

**Farmer Producer Companies, Good Agricultural Governance for
Rejuvenating Agriculture scenario in Manipur**

A Case Study by Dvara E-Registry

December 2022



1. Prologue

When the whole world is talking about innovation-driven economy, Manipur is talking about food deficit. We are reminded of the fact that political freedom and economic freedom are two sides of a coin; and food self-sufficiency is at the centre stage of economic freedom.

Even after 68 years of economic planning in the State, Manipur's development history is characterised by a depressing pattern of a dying agricultural sector with a persistent deficiency ranging from 107 MT of food grains in 2013–14 to 267 MT in 2019–20 (Economic Survey Manipur 2020-21, 2020)

The small and marginal farmers continue to experience significant levels of economic insecurity. The income of small farmers is only 39% of that of medium-sized landowners and only 13% of that of large farmers. A household engaged in agriculture makes an average monthly income of Rs 9861 against the national average of Rs 10,829. This is far too little to keep a surplus for investing (Singh, 2022)

The primary survey conducted by Dvara E-Registry says that average land holding in Manipur is 0.6 acre and in Kakching district it is 1 acre. Due to its absolute reliance on rain, the operational holding of 0.6 acre of land is too meagre to engage the agricultural household fully throughout the year. Rain deficiency led farmers to take only one crop during the monsoon season.

Additionally, there are very few advantages of established infrastructures like warehouses, cold storages, sorting, grading, and packing units throughout the entire rural area. These circumstances plunge the farmers into a whirlwind of uncertainty, leaving them poverty stricken and deprived.

Access to agriculture financing is also a major challenge faced by farmers in Manipur. Institutional credit is largely unavailable for smallholder farmers. Review of Agriculture Credit report by Reserve Bank of India suggests that North-eastern states have a miniscule share in the country's overall output as well as loans to agricultural and allied sector, this means that the North-eastern regions are getting very low agri-credit as percentage of their agri-GDP.

Today the agricultural sector in the state of Manipur is plagued and increasingly stifled with seven visible constraints. These are as follows:

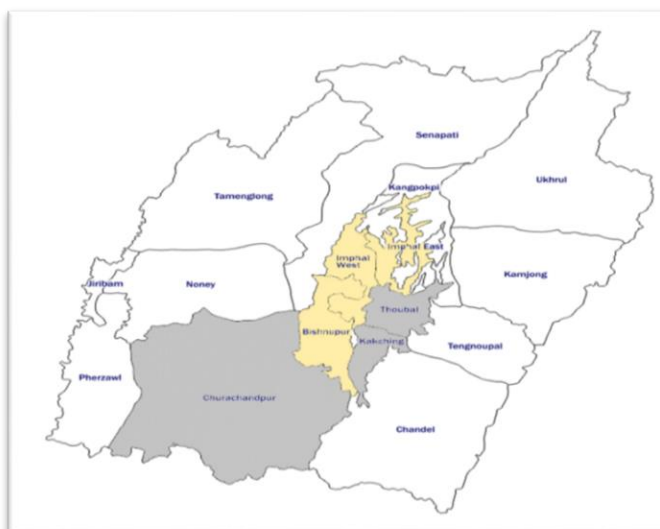
- Land degradation
- Climate change challenge
- Lack of sufficient irrigation
- Transfer of agri-land for non-agricultural purposes
- Lack of marketing infrastructures
- Increasing externalisation where the region is depending largely on local resources and its products are only getting consumed locally, there are definite limits to the possibilities for expansion of production in this region.
- Heavy dependence upon unorganised- informal sources for credit and absence of farm planning.

2. Dvara E-Registry's presence in Manipur

Collectivization and entrepreneurial growth of farmers are crucial to improving their conditions, and FPOs are seen as a potential route in this regard. A group of farmers who are involved in agricultural production and related activity and have relatability towards the management of agricultural business operations make up a farmer producer company. This group can be made up of farmers from a single village or from numerous villages. The FPO's primary goal is to establish agricultural companies by registering as a company. FPOs are created with the goals listed below.

