



**Directorate of Tourism,
Government of Meghalaya**

**Scheme for Community led
Tourism Infrastructure**

1 Introduction to Community led tourism infrastructure development Scheme

Meghalaya's stunning landscapes, from its pristine hills to lush forests and captivating waterfalls, have rightfully earned widespread acclaim, attracting travellers from all corners of the country. Beyond the sheer beauty of its natural scenery, Meghalaya is striving to set a benchmark in sustainable and responsible tourism practices. This involves a strategic approach to diversifying destinations, creating new attractions, and catering to a variety of interests while safeguarding its environment and rich cultural heritage.

Recognizing the state's tourism potential, various initiatives have been undertaken to elevate the sector to new heights. It's understood that the involvement of local communities is crucial alongside governmental efforts. Thus, the Directorate of Tourism is launching a forward-thinking scheme that invites villagers, community members, village administrative bodies, and site management bodies registered with Government of Meghalaya to collaborate as partners in the development of their respective regions into thriving tourism destinations.

Under this scheme, communities are empowered to identify development needs aimed at enhancing existing tourism infrastructure and spearheading the development of necessary facilities in their areas. The Government will extend financial assistance of up to INR 10 lakhs to support infrastructure development works.

This initiative not only aims to enrich the tourist experience by ensuring quality infrastructure but also fosters active participation from local communities in the planning and development process. Applicants under this scheme will serve as an extension of the Government, playing a pivotal role in identifying site-specific infrastructure gaps and formulating and implementing plans to address them.

2 Rationale of Scheme

Meghalaya stands as one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in the country, welcoming approximately 1.2 million visitors annually, with projections indicating a rise to 1.5 million by 2025. Recognizing the pivotal role of the travel and tourism sector as a cornerstone of the state's economy, it is imperative to pursue its development in a comprehensive manner.

In this pursuit, grassroots organizations like cooperative societies and village-level enterprises emerge as key players. Drawing inspiration from the successful cooperative movement within the state, which not only fostered inclusive growth but also institutionalized government-led reforms, their involvement becomes increasingly vital.

With over 47 registered cooperative societies under the Meghalaya Rural Tourism Cooperative Federation Ltd. and numerous tourism societies operating under district administrations, these grassroots entities are actively contributing to unlocking the tourism potential of Meghalaya. They are instrumental in revitalizing tourism sites, managing activities, promoting destinations, and laying a solid groundwork for delivering exceptional experiences to visitors.

This scheme capitalizes on the robust network of enterprises by empowering them to facilitate the transformation of all tourism destinations across the state. It aims to bolster the infrastructure, encompassing clean public conveniences, parking facilities, designated holding areas, ticketing counters, information centres, and market zones,

to ensure a seamless and enriching experience for tourists.

3 Objectives of the scheme

- I. Facilitate participatory development driven by insights from grassroots enterprises.
- II. Address current infrastructure deficiencies to enhance the overall tourist experience.
- III. Foster a convenient and safe environment in Meghalaya for all tourists.

4 Scope of Scheme

The primary objective of this scheme is to enhance infrastructure at tourist sites and locations. Through this initiative, the government intends to undertake infrastructure projects related to tourism activities in various tourist regions and provide the requisite funding for such developments. Under this scheme, the Department of Tourism, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, will oversee the implementation of essential tourism-related infrastructure projects as outlined in this document. These projects aim to provide necessary amenities at tourist sites and villages, thereby unlocking their tourism potential. The financial assistance provided under this scheme will be capped at a maximum amount of INR 10 Lakhs, disbursed according to predefined milestones.

5 Scheme Guidelines

5.1 Beneficiaries under the scheme

The intended beneficiaries of the scheme are the registered cooperatives and societies.

5.2 Scheme components

The scheme is aimed at improving or developing enabling infrastructures in regions that have considerable tourism potential measured by way of current tourist footfalls. The admissible components for development under the scheme include:

- Construction of toilets and public conveniences
- Installation of water ATMs
- Establishment of holding areas and ticketing facilities
- Development of hiking trails, viewpoints, and resting decks
- Establishment of experiential centers, museums, and information centers
- Provision of equipment for experiential products such as bicycles and kayaks
- Any additional components as specified by the Directorate of Tourism through official notification.