

## **Documentation of Land allocation process under FOCUS Mizoram**

The FOCUS Mizoram project, through its initiative targeting landless farmers, has had a substantial positive impact, leading to improved livelihoods and economic opportunities for the landless farmers within the state. The formation and promotion of Landless FIG under the project, involving the allocation of leased land to farmers for 5-20 years, has notably contributed to the improved well-being of the landless farmers.

This report serves as a succinct document for policy dialogue with government stakeholders, highlighting the success of the Landless FIG initiative and advocating for its replication and scaling up to benefit a larger section of the society.

Here is a detailed report highlighting the positive impact of the Landless FIG under FOCUS Mizoram project for policy dialogue with government stakeholders:

**Historical Context:** Mizoram, since gaining statehood in 1987, has struggled to undertake specific initiatives addressing the challenges encountered by landless farmers. FOCUS Mizoram is the first project to take proactive measures to provide land-based support to landless farmers, signaling a vital intervention to establish a stable agricultural system for this vulnerable group.

**Challenges Faced by Landless Farmers:** Landless farmers in Mizoram have historically endured abject poverty and faced challenges in acquiring permanent land. Dependence on the Village Council for temporary plots of land on a yearly basis has resulted in an unpredictable and unsustainable livelihood, jeopardizing their access to natural resources and limiting their income prospects. Furthermore, the absence of initiatives addressing their challenges over the past 36 years since statehood has perpetuated their struggles.

In Mizoram, a significant population of landless farmers has traditionally faced challenges in accessing permanent land ownership, leading to dependency on temporary land allocation for cash crops and shifting cultivations. FOCUS Mizoram recognized this issue and promoted 271 Farmer Interest Groups across multiple districts with approximately 15 to 30 members each, aiming to address the challenges faced by landless farmers.

**FOCUS Intervention for Landless Farmers:** FOCUS Mizoram implemented various initiatives to support landless farmers, subject to land availability and monetary assistance. FIG member was allocated a temporary pass with at least 0.5 ha of land for a period of 5-20 years approx. The allocated land was done with prior engagement of all concerned parties with all due process and land pass permission which was agreed and duly signed by both the parties, i.e, Village council and FIG.

Through collaboration with Village Council leaders, suitable land for farming techniques such as bunding, bench terracing, and water harvesting structures was identified. Proposals for land allocation were presented before the Village Council.

FOCUS project and FIGs collaborated to implement agricultural projects, providing training in improved agro-techniques and cultivation methods, including horticultural crops and multi-purpose trees. Furthermore, member contributions were collected within each FIG, ensuring stakeholder investment in the projects.

**Quantitative Data:** The FOCUS Headquarters in Aizawl reported a total of 271 Landless Farmers FIGs in Mizoram, distributed across districts as follows:

Sl. No	District Name	No. Of Landless FIG formed
1	Serchhip	25
2	Kolasib	36
3	Khawzawl	33
4	Champhai	36
5	Mamit	62
6	Saitual	79

**Impact Analysis:** The intervention by FOCUS Mizoram has led to transformative changes for landless farmers. Formerly trapped in a cycle of poverty, these farmers now possess access to settled land, water, and improved income prospects. With 40% of landless farmers receiving land allocation as per the Annual Outcome Survey 2023, the intervention has significantly improved their farming productivity, economic opportunities, and overall well-being. Their farming productivity and efficiency have significantly improved, enhancing their economic opportunities and overall well-being. The positive changes experienced by individual families have had a remarkable cascading effect, breaking the cycle of poverty and positively impacting other families within the community.

**Recommendations:** The success of the Landless FIG initiative by FOCUS Mizoram serves as a model that can be replicated by government departments and other organizations. Scaling up and replicating these initiatives can have a substantial societal impact, thereby addressing the challenges faced by landless farmers across the state and fostering sustainable agricultural practices. Therefore, it is imperative for policy dialogue with government stakeholders to consider scaling up and replicating FOCUS Mizoram's initiatives on a broader scale to address the challenges faced by landless farmers across the state.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the Landless FIG under the FOCUS Mizoram project has been successful in transforming the lives of landless farmers in Mizoram. The provision of leased land, coupled with training, improved agricultural techniques, and enhanced economic opportunities, has led to a tangible improvement in the livelihoods of the landless farmers, breaking the cycle of poverty, fostering sustainable and productive agricultural practices.

This report backed by data and tangible outcomes serves to underscore the effectiveness of the FOCUS Mizoram intervention and advocates for its replication and scaling up by government and concerned departments to create a significant positive impact on the lives of landless farmers across Mizoram.