- Helps farmers in accessing good market for their produce at the farm-gate itself.
- Facilitates farmers to sell their produce easily across country
- Help farmers to get economical services and will be able to escape the hurdle of middlemen
- Provides services like advisory and technical assistance in of supply of seeds, fertilizers, machines, market linkages etc
- Provides training, networking, financial and technical counselling to farmers will be available
- The FPO will receive contributions from the government to increase the business at par with its capital.
- In the context of ensuring availability of credit to farmers and access to the market, FPO formation will help solve the challenges that small and marginal farmers face

Dvara Trust has been recognized as a Cluster Based Business Organisation (CBBO) and empanelled under NABARD, Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to form and promote 50 FPOs across the country. Currently, the organisation is promoting 7 FPOs in the districts of Churachandpur, Thoubal and Kakching. 5 new FPOs have been allotted to the organisation in June 2022 to be promoted in the districts of Bishnupur, Imphal east and Imphal West.



With the above-mentioned premise, Dvara E-Registry's made its foray into Manipur in August 2021. Our approach in the state of Manipur is to create an enabling ecosystem for farmers to broaden the spectrum of livelihood opportunities available to them. The FPO formation and promotion has been done broadly under following components.

Access to credit for both FPOs and farmers	Increasing farmers' revenue realization in the crops sold.
Reduction in the cost of cultivation for the farmers	Augment secondary sources of income for the farmers
Increasing farm productivity for the farmers	

Prior to starting the intervention, Dvara E-Registry conducted a diagnostic study to get an understanding of Value chain in Manipur. This included a SWOT assessment to understand the agribusiness scenario in Manipur. The findings of the same were as follows:

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agro climatic diversity ranging from tropical to alpine making it possible to grow a wide variety of crops - Soil is rich in organic matter - Rich biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organic farming Infrastructural facilities can be created with the participation of private sector - Ample opportunity to obtain agricultural inputs in bulk quantities through FPOs at substantially lower costs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to export destinations such as Bangladesh and Myanmar - Potential to commercialise products such as pineapple, kiwi and passion fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of government policies available for Manipur and North-East region can serve as a boosting factor for agricultural development - International markets can be targeted due to geographical location and availability of produce - Huge scope for value addition of surplus produce - Scientific promotion of allied agriculture – livestock farming and fishery
<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of infrastructural facilities along the food value chain - Lack of market access - domestic & international - Limited low of men and material due to hilly terrain - Jhum cultivation and subsistence farming is leading to deterioration of available resources - Non-availability of skilled manpower Lack of business acumen 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slow growth of infrastructure links - Uncertainty in external trade scenario

As was previously mentioned, Manipur's productivity levels have not increased at a rate that is comparable to the rest of the nation, and the region's agricultural potential has not been realised. The major reasons are as follows:

- State lacks market-driven production practises
- Farmers lack a basic understanding of commerce, there is insufficient infrastructure at the farm level, and there is a lack of post-harvest infrastructure, such as specialised markets, pack houses, cold storage facilities, sorting and grading lines, processing industries etc
- Because the state lacks proper post-harvest infrastructure, post-harvest losses are not only substantial, but the uneconomic quantity also raises transaction and marketing costs for individual farmers
- Post-harvest losses are also caused by a lack of mechanisation because to dispersed farms and a lack of infrastructure amenities. Ironically, most farmers just sell their produce in raw form at much lower prices

Due to its mountainous terrain and remoteness and more importantly inadequate road and rail infrastructure, Manipur suffers from a severe bottleneck in the transportation of agricultural products. The cost of transportation frequently increases when goods are transported by road to significant metropolises for marketing. International markets place a lot of emphasis on packaging, cleaning, grading, and post-harvest handling facilities with storeroom in addition to transportation. Most of these amenities are difficult for ordinary farmers to access. Farmers in the area receive lower returns than those in other regions of India due to the absence of alternative and organised marketing structures. In order to avoid transportation issues, the majority of farmers sell their produce to the accessible channels in the village (farm gate) at prices that are comparably lower than those found in

