

Impact Story

Ephong Konyak, Changlang Village, Mon, Nagaland

Ephong Konyak is an active leader in the Self- Help group (SHG) based 'Longnam Producer Group' in Changlang village, in Mon district. It is worthy of mention here that these SHG based producer groups have been successfully formed and funded by the State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM), Mon to trigger and strengthen micro-enterprise activities amongst rural women in Mon villages. These producer groups form a strong social capital and a robust platform to incubate and scale livelihood and micro-enterprises (both agri-based and non-agri-based) involving rural women.

From the genesis of the Changlang solar mini grid in September 2024, Ephong took deep interest in the operations of the solar mini grid, as her son Kaingam Konyak was the local mini grid operator. Ephong was very keen to learn about the 'productive use of energy' especially how solar electricity can power agri-processing machineries like



electric rice hullers and electric corn pulveriser machines. She knew that these machines would have a profound impact on improving local livelihoods in an agrarian community, in terms of addressing food security issues and increasing household incomes, especially for rural women. Ephong was convinced that these simple agri-machines would be easy for women to handle and operate and would create new entrepreneurship opportunities in the villages. She reached out to the local team of Hamara Grid, based out of Changlang village, to support her in procuring two single-phase agri-machines – one electric rice huller and one electric pulveriser. Team Hamara Grid not only supported her to procure and install the two agri-processing machines within her household premises but also trained Ephong and her daughter in law, Nyemshan Konyak, to operate both the machines successfully. They were also trained on the basic repair and maintenance functions of the machines.

Since then Ephong and Nyamshen are successfully operating the electric rice huller and the electric pulveriser machine with the help of the mini grid solar electricity. The local SHG members from Changlang village come to her for pulverising their corn seeds for livestock feed. She is charging around Rs.50/- for pulverising one tin of corn seeds (which contains around 11 kgs of corn seeds) and Rs. 40/- towards dehussing one tin of paddy (which contains around 12 kgs of paddy) to the local red rice.

Ephong is a happy and successful entrepreneur in Changlang. Presently, she is bringing home an additional income of Rs.10,000/- to Rs.12,000/- per month. She anticipates that during Christmas and festive seasons, her income will grow upto - Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 18000/- per month. When Ephong is busy with farming in the fields, her husband and son, Kaingam also run the pulveriser machine and the rice huller machine for the customers. Ephong has built this as a successful family-based agri-enterprise in Changlang village. Ephong demonstrates true leadership by leading from the front and inspires other producer group members through her own vision, actions, hardwork and commitment. As Wangnyu, another member from her 'Longnam Producer Group' aptly sums up – "we are very proud of her and all the women of Changlang village are very proud of her. They aspire to be like Ephong, one day"