

Training Programme on

Livelihood Enhancement of Rural Women using Community Based Integrated Approach in Pilot Village of Khangchendzonga Landscape (KL)-India



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In coordination with

Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC), Yuksam Sikkim Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee, Gorkhey, Darjeeling West Bengal

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1. Summary

This report is an outcome of field based activities carried out under Khangchendzonga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCDI)-India programme in Barsey-Singalila pilot site. This event report describes about various approaches and interventions as extended by the G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE), Sikkim Regional Centre and its partner organizations for initiating arrangements for week-long demonstration training cum capacity building programme. Initially, a consultation meet between team KLCDI- India with community representatives and members of Gorkehy Ecotourism Committee (GETC) was organized to identify potential beneficiaries. Thereafter, capacity building trainings on solid-waste management, Resource Recovery Centre (RRC), low cost organic farming were imparted to the identified beneficiaries including other participants at Gorkhey village. Following this, onsite field demonstrations of RRC construction, its functioning and management, low cost polyhouse and vermin-compost making were given. A total of four low-cost polyhouses, four vermin-compost pits were provided to the beneficiaries of Gorkhey-Samanden village. Besides, a RRC unit was also constructed at Gorkhey for effective recovery of resources from the generated solid-waste at the village level, its management and recycling. Through this local people are highly motivated and carrying out the activities further. To continuously monitor the progress made by the villagers, design and set plans for future activities, keeping records of the changes occurred are some of the key responsibilities ahead.

2. Background

The fragile ecosystems of the Himalayan Region (HR) are facing impacts of climate change in the form of shift of habitats, loss of biodiversity, and environmental degradation which are subsequently affecting the livelihoods of dependent communities. For this reason, Sikkim Regional Centre of National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE) organized a week long capacity building programme at Gorkhey-Samanden Village of district Darjeeling, West Bengal, a pilot site of Khangchendzonga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCDI)-India from 01 to 06 March 2020 linking ongoing organic farming and solid waste management activities of KLCDI-India program. The main objective of the program was to improve the resilience of people to both climatic and non-climatic threats and promote adaptive approaches by assuring ecotourism services for benefiting the local communities in the form of social, economic and cultural alory through applying community based integrated approaches for livelihood enhancement. The programme was targeted to empower the skills and capacities of rural women in the region and synergised with the gender budgeting program of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Govt. of India. The focus was to orient the rural women for their skill and capacity enhancement towards sustainability of rural livelihood.

For promoting sustainable and responsible ecotourism development we imparted interdisciplinary training to communities (involving women SHG groups) on practicable and comprehensive technologies. Aiming to increase household yield/income from organic farming and polyhouse based farming we conducted demonstration training on hill specific technologies/models. Additionally we created peoples' awareness on developing eco-entrepreneurship, homestay steering and management as supporting activities under the project objectives.

3. Interaction meet and identification of beneficiary

An interaction meet with the Gorkhey ecotourism committee (GETC), in Gorkhey and Samanden village was organized on 1st March 2020 to analyze the progress and current situation of the ongoing KLCDI-India activities in the target villages. The role of women in village development was discussed with

the committee representatives and identified the key women leaders of target villages. The women members are supposed to contribute to the KLCDI-India activities. Moreover, Committee president Mr. Bhusan Chettri briefed about the progress of the villages and suggested the names of six beneficiaries for the construction of poly house and vermin composting pits. Further to ensure the community participation in solid waste management, the commitment and role of the community was determined and identified the location for constructing Resource Recovery Centre (RRC). The following resolutions were made agreed during the interaction.

- 1. GETC will manage the developed RRC in coordination with the community and ensure the community participation in solid waste management.
- 2. GETC will monitor the community based integrated approach at local level and communicate the progress with NIHE on regular basis.
- 3. Local level awareness and stakeholder's engagement will be ensured under the guidance of NIHE.

