



Research article

## Understanding Rural Development in Naga Villages: A Case Study of Magulong and Nzauna

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**Abstract:** This study has identified significant gaps between the intention of a series of rural development schemes and the experiences of the supposed beneficiaries - as in the case of the two Zeme Naga tribal villages located at the border of two administrative jurisdictions of Manipur and Nagaland. This study analyses the villagers' perceptions of rural development programmes, their socio-economic status, and living condition based on interviews and observations. It attempts to understand the socioeconomic issues of the two villages, and further leads us to look at the concerns of the villagers and figure out what ought to be done.

**Keywords:** Zeme Naga, Village economy, Rural development, Living condition, Socioeconomic, Northeast India.

### Introduction :

Much importance has been given to the rural development sector by the government of India to transform the rural areas by providing various infrastructural schemes and basic facilities to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural population. However, many rural villages, especially in the hilly regions of northeast India, continue to struggle due to a lack of proper implementation of development schemes. Attempts have been made in the region to facilitate basic needs in connectivity, employment, public goods & services to alleviate poverty and the problems of inequality. However, we have seen certain rural populations in the region living under dire poverty, and the issues of inequality continue to rise. The study village of this paper – Magulong, and Nzauna are found to be no exception. The analysis of perceptions and living conditions of the people of these two villages has identified significant gaps between the objectives of the rural development schemes and the experience of the beneficiaries. In theory, rural development is a concept that refers to the processes of change in rural societies, which involves both the intensive intervention of the government to uplift the living condition of the rural poor; and the participation of the people from the grassroots to understand their need by the policymakers. It is to enable the villagers to fulfill their needs of social, economic, physical, and intellectual to help further them to be self-reliant and confident for improving their conditions at their own initiative (De Silva, 1988:53). It is supposed to reduce the problems of poverty, hunger, unemployment, inequality and serve to improve the quality of life of the rural population and unleash their creative energy (Daramola & Ayo, 2015:508). However, the practical experience of the people may not be at par with the theoretical outlook or may be contextually irrelevant. This

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study, therefore, attempts to contextualize the people, study their requirements, understand their challenges, and look for possible solutions.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to understand the experience of the villagers over Rural Development Programmes (RDPs); to contextualize the problems, the needs of the people, the hindrances & obstacles; and to enhance the knowledge and understanding of such villages in the northeast region and come up with a recommendation for viable solutions and alternatives.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study is based on the primary data collected for my MPhil Dissertation. The study village or field was purposely selected based on its geographical location being the most peripheral and remotest (in terms of connectivity) in their respective state. The fieldwork began from Magulong and ended at Nzauna in January and February of 2018. The sample selection was randomly taken based on the availability of the respondents in the household. I have visited each respondent's household and conducted a semi-structured interview that usually prolonged 40 to 50 minutes. For some samples, I took the interview from social gatherings and public playgrounds as people get leisure time there to discuss things. I have collected a sample size of 34 from Magulong and 30 from Nzauna (64 samples in total). The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis along with some tables.

### **Background**

*Magulong:* Magulong is a small village lived by the Zeme Naga community (Zeme tribe)<sup>1</sup> of Manipur, which peacefully shares a border with Nzauna village of Nagaland. The village is **located** in the extreme north of Tousem Sub-Division (50 km away) of Tamenglong District (89 km away) in Manipur. According to Census 2011, the village has 139 households with a total population of 1184. Magulong acquired a **literacy** rate of 77.79 percent, which is higher compared to the state average literacy rate of 76.94 per cent. The village has Government High School, and Mt. Kisha English School (private institute).

According to the Village Authority Chairman and the villagers, the health problem in the village is always a big concern. No Hospital or Primary Health Centre is available in the village, except the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) that helps during child delivery and some first aid. The village has a sufficient water supply but facing issues in distribution and management. The Branch Post Office was established in the village in 1982 and found to be functioning till today. Magulong received National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) since its first phase (2006). In records, various village development works were carried out through this NREGS like constructing Village Authority Office, water tanks, repairing of roads, cash crop plantation, maintaining sanitation and cleanliness, etc. Through the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), the

village got the motorable road connection in 2012. The village got electrified through Rural Electrification Programme (REP) in 2014. Majority of the household has a simple tinned-roof construction at the least through Pradhan Mantri Awas- Gramin Yojana (previously Indira Awas Yojana).