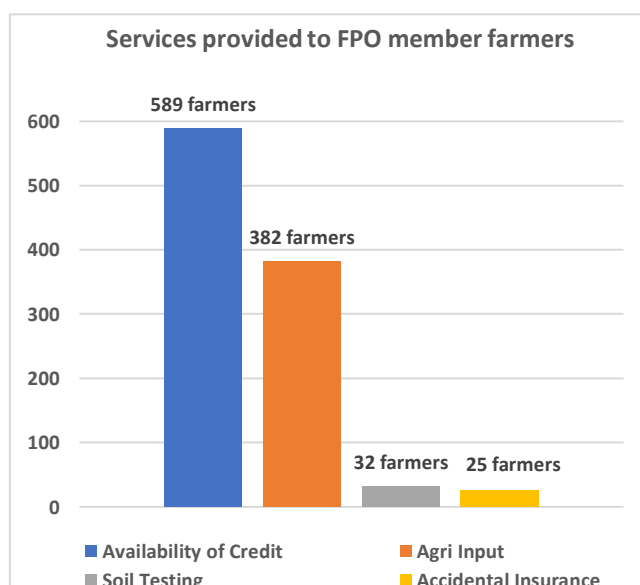
urban marketplaces. The issue of food commodities being illegally smuggled into the state is also an issue which farmers face. These largely include Areca nut, fruits and vegetables. In addition to above, other challenges faced by farmers in the state are as follows:

- Farmer is more reliant on the middleman/trader in urban markets due to the high cost of transportation for dealing. To pay farmers less, the middleman/trader engage in unfair business tactics during the procurement process and raise concerns about quality.
- The farmers are occasionally paid for their operations by the traders who buy the produce. In such cases, the farmer is at a disadvantage since he must accept a lower price and allocate a larger amount of the output to the debt's interest payments.
- The market for organic goods is expanding quickly, but it still faces several difficulties in terms of supply chain management, marketing, and product and sector growth. One of the most important factors in the success of creating an organic market is supply chain management.

3. Impact of Dvara E-Registry's intervention

A common farmer in the state of Manipur is facing plethora of challenges, as was discussed in the preceding section. Dvara E-Registry firmly believes that the FPOs it is supporting can provide sustainable solutions in the long run.

Dvara E-Registry's intervention in Manipur started in November 2021 but the work got momentum in May 2022 post the omicron wave of COVID-19. In a very short span of time, the shareholder farmers and their respective FPOs have been provided various services which is catering to their farming requirements as well as helping in increasing their income.



Access to credit for farmers – To minimize the vicious chain on non-institutionalized lending, Dvara E-Registry, in collaboration with financial institution has provided farmers of Manipur quick financing for their agricultural requirements. Till date, 589 farmers have received loans from their respective FPOs in two districts of Kakching and Thoubal. By the end of Rabi season, it is expected that 2000 farmers from all the seven FPOs will receive credit from their respective FPOs in the additional upcoming districts of Bishnupur, Imphal East and Imphal West

Farmers Accidental Insurance Scheme – In the month of August 2022, Dvara E-Registry has launched a personal accidental group insurance programme for FPO members farmers and their family members. The scheme is also open for non-members which motivates them to become shareholder in FPOs. The scheme is providing financial protection of Rs 1 Lakh against uncertainties of accidental death and disability resulting from accidents. In addition to this, the organisation has also launched a group health insurance for farmers and their family members who have taken membership in FPOs. The benefit of this scheme includes hospicash, accidental death / permanent total disablement/ permanent partial disablement, accidental hospitalisation and more importantly Child education. The initial response to both these schemes is very encouraging. By mid of September 2022, a total of 50 farmers have got themselves booked for both the insurance schemes and going by the intent, shown by farmers, at least 70-80% farmers will take these up.

Availability of agri Inputs – Dvara E-Registry, through its tie-ups with links FPOs to bargain for the best pricing on agricultural products. To obtain the best prices, aggregate demand for agricultural inputs is shared with agricultural input suppliers. The availability of high-quality inputs at affordable prices is a problem that is

resolved when FPOs and farmers have timely access to them. This has greater significance in the case of Manipur because most of the agriculture inputs are typically unavailable and, when it is, it priced exorbitantly. A case to understand this is the availability of irrigation equipment like spray pump and spray guns. These are available to farmers at a price of Rs 2,500 to Rs 2,800. Through the bulk demand and by the virtue of tie ups with the companies, irrigation equipment has been made available to shareholder farmers at Rs 2090 therefore, a farmer made a profit of 16% to 25% on irrigation articles. A total of 125 farmers from 7 FPOs have purchased these through their FPOs. Similarly, the organisation, facilitated the availability of bio fertilisers and plant growth regulators on cheaper prices through bulk demand. A total of 257 shareholder farmers have availed the same.

