

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



RURAL WOMEN UPLIFTMENT SOCIETY

Sielmat Box-3, PO Churachandpur, Manipur

Introduction: *The journey in year 2015 was remarkable in many ways. RWUS could move ahead and carry out its mandate in spite of the myriad challenges. The political fallout of the infamous bill passed by the state assembly was immense in terms of disruption of normal lives, loss of properties and movement within the district. In spite of all this, the Almighty was gracious and lead us with renewed vigour and enable us to achieve our goals and target.*

RWUS with its passion and commitment works ceaselessly to address these emerging challenges through diverse programs under different projects.

About the Organization:

Rural Women Upliftment Society (RWUS) is a Church Based, Not for Profit, Gender just indigenous philanthropic organization founded by the development department of the Independent Church of India (ICI) in the year 1990. With full autonomy in administration and functioning, RWUS seeks to address the issues and concerns of the people without compromising their unique cultural, social and religious practices encompassing gender, Local Capacity for Peace (LCP) and environment as cross cutting theme.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision: *To empower the people for justice and development.*

Mission: *To empower grass root communities through capacity building, awareness raising, trainings, advocacy and lobby work, networking and alliance building and through support.*

Thematic Area:

Anchored on a mission to empower grass root communities,

RWUS has the following core thematic issue-

- ✓ **The right to food and Food Security**
- ✓ **Gender and Women in governance**
- ✓ **Capacity Building and Training**
- ✓ **Environment and Natural Resources**

COALITION ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (CENRs)

Summary of activities: CENRs seek to protect, promote and manage natural resources in a just and sustainable way and advocate its uses entirely for the benefit of the people. To achieve this, the following programs were conducted:

1. National Campaign /Consultation on Development trend in NE and the Impact on local communities , New Delhi 9 – 10 August

In collaboration with Tve and Assam Times (media advocacy organizations), CENRs have conducted consultation in Delhi on issues around indigenous people's rights over land and resources and the impact on local communities in the context of development trend in the region. The program was held in India International Center (IIC) where there were people coming from national NGOs, Activist, media house, academicians and CSOs from NE region. There was



panel where prominent persons deliberated on the theme of the program. Prof Sanjoy Hazarika spoke on Look East Policy and possible impact on local communities, Joydeep Gupta, thethirdpole spoke about Conflict and natural resources in the NE and Kishalay Bhatarjee (TBC) spoke on politics of media and conflict with reference to NE region. The sharing of experts was followed by open interaction whereby various issues and elements for community preparedness to cope with development trend have been raised and shared by participants from different fields.

There was a film screening, short film made by CENRs named “Manipur Diary (the lonely planet) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qPg-y0fVII>

With reference to the Film, CENRs Convenor, Mary Beth Sanate and Ms Shangaidar Tongtang has shared the work of CENRs and how extractive industries work in the NE have impacted the lives of poor communities especially women. She draws national community to support and solidarity of CENRs work

2. Multi Stakeholders Consultation at NE level, 18-22 Nov Imphal

As part of its overall approach and believe for engagement of several stakeholders' development initiative, CENRs organized three days consultation in Imphal, Manipur. We had different CSOs, CBOs, Government line departments and youth organizations attending the program.

Dr Leban Serto, elaborated development trend in the NE, focussing his talks on proposed ADBI Asian highway project, Indo-Myanmar agreements. He further stressed the need for civil society



active engagement in the process and the importance for government and industries to explore interactions among public opinion, governance and public spheres.

Dr Varte, Co Convenor CENRs also shared the importance of corporate and local communities' engagement. He further said, this is the most challenging context in the world because relationship between corporate and local communities has undergone a long history of mistrust and antagonism.

The second and third day's subject focuses on increase shared understanding on key elements on effective engagements of corporate, government and local communities on development initiative.

The plenary sessions pulled in several concerns and actions points to further leverage concerning multi- stakeholders' engagement in development

3. Observation of World Environment Day: World Environment Day was observed with the communities at RWUS office on 5th June where speakers talk about the significance of the day and the urgency of the need to take immediate action to protect the environment.



4. Training on International framework and standard: A 2 days training on international framework and standard was organized for the members at Imphal on 26th-27th June
5. Financial training: Follow-up training for CENRs partners on financial management was also organized during 16-18 June.
6. Campaign through Music and poster: To raise awareness on environment and natural resources, a music program was organized where civil society leaders, students leaders and NGOs

CHURCHANDPUR AREA INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (CAIDP)

Summary of activities: CAIDP project is implemented in 17 villages under 3 blocks in Churachandpur with the goal of alleviating the deep rooted food insecurity due to abject poverty, negligence and deprivation of rights. The project address the innumerable issues confronting the livelihood, food security and accessibility of citizens rights and entitlements through improved agricultural practice like SALT and SRI, FAITH gardening and advocacy to access public schemes.