With these agreements, the interaction was ended by concluding remark and vote of thanks by Ms. Jarina Lepcha, field and office associate, KLCDI-India.

4. Key approaches/processes followed

A four-step-multi-factor participatory approach was followed during week-long demonstration training cum capacity building programme. Four steps such as: i) beneficiary identification, ii) knowledge sharing, iii) demonstration and field orientation, and iv) learning and documentation were taken into consideration. For beneficiary identification, three factors i.e. review of ongoing work by the respective farmers and performance on previous interventions; one to one interaction, to get idea of their preferences, availability of cultivable land, etc.; community/GETC committee, SHG consultations for their recommendation regarding the beneficiary identification. In the next step, knowledge sharing, various training programmes such as interaction meet with the farmers, interested women

entrepreneurs, onsite visits to analyse the status of solid waste through conducting village walk, site identification for the polyhouse/vermin-compost bed/resource recovery centre (RRC) construction, and training for participants/beneficiaries to disseminate knowledge regarding the process and techniques. This was followed by demonstration and field orientation, in which participants/beneficiary were demonstrated the process of polyhouse/vermi-compost bed construction, functioning and construction of resource recovery centre. At the end all these interventions made during the event will be monitored for longer run in the form of experience and practices of community/beneficiaries.

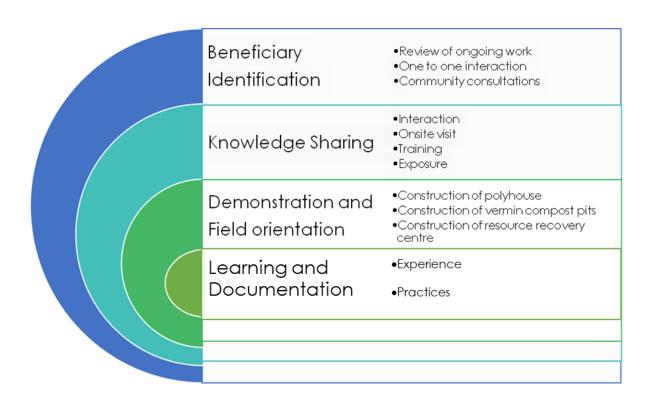


Figure 1. Activity implementation approach

5. Capacity building on solid waste management

On the second day, a capacity building programme on solid waste management was organized to review and further strengthening the project activities. The programme was commenced at Gorkhey committee hall at 10:00am with Khada offerings and introduction of resource persons of the programme Ms. Tshering Uden Bhutia expert in solid waste management activities and CEO, Khangcendzonga Conservation Committee, Yuksam and associate Ms. Kadambari Thapa. It was followed by the welcome of KLCDI-India team; Dr. Y.K Rai, Dr. Aseesh Pandey and Ms. Jarina Lepcha by the Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee (GETC) members. Mr. Bhusan Chettri, President GETC, welcomed all and thanked GB Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE), for selecting Gorkhey and Samanden villages as pilot villages under KLCDI-India programme. Dr. Aseesh Pandey, Program Manager KLCDI-India briefed about different ongoing initiatives across KL-India part and the work done under KLCDI-India program in Barsey-Singalila, Pilot site. Dr. Y. K. Rai explained about the training programme and the role of women for the development of the village. A total of 46 participants (36 women and 10 men) had participated in the training programme.



Inauguration session of capacity building program at Gorkhey Committee hall

6. Review and capacity building on Solid waste management

After the completion of inaugural session, the training session began with the introduction of the participants wherein the village women actively participated in the training programme. To begin the programme, resource person of the session Ms. Tshering Uden Bhutia asked the participants about the expectations and vision of Gorkhey-Samanden village for 10 years from now and received the following feedbacks:

- Gorkhey and Samanden will work together and will make a united village
- They want to see Gorkhey and Samanden as one of the cleanest villages of the world
- 3. The village with ban in the plastic product/ materials
- 4. Adopt and promote local food and products
- 5. Proper solid waste management within 10 years period
- 6. Villagers want to promote ecotourism in their locality
- 7. Want to get recognized their village as organic village