*Nzauna:* Nzauna is another small village bordering Magulong which is inhabited also by the same Zeme Naga Community (as Zeliang Tribe)<sup>2</sup> under Nagaland state. It is located in the southernmost part of Nagaland, under Peren District. According to the 2011 Census, there are 108 households in the village, having a total population of 989. The literacy rate is 77.23 percent, which is lower than the Nagaland state average literacy rate of 79.55 percent. The village is situated about 60 kilometres away from sub-district Headquarter Nsong, 124 KM away from District Headquarter Peren.

The village has a Government Primary School, which was established in 1955, and proper school construction with the tinned roof was constructed in 1963. According to the Village Council Chairman, since its inception, the village has been facing water scarcity, especially during winter. In 1966, Piped Water Supply Scheme (through Public Work Department-PWD) came to the village (rubber pipe). In 1976, the Public Health Engineering (PHE), which was bifurcated for the erstwhile PWD, supplied the Iron Pipe for better efficiency. The village receives the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme in 1976, right after the year of its scheme launching in India. As per the respondents, they have been receiving this benefit from time to time till today. The village was electrified in 1986 through India's Minimum Needs Programme (MNP); however, due to poor maintenance, the village was disconnected for several years during the 2000s and reconnected only in 2016 through Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY). The connectivity of road to the village was done through Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in 2006. In 2008, the National Employment Guaranteed Scheme reached the village, and this scheme has been continuing till date.

Both Magulong and Nzauna share many things in common. They are of the same tribe, language, agricultural practice, culture & tradition, food habits, and historical roots. Even the land is on a community ownership basis. The unique land ownership pattern and management and control of forest and water resources by the landowners are empowered by Article 371A (in Nagaland) and Article 371C (in Manipur Hill Areas) of the Indian Constitution. These two villages are located in the farthest corner from their respective district headquarter and are considered one of the most backward and remote villages in their respective state.

### **Living condition and mode of production**

The living condition of the villagers mainly covers the aspects relating to their standard of living and their economic activities. For better analysis and understanding of the villagers' living conditions, it is pertinent to discuss the characters of the fusion or mixture of indigenous and modern activities practices by the people. There is a criterion which helps in determining the character of fusion of practices of the village – whereas the indigenous

activities are less advanced in technic, traditional, pure, simple, and straightforward; the engagement in modern activities, on the other hand, applied advanced technology and application of outside technology and tools. The indigenous activities include hunting, shifting cultivation, the dependence on forest minor/major products, living in traditional thatched-house, etc. On the other hand, modern activities mean the villagers engage with more advanced agricultural practice, live in advanced housing, use electricity, vehicle, mobile communication system, and so on. Table 1 shows the major criteria of indigenous and modern activities with the percentage of the villagers 'engaged in them.

*Table 1: Indigenous and modern activities engaged by villagers*

Types of indigenous Activities	%.	Types of Modern Activities	%
Hunting	90	Modern Schooling	72
Shifting Cultivation.	89	Settled agriculture	11
Collection of Forest minors	99	Self-employed	5
Traditional Thatched House.	36	Use of electric energy	100
		Advance housing	64

*Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018*

### **Indigenous Activities:**

1. **Hunting** is one of the indigenous activities' practices in the village – hunting of wild animals, fishing in traditional technic, and trappings. These are practiced by individual hunters or by forming a big group of hunters depending on the type of hunting and occasion. There are some occasions or festivals where the whole villagers require feasting together. On such occasions, sometimes, instead of cutting down their livestock, the villagers want to go for wild animal hunting in the deep forest or fishing in the river stream. Some animal-trapping experts spend their leisure in making traditional traps deep in the forest or at the yard of the *jhum* field. As shown in table 1, 90 percent of the respondents whose household has an adult member engage in these activities. The remaining 10 percent which does not involve are those household that does not have active adult member, or whose young member is out of the village for pursuing modern education or entrepreneurial businesses.
2. **Shifting Cultivation** is a common practice in the region, and the two study villages are no exception. The majority of the household (89 percent) practices shifting cultivation, only 11 percent engaged in terrace cultivation. Shifting cultivation is considered the main source of livelihood in the village, and therefore they give much importance to it. It also becomes their socio-economic and cultural importance of living in the village.
3. **Collecting forest minors** like various types of wild vegetables – leaves, soothes, roots, fruits, and mushrooms become a part of their lives. The forest produces different edible varieties every season, and

the villagers are very much knowledgeable and aware of its time for collection. As one respondent narrated, “The forest produces so many varieties around the year for our consumption that we cultivate them often apart from the vegetables produces in the field.” About 99 percent of the respondents (some regularly and some irregularly) do collect such produces in the forest. The remaining 1 percent is the ones who are old aged who live in the alms of their generous neighbors or relatives.