Soil Testing - Dvara E-Registry has started implementing a Soil Testing system for its affiliated Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), which benefits smallholder farmers. The shareholder farmers in Manipur are reaping the benefits of soil testing as it helps in assessing the fertility and nutrient status of soil for providing an index of nutrient availability or supply in a given soil. The soil health card leads to more informed fertiliser decisions with a potential benefit to the farmer of increased yields, reduced operating costs and superior environmental risk management and it also includes improved crop maturity and quality, higher tolerance to disease and pest damage, and increased growth. Both FPOs and farmers will benefit from Soil Testing since farmers will only purchase nutrients that their soil lacks. Dvara E-Registry through its respective 7 FPOs in Manipur have undertaken soil testing for around 32 farmers. Dvara E-Registry is receiving positive response from farmers community and other organisation with respect to testing of soil, but the activity has been severely marred due to continuous rainfall. A MoU has also been signed with Imphal based 'e-Loumi' of Farming Alternative and Resilience Management Schools. Through this tie-up, soil testing will be undertaken for 1000 farmers.

Business planning and capacity building - Dvara E-Registry has provided wholesome guidance to its FPOs in Manipur to prepare business plan based on the analysis of the baseline survey and secondary data and is handholding all the six FPOs through the execution of the business plan and other aspects of capacity building.

Customised agro advisories - Dvara E-Registry is providing farmers of Manipur with advisories adjusted as per the block level weather information based on soil condition, crop sown, duration of particular varieties, including advice on pre-sowing, land preparation, seed treatment, sowing, nursery preparation, irrigation management, flowering, harvesting, and postharvest. Dvara E-Registry also share geography specific agro advisories for crop specific issue.

Digital platform - Dvara E-Registry is providing Manipur farmers with a digital solution through Doordrishti, a complete platform for daily operations and accounting. It includes three interfaces: a web-based interface for the FPO, a mobile based application for the farmers and a mobile based application for the field representatives. The web interface for the FPO helps in managing all farmer data digitally and communicate with farmers. The mobile application for member farmers is called Krishak. It provides agro advisories, price information, metrological updates, and updates from the FPO for the sale of agri inputs and the purchase of agri produce. The mobile application for the use of field representatives is called Krishak Saathi. This application is a virtual communication tool between a farmer and its FPO. Krishak Saathi Application enables field representatives to collect accurate and verified farmer and plot information. In addition to helping with data administration, MIS, and accounting, Doordrishti also shares farm-level analytics with useful insights, supporting with crop monitoring, management, and yield estimation.

Weather forecast - By sharing block level weather forecast for 5 days, Dvara E-Registry is assisting farmers to schedule their cultivation practices. This way, farmers can manage their cost and efforts. The team on the ground is assisting farmers to understand how to solicit the information from the Doordrishti application.

Technological solutions - Dvara E-Registry has tie-up with companies that offer innovative and cost-effective solutions for the farmers, that can help in either reducing the cost of cultivation or can offer solution to the problems faced by the farmers. Comprehensive soil testing, usage of Nano urea technology, provision of innovative irrigation accessories like spray pump and spray gun among others are few of the examples.

Market Watch - Through this service, Dvara E-Registry is communicating the daily spot prices from 2000 major agricultural produce market committees (APMCs) for over 70 agri commodities. It also provides futures prices of agri commodities listed on derivatives platform.

Accounting and compliances - Dvara E-Registry is assisting FPOs in Manipur to keep track of all financial transactions, such as sales and purchases, inventory management, vendor management, customer management, and profit and loss statements. This makes it easier for FPOs to keep track of their finances.

Secondary sources of income - Dvara E-Registry is exploring, sharing and assist in implementation of new avenues for secondary sources of income for the members farmers and FPOs. This hold significance in the

case of Manipur as majority of farmers depend on other non -farming activities like piggery, poultry, goat-rearing, and fishery among others.

