

**NARRATIVE REPORT OF
SKILL IMPROVEMENT AMONG RURAL YOUTH OF MEGHALAYA
(Project No. INS 16-173)**

0.1 Introduction:

“Skill Improvement among Rural Youth and Women of Meghalaya” was submitted by Don Bosco Technical School and the with the aim to assist 40 rural youth and women by subsidizing their training cost and thus enabling them to start their own enterprises for their livelihood. The project was supported by Dr. Frank Siebert and Friends from Germany through Don Bosco Mondo and was implemented through Opera Ravalico, a registered society of Salesian Province of Shillong. The Skill improvement program has three components: a) Training in Oyster Mushroom production b) Training on Hair cutting and Revolving Fund for support of poorer students. The first two trainings were completed by April 2022 and the third programme, i.e. revolving fund is continues as it requires longer duration for implementation.

1.0 INCEPTION AND PROJECT SUBMISSION: The idea about supporting poor youth of Meghalaya came with the communication with one funding partner Dr. Frank Siebert in Mid-November 2021. The idea was accepted by the Dr. Frank and friends and after having discussed with technical school authorities, especially the Principal, the Rector and the Administrator of Don Bosco Technical School, the project was prepared and submitted on 22nd November 2021.

A. MUSHROOM TRAINING:

2.1 ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MUSHROOM TRAINING:

2.1.1 Preparation:

The positive reply from the Dr. Frank and Friends and from Don Bosco Mondo of Information immediately followed up with information gathering on the feasibility of the training programs. Accordingly, the months of January - February 2022 for Training in oyster mushroom and the months February-March 2022 was decided for training. It was decided that for training on Hair Cut Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong and for oyster mushroom training A.J. Nongkynrih Mushrooms from Mawpdang were to be training partners. Vendrame Institute of Rural Training and Animation (VIRTA), Mawpdang was selected as a venue for training on mushroom. Detailed planning was done with each of the organizations to work-out the resources and logistics.

2.1.2 Mobilization: Announcements were made through social media and through institutions and social organizations including those who had shown interest in participating in the trainings. Announcements were made in public gatherings and church services. Posters were placed in specific locations for the youth to see. Training brochure was also prepared and circulated. After

having an idea of the response of youth and women who were to participate the dates were fixed and detailed training plan prepared.

2.1.3 Receiving of Application: Applications were received verbally and in writing from those willing to participate in the training and it was complete by a week before the actual programme.

2.1.4 Training on Mushroom: The training on oyster mushroom was organized in two batches due to inconvenience of date. The participants were:

Batch 1:

Sl. No.	NAMES	Address
1.	Homas Lyngdoh	Laitdiengsai, East Khasi Hills
2.	Phrang Kupar Kharduit	Thangsning, East Khasi Hills
3.	Iainehskhem Shadap	Thangsning, East Khasi Hills
4.	Lahunlang Kharumnuid	Latikseh, Smit, East Khasi Hills
5.	Airilang Lynshiang	Mawshut, Ri Bhoi
6.	Sumarlyne Dkhar	Lad Nongkrem, East Khasi Hills
7.	Mary Theo Kharkongor	Umphyrnai, East Khasi Hills
8.	Iortila Mukhim	Laitsyiar, Ri Bhoi
9.	Wanhun Nongrum	Laitsyiar, Ri Bhoi
10.	Matilda Warjri	Laisyiar, Ri Bhoi
11.	Mortilang Mukhim	Laitsyiar, Ri Bhoi



Batch 2

1.	Komes Shangrang	Umyrkhang, Ri Bhoi District
2.	Pynskhembha Kharkongor	Madanrting, East Khasi Hills
3.	Therina Umbah	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
4.	Lofina Umbah	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
5.	Rosina Mynsong	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
6.	Elizabeth Phangcho	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
7.	Trus Umbah	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
8.	Kristina Dkhar	Umyrkhang, Ri Bhoi
9.	Rose Umbah	Umyrkhang, Ri Bhoi

