operates in two districts each in the states of Assam, Manipur and Meghalaya. The regional office is in Shillong, Meghalaya. This documentation focuses on NERCORMP activities with specific to Meghalaya. The documentation captures the aims of NERCORMP which are:

- More responsive to communities perspectives on needs and priorities.
- Involve the communities more in decision making and planning.
- Make communities more responsible for management of their development programmes in order to generate a greater sense of ownership of development interventions.

METHODOLOGY

The Governance Knowledge Centre decided to document the best practices of North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP) because this rural development initiative undertakes a host of innovative measures to generate livelihood opportunities for reducing poverty and ensuring food security in the region, while channelising effective community participation in the entire process.

The team used both primary and secondary research methods for the preparation of this best practice document.

Conducting desk based secondary research that mainly comprised of project reports and case studies published by NERCORMP, the team gathered important information on the background, objectives and operations of the initiative. In order to validate the secondary research findings and to know more about the project, the team visited NERCORMP's Head office located in Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya. The team prepared questionnaires for the Programme Coordinator & Development Strategist and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (MEO) of NERCORMP to gather information related to the project. The team conducted focus group discussion with a Self Help Group (SHG), including the nominated SHG executives and the Project Technical Officer, in Mawiong village located in East Khasi Hill district of Meghalaya, to learn the project's impact on its beneficiaries. The OneWorld research team interviewed the key implementers and interacted with community members in a project village and obtained first hand account of the project design, implementation challenges and its impacts on the people, the prospects of information bias is believed to be minimal. However, as the documentation focuses on analysing the generic objectives, work methodology and achievements of NERCORMP, it could not focus intensively on all specific initiatives undertaken by NERCORMP.

BACKGROUND

The North-Eastern region of India, comprising of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, has abundant diverse natural resources. It is recognised that if these resources are leveraged efficiently, the region has the potential for high economic growth. Paradoxically, the region remains one of the most economically backward areas of India. The political situation, combined with insurgency and ethnic conflicts have delayed the much needed socio-economic and infrastructural development. Although, the Government of India had initiated various developmental schemes to accelerate the growth process, the challenge is to protect the rights of the tribal communities and integrate it with effective growth models.

The potential for socio-economic growth of the region is widely recognised by the government and International Organisations, mainly because of the abundance in natural

resources and rich biodiversity. In this effort, in 1998, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), jointly with the Government of India through North-Eastern Council, had initiated North-Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP).

NERCORMP seeks to bring together the knowledge, expertise and ideologies of the government, IFAD, local civil societies and the communities to unleash the potential for development tapped in the backward areas. The implementation strategies adopted by NERCORMP set an excellent model of alternative development paradigm which generates socially, financially and environmentally sustainable livelihood options while triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes among development agents in the region.

Although NERCORMP is a government of India undertaking, its initiatives are implemented at the regional and district level through registered societies established specifically for the project. This move was directed to strengthen community based organization by providing greater operational flexibility to the project beneficiary. This best practice highlights the approach adopted by NERCORMP, and the success of its implementation in past decade.

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the project is to “improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups in a sustainable manner through improved management of their resource base in a way that contributes to protecting and restoring the environment”.¹ To achieve the aim, NERCORMP is involved in following activities:

- Capacity building of local communities and change agents to equip them with decision-making capability.
- Encourage youth to participate in local development, and promote sustainable agricultural practices.
- Provide avenues to generate livelihoods in resource poor households in crops, horticulture, forestry, livestock, fish production and non-farm activities.
- Assist communities in conserving their natural resources through utilising the commercially valued products in environmentally sustainable manner.
- Strengthen indigenous institutions and institutionalise new conservation practices
- Assist villagers in infrastructural developments by upgrading or constructing the roads to enhance market linkages.
- Improve social conditions by facilitating access to safe drinking water, healthcare and electricity.

¹ North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project for Upland Areas. Web. [www. http://www.necorps.org/about.htm](http://www.necorps.org/about.htm)

PROJECT DESIGN

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

NERCORMP is a joint initiative of the **Government of India** and the **International Fund for Agricultural Development**, a specialised agency of the United Nations having expertise in addressing issues on livelihood, food security and rural poverty,

The **North Eastern Council**, **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region**, represent the government of India in the project set up. The North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region which consists of the eight States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. The NEC functions under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) of the government of India.