Resource person Ms Tshering Uden interacting with participants

6.1. Village walk

After getting expectations and vision from the participants, a village walk was organized to monitor the current situation. During the village walk, waste materials were collected from along the village trail and the waste was brought to committee hall. Thereafter, types of waste and its segregation method were taught to the participants. Different products which can be made using plastic/waste (e.g. basket, flower vase, sleeper, dolls, ladies purse, and other decorative material) were shown to the participants. These products have gained wider appreciation and based on the interest; making procedure/technique of these products was explained to the participants.





Collection of waste during the village walk and various products made using plastic waste kept for demonstration by KCC, Yuksam

The programme ended with debriefing by the participants in that they shared their learning with the panellists Dr. Y.K. Rai and Dr. Aseesh Pandey. In continuation to this,



participants were given a task of making any reusable product using domestic plastic waste in a participatory manner. Dr. Rai concluded the session appreciating the efforts made under KLCDI-India program and remarked that reuse of plastic can became a livelihood option. Dr. Pandey stressed on the need to link such products with ecotourism and urged to the participants to come up with a product (made up to solid waste collected from Gorkhey and Samanden village areas) which can be developed as a souvenir to the tourists. He said that efforts like these (reuse, recycle and reduce of plastic waste) will help to make these villages as the cleanest villages of Kangchendzonga Landscape. Realizing the importance of area specific souvenir and based on learning, participants came up with fruit basket using magi/wiwi а wrappers.

A reusable product (fruit basket) made by the participants using domestic plastic waste material

6.2. Resource recovery centre:

The resource recovery centre (RRC) is a designated area with the facility of waste collection, sorting, and transfer. It is a locally governed system (at community/local governance level) that creates social enterprise through repairing, re-using and recycling the waste into resource. RRC aims to reduce the waste volume going to landfill at local level through either recycling or resource recovery. Following are 7 point explanations indicating the need of RRC.



Why do we need Resource Recovery centres (RRCs)

6.2. Training on RRC management

A day long training programme on resource recovery centre management and functioning was given to the participants of Prakriti and Samiti women self help groups Gorkhey and Singalila, Saraswati and Nabnita self help groups of Samandin villages. Experts from Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC), Yuksam and G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE), Gangtok took three interactive sessions and one hands-on training session on the same. In first interactive session, participants were briefed about the RRC, roles and responsibility, mechanism of functioning and maintenance. In second session functioning of RRC in other parts of KL, country and worldwide was discussed. In the third session programme manager, KLCDI-India described how RRC may help in better management of ecotourism in the area, and how the community can act as a role model across KL by better managing the RRC. Further he explained how proper management of RRC will help to fulfil their dream of making Gorkhey-Samandin as the cleanest villages of KL. However, during the hands-on session participants were trained in waste segregation (reusable or disposable), categorization (recyclable, reusable, repairable waste) and its maintenance (arrangement of waste, segregation chamber, storage chamber etc.) in RRC. A positive excitement was observed among the participants during the lecture and audio visual sessions and they demanded for RRC in their villages. With the agreement of all the leaders of 5 SHGs and GETC members, the responsibility of RRC maintenance was given to the Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee (GETC), and the president of GETC, Mr. Bhusan Chettri, agreed on it.



Training and feedback session on Resource Recovery Centre functioning, its maintenance, best management practices and sustainability

6.4. Construction and Inauguration of RRC

A resource recovery centre (first of its kind Khangchendzonga Landscape) was established in Barsey-Singalila Pilot site of Khangchendzonga Landscape Conservation and development Initiative (KLCDI)-India program. A RRC having area of 375 square feet with separate waste segregation chambers, storage chambers, and collection sites has been constructed using participatory approach. To ensure community participation the construction of RRC was done through Gorkhey ecotourism committee in synergy with 5-active self-help groups of the area. The financial and technical support was provided by the G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE) Sikkim regional centre and Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC) Yuksam. The centre was inaugurated on 6th March 2020 in the presence Dr. K.S. Gaira, investigator-KLCDI-India and all team members, representatives of department of forest West Bengal, KCC Yuksam, GETC members and participants.

