



**GOVERNANCE
AWARDS
2019
12-12-2019**

**EXCELLENT CONTRIBUTION
AWARD**

Ms. Shashanka Ala, IAS

(Deputy Commissioner, Lawngtlai, Mizoram)

For tackling malnutrition by making every school, Anganwadi and childcare centre
In Lawngtlai self-sufficient in local varieties of fruits and vegetables

A 2014-batch AGMUT cadre IAS officer, Shashanka Ala holds a B.Tech degree in electrical engineering from IIT Madras. Lawngtlai, where she is posted as Deputy Commissioner, is one of the remotest, most backward and disaster-prone districts of Mizoram. From Aizawl it takes approximately 10 hours to reach Lawngtlai (a distance of 296 km) due to bad roads and landslides. Most fruits and vegetables that come by trucks from Silchar in Assam, a further 180 km north of Aizawl, take two days to arrive and are unfit for consumption. Consequently, the district is home to the highest percentage of stunted (35.3 percent), severely wasted (5.9 percent) and underweight (21.3 percent) children under the age of five in Mizoram. Working on the idea of growing local varieties of fruits and vegetables in schools and Anganwadis, she designed a unique solution called 'Kan Sikul, Kan Huan' (My School, My Farm) to address malnutrition in her district. Under this scheme, every school and Anganwadi built a small kitchen and garden within its premises. These schools and Anganwadis source their fruit and vegetable seeds and compost from the district administration. They can now cook their mid-day meals using the food they grow instead of waiting for trucks from Silchar or Aizawl. The project encourages children to participate in the process of growing healthy food, and recognise environmental stewardship and dignity of labour.

The first phase covered 213 schools and Anganwadis. The second phase will cover 500 schools and Anganwadis. The third will focus on rearing livestock and poultry. By March 2020, every school, Anganwadi and childcare centre in Lawngtlai is expected to become self-sufficient in growing local varieties of fruits and vegetables. Vice-President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu has recommended this model's replication across the country.



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