10.	Bertina Lyngdoh	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
11.	Cecilia Lyngdoh	Mawlaho, Ri Bhoi
12.	Jerry John Ekka	Umtyrkhang, Ri Bhoi
13.	Ajay Dang	Patharlyndan, Ri Bhoi

Additional participants on request:

1	Kopsibon Synnah	<i>Mawpdang</i> , East Khasi Hills
2	Cordilia Syiem	<i>Mawpdang</i> , East Khasi Hills
3	Lavinia Syiem	<i>Mawpdang</i> , East Khasi Hills





Batch 1



Batch 2



The training comprised of theory and practice and the days were divided accordingly. The theory comprised of a) About oyster Mushroom, b) Farming/production technics and c) Economics and marketing of oyster mushroom. The theory was held in the training hall and the practical was

held in the Oyster Mushroom farm and the free space near the farm and the institute. Following goods were provided from the project for the training:

	PARTICULARS	UNIT
1.	Seeds (oyster mushroom spawn)	250 Packets (200 grams each)
2.	Straw, Firewood, Water	300 Kilogram
3.	Anti-fungal solution	2 Kilogram
4.	Packaging material	100 Units
5.	Lime	20 Kilogram
6.	Notepads, pen etc.	25 Sets

2.1.5 Distribution of Tools and equipment: The tools and equipment for oyster mushroom farming were distributed within one month of the training on account of planning and organizing and bulk ordering of the equipment. This support was necessary so that the aspiring farmers will find it easy to set up and start the production. The following equipment were distributed free to the participants:

	PARTICULARS
1	Hygrometer -1 each
2.	Thermometer -1 each
3.	Indofil (250 gm) each
4.	Mushroom Seeds – 4 kg each & Packing materials

Post Training follow-up: The organizers of the training were able to make regular follow up of the farmers who were trained under the project through two means:

a) Contacting over the phone:

b) Visit to the farmers

Of the first batch all 11 (100%) have used their skills and material support to start farming. Of these 8 (73%) have been successful – producing sizable amount and selling or consuming the oyster mushroom produced in their farms. The rest 4 (27%) experienced initial failure and are waiting for next planting season for preparation of production facilities and for production. Those

who experienced failure will also be able to rectify their mistakes and can continue the production and earn good profit. Fr. Cyril has been able to visit 4 farms of the beneficiaries and he was satisfied with the production.

Journey to Self-confidence

Mary Theo Kharkongor from Umphyrnai, East Khasi Hills District was an unwilling inheritor of a primary school that was started in her land 30 years ago by the Loreto nuns. Due to dwindling number of students, the school had become a financial burden: all her little income and that of her husband went for payment of teachers and she could barely manage to feed herself and her two children.



Mary Theo and her Family at work (preparation for planting Oyster Mushroom)



She was at the point of despair when she heard of the training in oyster Mushroom. She joined the training and was very grateful to the organizers. As soon as she got the support of equipment and planting materials she began to cultivate in her free spaces in her basement. Using her newly acquired knowledge she cultivated and 6 kgs which the family used for consumption. The second batch was equally successful. Then she planned to upscale her production. Presently she is whole of her house basement and some of the unused classroom in the school to cultivate mushroom, expecting about 25000 per month as income from the mushroom production alone.

The prospect of her success has brought great cheer to her family. As the saying goes "Fortune favours' the brave", her self-confidence has grown and she foresees a better future for her family.

Of the second batch, none but one (from East Khasi Hills) have been able to start the mushroom farming as they hail from warmer climate and they will be able to produce from the month of October 2022. They are all in different stages of preparation. However, they are all getting ready with production house so that when the time comes they will be able to start the production of oyster mushrooms. Mr. Pynskhembha Kharkongor from East Khasi Hills is working with his cousin where they have good facilities to plant mushrooms.