3.1 Impact in numbers

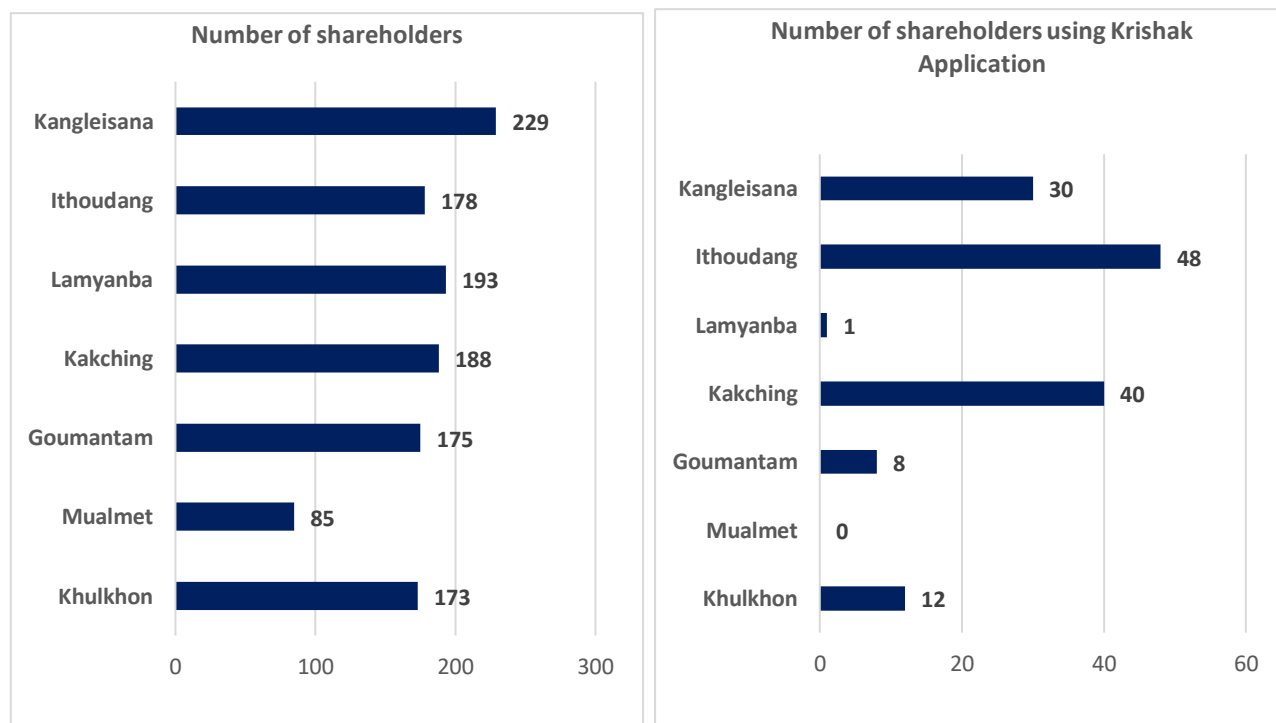
These are some of the impact figures in graph which will provide the extent of work Dvara E-Registry has undertaken in the state of Manipur

We are working in total three districts of Manipur. The details are as follows:

District	Name of the FPO
Churachandpur	Mualmet Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
	Goumantam Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
	Khulkon Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
Kakching	Lamyamba Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
	Kakching Progressive Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
Thoubal	Kangleisana Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited
	Ithoudang Krish - E – Farmer Producer Company Limited

Number of shareholders who have taken membership and number of shareholders using Krishak Application

A total of 1221 farmers have taken membership in respective FPOs in Manipur while 139 shareholders are actively using the Doordrishti Krishak application. The details are as follows:



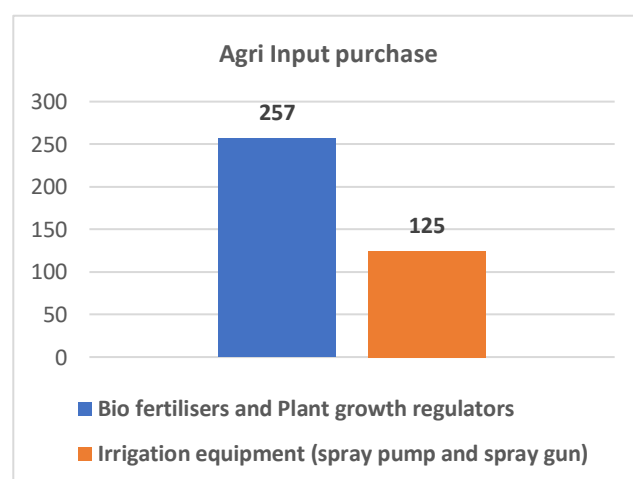
Out of 139 shareholders who are using the Doordrishti Application, 133 shareholders have done transactions with their respective FPOs through the application.