4. The traditional **thatched house** is a common practice in the village since the olden days. This house, however, is replaced by the modern tinned roof with the help of the government’s rural housing scheme like IAY in recent times. The field survey revealed that about 36 percent of the respondent’s households still live under the traditional thatched house. Those with tinned houses are either build with help or without the help of the government.

### **Modern Activities:**

1. About 72 percent of the respondents are engaged in the **modern schooling** system (as most of the respondents are ‘parents’ the figure of schooling found would be of the older generation and not the present schooling children). It is learned that almost every household where there are kids, they all have attended schools, either in government or private school. Education is considered very important by the villagers, and most parents spent the most on children’s education.
2. **Settled agriculture** is an improvised agricultural practice from the traditional shifting cultivation. Since the lands available are mostly in hilly terrain and the best are the slope ones, to have settled agriculture becomes a herculean task. It is difficult in various forms - to dig down the sloppy land to a flat-plain surface or a terrace, as well as to bring irrigation for wet cultivation. They need a lot of labour and resources to begin the task. They know the advantages of this type of cultivation, but many could not afford to start. Therefore, only a few (11 percent) were found to be engaged in this practice.
3. About 5 percent of the respondents make their major income by engaging in some **self-employed activities** like running a small business by engaging with the neighbouring towns or cities, carpentry, handicraft, weaving, designing artifacts, or becoming a driver of a passenger vehicle. These are not practiced in the olden days as their profession. However, with the advancement of living standards and the increasing demand among the population, these professions are increasing.
4. The use of **electricity** or solar energy becomes a necessity in their day-to-day life. Before the coming of electricity and solar energy or kerosene lamp, they use only fire torch as a source of light at night. With access to electricity, the life of the villagers has changed dramatically. They started to use it for almost every purpose, not just for lights. Respondents have narrated, “The comings of electricity have changed

their life. With access to electricity, we get the opportunity to use various modern electronic tools, motors, and machines, which make our life much easier.” Today, every household in the study villages is fully electrified (100 percent).

### Main source of Income:

Currently, the main source of income for the majority is through animal husbandry (61 percent). Almost every household is involved in animal husbandry, though on a tiny scale (see table 2).

Table 2: Villagers’ main source of income (%)

Village	Sell Crops	Animal Husbandry	Wage Labour	Self-Emp	Govt. Job	Others
<i>Magulong</i>	2.5	53	14	14	12	4.5
<i>Nzauna</i>	3	70	6	6	12	3

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2018

As per the respondents, keeping a local chicken is a better option because they are easy to be taken care of, and piggery is next. They build only a small hut, pens, sties, or coup to rear animals in their backyard without adequate hygiene. Mostly, female members of the household take care of them. The reason for low-scale involvement is due to lack of time as well as finance. The village Nzauna has a higher number of respondents (70 percent) than Magulong (53 percent), whose main income lies in animal husbandry. Please refer to table 2 below for the rest of the source of income.

### Major Problems of Household:

There are various problems that a household in the village suffers from. The major problem begins with the lack of basic needs of human life like food and health. The maximum percentage (20 percent in Magulong and 43 percent in Nzauna) of household problems is due to the lack of enough food available for the family throughout the year. Next to food is health issues. It has been observed that there is no Health Centre in either of the village. Both the village expressed the same fate of misery they use to face during severe sickness. The only option available during the emergency is to run to their church leaders for prayer support or to the local *kobiras*. During an emergency, about 77 percent contact Church leaders, 18 percent to *kobiras*, and 5 percent look for modern medicines available from those who know little about medicines.

There is also an issue of joblessness and indebtedness amounting to the villagers. The major cause of indebtedness in the village is due to the cost of – children’s education (62 percent), taking credit for hiring agricultural labor (15 percent), health issues (12 percent), house construction (5 percent), and failure of crops (3 percent). Nevertheless, overall, the two village shares an almost equal standard of living even if they are dealing in from a different set of state administration.

