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GREEN-AG PROJECT, MIZORAM
STATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF MIZORAM

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 8th STATE STEERING COMMITTEE (SSC) OF GREEN-AG,
MIZORAM**

Venue : Secretariat Conference Hall-1, MINECO, Aizawl
Date and time : 4th September, 2024(Wednesday) at 11:00 am
(List of members present attached as Annexure 1)

The Green-Ag Project 8th State Steering Committee meeting was held under the chairmanship of Smt. Dr. Renu Sharma, IAS, Chief Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, to discuss various key agendas, including the Annual Work Plan and proposed Budget. At the outset, the Chairman warmly welcomed all SSC members and invited Mrs. Ramdinliani, the Special Secretary (Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department & Co-Chairman State Steering Committee to present an introductory overview of the Green Ag, Mizoram project, setting the stage for the meeting's deliberations.

The Secretary delivered a detailed project overview, outlining its key objectives and strategic objectives. She emphasized that agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood for the majority of the population, highlighting the imperative of achieving balanced development while prioritizing environmental sustainability and preserving ecological integrity, emphasized the importance of adopting a cluster-based approach to achieve sustainable development outcomes. She reported that the Green-Ag project is focusing on the Dampa and Thorangtlang Landscapes, covering 38 villages across Lunglei and Mamit Districts. Additionally, she informed that the project has been extended till the year 2028 due to COVID-related disruptions to project activities. The Secretary noted that the Green Ag project is being implemented across five states, including Mizoram, a recognized biodiversity hotspot grappling with issues such as agrobiodiversity loss and forest degradation. She highlighted the project's governance structure, comprising a National Project Steering Committee at the National level and State Steering Committee, chaired by the Chief Secretary, at the state, district-level Technical Support Groups at Lunglei and Mamit chaired by respective District Commissioners. Furthermore, community institutions, including Village Implementation Committees, have been entrusted with planning and implementing project activities, ensuring grassroots participation and ownership.

The Secretary invited the State Technical Coordinator, Green-Ag to deliver a brief project overview, after which the Coordinator proceeded to elaborate on the agenda as requested.



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Agenda Minutes:

1. **The state Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) 2024-2025:** The AWP&B for 2023 to 2024 was approved after careful deliberation and the approved amount is Rs. 9,98,91,418 (11,96,304USD @ Rs. 83.5/ USD) (Annexure 2). The Committee was informed that as per the Operational Partner Agreement signed between OP and FAO, the OP is authorised to make variations not exceeding 10% in any budget headings. The members were also informed that the AWP&B approved items if needed could be adjusted as field demand/change of items provided it did not exceed the amount; there is flexibility in the implementation. Any variations above 10% on any budget headings that maybe necessary for the proper and successful execution of the project shall be subject to prior consultations with and approval by FAO.
2. **Ex-post facto approval for procurement of turmeric rhizome:** After addressing the exigent need of procurement of turmeric rhizome as it is a seasonal plant, and considering the availability of third party Organic Certified at Tlabung village, it was subsequently recommended that the single source procurement of rhizome be presented to the Departmental Purchase Advisory Board (DPAB) and thereafter, be submitted before the State Steering Committee for ex-post facto approval for final consideration.
3. **Policy dialogue:** The State Technical Coordinator, Green-Ag, presented a detailed justification for engaging a consultant to undertake the proposed studies. Following thorough discussion and consideration, the meeting accorded approval for the following study topics:
 - i. **Integrated Farming System in Compact Area Development Approach:** Integrated farming systems will be developed in contiguous watershed-based areas to upscale settled agricultural practices, achieve climate resilience, and facilitate ease of doing business through common infrastructure.
 - ii. **Comprehensive/ Holistic Development Approach Policy (Farm to Fork/Plough to Plate):** The Farm to Fork concept will promote sustainable food systems by connecting local production to consumer demand. It will integrate technical and sociological aspects, like community planning and traditional knowledge, to ensure nutritious food, increased incomes, and environmentally friendly practices.
 - iii. **Market prospect of Ginger, Turmeric, Broom Grass, Mizo Chilli & Lemon grass with special reference to Value Chain & Value Addition:** The North East Region's organic agriculture and horticulture will be leveraged to unlock its full potential, addressing existing bottlenecks and creating a comprehensive roadmap for value addition and export growth of key crops like Ginger, Turmeric, Broom Grass, Mizo Chilli, and Lemon Grass.



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4. **Convergence with concerned line departments:** The State Technical Coordinator emphasized the imperative of interdepartmental convergence to facilitate integrated efforts and synergies. The meeting recommended the integration of Village Implementation Committees with Village Councils to augment monitoring and review mechanisms. Furthermore, all stakeholders concurred on the necessity of collaborative efforts with the Green-Ag project to ensure effective implementation and attainment of desired outcomes.