Purchase of Agri Input

Respective seven FPOs have provided Agri Inputs to a total of 257 unique farmers from a total of 382 transactions. The agri inputs could be categorised into two broad categories, Bio fertilisers and Plant growth regulators (Nano urea, fertilisers) and Irrigation equipment (spray pump and spray gun). It is to be noted that Dvara E-Registry has facilitated the availability of bio fertilisers and plant growth regulators on cheaper prices through bulk demand. Shareholder farmers during the recently concluded impact study stated that the availability of assured-

quality inputs at affordable prices is a problem that is resolved when FPOs and farmers have timely access to them. As per the survey, 182 farmers in total had bought agricultural inputs from their respective FPOs. Most farmers think FPO offers products at competitive prices than other markets while also offering assured-quality inputs. Good quality of inputs and timely availability is one of the main advantages, according to most farmers in Manipur.



Soil Testing

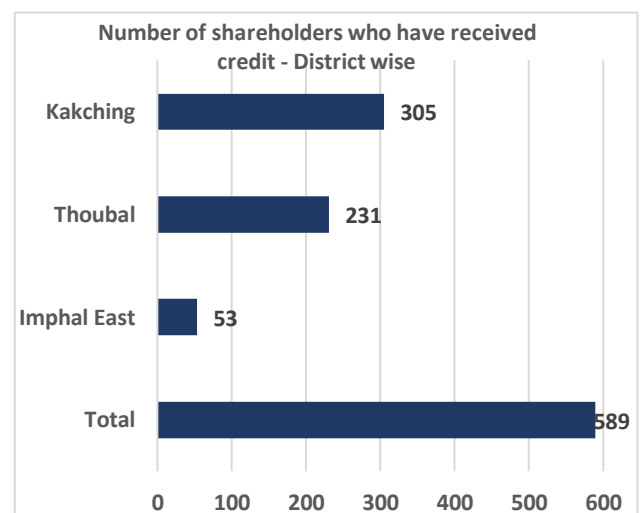
Dvara E-Registry through its respective 7 FPOs in Manipur have undertaken soil testing for around 32 farmers. Farmers' community and other organisations are responding favourably to Dvara E-efforts Registry's to test the soil, although the action has been significantly hampered by the persistent rain. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Imphal-based "e-Loumi" of Farming Alternative and Resilience Management Schools. 1000 farmers will have their soil tested as a result of this partnership. The in-house impact survey conducted by Dvara E-Registry states that the major benefit reported by farmers has been the set of recommendations that they receive after the soil testing process. This largely includes correct dosage of nutrients based on crop variety and landholding. Farmers during the qualitative exercises opined that there was limited awareness previously and soil testing helps them to take better decisions. The soil health card covers 11 parameter parameters which is higher in comparison to other tests conducted by government agencies. This results in farmer's saving costs on agri inputs that are not required.



Soil testing being done in Ithoudang FPO, Thoubal, Manipur

Lending

Dvara E -Registry has started the lending programme in Manipur in Kharif 2022 season. Till date 589 shareholders comprising of three districts and four FPOs have received credit. These farmers are from 36 villages. Of these 20 villages are in Kakching district while 10 villages are in Thoubal district, 6 villages are from Imphal East. By the end of next season, it is expected that 2000 farmers from all the seven FPOs will receive credit from their respective FPOs in the additional upcoming districts of Bishnupur, Churachandpur and Imphal West. The recent survey concludes two major benefits of the credit process, firstly the loans are disbursed at home followed by minimal paperwork. Another important feature is that loans are disbursed on time. The qualitative study conducted in early part of 2022 also brought forth similar findings where farmers said that onerous paper requirement is one of the major deterrents behind small holder farmers not getting the loan.



Summary of outcomes

Agricultural Financing - Interview with farmers indicate that the biggest premium of this financing process is the timely disbursement of money before the sowing period. Most of the farmers are marginal farmers and they need quick credit for buying agriculture input before the cropping season starts. In this scenario, the loan provided through the FPO comes very handy. Non institutional sources like money lender, agri input dealer are very scarce in Manipur and people have travel to other far-flung villages in order to get loan thus they also time and productive man-days. On an average, each loan from a moneylender carries an interest rate of at least 30%. Through the Dvara E- Registry's

intervention 183 farmers in total have gotten loans, and an average saving of 47.8 percent can be attributed because of intervention.

