

# SUNJIASH SANGMA

AND HIS ROLE IN RURAL LIVESTOCK SERVICE

Improving Animal Health in Dilma Adap Village through Megha-LAMP







In many rural areas, livestock plays an important role in supporting household incomes, often alongside small-scale farming. However, access to even basic services remains limited. There are not always trained individuals nearby who can carry out simple procedures or offer timely support when problems arise. While government departments do offer such services, the shortage of human resources and the remoteness of many villages make it difficult to reach every area.

To address this gap, the Meghalaya Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project (Megha-LAMP), supported by IFAD and implemented by the Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA), has introduced a system of community-based Service Providers (SPs). These individuals are trained to offer practical support across both farm and non-farm sectors to help bridge the service

gap in their own villages. For the communities, it means better access to help when needed. For the Service Providers themselves, it is also a way to earn an income while doing work that is useful and valued.

Today, more than 1,900 SPs have been trained by the project across multiple value chains, including ginger, banana, pineapple, black pepper, cashew, potato, off-season vegetables (OSV), and bay leaf. The initiative also covers non-farm sectors such as piggery, apiculture, weaving, and sericulture. These SPs are playing an important role in delivering essential extension services to farming and non-farm communities across Meghalaya. One of them is Sunjiash Sangma from Dilma Adap Village in North Garo Hills, member of the Tinsimina Integrated Village Cooperative Society Ltd. (IVCS), and Piggery Service Provider.

## STARTING HIS WORK

In 2021, Sunjiash completed a 45-day training organised by MBMA in collaboration with the District Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department, East Garo Hills, at the Bolmoram Technology Resource Centre. Before this, he worked as a farmer and daily wage labourer. He had seen firsthand the difficulties people faced in accessing basic livestock services, especially for vaccinations or procedures such as castration. The shortage of veterinary staff and the large area they were expected to cover meant that such services often remained out of reach. Seeing the gap, Sunjiash decided to step in. What began as a response to a local need also became a new livelihood path for him.

Following his training, Sunjiash began offering services such as castration, vaccination, and treatment of livestock conditions including paraplegia, tetraplegia, and cases involving fetotomy or embryotomy. With no other trained provider in the vicinity, he soon became the go-to person for these services.

To get his work off the ground, he received a ₹50,000 loan from MBMA in the same year. He used the funds to purchase tools, equipment, medicines, vaccines, and other supplies necessary for his work. To help people better understand the importance of animal health services, the IVCS conducts at least two awareness programmes each year, where Sunjiash participates as a resource person.



## CHALLENGES

In the region, basic livestock supplies, such as vaccines and equipment, are not readily available. To keep his services running, Sunjiash often travels long distances to places like Dhupdhara and Bongaigaon for vaccines, and even as far as Guwahati, Assam, to source tools and equipment. Transporting these materials is not always easy. During the rainy season, poor road conditions make travel slow and difficult. There are also challenges when it comes to payments. In urgent situations, some families are unable to pay the full amount immediately. While many repay later, it adds uncertainty to the work. Despite these challenges, today, Sunjiash provides services to 10 villages near his own and 9 villages in Assam, as Dilma Adap is located near the Assam border, which now serves as a link between communities in both Meghalaya and Assam that otherwise have limited access to livestock services.

## SERVICES PROVIDED

Over time, Sunjiash has expanded the range of services he offers to include various types of livestock and even pets. The table below outlines the kinds of support he provides, based on the animal:

SN	Name of the Livestock and pets	Services Provided
1	Cattle	Castration, management of fetotomy or embryotomy cases and treatment of fungal infections.
2	Pigs	Castration, treatment of paraplegia or tetraplegia, vaccination, and Fetotomy or embryotomy cases
3	Goats	Castration, treatment of paraplegia or tetraplegia, vaccination, and management of fetotomy or embryotomy cases
4	Chickens	Castration and vaccination
5	Dogs	Treatment of paraplegia or tetraplegia, management of fungal infections, and vaccination.

## INCOME FROM SERVICES PROVIDED

While Sunjiash began his work with a focus on basic procedures, his services have steadily grown in both scope and demand. The table below provides an overview of the services he offers, along with estimated quantities, rates, and income generated over the course of a year

SN	Name of the Livestock and pets	Service provided	Minimum Quantity (Range) Annually	Minimum Rate (per head) (₹)	Minimum Total Income (₹)
1	Cattle	Castration	10	₹300	₹3000
		Fetotomy or Embryotomy cases	10	₹500	₹5000
		Fungal Infection	20	₹300	₹6000
2	Goat	Paraplegia or Tetraplegia	60	₹200	₹12,000
		Castration	60	₹200	₹12,000
		Vaccination	60	₹200	₹12,000
		Fetotomy or Embryotomy cases	10	₹300	₹3000
3	Chicken (Rooster)	Castration	70	₹100	₹7000
		Vaccination	100	₹20	₹2000
		Castration	50	₹200	₹10,000
4	Pig	Vaccination	160	₹200	₹ 32,000
		Treatment of Paraplegia or	50	₹200	₹10,000

