

## **Influence of Policies on Rural Livelihoods in Nagaland with a Focus on Mokokchung and Zunheboto Districts**

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### **Abstract**

Nagaland is a land of many tribes situated in the easternmost part of India bordering Myanmar. Her people have been farmers since time immemorial, mostly engaged in the traditional practice of subsistent slash-and-burn cultivation or shifting cultivation known as jhumming. Jhumming was mass practiced till late 80s to early 90s. Even today, shifting cultivation dominates the major segment of the economy of the people. However, in many places of the state, certain communities have shown a “shifting away” from the practice of this occupation i.e. jhumming, as Government agencies and various NGOs have educated and made the people aware of the evil and adverse effects of jhumming from an environmental and ecological perspective. As a result, these people were forced to explore alternate livelihoods. Livelihood can be simply defined as the means by which people satisfy their needs and afford a comfortable living. Emphasis on sustainable livelihood forms an important component of poverty alleviation programmes, rural agricultural development and rural resource management. In Nagaland, forest policies of the State Government have greatly helped the rural populace to adopt forest based activities for their livelihood and enabled them to shift away from the harmful practice of jhumming. Besides these efforts, various other policies of rural development and poverty alleviation programs have helped the rural and underprivileged lot to adopt a livelihood alternative to jhumming. Consequently, all of the above mentioned activities result in the interaction of livelihood practices and economic activities among people of different areas, both rural and urban. Thus, these urban-rural and rural-rural interactions among towns and villages play a crucial part in the functioning of the economy of Nagaland.

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