## Findings based on perceiving responses

As per the narration of their living conditions above, it suggests that the villagers got to experience the benefits of rural development works like housing scheme, electricity, water supply, agriculture, etc. However, the experience of the villagers must also be analyzed from what they will say or perceive, and this is also necessarily the actual findings. People's perceiving responses are based on the way how they think, notice, or understand something using their senses. It is also the process by which people interpret and organize sensations to generate a meaningful experience of their surroundings. A person interprets the stimuli into something meaningful based on his/her prior experiences. In the same manner, the perceiving responses regarding the implementation of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) were collected and discussed here. However, it may be observed that the receptiveness to the stimuli is also sometimes highly selective and may be limited by a person's existing beliefs, sentiments, attitude, motivation, personality, or even politically biased background.

### Awareness about RDPs:

An old aged man of Magulong in his 80s recalled, "I remember the government gave a pilot project of the terrace field, but it did not continue well in many areas due to water scarcity." He also recollected how many fishery ponds were dug with the help of the government, but none of them is utilized today. A housewife having 5 kids recalled the situation of shortage of food in the village during the early 2000s. She said, "Government gave us 50 kilograms of subsidized rice during the time of food shortage in the village. That was the first time I remember the government has done a big help for us. But we faced another big problem as those days there was no vehicular road connection. All of us have to walk through the hilly terrains crossing more than 20 kilometers and come back with a heavy load of rice carrying on our back. Rice was never sufficient for a big family like mine, and you know the rest of the sufferings."

Table 3: Awareness about RDPs implementation%)

Responses	Magulong	Nzauna	Total
<i>Yes</i>	68	70	69
<i>No</i>	32	30	31

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

In the late 2000s was the time the villagers started to realize well about the government's development programmes with the implementation of MGNREGS (2006), PMGSY, IAY, and Old Age Pension Scheme. There are loopholes and disappointing results in all these schemes, but people's awareness increases in recent times. There is a slight difference in responses between the two villages. About 69 percent of the respondents are aware, whereas 31 percent are not. See table 3 for figures.

### Viability of the functions of RDPs:

Here, the synonym of the word 'viability' would be 'practicability,' and it would mean the problem-solving capability of the function of development programmes in the village. The problems of viability are found to be intense in this study. About 64 percent of the respondent said that the function of the RPDs is not viable, and only 28 percent claimed it is viable. The remaining 8 percent have no idea about it (See Table 4). This study revealed the problem of viability where the needs of the people were not addressed proportionately.

Table 4: RDPs function's viability (%)

Responses	Magulong	Nzauna	Total
<i>Yes</i>	17	38	18
<i>No</i>	59	70	64
<i>Do Not Know</i>	3	13	8

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

One of the respondents illustrated, "Plantations like orange, banana, and bamboo are all gone in vain, and we have already abandoned them." Another respondent said, "Though there are many abandoned fishery ponds, I have never seen a person from the Fishery Department coming and investigating in our village fishery." An older man lamented, "Fishery has abandoned long ago because there was no alternative arrangement of water for the dry season. Otherwise, fish was easy to take care of."

### Obstacles to Development:

The kind of impediments or hindrances implicated in the process of development is called obstacles to development. The villagers notice several barriers based on their own *a priori* perception. The first obstacle is due to the 'remoteness of the village' location or lack of connectivity and communication (21 percent in Magulong and 60 percent in Nzauna). Here, the meaning of 'remoteness' does not mean an absolute absence of connectivity, but it is a lack of it. Rural connectivity is one of the major objectives of Community Development Programme as this has been one of the means to improve the lives of the rural population. In addition, the villagers were usually charged by the government agencies for the free supplies like food, building materials, plant saplings, etc., claiming that the charges are for the cost of transportation. People pay even for Aadhar registration. An old man, who is living with his aged wife explained, "During Aadhar registration, we were charged Rs.50 each by the agents as their transportation charge. I do not have any money that time, so they have deducted from my NREGS money." Looking at this situation, the root cause of their suffering is also due to poor road connectivity.