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is one of the agency which provides technical support for implementation of the projects.

WORK FLOW

Phases of project implementation

NERCORMP's first phase was implemented in 1999 and lasted till 2008. During this phase the project covered two districts each in Meghalaya, Assam and Manipur with the total project fund of INR 166.25 crore. The project is now into its second phase as NERCORMP-II, to be completed in 2016. The present project, with financial support of INR 200 crore, is covering the same six districts as the Phase-I of the project. However, the Phase II aims to include 400 villages that are adjoining to the villages covered previously.

Programme design

NERCORMP's implementation strategy sets an excellent model of alternative development paradigm which generates socially, financially and environmentally sustainable livelihood options while triggering attitudinal and behavioral changes among development agents in the region.

Although a Government project, efforts are made to make the operations independent of the public administration. The project monitoring and implementation is done by registered societies established for the purposes of the project at regional and district level, and Programme Support Unit, established at the regional level, provides the necessary guidelines to the Development Support Teams (DST) established at every district. These bodies mobilize community based institutions to induce participatory approach to

implementation of the project. The project also involves various government line departments, NGOs for strengthening technical, legal, economic and social collaboration.

The actual field level intervention begins with **community institution building** activities of forming Natural Resource Management Groups (NaRMGs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs). The principal drive for this method of intervention is the fundamental ideal of trusting the traditional knowledge base and development drive of the communities, thereby delegating them with corresponding responsibilities. To catalyse creation of community institution, supplementary capacity building activities, and monitoring at village level, the project establishes partnership with local NGOs having strong community presence.

Prior to introducing any intervention, community participation and support is ensured by seeking permission from the village head, such as Nokma in Garo Hills, and organizing a meeting with the residents to discuss the project philosophy and purposes discussed. Later, the villagers sign a Social Agreement for the implementation of the project to complete the initial process. Afterwards, the NGO take the responsibility of forming the NaRMGs and SHGs along with district support team.

Natural Resource Management Group (NaRMG)	Self Help Group (SHGs)
<i>Comprises of males and females drawn from each household in the community</i>	<i>Comprises of 15-20 members playing key role in providing credit to its members.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving as Village Development Board/Committee • Universal participation • Equal gender representation (husband and wife from every household) • Complimentary to traditional institutions • Decentralised budgeting, planning and implementation • Devolution of decision-making from traditional institutions and government • Decision making for the project activities • Supporting role, coordination and guidance to SHGs when necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote savings and credit • Foster increased women’s participation in diverse activities • Endorse women’s empowerment through effective fund rotation (Revolving fund) and creation of various income generating activities • Provide a forum to address micro-credit needs while encouraging savings for greater sustainability • Convey community ownership and stronger sense of accountability • Provide a forum to address social issues while providing range of social service activities

Figure 1: Salient features of NaRMGs and SHGs

Both NaRMGs and SHGs are linked with various other institutions such as micro finance institutions (MFIs) and regional banks for financial support and proficient project implementation.

In order to give a collective voice to the wider community and to serve as a pressure group for availing developmental funds from different line departments NaRMG Cluster Associations are formed. 10 to 15 NaRMGs come together to form an association. SHG federations are also formed of 10 to 15 SHGs in a bid to assist the individual SHGs in capacity building, providing need based credit to individual SHGs, taking up matters of common interest including education, business and setting up of successful cluster enterprises.

There is an effective monitoring mechanism in place to check meaningful community participation at all levels of planning and implementation. In all SHG and NaRMG meetings, an attendance register and other books of accounts are maintained to check gender participation, project records, distribution and allocation of funds. The monitoring form is first filled up by the NaRMG secretary and partner NGO and then all the information is uploaded in the electronic database. It is cross verified, and both hard and soft copy of the report is sent to the District Support Office. This report is used by district team at the time of field visit to cross verify physically.