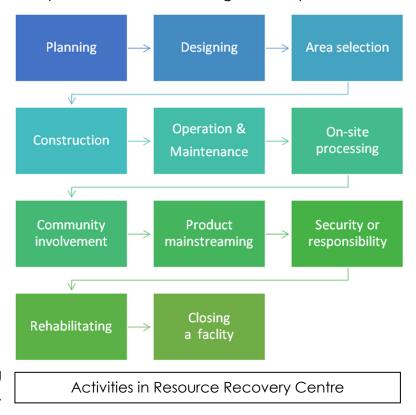
The RRC functioning was demonstrated by Ms Tshering Uden Bhutia using the waste collected during village walk. All the racks were labelled to maintain the proper segregation and storage. It was agreed that the RRC will be maintained in weekly basis.



6.5. Sequential activities in RRC

There are eleven sequential steps required for the functioning of a resource recovery centre (RRC) taking from construction to management. Foremost, a concrete planning in synergy with local governance and nearby community is required to solve how, who and where (i.e. how to collect resources, who will take the responsibility, and where to locate the structure). The design plays an important role, which depends on the area specific requirements. For a small scale RRC, at least three chambers are prerequisite i) collection, ii) segregation and iii) storage. The area that is away from the settlement, near to road/ transportable location with appropriate open space is preferable for RRC construction. A proper guideline with hands-on training on operation and maintenance is essential for proper functioning of the system. Another major step is onsite processing which include: collection and segregation of waste and its reuse, recycle, and repair to generate resources as well as support cleanliness. In this step involvement of community in a participatory manner is recommended, that helps in adopting and smooth functioning of the system. The prepared products after reusina, recycling and repairing the waste material need to be mainstreamed through its market linkages or value chain development. Such as, in Gorkhey and Samanden village these products can

be linked with ecotourism activities of these villages. Further, there is a need to security ensure and distribute responsibilities of the RRC, which includes proper safety of the centre such as taking control over spill over of waste, keep the area environmentally benign and record of costanalysis. Since each RRC has a carrying capacity of waste and after certain time it needs to be shifted from one place to other and needs to be closed following proper disposing and hygiene precautions.



6.6. Best practices in RRC

Best practices of RRC includes risk management at different levels such as environment (water and air pollution), hazardous waste (chemicals, radioactive substances) and hazardous goods (broken glasses, tin, polythene etc.) through proper knowledge and precautions. For the same regular interaction/ meetings between experts and local stakeholders' is essential to strengthen smart material management in RRC. Sustainability in fund is very crucial for RRC functioning and achieving an acceptable balance between income (from resource recovery) and expenses (staff wages, transportation of waste into designated landfill area etc.). Ensuring that the constructed facility has sufficient processing capacity and can meet future needs and challenges brought about by changes in legislation, population and other factors over time.