		Tetraplegia			
		Fetotomy or Embryotomy cases	10	₹500	₹5000
5	Dog	Vaccination	160	₹300	₹48,000
		Treatment of Paraplegia or Tetraplegia	20	₹150	₹3000
		Fungal Infection	20	₹100	₹200
		Castration	100	₹200	₹20,000
		TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME ₹190,200			

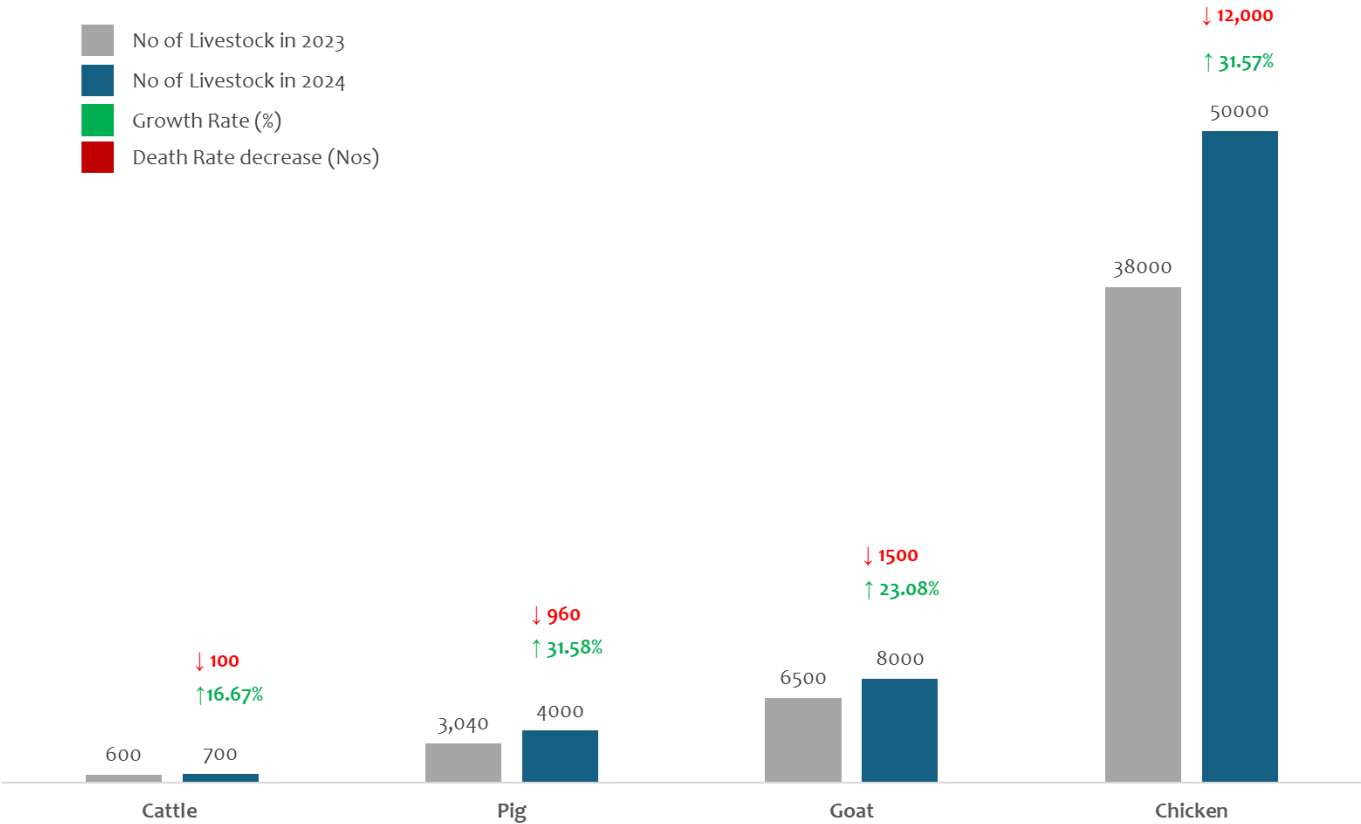
IMPACT

Sunjiash’s efforts have led to visible improvements in his community. Livestock health has steadily improved across the 19 villages he serves, contributing to a decline in animal mortality and enabling households to earn more through livestock-based activities. As the animal population in the area grows, so do the opportunities for rural families to strengthen their livelihoods.

