

# Bah Stevenson Khongbri: A Story of Economic Empowerment and Livelihood Diversification



*Partnering with Regeneration Meghalaya since 2023, Bah Stevenson achieved 60% nursery income increase, launched a piggery business generating ₹5,000 bimonthly, and created employment for local youths, reducing urban migration.*

Through interventions of the Regeneration Meghalaya project significant strides have been made. The reforestation effort has had created far-reaching economic impacts.

Partnering with Regeneration Meghalaya since 2023, Bah Stevenson Khongbri of East Khasi Hills district, Meghalaya is crafting a story of sustainable development, climate action and social transformations through community-led land restoration initiatives. Mobilizing indigenous communities from his locality, Stevenson has strengthened community ties, enhanced local ownership, and encouraged a culture of collective responsibility toward land restoration.

Economically, the impact has been profound. Bah Stevenson, who happens to be a local nursery man has seen a 60% increase in income after he partnered with the RM project. With this additional income Bah Stevenson started his piggery business which is currently generating a steady revenue selling one pig every two months for 5,000 INR. The initiative has also connected him to vital social protection schemes like PMFME, the Meghalaya Piggery Mission, and CM-Elevate, amplifying his entrepreneurial efforts.

On a social level the additional income encouraged Stevenson to generate employment opportunities. He employed local youth from Kyrdekhlha and nearby villages in Nursery and Piggery operations, thereby reducing migration to urban centres like Shillong for job opportunities.

Exposure to modern technologies and digital tools, groomed Stevenson as a power user of Earthbanc MRV digital tools. He is now using these tools to monitor growth of saplings in his planting sites as well as reporting tree health, maintenance and care requirements, and landscape observations from time to time. Moreover, driving his keen interest in nursery techniques, he successfully mastered a method of propagating healthy *Cryptomeria japonica* saplings from cuttings.



Looking ahead, Stevenson sees opportunities in non-timber forest products (NTFPs) like wintergreen, with potential for beekeeping to boost biodiversity and income. Despite challenges like occasional grazing or fencing repairs, the project's support has laid a foundation for resilience. Through this collaboration, Stevenson's story illustrates how reforestation not only restores the land but also empowers individuals, unites communities, and builds prosperous futures in Meghalaya's rural heartlands



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