



## **Diffusion of organic farming in north-eastern India: The case of Mizoram state**

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Organic farming is increasingly being considered as an option for improving food security, food safety and alleviating poverty, proactively creating new local and export markets. Organic production systems are particularly suitable to smallholder farmers as these systems depend on the sustainable use of local resources and on farmers' traditional knowledge and social networks. The FAO of UN has identified organic farming as a priority area for addressing both local and global food security challenges. The government of India too among several other measures has launched "National Project on Organic Farming" (NPOF) which has focused attention on North Eastern states including Mizoram. The Indian Ministry of Agriculture and Indian Council of Agricultural Research consider the North Eastern Region including Mizoram, being mostly rain-fed and mountainous, ideal for promotion of organic farming. Thus, this study (doctoral dissertation) was carried among 150 integrated organic farmers from three districts of Mizoram to identify the potential & constraints including training needs of the farmers and role of producer organizations in the area of organic farming. Mizoram state in India formally recognized organic farming by passing the Mizoram Organic Farming Act in 2004 to introduce, adopt areas for, promote and regulate organic farming in the state. Accordingly, under extension strategies, organic agricultural practices were diffused by setting up model organic farms and model organic villages, with substantial efforts made in capacity building of trainers and farmers in different aspects of certified organic production in Mizoram. This study also revealed very good prospects of organic animal husbandry development as well. This paper elaborates the extension activities including capacity building measures undertaken in the state of Mizoram to promote and develop organic farming, which could be an example for others to replicate the experience towards organic farming development. As a way forward, it is recommended that the extension functionaries should concentrate on capacity development measures including formation and strengthening of farmers' associations to make organic farming sustainable venture for the farmers.

**Key words:** capacity building, extension functionaries, Mizoram, North-eastern India, organic farming