Phase	District	SHGs/ NaRMG	Villages	Households
1 st phase	West Hills	Garos 852/257	192	7070
2 nd phase	West Hills	Garos 154/95	75	3627
1 st phase	West Hills	Khasis 454/162	162	6900
2 nd phase	West Hills	Khasis 155/76	76	3619

TABLE 1: TOTAL NUMBER OF NARMGS AND SHGS IN WEST GARO HILL AND WEST KHASI HILL DISTRICTS OF MEGHALAYA. SOURCE: NERCORMP

Developing the micro plan for sustainable livelihood generation

NaRMGs and SHGs bring together every section of the society, with special emphasis on the women and the poorest, to decide the development agenda. Through the process of

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) the community defines their development goals and presents it to the NERCORMP District Support team, which later takes it forward to the Regional Office for final approval of their Annual Work Plan & Budget and fund release. NERCORMP has its wealth ranking criteria to identify the income levels and the housing assets of the villagers in four categories of i) better off, ii) poor, iii) poorer, and iv) poorest. It ensures prioritisation of the development agenda and percolation of development initiatives for the interest of the poorest in strata.

Income generation along with biodiversity conservation

NERCORMP delicately balances the intricate relationship among livelihood creations in forest areas, environment stability, rural development, poverty alleviation, and food security. The community driven development agenda seeks to generate various livelihood options like agriculture, horticulture, livestock and forest based activities, which were found to be suitable to the region. One of the focus areas of the project has been reduction of harmful effects of shifting cultivation, commonly known as *Jhum*. The project conducted wide awareness campaigns on the efficient means of cultivation that includes conversion of *Jhum* land into terraces and community forest reserves, promotion of cash crops and perennial horticulture crops in *jhum* areas, and promotion of agro-forestry in those areas. It introduced the community to technologically, socially and environmentally viable agriculture tools and techniques, while promoting strategic prioritisation for food security.

Along with sustainable farming, a host of other forest based interventions and investments are undertaken for the community. As for the indigenous people of Meghalaya living amidst forest areas, forest products not only ensure subsistence and safety net, but also holds potential commercialisation of timber, and non timber forest products (NTFP)² for economic liberalisations. Some of the NTFPs actively promoted by NERCORMP for commercial use are bamboo, cane, broom grass, fuel wood, bay leaf, bark of cinnamon tree, gooseberry (amla), wild pepper and medicinal plants. Apart from these mushroom cultivation, bee keeping, sericulture and fishing are also largely promoted among the community. As the primary focus of the programme is to percolate the benefits of these livelihood generation activities among the most economically underprivileged section and the women, the NTFP enterprises in Meghalaya are mostly run by women.

Integration with a range of government line departments have also opened up the avenues for employment options. For example, with the intervention of NERCORMP a lot of activities are initiated under the Mahatma Gandhi national rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the region.

² NTFP is any and every natural resource from the forest except timber, which can be extracted from natural ecosystems, managed plantations, etc., and is utilised within the household, or be marketed or have social, cultural or religious significance.

Marketing of the products

NERCORMP has taken an effort for collective marketing of the project products through NaRMG Associations and SHG Federations. Business approach introduced among the communities has been able to reorient the concept and practice of wealth creation. The project has also facilitated communities to have better access and price for their surplus produces by leveraging the collective bargaining strength. NERCORMP also introduced the concept of value addition by improving the quality and price of the products. NERCORMP teaches the communities to procure needed commodities collectively at better prices and ensuring quality.

Apart from creating localised markets in the project areas, NERCORMP has a small retail outlet at its head office located in Shillong. The products sold are Durama Tea (West Garo Hills), Aloe Vera Soap, Juice and Gel (West Garo Hills and North Cachar Hills), Candles (Karbi Anglong), Honey (Nongstoin and Senapati), Banana Chips, Gooseberry Candies, and Wild Apple Candies (Ukhrul) etc. The profit earned in the centre are transferred to the concerned federations for distribution.

NERCORMP holds trade fairs in the month of May every year since 2009 to provide a wider scope for marketing of their products. The fair know as Neat Fest (North East Agro Business Trade) also organises capacity building workshops and technology know-how seminars. All the products are standardised under the umbrella brand name 'Neat' to give identity and market recognition to the products. NERCORMP is now using the services of India Development Gateway, a Government of India portal, which provides a common online platform for buyers and sellers maintained by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) to sell the products.

