

The Common Facility Center Creating Livelihoods



In the Churachandpur district of Manipur, Zenmuankim, 33, heads the administrative unit at the Common Facility Centre (CFC) of the Indian Micro Enterprises Development Foundation-Scheme of Funds for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (IMEDF-SFURTI) Aromatic Cluster.

Earlier, she used to plant seeds in her field and sell them to her friends and family. Later, in 2019, she joined the cluster and worked as a link to collectivise women farmers for any event/activity at the CFC.

The CFC is a green building where a rainwater harvesting plant with a capacity of 7,000 litres was established. The collected rainwater is then subsequently used in the centre's toilets. There are machines that help workers to extract oil and make products like tea, oil, dispensers, etc. from the procured lemongrass from farmers.

Apart from the administrative duties, Zenmuankim also focuses on doing quality checks of the final products such as lemongrass essential oil and herbal tea. She also supports her family in floriculture.

The Churachandpur Aromatic Cluster is a part of the Northeast India, which is abundant in aromatic plants, medicinal herbs, and spices. The botanical species of this region generally have a higher content of active ingredients and a unique and essential oil profile. To exploit these gifts of nature in the highest possible way for the benefit of the farming community is the focus of this cluster. The lemongrass produced in this region has a high citral content. The products have an online presence in the form of herbs. Some batches of extraction have citral as high as 80.27%. The region also houses the biggest distillery installed in Manipur. The cluster benefits her as it has generated additional income for her family. Now, she has regular employment, with job security, and her children look up to her as an inspiration.

Zenmuankim says, "The job I'm doing right now is secure. It provides a regular income for my household. It may not be very high paying, but my children look up to me as it is respectable work I'm doing."