3.0 Resources Utilized: The total amount budgeted was INR. 90,000- for the training cost and the

OTHER SUCCESSFUL OYSTER MUSCHROOM FARMERS

PHRANG KUPAR KHARDUIT
(THANGSNING)



HOMAS LYNGDOH
(LAITDIENSAI)



material support. The training cost and the material support amounted to Rs. 93,360/- (with local contribution). Breakdown of this cost:

	Heads of Expenses	Amount
1	Hiring of Training Facilities with Food:	16,500.00
2	Use of Farm for practical and Training materials (Mushroom and Lab materials):	34,410.00
3	Resource Person's Fee:	6,000.00
4	Supply of Materials for distribution:	36,450.00
	Total	93,360.00

4.0 Conclusion: The Training on Mushroom production was a good one – although not many ‘youth’ who were expected came forward to get the training for reasons known to themselves. On the whole the Training on Oyster Mushroom Farming has been good and has a good prospect of good production for future economic improvement of the families of those trained.

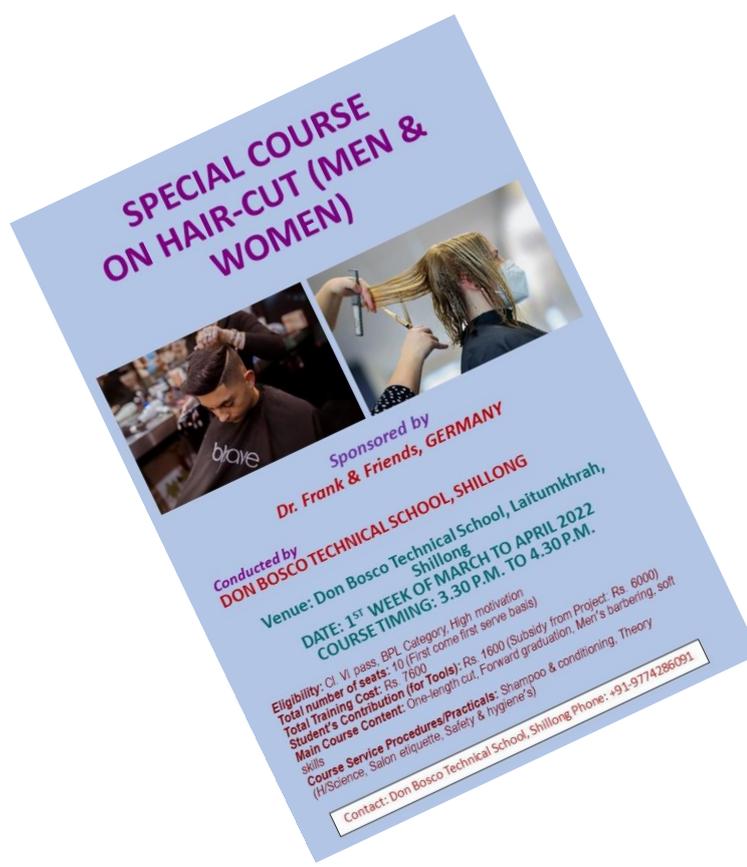
B. TRAINING IN HAIRCUT

The training on Haircut was conducted between 1st March 1st April 2022 under the expert trainers appointed at Don Bosco Technical School. It was first of its kind at Don Bosco Technical School. As per the proposal 10 students were trained of the 12 who were admitted.

5.0 The Activities:

5.1 Advertising and Receiving of Applications:

Advertising was done in social media, especially through WhatsApp to various groups. Printed posters were also sent to suburban localities. The applicants visited the centre and they were given counselling and the willing and the eligible filled the application forms.



5.2 The Conduct of Training: The training was held between 1st March to 1st April 2022 at the Beautician Lab (Hair) at Don Bosco Technical school, Shillong. The inauguration was held in



the Beautician Lab in which Fr. Saji Stepha, the Rector, Fr. Arcadius Puwein, Ms. Regainful Jyrwa and Ms. Eucycleda Laloo along with all the trainees were present.

The training comprised of a) Haircut, b) Soft skills and personal grooming and c) Management of haircut business.

Advertisement and Receiving of Applications. The training was conducted by Mrs. Regainful Jyrwa and the administration support was provided by Mrs. Eucycleda Laloo.