Increase in the growth rate of animals:

Over the past year, the villages served by Sunjiash have seen a marked improvement in livestock health and numbers. The availability of timely services, such as vaccination, treatment, and skilled care, has not only increased awareness around animal health but has also contributed to a steady rise in livestock populations. At the same time, death rates have dropped, indicating better survival outcomes across species.

The graph below provides an overview of these changes, capturing both the growth in livestock numbers and the reduction in mortality between 2023 and 2024.



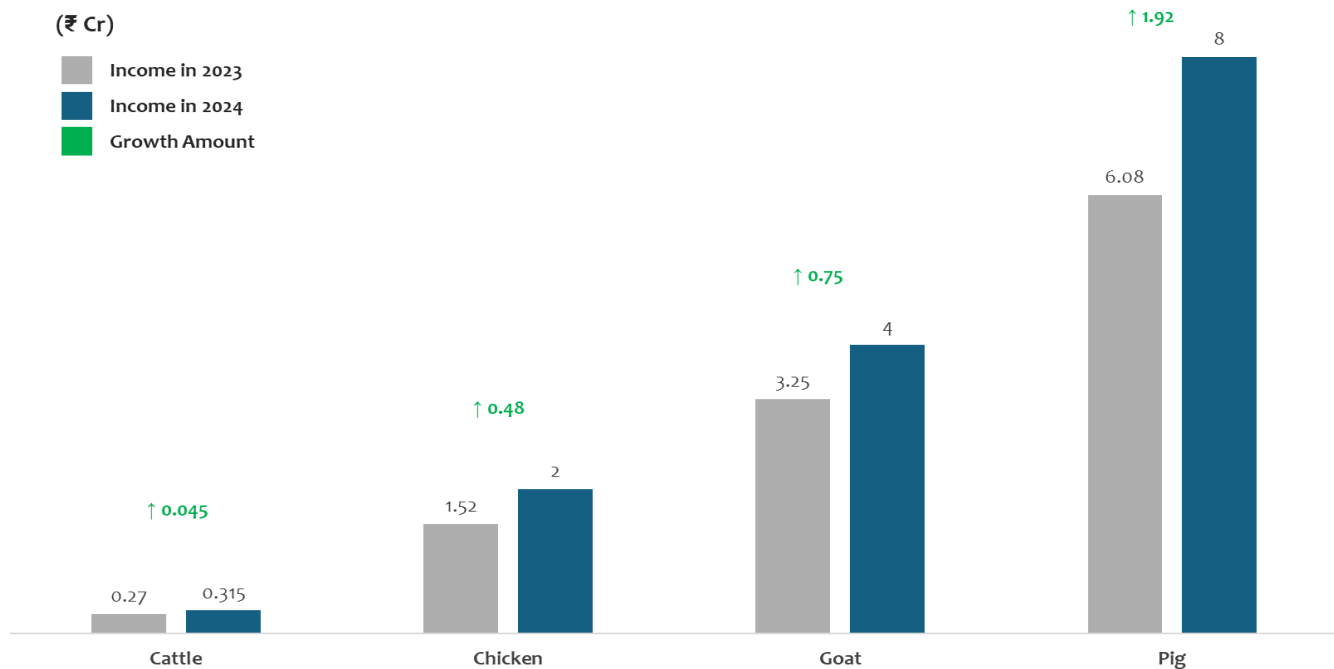
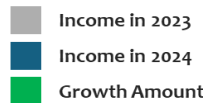




## Growth in Incomes

Improvements in livestock health and a rise in animal population have translated into measurable economic benefits for the communities in the region. With more animals surviving and thriving, families have seen a corresponding rise in income through the sale of livestock and related products. The table below provides a summary of income growth across different livestock types, showing the increase in earnings between 2023 and 2024.

(₹ Cr)



### Here's what the community says about him:

"Initially, we didn't have anyone trained to provide these services. Although the Veterinary Department helped when they could, having Sunjiash has made a big difference. He is always ready to support us." – Baldap Sangma, resident of Tinsmina

"We needed timely vaccinations for our livestock, which we didn't have before. Thanks to Sunjiash, it's now possible." – Akkai Sangma, resident of Upper Palukmari

"Because of his services, there has been an increase in livestock numbers, as the death rate of animals in our area has gone down. Things are different now compared to before. Whenever someone needs help with castration, treatment for paraplegia or tetraplegia, vaccinations, or procedures like fetotomy or embryotomy, they contact him. He always responds without hesitation and provides the services wherever needed. This has helped make our livestock and pets healthier, increased their numbers, and reduced mortality. We are grateful that his hard work, knowledge, and dedication to the community have turned problems into opportunities- bringing positive changes for the people, the village, and even for himself." – Parbin Momin, resident of Dilma Adap