The second is due to the 'ignorant nature of local leaders' (32 percent in Magulong). One of the respondents of Magulong explained, "...one problem is, our district Headquarter Tamenglong is very far away



from us, and another bigger problem is the language. We speak only Zeme (local dialect), whereas, in office, they use Manipuri, English, or Rongmei.” This clearly shows the difficulties faced by the local leaders when it comes to taking care of the official works at the district office or SDO office. On the other hand, only 7 percent of the respondents in Nzauna think the obstacles are because of the ignorant nature of the leaders. There is no language barrier for Nzauna as most of them speak Nagamese (which is a common language in Nagaland). In other words, we may say that this is not a case of being ignorant or uneducated nature of leaders but a problem of a language barrier.

The issue of ‘corruption’ is implicated in a massive range in rural development works, and this is considered as another obstacle (9 percent in Magulong and 27 percent in Nzauna). The State Legislative Assembly of Nagaland formed a select committee of Nagaland Lokayukta Bill 2015, which is an anti-corruption authority constituted at the state level and made to investigate allegations on corruption and mal-administration against public servants and is tasked with speedy redressal of public grievances under a period of six months. However, on being asked whether they know about the existence of such a committee to redress their grievances, none of the respondents were aware of such things. In Manipur, the Kangla Online (May 26, 2017), the local online news reported that “... the state government had submitted a forged report to the Ministry of Rural Development about the presence of Ombudsman in six districts, although in reality, they were not functional.” The implementation of Ombudsman in Manipur’s six districts (including Tamenglong) to monitor NREGS, PMAY, and Construction of Individual Household Latrine (IHHL) was not very effective, especially at the village level. None of the respondents of Magulong are aware of the existence of such a mechanism. There are also other obstacles like - lack of proper training and guidance from the officials in executing the works, lack of unity within the community or villages in certain cases, lack of connection with officers in the administration, and so on.

### **Programme that is benefitting the most:**

For this, an open-ended question was formulated without giving any specific option so that it may help to capture the actual scheme that comes first into the respondents’ minds as a beneficiary. Based on their response, four related categories come up as – agriculture, housing, subsidized food supply, and others like financial assistance, employment, skill development, water supply, and road connectivity. Magulong receives a better agriculture-related scheme (29 percent) as compared to Nzauna (15 percent), whereas housing scheme is better in Nzauna (40 percent) as compared to Magulong (34 percent). Food supply is also better in Nzauna (36 percent) as compared to Magulong (25 percent). Other benefits, as mentioned above, Magulong has a greater percentage (19 percent) comparatively with Nzauna (12 percent).

As per the observation, when it comes to this question, the respondents are more prone to think about personal benefits-related options. The schemes which are indirectly benefiting them or long-term benefits like

skill development training, road connectivity, electrification, or water supply are opt-out by most of the respondents. Instead, they opt more for schemes which are directly benefiting into their individual life like the roof of the house, subsidized rice supply, or agricultural development benefits.

### What should be the government's priority in Rural Development?

According to the villagers, the priority in rural development should be in road construction. From both the villages, 64 percent of the respondents expect the government to give priority to road construction (see Table 5). As they suggest, numerous issues can be solved by improving the vehicular road. At the same time, there are various ways to possibly fulfill the primary objective of India's rural development policy, i.e., to improve their standard of living, to increase productivity and reduce poverty, and utilize the readily available natural and human resources. In other words, most of the desired development activities can be carried out throughout the year by having an all-weather pliable road connection. The villagers have a dream to have a good road connection to their village so that they can carry out various economic activities like supplying products of the village to the nearby market, bringing in modern improvised tools for agriculture to make it more productive, local business may increase and help the jobless youth to engage in such business and so on.

On the other hand, this will also help the students and parents in seeking an education; and any subsidies item that comes from the government can also reach the beneficiaries without delay or do not have to pay extra money to the agents for difficult transportation charges. Moreover, any other government schemes can be implemented to their best if not adequately. The villagers have expressed their countless reasons why a good road connection is required. One of the respondents urged and wished that, "...if there is good vehicular road connected to our village from before, there might be many educated individuals coming up already in our village. Government High School was established in our villages many decades ago but not able to run properly due to lack of qualified teachers who would come from outside to teach us. They always blame and complain that they find it difficult to reach the village without a vehicle."

