

# Vaccination Camp, Meghalaya



**COVID-19 VACCINATION**  
*diaries*

The vaccine-reluctant and hard-to-reach communities in Meghalaya benefitted from the Project's initiatives



With rapid spread of the COVID-19, the remotely located rural areas became high-risk zones. To ensure that no one gets left behind in the Government of India's nation-wide COVID-19 vaccination program, the Project and local Non-Governmental Organizations (subawardees of the Project) came forward to support the Government.

The MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project in collaboration with the Govt. of India, and supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), ensures equitable vaccination to vulnerable, hard-to-reach, and marginalized communities. The State Government expended its social welfare resources, collaborated with the Project, and delegated the awareness programs and vaccine dispensation activities to local change agents such as community leaders, local NGOs, ANM workers, and others.

In Meghalaya, the Project has engaged local NGOs like Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN) to build vaccine confidence amongst priority groups. They worked closely with their team of community mobilizers to address micro-barriers, positively influence behaviors, and encourage communities to complete their COVID-19 vaccination.



Most people had fears and doubts about the side effects of the vaccine. Pregnant and lactating women were difficult to convince and many linked the vaccine to infertility, irregular menstruation, and child delivery complications. Parents were reluctant to send their school-going children to vaccination camps as they thought the side effects would adversely affect their future. The Project fought through these hurdles with consistent counseling and vaccine awareness sessions in schools, community halls, and healthcare centers to debunk the myths and stop the spread of fake news among the population.



Large parts of the state are difficult to reach and required ASHAs and health workers to travel on foot for over a day. Even when they managed to battle the difficult terrains, the villagers often refused them entry into their homes and were indifferent to their repeated warnings. Supported by the strong leadership of the State Government, the Project representatives along with their local sub-awardees never took no for an answer and continued to make door-to-door visits to convince every last person to go and get vaccinated at their nearest vaccination camp.





With months of untiring visits, counseling, and mass distribution of Information Education and communication (IEC) materials, the Govt. of India and local frontline workers aided by the Project ensured that Meghalaya's hills and valleys achieved maximum vaccination coverage.



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