To achieve its objectives, the following activities were conducted between April 2015 and January 2016:

- ✓ SRI Trainings conducted 4 times and attended by 203 farmers. Support is also given to all the beneficiaries.



- ✓ 2 trainings were conducted on Sloping Agriculture Land Technology (SALT) with 148 farmers attending and 37 farmers provided with agriculture support. Refresher training were also organized 6 times which were attended by 302 farmers.
- ✓ SHG training for income generation program was organized 2 times and attended by 68 women SHG members.
- ✓ 3 trainings on livestock management were provided to 151 families.
- ✓ Community Seed Bank was established in 3 blocks which were managed by SHGs.
- ✓ Nutrient management trainings were also conducted 3 times with total participants of 162 farmers.
- ✓ Training for Self Help Group federation was organized 3 times.



Case study: Mr. Soineilam aged 48, lives in Buallian village with his wife and five children (3 sons and 2 daughters). Some years back he owned 1 Sangam of paddy field near his village. But due to the construction of Multi Purpose Dam nearby his village, his paddy field was submerged by the Dam and became landless. The compensation which was given to him was not even enough for the family's one year survival. With much hardship he has to earn his living by daily wage labour. Though he doesn't have his own land he continued to farm in others' paddy field on a share cropping basis in 2 Sangams of land. He usually harvests 27 -30 bags of paddy in 1 sangam per year. Since, he has to share 50% of his produce to the land owner. He could hardly earn for his family one year survival. Though worried for a better income he has no option as he has no land of his own.



In 2014 he came to know a new way of paddy cultivation from the Project staff and hence he decided to experiment the new method of paddy cultivation in his field. So he started practicing SRI in 1 sangams of his paddy field. Though he faced some difficulties at the beginning like transplanting a young sapling of 9-15 days old in a row line with a proper distance he was anxious that it will survive, all his neighbouring farmers glared at him in amazement of what he did. After 2 months he could see the difference of Conventional and SRI methods from the tillers. He could harvest 43 bags of paddy in 1 sangam against 27-30 bags in previous years from conventional method. He is happy that he could have a longer period of peace as he is able to store more paddy in his barn. In spite of the good production in SRI, Soineilam told to RWUS that "Transplantation in a line mark makes the transplantation slow and wage is also higher than conventional method." However, he is planning to continue SRI in this coming year also with a hope that things will work easier than first year. Soineilam is awarded 3rd in the district level crop competition organized by the District Agriculture Department and stood 1st under RWUS competition. He wants to convey his heartfelt thanks to WRC, NEICORD and RWUS for his new learning

CAPACITY BUILDING ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW:

Summary of Activities: The project is implemented in 5 villages of Churachandpur district. Major activities are capacity building, advocacy and networking, gender and livelihood security. The project works towards strengthening Community Based Organization (CBOs) for self sustenance, economic development and effective right based advocacy and lobbying. To achieve this, the following programs were conducted during this period

- ✓ 1 day awareness program on climate change for the community was conducted on 7 August 2015 attended by 26 participants
- ✓ 1 day Human Rights awareness program was organized on 28 August 2015 which was participated by 26 participants.
- ✓ Awareness program on peace building was organized on 18 and 19 October where a total of 27 participants attended.
- ✓ Conduct 1 day awareness on legal rights and entitlements for women on 4th December 2015 where a total of 3 women attended.
- ✓ Organized 2 days Training of Trainer on human rights in health sector on 10 and 11 December. Altogether, 58 participants joined the program.
- ✓ Press conference was organized on climate change and human rights violation at RWUS office on 8 January 2016 which was attended by the media fraternity.



WOMEN ENVIRONMENT PROJECT (WEP)

Summary of activities: Women and Environment Project was aim to capacitate and involve women in the promotion, protection and management of resources and environment. Since women bear the brunt of adverse climate change impact, their role is minimal and does not have any say in the management. Thus to increase their aware and built up capacity, the project conducted the following programs:

Summary of activities:

1. 1 day community capacity building on environment and climate change was conducted 2 times on 18 May and 25th 2015 May which was attended by 30 participants.
2. Trainings were conducted for 15 women promoters on



environment at RWUS office on the 28 and 29 May 2015. 15 women promoters attended the training.

3. World Environment Day was observed on 5th June and was participated by 64 women from different villages

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN GOVERNANCE:

Summary of activities: RWUS consistently work towards capacity building of local women and to increase participation in local governance. During 2015, Manipur has been going through various calamities of both man made and nature. Nevertheless, RWUS could continued to provide financial support to women organizations such as Kuki Women Union, Hmar Women Association, Pricilla Home, Indigenous Women Organization, Presbyterian Women Development Project , and others. These women groups conducted several programs such as Women's Rights, Lokdaat, women's empowerment, Domestic Violence Act 2015, Counseling for women victims of violence and other skill development training. These women leaders are also engaging in peace building work and negotiation to protect indigenous land rights and other human rights relating to women.