Table 5: Priority for rural development (in %)

Village	Financial Asst.	Terrace Agri.	Health	Edu.	Rd construction
<i>Magulong</i>	3	6	9	17	65
<i>Nzauna</i>	3	6	12	16	63

*Source:* Author's Fieldwork, 2018

The second priority falls for a better education. The villagers, old or young, understand that education can change their life. Children's education is where the villagers spent their resources the most. Most of the villagers desired to have the local Government School run by qualified teachers regularly in their respective villages. They were concerned about the quality of the education their children get from the proxy teacher or a substitute teacher. The

concern of health becomes the third priority in the village, followed by agriculturally related help and financial assistance.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study shows that neither of the states, in their development strategy implemented so far, were able to produce the desired result. The development schemes did not provide enough impetus for grass-root development. Instead, the schemes resulted in the creation of a politically driven distribution-oriented process. So far as the political motive is a concern, ensuring the development and gaining success in capturing more rural votes using the central development funds is a factor that has been a trend of the game instead of basing support on humanitarian grounds. The problem of the distribution of benefits to the deserving beneficiaries arises as one's political affiliations play an important role. Therefore, in the first place, the rural development programme should be made free from deriving political benefits, or otherwise, it should be checked systematically to ensure that the right beneficiary receives its due share regularly.

More essential queries that are of great concern is, how is it viable to have a steep rise in the level of economic growth without an attempt of improving or changing the mode of production, distribution, and consumption? The farmers of shifting cultivation are still using indigenous practices without capitalizing much of a surplus, but it is found that they are not free from capitalism anymore. They are already a part of capitalist influence, yet they are not wholly capitalized, which makes their life more difficult.

Moreover, the practice of agriculture to be a viable instrument of economic change needs to be taken up as a strategy of importance. This community needs agro and resource-based industries where the ordinary people can directly participate in their development and not capital-intensive and technology-based industries that are alien to their nature. At the same time, since the village is affluent in natural resources, the primary objective of the development strategy must be to utilize these optimally and in a manner that maximizes the benefits accruing to the local population.

However, given the strategy of the development programmes always turn towards the measures to control or stop shifting cultivation, which is the main source of rural livelihood in the region. It would be ethically wrong to stop someone's source of livelihood without implementing an alternative source. The strategy for an animal husbandry programme oriented to local conditions, settled agriculture based on local landscape conditions, the tapping of the considerable potential for horticulture, promotion of sericulture, commercial handicraft, traditional artifacts, promote the indigenization process and the improvement of communication are all welcome. A village, like Magulong, has a high potential for eco-tourism as well.

Such implementation can help the farmers to engage more in settled-agricultural practice, which eventually *jhum* cultivation may parish at its own without imposing them to stop. Otherwise, directly halting the practice and implementing plantation and forestry or development of modern industries has a risk of the poor villagers being exploited in the long process.

At the same time, there is a concern about ecological discomfort. The village has vibrant natural resources – fertile land, clean stream water, forest, vegetation, herbs, exotic plants, animals, rocks, etc. The drastic expansion of the modern lifestyle and the influence of the capitalist economy in their pursuance of a better life is seen in the village today. In such a development, the faster the growth, the higher the environmental demands, and its degradation is prone. Possible solutions that may maintain ecological balance with the economic development of the village at this juncture would be to utilize locally available resources, generate useful and innovative ideas to utilize those resources and create a suitable market to circulate money within themselves at the maximum possible ways. For instance, in agricultural practice, it is required to improve their organic vegetables and crops by utilizing natural manures that can be obtained from the freely available forest decays; increase the rearing of local chickens to a possible larger size by adding contemporary techniques to their conventional small coop and utilize village industry in sync with modern ideas for better marketing scope. Based on the result of their sources of income analysis, these are some practical potentialities the villagers may have acquired for faster economic growth that can continue without hindering ecological concerns.

By and large, the effectiveness of rural development lies in the understanding of the villager's actual needs and requirements. The contextuality and the viability of the beneficiaries should be a major focus in the policy formulation, rather than emphasizing skyrocketing plans that may hamper the interest of the local inhabitants. The existence of ecological limits should also be vigilantly taken care of from the point of its growth and sustainability.

#### **Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup>Zeme Naga tribe is one of the tribes living across three states- Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland. They are a minority tribe in each of the states because they have been politically divided into 3 states during state reorganization in the region.

<sup>2</sup>In Nagaland, the term "Zeliang" is an acronym coined by combining the first syllable 'Ze' and 'Liang' from the two cognate tribes' names, 'Zeme' and 'Liangmai.'

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