Loan amount through FPO	FPO Interest rate	Interest amount	Interest rate (non-institutional sources)	Interest amount	Saving	Saving in percentage
Rs 30,000	24%	Rs 4,300	30%	Rs 9,000	Rs 4,700	47.8%

Agricultural Input It is worth mentioning that accessibility to agriculture is a challenge in Manipur. Through its FPOs, Dvara E-Registry is helping shareholder farmers to gain access to these inputs and on the top of it, through the aggregation model, FPO farmer members have also saved cost with respect to purchase of agriculture input like irrigation commodities, bio fertilisers and plant growth regulators. A total of 382 farmers from six FPOs have purchased agriculture inputs. Following exhibit will provide a better understanding of the outcomes

Product	Average market Price per Unit	FPO Price Per Unit	Saving in percentage
Irrigation equipment	Rs 2500-Rs 2800	Rs 2090	16% - 25%
Bio fertilisers and Plant growth regulators	Rs 240	Rs 220	8%

Soil testing – The results of soil testing is yet to be ascertained but interaction with farmers have brought forth the fact that they are finding the soil testing quite essential and presumes that it will help him save costs with respect to undue expenditure on fertilisers. It holds larger significance in the case of Manipur because these bio fertilisers and PGRs are scantily available. A comprehensive soil health card with authentic set of recommendations will assist farmers in saving undue cost.

Price information: Farmers were of the view that Price information provides them an option to view commodity prices of different mandis and help take better decision. Farmers through respective field representatives are now understanding the contours of mobile based application that they have downloaded and will be using it more actively in next season.

4. Future recommendations

Based on the experiences gained by Dvara E-Registry in last one year, these are some of the recommendations that will help the FPOs and their respective shareholders to thrive in the future. Dvara E-Registry is already working on some of these specific learnings and will collaborate with different partners to help bring a transformation in lives of farmers of Manipur.

- To undertake various research studies required for a thorough grasp of Manipur's organic niches in order to assist organic farmers in entering the export market with a competitive advantage. It is necessary to conduct a survey on prospective niche crops for organic farming in various agroecological zones and farming traditions across the state.
- Market survey and demand estimation and product development will be done in collaboration with specialised regional councils in conjunction with private firms who are already involved in marketing of produces especially organic produces.
- Availability and accessibility of quality input that has the potential to boost yields. This includes fingerlings for fisheries, piglets and breeds for the animal husbandry industry, and high-quality seed for agriculture. To meet the demands of farmers, institutional innovations like seed banks in

public-private partnerships are required. Dvara E-Registry will be collaborating with Fish Welfare Initiative, a charity organisation which aims to improve the living conditions of farmed fish by minimizing stress-inducing factors such as disease and overcrowding in aquaculture.

- Assisting organic poultry, dairy, piggery unit and others using local/indigenous breeds suitable to agro-ecological regions in order to meet the demand for organic dairy, poultry and other animal-based products.
- Given that organic farming is practised by farmers in this region by default, attention should be paid to identifying markets, prospective crops, and effective methods of organic certification and branding in both domestic and foreign markets in order to raise farmers income.
- Extension amongst farmers should be prioritised. It can significantly aid in the dissemination and exchange of information. The FPOs can bring it farmer members to the location of a successful invention or helpful practise for farmer exchange visits, where they discuss and observe the benefits and costs with adopting farmers.
- Most importantly, the FPOs and their BoDs with able guidance from Dvara E-Registry need to put in place a strong mechanism to tackle the chronic issue of cost-disability and mounting concern of externalisation. In Manipur, the problem of farmers' internal capacities being more externalised is getting worse in the absence of a defined road map. Farmers are becoming more and more dependent on other forces that are beyond of their control due to the increased time and financial costs associated with buying seeds, manure, and even managing water for their crops. Through the FPOs, Dvara E-Registry is making inroads in reducing the cost of cultivation, bring in more technology intervention like soil health card, usage of alternate fertilisers, access to better quality irrigation equipment among others. In addition, plans are in place to promote climate resilient agriculture practices which comprises of using existing natural resources through crop and livestock production systems to achieve long-term higher productivity and farm incomes under climate variabilities.

