

1. Title of the Programme:	State Level workshop on Agroecology Learning Circle (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches.		
2. Objectives:	-To know the best practices of custodian farmers in the state -To aware of the contribution of grassroot farmers on traditional knowledge		
3. Date (DD/MM/YYYY):	August 8-9, 2023	Venue :	State Central Library
4. Names of Resource persons/Speakers/Presenters/any other:			
5. Total number of participants: 4	Students	0	
	Faculty	4	
	Externals	0	
	Any Other	0	

6. Introduction:

State Level workshop on Agroecology Learning Circle (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches organized by NESFAS, Shillong on August 8-9, 2023 at the State Central Library where Shri Gunanka DB,IFS, Additional Project Director, MCLLMP was the chief guest. During the two days workshop there was sharing of community-led best practices on indigenous way of farming. There was a show case of varieties of traditional seeds, plants, etc. Mr Pius Rane, Executive director NESFAS highlighted in his remarks about promoting local agroecology practice which is important for sustainability. There were performances from the members of ALC followed by group discussions, sharing of experiences and presentation of the overview of the workshop keeping in mind the policy recommendation.

7. Summary of Activities/Sessions:

(1) Activity/Session 1 -

Community-led sharing of best practices and peer learning. The first session of Day 1 of the State level workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resources Management approaches was an inaugural ceremony.

During the second session of Day 1, ALC members shared their best practices. Bah Bosswell Marwein from Mawkade ALC, Mawthadrishan Block, discussed effective soil management. Notable practices include planting sla lamet at the garden's edge to prevent soil erosion. Additionally, placing banana plants at the top or middle of the field helps retain soil moisture, allowing the use of only organic fertilizers like manure.

Kong Wanpouri Sumer from Lumtep ALC shared insights into weed and pest management. To control weeds, cut them in December, let them dry for two to three weeks, and then burn them. The resulting ash can be used as a natural fertilizer. For pest management, utilize eggshells as fertilizer for ginger. Burn the eggshells and mix them with lime and tobacco leaves to effectively control pests.

Kong Regina Lyngdoh from Mawryngkhag ALC shared effective strategies for pest management in fresh bean plantations. To deter pests, soak tobacco leaves in 5 liters of water and use the infused water to spray the fresh beans during sprouting and flowering.

Bah Crystalin B Marak of Darichikgre ALC discussed pest management for pumpkin cultivation. A mixture of neem leaves, garlic, fern leaves, and mulberry leaves can be combined and sprayed on pumpkin leaves to control pests.

Kong Hamsniawpher Suchiang of Mulum ALC and Bah Gilbert Khongsit of Mawbri ALC shared their insights on seed management practices. This session was followed by an interactive questions and answers round from the farmers and participants.

The third session of Day 1 focused on the exchange of CLLMP Best Practices, covering topics such as Forest Management Plan, Payment for Eco-system services, Living root bridges, Water Resources Management in Mawteibah Village, Grassroot Innovation by The Ri Bhoi Traditional Healer Association, and Grassroot Innovation: Reclamation of mining-affected land. Presenters for these topics included Jsywill Nongpiur, James Kharkongor, Kimistar Lubri, Balalupa Mawlong, JB Manih, and Kyrseven Ryngkhlem. Kong Gratia E Dkhar, Sr. Associate Programme at NESFAS, concluded the day's session.

(2) Activity/Session 2-

Participatory selection of best practices for adoption district-wise. This is the first session of 2nd day workshop. In this session, the participants or communities were divided according to the district they belonged to and the task given was to identify the best practices adopted by them and

to present it with reasons for choosing those practices. The session was facilitated by Bah Khraw Wahlang, Adviser, NESFAS, Kong Naphishisha Nongsiej, Associate NESFAS and Kong Rimchi Marak, Sr. Associate, NESFAS.