(Action: All Department)

5. **Agriculture Policy:** The Secretary highlighted the absence of a state Agricultural Policy, leading to the formation of a drafting committee in 2022. The committee, led by a retired Agriculture Director, has prepared a draft policy covering agriculture and allied sectors, which requires further refinement. The meeting consented to convene an inter-departmental expert team comprising Directors from the following relevant departments to finalize and approve the policy:

- i. Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department
- ii. Horticulture Department
- iii. Irrigation Department
- iv. Fisheries Department
- v. Environment, Forest & Climate Change Department
- vi. Sericulture
- vii. Rural Development
- viii. Local Administration Department

(Action: Secretary, i/c Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department may take forward to constitute panel of experts to finalized the policy)

6. **Group Insurance:** Following the Secretary's briefing on the project's hazardous conditions, the meeting unanimously approved group insurance coverage for the all employees under Green-Ag. Dr. Manoj Mishra, representative from FAO, emphasized that the insurance premium should not exceed 5% of the total Human Resources budget, ensuring a fiscally responsible allocation of resources.

(Action: Operational Partner)

7. **Investment plan related initiative:** The Secretary presented the Piggery Investment Plan, outlining the procurement process initiated in May 2024. She highlighted the challenges in sourcing indigenous breeds and the necessity for strict biosecurity measures. Noting that state-run Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department farms, major private farms and Mizoram Pig Producers' Cooperative Federation (PIGFED) Ltd. exclusively



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possess only Exotic/Hybrid breeds, the Green-Ag project could not implement activities with exotic or hybrid of both vegetables and livestock, the mandate for the project is to conserve Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Forest Management. The piggery investment plan was prepared by the FAO hired consultant with strict adherence to involve only indigenous breed. During the investment plan preparation, extensive survey on the availability of indigenous pig breed was carried out in the state and it was identified that there are no other farms that can supply enough indigenous pig breed required by the project. Therefore, the Secretary proposed Single Source Procurement from XAYNE Piggery Farm, Lunglei, being the sole supplier meeting the requirements. She emphasized that single source procurement facilitates easier maintenance of biosecurity protocols. Following thorough discussion, the meeting approved to recommend the proposal of Secretary, Agriculture for consideration of the DPAB and resolved to expedite the procurement process expeditiously.

8. **Customization of the procurement processes:** The meeting decided to review and explore available procurement processes based on specific requirements. It was agreed to research procurement norms from any other externally aided projects, central schemes & projects and other Green Ag project states, and report back to the Secretary for feasibility assessment and further action.

(Action: SPMU & GLIU)

9. **Recruitment of Community Resource Persons (CRPs):** The Secretary emphasized the importance of hiring CRPs from the project villages, particularly from the Bru and Chakma communities, to address language barriers. She also recommended reducing the qualification requirement from HSSLC to HSLC and also preference should be given to the candidate who applied from the landscape. The meeting resolved that the District will submit recommendations and recruitment will be facilitated at the Secretariat level.

(Action: SPMU & GLIU)

During the meeting, the following additional matters were agreed upon:

- i. Filling of vacant positions, including Office Assistant, Administration & Operation Officer, and Farmer Field School Expert for the Green Landscape Implementing Unit (GLIU) in Lunglei.
- ii. Finalization of pay revision and increment of staff remuneration, previously approved in the 7th SSC Meeting is to be presented to the Secretary for approval.



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- iii. Re-structuring of State Steering Committee: The meeting approved inclusion of the Secretary, Cooperation Department and change of Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Water Resources Department to the Secretary, Irrigation and Water Resources Department.

(All Action: Operational Partner)

The Chairman requested the Secretary to review and address all pending matters from the previous SSC Meeting. She also stressed the importance of collective action to address identified gaps and take corrective measures on a priority basis, ensuring comprehensive resolution of all concerns by the next quarter or sooner. The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chair.

Sd/-

(Dr RENU SHARMA)
Chief Secretary,
Government of Mizoram,
& Chairman,
State Steering Committee
Green-Ag, Mizoram, Aizawl.

Memo No.B.13014/5/2019-DTE(AGR-GEF6):Dated Aizawl, the 12th September, 2024

Copy to:

1. PS to Minister, Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department, Government of Mizoram
2. Sr. PPS to Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram
3. Sr. PA to Secretary, Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department, Government of Mizoram
4. All members

(VANLALTHLAMUANA)

Director,
Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Department,
& Member Secretary,
State Steering Committee,
Green-Ag, Mizoram.