CASE STUDY: Visiting a SHG in Mawiong Village

The Team visited a NERCORMP built SHG in Mawiong village, 40 kilometers ahead of Shillong comprising of mostly women members aging between 18 to 60 years old. Prior to NERCORMP intervention, they produced maize, rice and potato for consumption and minimally engaged with the market as they did not have access to market linkages and road connectivity. Post intervention, they have been trained in agriculture, dairy farming and capacity-building activities.

The SHG meets twice a month presided by President, Secretary and Treasurer to discuss their priorities and needs; and communicate it to the District Support Team to finalise the plan and share it with the regional office for final approval of plans. The members contribute Rs 5 per month as membership fee.

Post intervention, they have planted more trees and adopted use of fertilizers and pesticides with the money coming from SHG's loan. Loan between Rs 2000-4000 is sanctioned with 2 per cent interest and members are able to pay back without any difficulties. The loan is granted out of membership fee and project support. To avoid any confusion, all financial transactions are recorded in the books of accounts by Secretary; trained by NGO field coordinator.

To create direct market linkage, NERCORMP constructed roads and now the members have easy access to the market for which they are able to make a profit of Rs 12,000 from Rs 5000 by selling their products in the market.

Besides improvement in financial standard, the SHG members feel connected to each other and daily interaction has improved their solidarity. They also feel empowered because they are the decision-makers and earn profit in farming. They also do not have to depend on money lenders. The members feel happy with NERCORMP's intervention and suggest for schools and hospitals in their village.

FUNDING

NERCORMP activities are funded by various stakeholders. The majority of the funds given to NERCORMP are by Government of India and IFAD, and rest comes from banks and contributions made by SHG/NaRMG members. The first phase started in 1999 till 2008 in villages of West Garo Hills and West Khasi Hills along with other four districts of NE. The second phase started in 2010 and will go on until 2016 in the adjoining villages of the previous programme areas. The project support for the two phases is listed in the table below:

Phases	Donor	Amount in crores
1st phase	Government of India	17.09
	IFAD	117.59
	Financial institutions	16.45
	Community contribution	15.12
	Total=166.25	
2 nd phase	Government of India	90 956
	IFAD	9
	Financial Institutions	Total=200
	Community contribution	

TABLE 4: FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE PROJECT.

SOURCE: NERCORMP

IMPACT

A significant change was seen in most respondents' lives post project implementation during a survey conducted by NERCORMP in West Garo Hills also. The table below summarises an overview of responses on changes brought by project and discusses ways in which it has impacted the community and region.

Responses on changes brought by NERCORMP	
Query	No. Of respondents (out of 60)
Increase in income	45
Improvement in consumption pattern	30
Empowerment	48
Improvement in health and nutrition	25
Increase in work burden	20
Awareness	38
Cooperation and unity	35
Linkages with line departments	26
Skill development	28
Improvement in income generating activities	24

TABLE 2 TOWARDS A JUST AND LAST CHANGE | NERCORMP-IFAD 2008

Alternative development for collective action

The most significant achievement of NERCORMP is its implementation strategy. The very nature of its working design makes it a technologically viable, socially sensitive and institutionally effective development programme. Unlike the existing development programmes of the region, NERCORMP is a community driven, gender inclusive with sustainable approach. NERCORMP at the first place defines development from the community's point of view. Every activity of NERCORMP project is based on the basic needs of the community identified through the process of participatory rural appraisal. Through community based organizations such as the NaRMGs and the SHGs, NERCORMP mobilised the community for collective action. Partnerships were built with the local NGOs for enabling group formations and training .

The feature of compulsory women participation in the community organisations paved way for inclusive development and equal participation. As the NaRMGs and SHGs became socially and economically empowered, these groups are encouraged to form federations for improving credibility with banks and other financial institutions and help linkage with existing financial institutions and line agencies. The wealth ranking criteria adopted by NERCORMP to identify the poorest of the poor is another unique component of the programme. Unlike other development programmes, NERCORMP doesn't use the Below Poverty Line criteria but conducts Wealth Ranking to identify various categories of poor families in each project village and to track their movement on a rough poverty scale as the

project progressed. This approach is meant to ensure that poverty alleviation programmes are focusing on the most deserving target group and progressing in the right direction.