5. Farmers speak



I became shareholder in Ithoudang Farmer Producer Company in May 2022l. Initially we were sceptical about this whole concept of FPC. Since the time I have become a member, I have got few benefits which I can share. Urea and other fertilisers are generally not available here. Through the FPC, I have got Nano urea and the FPC person also trained us how to use it. Secondly, I also got my soil tested for the first time as we never knew that something like this existed. Post the testing process, I got the soil health card, I am hopeful that it will increase my produce. I will certainly practice whatever has been recommended. I also purchased a spray pump for Rs 2100 and some insecticides. Both these commodities were delivered at the village. Earlier we had to travel to Thoubal main town or Imphal to but these things. I hope that FPCs will provide us more benefits in the future.

Bino Kumari, Papal, Thoubal, Manipur



I and many other farmers in my area, who have become shareholders are benefitting from the FPCs. FPC is arranging for Agri Inputs on time, which is a major challenge here additionally, for farmers in Manipur, this testing of soil before season is a new concept, I am hopeful that it will increase my and other farmer's harvest in my village.

Y. Thawailamba Meitei, Langmeidong, Kakching, Manipur



I did not know the concept of FPC as in Manipur, we have not heard about it previously but now, after being member in Kakching FPC from 9-10 months, I am able to understand the benefits of being part of such group. Good quality agri input is always short in supply in our area and farmers travel long distance to Churachandpur or Imphal to procure these goods. Through the FPC, I have purchased Spray pump, Nano urea and Phosphate on reasonable price in my village. Farmers who are not shareholders also now want to take membership in FPC. I am sure many more farmers will join this FPC in 1-2 years mainly because the FPC is offering better prices on agricultural inputs than the market.

Ranjit Thounaojam, Thounaojam, Langmeidong, Kakching, Manipur

6. Conclusion

The state of Manipur is endowed with rich biodiversity and abundant natural resources. Our experience from Manipur clearly indicates that despite inaccessibility, marginality and heterogeneity, the state has enormous potential to make commendable progress in agriculture and allied sectors. Manipur has not yet experienced the effects of the significant change in the national landscape that will double farmers income.

At this juncture, what is required in Manipur is the multi-pronged strategy which includes the following:

- Improvement in crop productivity
- Improvement in livestock productivity
- Increase in cropping intensity, diversification towards value added crops, improvement in real price received by farmers and shift from farm occupation to non-farm occupation.

Equal attention must be paid to soil health, contract farming and development of wholesale market and rural periodical markets.

Lastly, agricultural administration needs to be strengthened for which the state needs a sound agricultural governance. When market fails, Government should step-in with a new culture of determination to break all speed breakers. Left to the whims of market imperfections, it may not be possible to step up growth in desirable direction.

In this regard, Dvara E-Registry has made a sincere start, and at the moment, the member base, which consists of seven FPOs in the state, is close to 1200. Given that smallholder and marginal farmers have limited access to institutional loans and orientation regarding backward forward linkage and other services, this number will likely increase significantly over the next few months. I Nearly 85–90% of farmers in each of the FPOs that Dvara E-Registry is promoting have expressed interest in obtaining financing for agricultural purposes.

Along with loans for farming, Dvara E-Registry also offers loans for cattle and cattle feed. Due to the reliance on subsistence farming in Manipur, these services are extremely important. Manipur has a lot of potential for livestock husbandry in terms of economic viability. Second, there aren't many opportunities for government employment, thus self-employment is the key to financial security. Agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, and fisheries can offer facilities that are both technically feasible and economically viable given Manipur's position. In all these ways, FPOs can genuinely act as a change agent for Manipur farmers.

A total of five new FPOs has been allotted to Dvara E-Registry in this current year. These are in the districts of East Imphal, West Imphal, and Bishnupur. The coming years will be challenging for its FPOs to sustain. A concrete road map based on local realities; organised manpower will help it to sail through. One of the crucial determinants for the sustainability of its FPOs will be the uninterrupted institutional support that is not limited to the formation of FPO but provides new market linkages, adoption of agricultural best practices, provision of managerial skills to the farmers and institutional financing.

Glimpses of Activities undertaken in Manipur