1. East Khasi Hills District: The ALC group or communities of this district who belong to Mawsynram block has identified three best practices for adoption. They are Natural Resource Management such as water resource management, Traditional medicine and Community Seed Bank. One of the villages (Mawteibah) of this block has the water scarcity due to loss of topsoil cover during rainy seasons and therefore ALC groups has adopted the water resource management through CLLMP and this becomes success, therefore, they have chosen natural resource management as the best practices.
2. Another group of communities belonged to the East Khasi Hills District has identified pest management regarding ginger as the best practices
3. South West Khasi Hills: The ALC group belonged to this group has identified Organic farming as the best practices, followed by rearing fish in paddy field as part of pest management and the community seed bank. The communities want to transform from using chemical fertilizers to organic fertilizers in their terrace farming as they also consider the need of conserving the soil health. They also mentioned that reviving the traditional or indigenous seed was successful through the community seed bank.
4. West Jaintia Hills: The communities suggested three best practices. They are community seed bank to preserve the indigenous seeds, composting to enhance soil fertility and organic pesticide as a part of pest management.
5. East Jaintia Hills: The communities of this district have identified the seed management as the best practices followed by forest management and soil management by using small bamboos which are tight and strong to prevent soil erosion.
6. Ri-Bhoi District: The ALC group of this district has suggested to have organic ginger cultivation as the district is threat to inorganic cultivation of ginger and destroying the soil and ginger production. They also suggested about the water resource management as there is water scarcity due to pumping of the trees and Jhum cultivation. They also want to bring the attention of the living root bridges which are situated in the district. The district has a lot of living root bridges, however, cutting down of these bridges to construct road leads to the extinction of pycus plant. Therefore, they want to conserve these living root bridges.
7. South West and East Garo Hills: The first best practices the communities want to adopt is the water resource management. They plant trees which are water retaining species and also bamboos and telwa trees which can hold the water for long time. The second practice is the

forest management where they are keeping the forest and conserve forest area. They have a rule that if some one cuts down one tree, he/she has to plant 5 trees in replacement. They also identified the shifting cultivation as the another practice to adopt because they realized that local seeds could be preserved only through shifting cultivation.

8. Another community group of Garo Hills want to adopt the practices suggested by Khasi Hills. Gauva, peach and pomegranates are grown in almost every house and they want to adopt the organic pest management for these crops which was suggested in the previous day discussions. They also want to adopt planting of garlic chives around the shifting cultivation area for pest management. Because they plant important crops such as pumpkin, taro, sweet potato, tapioca by shifting cultivation. They also suggested to adopt the using of tobacco leaves for pest management of French beans.

(3). Activity/Session 3- Develop a mechanism to strengthen co-learning (Road-map) session:

This session was conducted to develop a road map for co-learning among the communities. In this session also the farmers or communities were divided district-wise. The task given was to find out the most effective knowledge exchange platform for the community among the four alternatives given. The alternatives are learning the knowledge from ALC members of neighboring ALC, learning from extension workers and KVKs, learning from project team or other teams and learning from external experts. The session was facilitated by Bah Dhrupad Choudhury, Adviser, NESFAS, Bah H.H Mohrmen, Adviser, NESFAS and Kong Merrysha Nongrum, Sr. Associate, NESFAS.

1. South West and East Garo Hills: The communities felt that ALC (Agroecology Learning Circles) is the most comfortable platform at grassroot levels to share the knowledge among the farmers/communities. They get the less benefit from extension workers of KVK and therefore, extension workers from KVK need to be strengthened to use as a platform of knowledge sharing among the communities.
2. West Khasi Hills District: The community from this district suggested that project teams are the most effective platform for the community to share and learn the knowledge. They do not have ALC in their area so ALC has to be strengthened to be a platform of sharing the knowledge.
3. West and East Jaintia Hills District: The community/farmer from this group expressed that they learned best from ALC farmers to farmers and the community learns less from extension workers from KVKs because of language barrier. The farmers from the East Jaintia Hills mentioned that the weakest platform for knowledge sharing is the external experts from outside because the extension workers come only one time and leave and they do not have follow up procedures, so it is very difficult for the farmers to learn and

exchange the knowledge from external experts.

4. Ribhoi district: The farmers of this district shared that ALC farmers to farmers learning is the most effective platform of knowledge sharing and learning. They also suggested that the techniques taught by the external experts are very new and foreign to them therefore, they had given the opinion of weakest platform for learning as external experts.
5. East Khasi Hills District: The farmers from this district felt that ALC is the best platform to learn and share the knowledge among the farmers. The extension worker from KVKs is the least favourable platform for the farmers to learn as the extension workers come only one time and give training and there will be no follow up. The other group of farmers from East Khasi Hills also suggested that the extension workers and external experts should learn the traditional knowledge adopted by the farmers and then combine with the scientific knowledge to come up with the solutions.