The participants were:

NO.	STUDENTS' NAMES	ADDRESS
1	Ribanshai Dkhar	Laitkor Mawrie Lumheh, East Khasi Hills
2	Siljohnstar Lyngkhoi	Mormawthaw, Riangdoh, West Khasi Hills
3	Elius Mawrie	Wah Sohka, Laitkor, East Khasi Hills
4	Dishester Kharumnuid	Umphyrnai, East Khasi Hills
5	Nangteiboklang Khsiar	Sohryngkham Lulong, East Khasi Hills
6	Queen Mery Nongsiej	Mairang, Eastern West Khasi Hills
7	Pynhunlang Sun	Nongsawiing, Diengiei, East Khasi Hills
8	Ribor Malngiang	Sohiong, East Khasi Hills
9	Anthony Nongrum	Umsaitsnging, Umsnging, Ri Bhoi
10	Teibor Sohkhlet	Nongrah, Rynjah, East Khasi Hills

5.3 Assessment & Certification: The Assessment of the group was done on 05 May 2022. All the trainees passed in the assessment. The certification was done on 11th May 2022. A small function was held with only 6 the trainees present. They were presented with certificate of participation from the institute which will help them in the future to get some support from Government or loans from banks.



CERTIFICATION PROGRAM 11 MAY 2022

6.0 Post-training Support: The staff are in touch with the trainees who have passed out for support and handholding in getting their work started or getting their units established. Of the 5 students (other 5 could not be contacted) contacted presently 3 have started and 2 have not been able to start.

Syljohnstar's Journey to Success

Syljohnstar Lyngkhoi was one of the last to join the training programme since he received the information on the training on haircut the last (a day before the start of the programme). But even though he was the first he became the first in making a start-up in hair cut business.

He hails from the remote village of Riangdo in West Khasi Hills, about 60 k.m. away from Shillong with a large but economically helpless family being supported by him. He was delighted to know that his training cost would be met through the generous support of funding from generous people from Germany. He stayed at his relative's house at Mawlai and made it to the training mostly on foot, covering a distance of 6 kilometres one way.



He never absented himself. He attended the program with utmost attention and interest. Needless to say, he acquired all the knowledge and skills and passed well the assessment.

Today he is a happy owner of a barber shop, employing 2 people in his shop earning about 800 to 1000 rupees a day. With this he able to feed his family and support for the education of his siblings. He has plans to improve his shop with better equipment and capacity where he will be able to give jobs to more people and serve the need of the area.



DISHESTER KHARUMNUID IN ACTION AT HIS NEWLY SET UP SALON

7.0 Utilization: The total financial support requested as per the project was INR 60,000.00 for the training of 10 students. This was only the subsidy amount which was paid to as fee for the training conducted. The students paid their local contribution of INR 1,600.00 towards supply of toolkit which they along with them.

C. REVOLVING FUND:

The revolving fund idea was brought up on account of inability of several poor youth wishing to participate in Beautician Course and were seeking bank loan. The inability of the bank to give student loans led them to go to Guwahati to get training at cheaper cost (of questionable quality). An amount of INR 150,000.00 has been sent to DBTS and is being made available for any youth needing interest free loan either for partial payment of course fee or for start-up of their enterprise.

So far, no request from any student has come for the loan. The loan committee feels that in case there are no takers for student loan, this can be converted into scholarship grant for poorer students during the year 2022-23 with the permission of the Donor.

CONCLUSION: The two of the three support made available to the youth of Meghalaya for improving of skills through the project "Skill Improvement of Youth of Meghalaya" (No. INS 16-173) has been successfully completed and these are showing good results. Initially there were less demand for the training programme but presently the demand for these trainings is increasing and there is request for more such programmes. The fate of the third aspect of the same project (Revolving Fund) is to be decided within the month of August 2022.

The programmes as shown above have been well conducted and they are already showing signs of good results among the poor people especially among the youth. The participants have expressed their gratefulness to the donors particularly to Dr. Frank Siebert and his friends from Germany for their concern for the poor and for the financial support they have extended. The organizers are also very grateful to Don Bosco Mondo, Bonn for facilitating the transfer of funds and other support.
