

# REPORT OF THE VILLAGE MEETING

ON

**“RIGHT TO FOOD”**

***ORGANISED BY***

**KHATARSHNONG SOCIO-ORGANISATION (KSO)**

**CHERRAPUNJEE.**

**IN COLLABORATION WITH**

**“PEOPLE’S RIGHTS FORUM-MEGHALAYA”**

***SPONSORED BY***

**INTERNATIONAL FOOD SECURITY NETWORK (IFSN) AND ACTION AID INDIA  
(AAI)**

**DATE::12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2011**

**VENUE::NONGPRIANG COMMUNITY HALL, NONGPRIANG 12SHNONG,**

**SOHRA.**

**NO. OF PARTICIPANTS: 32 (M: 20F: 12 )**

**NO. OF KSO STAFFS PRESENT: 3**

**SHRI. LHAISING KHONGSHEI (PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR,  
KSO, SOHRA)**

**SHRI.LAMPHRANG DIENGDH (FIELD OFFICER, KSO, SOHRA)**

**SHRI.THROPHINUS SHABONG**

## **PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES**

- ✓ The aim and objective of this programme is to make native people aware of ‘Right to Food’ or ‘Right to Eat’-a basic need of human beings being conferred by the Government of India under which various programmes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Mid-day Meal (MDM), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), etc. were launched to free Indian citizens from hunger, poverty and illiteracy.
- ✓ To ensure the smooth functioning of all Government Programmes made available to the common mass.

- ✓ To impress upon the people the need to access to this particular Right to Food/ to understand the importance of knowing the opportunities being denied or deprived of.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

- ✓ Welcome speech from the village Sordar.
- ✓ Introduction (Opening session)
- ✓ Taking of photos and Registration.
- ✓ Clarification.
- ✓ Questions, answers and suggestions.

**FORUM'S PROFILE:** People's Rights Forum-Meghalaya, slightly and normally come into existence in the year 2007. It is a platform of twelve partners NGOs working on the issue of Right to Food Campaign and Food security across the state of Meghalaya, having partnership with other NGOs, CBOs in the Northeast and funded by Action Aid India (AAI) & International Food Security Network (IFSN).

**BRIEF NOTE:** The session began at 7:00pm evening with a warm welcome speech from the village Sordar to the KSO staffs and the participants. It is then started with the introduction to the meaning and concept of Right to Food with its main components which include MGNREGA, TPDS, MDM, ICDS etc. The brief description/ explanation on the issue were shared by Mr. L. Diengdoh. To know more let's have a substance in each sub issue:

**Targeted public Distribution System (TPDS):** In spite of clarification and explanation the meeting was carried on with the interactions/ discussion and suggestions too. When we talk about this issue the main key-issues can be discussed as under:

1 .Categories –The facilitator said that the system has four categories viz. AAY, BPL, APL and ANAPURNA. Of these, BPL is the first and foremost important category to get family identification without which no one can access to various Government supports or assistances. Thus encouragement has been made that people particularly vulnerable poor people must comprehend the importance of being the BPL families. Many a time people are still maintaining culture of silence and make the community to practically remain backward in asking for their rights. With regards to the quantity of essential commodities to be given to the public is fixed by the government as follows:

Categories	Items			Rate	Amount	
	Rice	S.K oil				
		Rural	Urban			
AAY	35kg/card holder	3/7litres/Car d holder	7/9 litres	1/2 Kg per Head.	3/-/kg	Rs.105
BPL	35kgs/card	3/7litres/Car	7/9 litres	Do	6.15p or8/-	Rs.280

	holder	rdholder			/kg	
<b>APL</b>	<b>15kgper card holder</b>	<b>3/7litres</b>	<b>7/9 litres</b>	<b>Do</b>	<b>10/-/kg</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
<b>ANAPURNA</b>	<b>10kg/month</b>	<b>3/7 litres</b>	<b>7/9 litres</b>	<b>Do</b>	<b>Free of cost.</b>	<b>Free of cost.</b>

All of the above are not to be denied but should be given every month without deduction especially those families who have cards. But in Nongpriang village the condition of TPDS is comparatively not so bad because of equal distribution of essential commodities as well as understanding between the beneficiaries and the dealer with a responsibility of the vigilance committee. And the main problems encountered are:

1. Most of the beneficiaries do not have cards.
2. Lack of information knowledge.  
Maintaining the culture of inferiority complex.
3. Quality of rice sometime is bad and the quantity is also not totally accurate.

**MGNREGA:** In fact, MGNREGA is not new to them. But still there is a need to sensitize and make people more aware of it. Therefore, thorough clarification on the issue is made just to recall the most important parts/ points and the new amended strategies.

The state government has amended some existing provisions making them applicable in the implementation of the programme mainly in backward areas. The VEC with a membership of the heads of the families is responsible for the smooth functioning/ management of the scheme. Since MGNREGA is made functional, we had just discussed about the problems/ circumstances/ opinion facing by the VEC leaders or the MGNREGA workers. In this connection the village people gave the following commences:

In the very beginning, the programme was undoubtedly functioning well, but now there are lots of problems and changes especially for VEC leaders that took place due to the emergence /implementation of provisions/orders/advices that have been put/ enacted by the Government. One of these problems is that the Block Office advised that all the Job card holders must have their own Bank account either in the SBI or in the Post Offices to prevent from corruption and to achieve accountability and transparency. But as a result, persons with disability/ challenged people, old people/ men and women would surely suffer a lot. So, suggestion made was to handle transaction of wages through the VEC account.

### **FINDINGS AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:**

In spite of clarification on the above main important rights the villagers of Nongpriang are still facing the problem of infrastructure namely, road and communication, healthcare, etc. Due to this reason almost all the facilities given to people are not functioning well and the Government Officials always take for granted by putting the blame on it without visiting the place to analyze social related issues. Though, there is an active participation from the villagers, but illiteracy is the barrier towards the development and growth of the village.

MGNREGA-as per the conversation with the village people, this programme is very helpful especially for the eligible unemployed youth, aged and the challenged people. Meanwhile, it affects agricultural activities where peasants have no more time for agriculture leading to less production of organic food crops. Turning to the Public Distribution System (PDS), it has quite functioned well because people are alert of the system. While ICDS and MDM are still going to the rack and ruin.

### GENERAL SUGGESTION:

- ❖ To disburse wages and material cost in time.(MGNREGA)
- ❖ Increment of wages is a must.(MGNREGA)
- ❖ Special allowance for head load/ carrying of materials should be provided.(MGNREGA)
- ❖ The Government should look into the rural villages/ areas that need to go on food shall be given special quotas/ employment guarantee scheme(s) in order to have equal proportion with the motor able native places.(MGNREGA)
- ❖ Training on Book keeping is mandatory.(MGNREGA)
- ❖ Education is the main issue to be initiated.

**CONCLUSION:** In conclusion, the village Sordar gave a vote of thanks to the audience and the guest for making the programme a successful one. The Sordar on behalf of villagers requested the forum to give a constant helping hand so that all the issues discussed shall be properly available to people.