8. Feedback & Recommendation (if any):

Recommendation: We need to look at two dimensions-

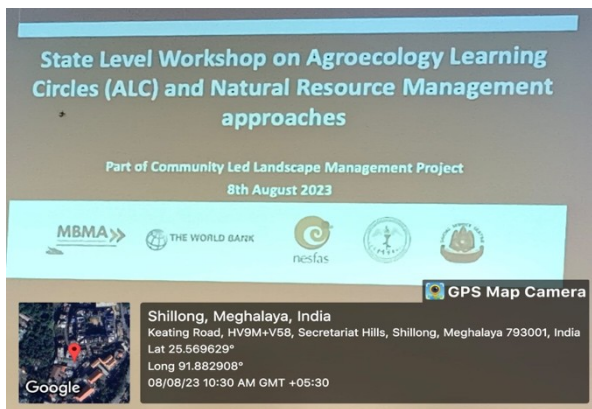
1. To look into the best practices which have been mentioned by the farmers to adopt to the other villages which have similar agroecological circle. Therefore, it needs to start from grassroots level where the communities are comfortable to share the knowledge. Hence, formation of federation is required at block level and district level to share the knowledge among the communities. ALC Knowledge is not enough for farmers, therefore, there is a need to have an interface with community or local experts and institutions, KVKs, research unit etc. Thus, we should set up a mechanism where we can have action research to have the technical experts work with community leader and identify challenges and bring solutions.
2. To set up a platform for project partners to exchange the knowledge among the partners at district level. It will help to disseminate the information, experiences and suggestions. It will also pave a way to get support from the administrators, tell them about incidences of pest, soil or forest department and also identify the gaps in implementation of the programs and thus it will help in improving the governance of the state.

In conclusion, there is a need of setting up of knowledge network among the partners as well as between partners and producer groups at different tiers to have co-learning or peer to peer learning at block level, district and state level.

9. Conclusion: A two days workshop was very informative and well organised. Group discussion and sharing of experiences were very insightful; there is a hope for sustainability on traditional knowledge of farming and management of indigenous resources available in the state.

10. List of Annexures:

a) **Annexure I: Pictures**



b) **Annexure II-Invitation Letter**



Kerie Ville, Arbuthnott Road, Laitumkrah, Shillong, Meghalaya, India || +919362313910 || www.nesfas.in || infonesfas@gmail.com

Date: 31st July 2023

To,

**The Head of Department
Nutrition and Dietetics Department,
MLCU Shillong.**

SUBJECT: Invitation to State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches under CLLMP co-organised by MBMA and NESFAS

Dear Sir/Ma'am, Greetings

from NESFAS!

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. On behalf of NESFAS, it is my great pleasure to extend to you a warm invitation to participate in our upcoming **State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches under CLLMP co-organised by MBMA and NESFAS.**

In its current project, NESFAS initiated the Agroecology Learning Circles (ALCs) as a multifaceted, bottom-up approach that lets communities direct their own learning and space to express their knowledge. ALCs combine agroecology with participatory research and aim at empowering indigenous communities to recognize, revive, practice, and eventually further develop traditional agroecology technologies and practices and stimulate local innovation for sustainable local food systems. The project "Empowering indigenous communities through Agroecology Learning Circles (ALCs) for resilient, integrated and innovative natural resource management", funded by the World Bank and supported by Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA) has enabled NESFAS and its partners to establish and consolidate the operations of 100 ALCs across Meghalaya.

The objective of this workshop is to bring together traditional knowledge holders, custodian farmers and enthusiasts in this field to foster an interactive and engaging learning experience. Participants will also have the opportunity to exchange knowledge and best practices as well a

explore innovative approaches to natural resource management. Through this workshop, NESFAS aims to promote the integration of traditional knowledge with modern techniques for sustainable natural resource management.

We believe that the knowledge and connections gained during this workshop will have a significant impact on our local farmers' ability to effectively address challenges related to Natural Resource management, spark new ideas, and inspire collaborative solutions. Ultimately, our goal is to empower local farmers to become catalysts for positive change in their respective communities and beyond.

Thank you for considering this invitation, and we look forward to seeing you.

Date: 8 & 9 August, 2023

Time: 9 am - 4 pm

**Venue: U Soso Tham Auditorium, Hall Programme:
Attached**

Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Pius Rane', with a stylized circular flourish on the left and a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Pius Rane Executive Director
NESFAS**

c) **Annexure III-Programme Schedule**

Programme:

State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resource Management approaches under the World Bank funded Community Led Landscape Management Project

