They are the poverty-alleviation incentive Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), the rural housing scheme Indus Awas Yojana (IAY) and the guaranteed rural-employment program the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS). The state-sponsored incentives are chiefly concerned with finance-mobilization and rural resource management to act as supplements to the centrally-sponsored schemes. Yet, for the rural poor who contribute to the commercial town’s agriculture production, the horizon remains bleak.

The silent breadworkers

Dimapur’s rural poor comprise of largely daily wage-earners, unskilled laborers and small-time farmers. An informal estimate (no official data is available) states 30 percent of the rural working-class population are engaged in agriculture, forestry or fishing. According to the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) and the State Poverty Alleviation Department, these are the people who depend on agriculture for their livelihood.

In such a scenario, the daily wage-earners and the unskilled laborers are the most vulnerable. The NSSO says that the daily wage-earners have been the worst affected. The average daily wage for a laborer has dropped from Rs. 500 to Rs. 350. The unskilled laborers have been hit even harder. They have been forced to work for less than half the amount they used to earn.

The effects of the lockdown are visible not only in the rural areas but also in the urban ones. The lockdown has led to a significant decrease in the demand for agricultural products, leading to a drop in prices. The lockdown has also affected the transportation of goods, leading to a shortage of essential commodities.

In addition, the lockdown has also affected the tourism industry, leading to a decline in the number of tourists. The lockdown has also affected the manufacturing sector, leading to a decrease in the production of goods.

The lockdown has also affected the education sector, leading to the closure of schools and colleges. The lockdown has also affected the health sector, leading to a rise in the number of cases of various diseases.

In conclusion, the lockdown has had a significant impact on the rural poor, leading to a decrease in their income and a rise in their expenses. The lockdown has also affected other sectors, leading to a decline in the overall economy.