Best practices for resource recovery centre function and management

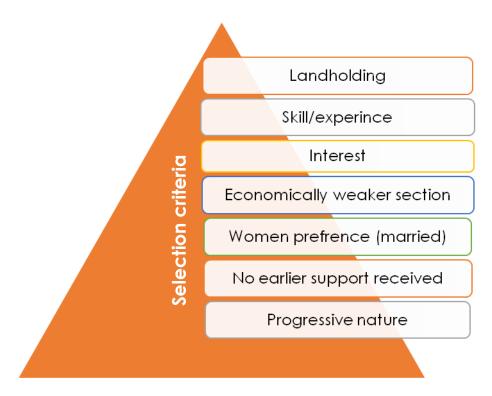
6.7. Organic farming activities

The ongoing organic farming activities of the KLCDI-India program such as polyhouse based vegetable growing, making of organic manure using vermicomposting method, etc. were monitored by visiting individual structure (polyhouse/vermicomposting pit) and interaction with the associated beneficiary. The visiting team consisted of an expert from MEVEDIR, Daramdin, which is a leading organization to place environmentally sound agricultural practices with its pioneering efforts in Sikkim, and KLCDI-India team. Onsite suggestions related to the queries of the beneficiaries were given/ addressed. Following this a technical session on organic farming based interventions was organized in Gorkhey committee hall. In this session, all the participants (46 in total) from Gorkhey and Samanden villages learned about the use of vermi compost, and polyhouses to grow offseason vegetables. And how community involvement can help in integrated village development programme and/or in the implementation of community based ecotourism. During the meeting participants were very keen to know about the organic farming and how participatory integrated approach can be successful and everyone wanted to have a poly house and vermicomposting pit at his/her household.



6.5. Beneficiary identification criteria

Beneficiaries for supporting materials for playhouse and vermin composting pit were identified/selected following a multifactor approach. A total of seven criteria were considered for selection (as indicated below) and the beneficiaries were selected in the presence of local governing bodies such as GETC, SHGs. Based on the above a total of 6 potential beneficiaries were identified.



6.6. Identified beneficiaries

SN	Name	Support material	Location
1	Mrs. Dawa Lhamu Sherpa	Polyhouse	Gorkhey
2	Mrs. Bishnu Chhetri	Polyhouse	Gorkhey
3	Mrs. Ramala Rai	Vermicompost	Gorkhey
4	Mr. Anil Rai	Vermicompost	Gorkhey
5	Mr. Nitesh Rai	Polyhouse	Samanden
6	Mrs. Lakpa Sangay Sherpa	Polyhouse	Samanden

6.7. Support material to identified beneficiaries (poly house/ vermicompost pits)

A total of four polyhouses and four vermicompost pits were constructed in a participatory manner, i.e. the construction material was supplied by the G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and the technical support was given by the rural technology cell of NIHE and MEVEDIR, Daramdin. However, the labour wages was borne by the beneficiary himself/herself.







Construction of polyhouse in Gorkhey in a participatory approach

6.8. Establishment and field demonstration of polyhouses

A total of four polyhouses were distributed to farmers of Gorkhey-Samanden village by NIHE in the presence of Dr. Y.K. Rai and Dr. Aseesh Pandey (Program manager, KLCDI-India). After material distribution, Dr. Y.K Rai gave a brief note on the technical part of the polyhouse such as standard size, shape and maintenance. Further field demonstration was given by Dr. Aseesh Pandey where he briefed about the importance of polyhouse, its functioning and method of proper irrigation in polyhouse. After the technical session was over, demonstration on polyhouse construction held in the presence of Gorkhey Ecotourism committee members.

6.9. Field demonstration on Low-cost vermi-composting

Demonstration training on making of vermincomposting was conducted at the fields/farms of identified beneficiaries and the raw materials like cow dung and dry litters was arranged by themselves. However, NIHE provided 1kg Earthworms (Esina foetida) to the individual identified beneficiary. Mr. Ganendra Sharma, a resource person from MEVEDIR, Daramdin; described in detail about the process of vermi-composting (a method that uses earthworms to transform organic waste into a nutrient rich fertilizer), an eco-friendly low-cost technology where organic waste is converted into compost through the joint actions of earthworms and microorganisms. He gave brief details on procedures and methods involved in making vermi-compost. Field demonstration in Gorkhey was held in the presence of Dr. Kailash S. Gaira (Project Investigator, KLCDI-India), KLCDI-India team members and resource person from KCC. However, in Samanden in vermi compost pits were made in the presence of Mr. Ganendra Sharma, Dr. Aseesh Pandey (Program manager, KLCDI-India) and GETC members. The sequential steps are shown in para 6.7 & photos below.