Positive relation of income generation and bio diversity conservation

As the prime objective of the project's inception was to alleviate poverty among the tribal population living in underdeveloped and difficult terrain of the region, the project focuses largely on developing ranges of sustainable livelihood and income generation programmes. These include organic agriculture, sustainable shifting cultivation, livestock and fisheries, forestry, Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), medicinal and aromatic plants, and non-farm enterprises such as eco-tourism, handloom and handicrafts etc.

The locals are also made aware of modern technology and innovations in farming and horticulture sectors along with ensuring market access for the products. Various products, such as Durama Tea, aloe vera soap, juice and gel, honey and chips, are sold at the retail outlay existing in the state's capital. The yearly organised Neat Fest also exposes the products to a wider market. NERCORMP has started using a government of India portal, India Development Gateway to promote the products online. NERCORMP promotes community based biodiversity conservation in the project areas by generating public environmental awareness and instilling a sense of ownership for the forests among the community.

One of the major objectives of NERCORMP is to mitigate environmental hazards posed by the region's excessive reliance on shifting cultivation, the practice of which is severely constrained with shortening cycle and degradation. The project adopted awareness campaigns to demonstrate effective environment friendly ways of managing shifting cultivation. In West Garo Hill district of Meghalaya the project has successfully achieved optimisation³ and rationalisation⁴ of shifting cultivation resulting in overall decrease in jhum areas and increase in areas under forest cover. Other jhum modification activities included - conversion of jhum land into terraces and community forest reserves, promotion of cash crops and perennial horticulture crops in jhum areas, and promotion of agro-forestry in those areas. The project also undertook successful interventions of preventing illegal and unethical fishing in the Bandra river of Meghalaya. The river contains many valuable fish, shrimps and crabs, providing sustainable livelihood to the locals. However, illegal and hazardous forms of fishing such as the use of electric power and poisonous substances such as bleaching powder and explosives were massively destroying the aquatic eco system as well as ruining the local community's traditional fishing occupations. In order to check these mal practices the project undertook awareness programmes, built community consensus on controlled fishing guidelines and imposed penalty on the violators.

³ Linking jhum clearing with labour availability in the household for subsequent weeding.

⁴ Selection of jhum sites by avoiding critical water sources, stream banks, sites of dense and large trees, canes etc.

Enhancing the role of women in sustainable biodiversity

Achieving gender equity is one of the major components of NaRMGs and SHGs. Prior to the initiation of the project, the role of women has been restricted as change makers in the public domain. NERCORMP realised the importance of women as the repository of locally rooted knowledge system and adopted measures to ensure effective participation of women in the development projects designed for the community.

As the NaRMGs comprised of male and female heads drawn from each household in the community, women are given equal platform as men in voicing their opinion in preparing Natural Resource Management Plans and other community plans. As members of the SHGs women have been receiving regular capacity building exercises such as training to carry out group activity, prepare micro plans and to approach district administrative offices, banks and other institutions.

NERCORMP has involved women in all the forestry and biodiversity awareness training programmes through ensuring 50 per cent women participation in any forestry development training to enable women to interact with men on equal terms. NERCORMP also ensures that 50 per cent of the members of NaRMGs and the Joint Forest Management Committee are women.

Social sector activity

NERCORMP has also undertaken various social sector activities in order to increase access to basic services and infrastructural facilities. The trigger for these efforts was the realisation that without a healthy social set up and adequate infrastructural support, the road to economic self sufficiency will be a difficult one. Thus NERCORMP initiated water and sanitation, health and prevention, road connectivity, irrigation and electrification projects. As a part of this effort in the state of Meghalaya, NERCORMP has recently built toilets for the community in convergence with the state government. The use of low cost toilet prevented open defecation and improved the sanitation of the households and aesthetics of the village. This move has been instrumental in preventing the pollution of soil, water and air, which is eventually reducing the incidence of water and soil borne diseases in the region. NERCORMP is also undertaking a series of efforts to built eco-tourism in Meghalaya.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Although there has been an impressive improvement in the living standards of people, mostly of those living in the lowest rung of economic strata, ten to fifteen per cent of the poorest families living in the project villages have not made progress despite programme interventions. Some villages are lacking in their activities with regard to value addition and

processing of products. Some are also taking time to adapt themselves in the market environment. Few require reinforcement in solid and water conservation. There were also difficulties faced in converging NERCORMP activities with other government programmes. Another challenge in implementation of NERCORMP's initiatives has been the absence of efficient local level organisations for supporting effective community mobilisation.

