



Darjeeling Ladenla Road Prerna

Annual Report 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008

Vision Statement

Darjeeling Ladenla Road Prerna believes in a world that sees the need to live as one family where the environment is preserved and protected, where conscious efforts are made to remove unjust structures while striving to build a just and humane society.

Mission statement

Our mission is to build sustainable human communities in the Darjeeling hills and the adjoining areas by promoting peoples participation, gender equality and living in harmony with the environment.

Goals

1. Promote, facilitate and strengthen people's organizations.
2. Promote organic agriculture and appropriate technology.
3. Undertake Development and Environment Education with educational institutions and community based organizations.
4. Provide support to other organisations.
5. Undertake research, development and dissemination on developmental issues pertinent to the Darjeeling Hills.

1. Community Development of Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties

Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties are part of the erstwhile Lebong and Mineral Tea Estate which closed down between 1050s and 60s. DLR Prerna's intervention started in 1996 and the community today is organized with 450 family members. The collective is registered under the West Bengal Societies Act 1961 as "Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikash Sanstha" (SVS) S/1L/49564 of 2007 – 2008 dated 9th January 2008. The SVS was Certified Organic under international standards in 2001 and Fairtrade Labeled in 2003. **It is the first Certified Organic and Fairtrade small farmers collective in the Darjeeling Hills.**

The learning experience of Harsing Dabaipani and Yangkhoo is being taken to other project and partner areas.

Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikash Sanstha activities continued in the year 2007 - 2008:

a. Small farmers organic green leaf being sold to TPI and through TPI in the International Market as well as locally in Products Himalaya as **small farmers organic fairtrade tea** under brand name “**Mineral Spring**”. 8231 kg of Mineral Spring Tea was made, 1718 kg more than the previous year. .

b. Control Union Organic Certification inspection and the **producer organic certificate renewed**

c. Development of Internal Control Systems and Internal Regulation Systems for Organic Farming.

d. First ever 100% internal inspections conducted by two teams of SVS representatives supported by Navin Tamang and Sailesh Sharma(TPI).

7th March 2008 : Meeting between TPI & MSSVS, new terms of agreement and increase in green tea leaf price from Rs. 29/- per kg to Rs. 33/- per kg. Within the increased price per kg Re. 1/- per kilo is exclusively increased by TPI for the formalization of ICS.

e. Training

- Internal Control and Regulations Systems(ICS and IRS) training of trainers. The ICS and IRS training had trainees from 3 TPI small farmers collective partners besides SVS. The TOT was conducted in Aap Botay homestays.

- Appreciative participatory planning and action training of trainers for hamlet representatives

- Support for participatory planning and development of plans

f. **Sanjukta Nari Sangathan(SNS), women’s wing of SVS activities continued in the year 2006 - 2007:**

Responses to 2007 challenges

a. Training of trainers and undertaking hamlet level Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action.

Challenges:

a. Further decentralization of the collective

b. Gender equity

c. Long term vision shared by all the members

d. Further enhancement of organic farming among all members

e. Training of the new board members under the West Bengal Societies Act requirements

f. Tea Board registration and registration under the Darjeeling Tea Certified Trade Mark

2. **Community Development of Mamring – Toryok**

3. **Community Development of Chimney – Deorali**

DLR Prerna and Anugyalaya DDSSS will be working in partnership in Mamring-Sittong and Chimney-Deorali.

4. Permaculture Design Course

Rico Zook, Certified Permaculture Trainer conducted a **14 days certified Permaculture Design Course 3rd to 18th October 2007** in Aapbotay, Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties 12 students; International, National, SVS members, Anugyalaya, DLR Prerna participated in it.

Aapbotay is strategically chosen for its bio-diversity richness, farming intensity and the potential for eco-tourism. The lodging for the students were home-stays and the food cooked by the self-help groups.

The course was followed by physical intervention of a bamboo house and compost toilet at Aapbotay as an outcome of the course.

An Introduction to Permaculture – 4 days course was facilitated by Rico and DLR Prerna team for Subarna Small Farmers, tea garden workers from 5 TPI gardens and ATREE Field Workers(3) at Aap Botay. This was the first attempt between Rico and DLR Prerna of co-facilitation and also to introduce Permaculture to small farmers and tea workers.