6.10. Process of vermin-composting

Identification of a cool, moist and shady site for the preparation of vermicompost pit is the first step of vermin compost pit preparation, and a 6x3 feet
bed demarcation in the ground is required for proper bed preparation. This is
followed by a sequential addition of i) a 1 feet layer of chopped dried
leaves/grasses to be kept as a bedding material at the bottom of the bed; ii) a
layer of cow dung is to be added on to it repeatedly up to 2.5-3 feet height
alternatively with a layer of green leaves in between cow dung; iii) Earthworms
(Esina foetida) were added on the top of the bed because the earth warm
feeds from top to bottom and a thin layer of cow dung to be added on top of
it; iv) sprinkle water to the bed immediately after the release of worms to keep it
moist; v) the prepared bed needs to be covered with gunny bags/polythene to
maintain moisture.

The vermin-compost bed should be turned upside down once after 30 days for maintaining aeration and for proper decomposition. Each 6x3 feet bed contains approximately 150-200kg of raw material. The vermin-compost gets ready in 45-50 days with approximate yield of 100-150kg. After complete decomposition of the raw material it appears black and granular in texture. Watering should be stopped as compost gets ready. The compost should be kept over a heap of partially decomposed cow dung so that earthworms could migrate to cow dung from compost. After two days compost can be separated and sieved for use.

7. Monitoring of ongoing organic farming activities

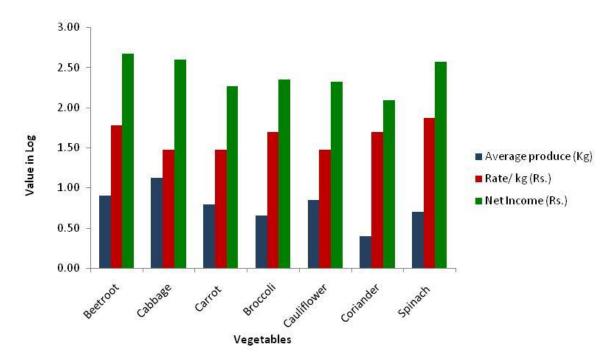
Under the KLCDI-India programme so far a total of 51 farmers have been trained on agro-horti practices, off-season vegetable farming, and organic farming including polyhouse construction and management of Gorkhey-Samanden villages. Various programmes related to organic farming techniques such as vermi-composting, bio-composting, bio-fertilizer and bio-pesticides preparation



Sequential steps of making process of the vermicomposting pits

have been provided to the identified beneficiaries/participants. A total of eight low-cost polyhouses developed using participatory approach to promote off-season vegetable cultivation in the field of the progressive farmers and they are utilizing in growing high value/off season vegetables (e.g. green peas, tomato, green vegetables, chilly, cauliflowers, cabbage, carrot, broccoli beetroot etc.). These off-season vegetables not only provided nutritional security to the villagers but also contributed towards enhancing the livelihood through community-based ecotourism by supplying the produce to the functional home stays in the villages.

The recent evaluation (two months period) of productivity showed that approximately 47 kg of vegetables (beet root, cabbage, carrot, broccoli, cauliflower, coriander, and spinach) was produced using the organic farming approach. Different vegetables were grown inside the polyhouse rotationally to ensure supply of vegetables throughout the year and nearly 282 kg of vegetables was produces in a year from a polyhouse. More importantly, the developed polyhouses also helped farmers to get vegetables (namely Beet root, Cabbage, Carrot, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Coriander, and Spinach) during COVID 19 pandemic. The seasonal assessment of production, income and profit, monthly showed that the Cabbage, Carrot, Broccoli and Cauliflower are among the most profitable crops (Figure) which needs to be promoted at larger level.