CONCLUSION

NERCORMP as a development intervention in the north eastern region has been able to provide the much needed guidance to the community as well as to the development sector. As the genesis of NERCORMP can be drawn back to the lack of efficient governmental service delivery mechanism, and the absence of sustainable development initiatives viable for the hilly regions, this project has been able to justify its inception goals. Through building up of partnership with both the community and the government agencies, the project channelised demand driven and financially sustainable livelihood options in the region. A major highlight of NERCORMP has been its successful implementation in the poorest and insurgency affected areas. Community institution building through NaRMGs and SHGs largely shielded the projects from insurgents' interventions. As the entire fund for projects is managed and utilised by the community for their own socio-economic benefits, the insurgents had no avenue nor desire to demand for compensation.

Successful implementation of the NERCORMP projects in six districts of NE which include two hilly district of Meghalaya region has promoted the government of India to initiate its third phase in 2012. The Planning Commission, the Ministry of DoNER and the North Eastern Council will be supporting the activities of this phase.

Research was carried out by the OneWorld Foundation, Governance Knowledge Centre (GKC) team.

Documentation was created by Research Associates, Ajupi Baruah and Attriba Hazarika

For further information, please contact Mr. Rajiv Tikoo, Director, OWFI.

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APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Background- Stakeholders and roles

1. According to our research, the major stakeholder in this project are :
 - a) Government of India
 - b) International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)
 - c) North East Council (NEC)
 - d) Ministry of Development of Northeast Region (DoNER)
 - e) United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- i. What are their specific roles in this project?
- ii. Are there any other stakeholders? If yes, who are they? What are their roles and contribution to the project?

Evolution

2. We understand that NERCOMP's overall objective is to improve the livelihood of vulnerable groups in a sustainable manner through improved management of their resource base in a way that contributes to protecting and restoring the environment. What was the motivation behind introducing this programme?
3. What is the current geographic scope of the project? In how many villages has it been initiated in Meghalaya?

Workflow

4. According to our research, NERCORMP engages in:
 - a) Capacity building of communities and participating agencies
 - b) Economic livelihood activities
 - c) Community based bio-diversity conservation
 - d) Social sector activities
 - e) Village roads and rural electrification
- i. What is the implementation approach/process followed for each of these categories?
5. Considering that this is a community-based initiative how do you mobilise the community?
 - i. What methods are followed to ensure community participation?
6. What is the structure of the programme in the field? Are there any dedicated project staff in the field? If yes, what is the total number of staff? How much do they get paid?

7. Currently, the second phase of the programme is being implemented and will go on till 2016. How is the first phase different from the second phase?
8. What monitoring mechanisms are implemented to track the progress of the programme?

SHGs and NaRM-G

9. What is the process for forming SHG Federations and NaRM-G Associations in villages? Give us information on:
 - a) Organisational structure
 - b) Roles and responsibilities of members
 - c) Nature of activities taking place

Impact and Sustainability

10. It has been more than a decade since implementation of NERCORMP. What has been the impact of the project, in terms of:
 - a) Improving vulnerable groups of Shillong?
 - b) Making the programme sustainable?
 - c) Improving the natural resource management?
 - d) Protecting and restoring the environment?
11. NERCORMP's goal is to alleviate poverty amongst marginalised population, advocate for their rights and provide support to expand their business.
 - i) Has it been successful in achieving all its goals? If not then, why?
 - ii) Are there any other goals? If yes, what are they and has NERCORMP been successful in achieving them?
12. How many human resources have been integrated in this project? Has there been an increase in the number since the initiative started?
13. How has the initiative sustained itself financially?
 - i. Is there a revenue generating mechanism? If not, then who is funding the project?
14. Did you face any challenges in implementing this initiative? If yes, what are they? How did you overcome?

Measuring success

15. What are the innovative features of the project?

16. Has this project being replicated in other states? If yes, please list them.

17. Can you share quantitative data to indicate achievements of the projects?