Day 1: Community-Led Sharing of Best Practices and Peer Learning

Time	Schedule	Speakers
9:00 am- 10:00 am	Registration + tea+ visiting of stalls	
Session 1: Inaugural ceremony		Chairperson: Kong Aurilia C Tariang, Associate, NESFAS
10:00 am-10:10 am	Opening Remarks	Bah. Pius Rane, Executive Director, NESFAS
10:10 am-10:15 am	Video screening	
10:15 am-10:30 am	Inaugural speech	Shri Gunanka DB, Joint Secretary to Govt of Meghalaya; Executive Director MBDA & MINR; Member Secretary BRDC & SCSTE
10:30 am-10:40 am	Vote Of Thanks	Veveane Sayo, Sr. Manager, KM, MBMA
Session 2: Sharing of ALC Best Practices		Chairperson: Bah Shaiphar Dohling, Community Consultant, NESFAS
11:00 am- 11:30 am	The knowledge on practices for management of soil	Lumtrep ALC & Jatah ALC
11.30 am -12:00 pm	The knowledge on practices for management of pest	Pahamshiken ALC & Darechikgre ALC
12:00 pm -12:30 pm	The knowledge on practices for management of seeds	Mulum ALC & Mawbri ALC
12:30 pm -1:00 pm	Open discussion and Reflection	
1:00 pm-2:00 pm	Lunch	

Session 3: Sharing of CLLMP Best Practices		Chairperson: Dokatchi K. Marak, TS
2.00 pm- 3.30 pm	1. Forest Management Plan	Jyswill Nongpiur
	2. Payment for Eco-System Services	Lavinia M. Dkhar
	3. Living Root Bridges	Kimistar Lubri & Mohonsing Khongshun
	4. Water Resource Management: Mawteibah village	Balalupa Mawlong & Dira Mawlong
	5. Grassroot Innovation: The Ri Bhoi Traditional Healer Association (RBTHA)	J.B Manih & Elington Syiem
	6. Grassroot Innovation: Reclamation of mining-affected land	Kyrsiew Rynghlem
	Opendiscussion	
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm	Wrap up and announcement	Kong Gratia E Dkhar, Sr. Associate, Programme, NESFAS



Day 2: Co-learning and Scaling up Opportunities for NRM practices

Time	Schedule	
10.00am- 11.30am	Session 4: Participatory selection of best practices for adoption district-wise	Facilitators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bah Khraw Wahlang, Adviser, NESFAS 2. Kong Naphishisha Nongsiej, Associate, NESFAS 3. Kong Rimchi Marak, Sr. Associate, NESFAS
11.30am- 12.00 am	Tea Break	
12.00pm- 1.30 pm	Session 5: Develop a Mechanism to strengthen co-learning (Roadmap) session	Facilitators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bah Dhruwad Choudhury, Adviser, NESFAS 2. Bah H.H Mohrmen, Adviser, NESFAS 3. Kong Merrysha Nongrum, Sr. Associate, NESFAS
1.30 pm- 2.30 pm	Lunch	

Time	Schedule	Speakers
Session 6: Closing ceremony		Chairperson: Kong Aurilia Tariang, Associate, NESFAS
2:30 pm -2:45 pm	Welcome Address - Presentation of the Overview of the workshop and Policy Recommendation	Bah Drupad Choudhury , Adviser, NESFAS
2:45 pm-3:00 pm	Voices from the ground	Kong Bibiana Ranee, Custodian Farmer, Nongtraw
3:00 pm-3:15 pm	Special Remarks	Pius Ranee, Executive Director, NESFAS
3:15 pm-3.30 pm	Award Ceremony	Merrysha Nongrum, Sr. Associate, NESFAS
3:30 pm-3:40 pm	Special Number	Khliehumstem ALC
3.40 pm-3.55 pm	Speech by Chief Guest	Shri Gunanka, Joint Secretary to Govt of Meghalaya, Executive Director MBDA & MINR Member Secretary BRDC & SCSTE
3.55 pm-4.10 pm	Phawar	Bah Nestar Kharmawphlang, Chairperson, NESFAS
4.10 pm-4:20 pm	Vote of thanks	Kong Binita Rai, Sr. Manager, KM, MBMA

Annex 4: Attendance

State Level Workshop on Agroecology Learning Circles (ALC) and Natural Resources Management Approaches.

SL.NO	Date	Name	Venue	Signature
1.	August 8-9, 2023	Dr. Seitiemang Hachip	State central library, Shillong	S. Hachip
2.	"	Dr. Faikhe Mangar	"	
3.	"	Dr. Nandanis Marwein	"	
4.	"	Dr. Dr. Chingekhan Sima Chanu	"	C.S. Chanu





Name & Signature of faculty In-charge

Name & Signature of Dean/HoD with seal