Average vegetable production of in polyhouse per 2 months in Gorkhey Samanden village

Way forward

The resource recovery centre constructed through participatory approach in which community people of Gorkhey and Samandin villages had given their participation. This is a unique way of managing the solid-waste generated within the village, either by villagers or the visitors/tourists and can be processed in a way that the maximum recovery of resources can be done from the waste material prior to its final disposal. The Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee (GETC) has been designated as an authority to mange and ensures proper functioning of the RRC-Gorkhey. The major challenge in the proper management and functioning of RRC is the year-round availability of resource/fund to the involved manpower and to the required amenities for RRC management. In this regard governance at local/district/state level can play a significant role and this LVLR model 'Low-Cost Village Level RRC' can be replicated in various fringe villages where the municipal waste collector vehicles are not in reach. This LVLR model can create win-win opportunity by generating livelihood as well as spreading cleanliness in the villages. Furthermore, integration of organic produces in the Gorkhey-Samanden village with ecotourism services like organic food and beverages may ensure equitable benefit sharing of village resources among the villagers and the Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee developed during the implementation of the programme could play a pro-vital role in the same.



List of participants during Livelihood Enhancement of Rural Women through Ecotourism Practices for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Khangchendzonga Landscape (KL)-India

Sn	Name	Designation	M/F	Contact No./email id
1	Roma Sherpa	Housewife/Farmer	F	7001616253
2	Phip Rani Limboo	Housewife/Farmer	F	8942993629
3	Passang Diki Tamang	Housewife/Farmer	F	
4	Passang Lhamu Sherpa	Homestay	F	
5	Bhim Kumari Chettri	Student	F	8250670035
6	Ramala Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	
7	Passang Diki Tamang	Housewife/Farmer	F	
8	Dawa Lhamu Sherpa	Asha	F	9002349727
9	Phur Lhamu Tamang	Housewife/Farmer	F	
10	Pem Diki Tamang	Homestay .	F	8670124357
11	Kumari Sherpa	Housewife/Farmer	F	
12	Kamala Chettri	Housewife/Farmer	F	8172029636
13	Santosh Chettri	Housewife	M	
14	Birmal Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	9800358674
15	Dawa Sherpa	Housewife	M	9733279901
16	Pabitra Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	,, 302, ,, 01
17	Chandramaya Chettri	Housewife/Farmer	F	
18	Nim Diki Sherpa	Housewife/Farmer	F	9800351359
19	Yamuna Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	7000331337
20	Mamta Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	
21	Phur Lhamu Sherpa	Housewife/Farmer	F	7872232011
22		Housewife/Farmer	F	7063359479
	Harimaya Chettri Laxmi Rai		F	7063337477
23		Housewife/Farmer	F	001/705414
24	Renuka Chettri	Homestay		8016725414
25	Srijana Rai	student	F	
26	Pem Cheki Sherpa	Housewife/Farmer	F	.:!:l
27	Nitish Rai	Student	M	nitiahrai@gmail.com
28	Uden Tamang	Homestay	M	udentamang1000@gmail.com
29	Tara Thapa	President (JFMC)	M	8967554774
30	Santosh Chettri	Housewife	M	9749484076
31	Sarita Sherpa	Farmer/ Housewife	F	
32	Chandra Kala Sherpa	Homestay	F	
33	Sumitra Rai	Farmer	F	
34	Ramala Rai	Farmer	F	
35	Lakpa Diki Sherpa	Farmer	F	
36	Minakshi Chettri	Housewife/Farmer	F	
37	Laxime Chettri	Homestay	F	
38	Bishnu Chettri	Homestay	F	
39	Man Maya Rai	Housewife/Farmer	F	
40	Tshering Uden Bhutia	CEO,KCC	F	9733149975
41	Kadambari Thapa	KCC, Yuksam	F	7432022094
42	Ganendra Sharma	F.O(MIDVIR)	Μ	7877114742
43	Y.K Rai	G.B.P (NIHE)	Μ	
44	Kailash Singh Gaira	G.B.P (NIHE)	M	
45	Aseesh Pandey	Program manager	M	
46	Jarina Lepcha	KLCDI-India	F	