RWUS assisted 11 widows to access their rights and entitlements under the provision of financial assistance for widows under Social Welfare department, Government of Manipur. In the process, 3 widows have got their bank account opened for the first time and others have got the death certificate of their husband's death. Having such documents helped the widows build their confidence and senses of mental security.



RWUS and its other women network of Women in Governance –Manipur chapter are engaged in many activities such as media advocacy and campaign. Local women participated in local television talk-show and in All India Radio Imphal under the theme “Women Speak” and Speaking the Unspeakable” . It has been a great and exciting experience for the women. It built their self confidence and courage to move forward.



Women in Governance (WinG) promoters at district level are involved in awareness rising on women peace and security on daily basis. The activities include one to one talk, group discussions, and small group meetings and in other social and religious programs. During the

land rights movement in Churachandpur, WinG promoters played key role in campaign, peace negotiation within local communities and with government and volunteering to assist those in need.

In collaboration with Manipur state legal service authority, RWUS and its WinG network observed 16 Days Activisms on violence against women and law day at state and district level. Various forms of performance such as short drama, choir presentation and solos were performed. Charter of demand has been submitted to the Chief Minister of Manipur and other concern line departments. The demand includes:

1. Gender Budgeting be made in all the Departments, Projects and Programs.
2. The policy of 50% reservation for women in Panchayats as per the amendment of Article 243(d) of the Constitution be implemented in the state
3. Concern authorities to implement women reservation based on 73rd Panchayat Amendment in Village Authority and Autonomous District Council in the hill districts of Manipur.
4. WinG urge to strengthen the implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 by
 - a. Creating a separate department for protection of women from domestic violence
 - b. Appointment of Protection and Service Providers on full time basis
 - c. Appointment of Protection and Service Providers whose districts are vacant.
 - d. Allocate adequate budget, tools and infra-structure like office, vehicles, etc.
5. Women Police Stations are equipped with sufficient trained personnel on Gender Based Violence, improved infrastructure and adequate budget.
6. We stand for Women Peace and Security and urge the state to develop Economic Security Policy for women specially widows who lost their husband in conflict and armed violence
7. The Government of India has ratified CEDAW (Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women) and the Recommendation of Resolution 30. Hence we urge the State Government to implement the principles
8. We demand for effective functioning of Manipur State Commission for Women
9. We demand speedy trial of cases related to violence against women and ensure perpetrators are punished without delay.
10. We demand amendment to customary laws to bring in gender friendly laws.
11. We demand immediate action to look into the drastic un-proportionate sex ratio in the state

RWUS with Women in Governance extended its support to Indigenous Women in Nepal for earthquake relief. Apart from this, we have extended relief and support to victims of landside and flood victims with special attention to women and girls

RWUS coordinator under Women Leadership have attended training on Leadership building in Nepal between 6 to 10 August 2015

SMILE PROJECT

SMILE is a local project initiated by RWUS to help under privilege children in the district. The project was started in 2010 with the purpose of rendering assistance to needy children who are deprived of reason to show SMILEs on their face. Ever since, RWUS continued these noble cause by providing assistance to people who are less privileges, poor and neglected. During last December, 50 homeless families due to landslide and flood were provided assistance in Chandel district. They were provided blanket to cope the harsh winter.



Executive Board members:

Mrs Hrilrohnem	: Chairperson
Miss Mary Beth Sanate	: Secretary
Mrs Lalthiengzo	: Treasurer
Mrs Zosangkim	: Members
Miss Darthangmawi	: Members
Ms Levis Singson	: Member
Ms Chinneinuam	: Member

RWUS Staff:

Ms Mary Beth Sanate	: Secretary
Mr Samuel Lallawmzuol	: Prog Manager
Ms Lalnunem	: Prog Coordinator
Ms Nissi Lalrochan	: Prog Coordinator
Ms Roselyn	: Prog Staff
Mr B.R. Sanglien	: Prog Staff
Ms Buongzakim	: Cashier
Mr Lalsiemthar	: Accountant
Mr James L.Hriler	: Junior Accountant
Mr Ramnghakhla	: Driver

RWUS is registered under the Society Registration Act, 1860 with registration No. 234 on 3rd April, 1990. It is also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1976 with a registration No. of 19410018 on 4th January, 1993.

The society is also registered under the Income tax exemption under 12A of Income Tax Act, 1961 with no. as RA214/12A/CIT/JRT/03 on April, 2003, at Jorhat.