Responses to 2007 challenges

a. A short term training, 'Introduction to Permaculture' with small farmers and tea workers was facilitated by Rico and DLR Prerna in Aapbotay.

Challenges:

- a. A need for a demo-area
- b. Contextualise Permaculture to small farmers and tea workers.

5. Organic Inspections

Nagrifarm Tea Garden and Factory, Dhajai Tea garden and Factory, Bannockburn Tea Garden – Tea - Darjeeling
 Aambootia Homestead; Mullootar Homestead – Ginger – Darjeeling
 Ganjes Jute - Madusuudan Kathi Co-operative , Ganjes Jute - SEVA Promoting NGO – Jute - Howrah, West Bengal,
 Ecofarm India Pvt. Ltd, Cotton - Kesinga, Orrisa,
 Department of Agri and Cane Dev Extension Programme – Vegetables - Jharkhund,
 COSPE-CTRC Project(Orrisa), Federation of Tibetan Co-operative India - Coarse Crops and Grains Tibetan Settlement Chandragri - Orissa

Challenges:

- a. Short notice commitments with strong deadlines

6. Support to Other Organisations

Anugyalaya Darjeeling DSSS

Fr. Valentine Rai took over the Directorship of Anugyalaya from 1st December 2006. DLR Prerna has been given a **Chief Consultant** status by the management of Anugyalaya DDSSS. Monthly meetings of Anugyalaya are being attended as a support mechanism. Ashesh Rai is still the principal finance person but he is training and handing over his role to Ms. Divya Gurung.

Under the IDEA project, a fund to integrate development interventions, DLR Prerna is part of the Core Development Cell with 8 other church based development NGOS.

Responses to 2007 challenges

a. Reduction of direct interventions time and increasing technical support as well as discussing partnership possibilities. DLR Prerna is part of the Core Development Cell and consortium of 8 other church based developmental NGOs.

Challenges:

a. Phase over from an implementer to a partner

Capacity Building support

1. Capacity building of Joint Body Representatives of Tea Promoters (India) gardens and Small farmers collectives' partners.

Goal: Develop capacity and skills for participatory planning and action of Joint Body Representatives and Small Farmers Representatives of the TPI Group of Tea Gardens.

Seeyok, Selimbong, Singell, Puttharjhora, Samabeong, Snow View, Banaspaty Tea Gardens; Puttong Tea Workers Welfare Committee, Mineral Spring Sanjukta Viksah Sanstha, Subarna Small Farmers Tea Society, Teesta Tea Co-operative representatives were the participants of the workshop.

Workshops on:

1. Social Analysis, Participatory Leadership and Effective Communication- Selimbong Tea Garden, 29th to 31st October 2007 - 39 participants

Specific Objectives:

- i. Enhance effective communication
- ii. Introduce social analysis and tools for social analysis
- iii. Enhance participatory leadership concept and skills

2. Peer Educators for HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health – Seeyok Tea Garden, 16th to the 19th November 2007 – 40 participants - facilitated by Anugyalaya DDSSS – www.anugyalayadarjeeling.org and special inputs by Shanker Foundation Darjeeling Network of Positive People – <http://shankerfoundation.blogspot.com>

Specific Objectives:

- i. Impart correct information on HIV/AIDS, STI and Reproductive Health
- ii. Introduce concept of peer education
- iii. Enhance skills for peer education

3. Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action – 42 participants - Puttharjhora Tea Garden, 16th to 21st December 2007

Specific Objectives:

- i. Introduce concept for participatory planning
- ii. Introduce tools for participatory planning
- iii. Enhance skills for participatory planning

FOLLOW-UP

Specific Objectives:

- i. Sensitise JB representatives and Executives on participatory planning and its tools
- ii. Support trained JB representatives to facilitate community participatory planning in each garden

23rd December 2007, TPI Executives and DLR Prerna met at Singel for a sensitization process and to discuss the various implications of the Capacity Enhancement Process.

Garden follow-up:

Singell - 15th January 2008
 Seeyok – 16th January 2008
 Selimbong – 17th January 2008
 Samabeong -18th January 2008
 Puttharjhora -19th January 2008

2. NRM project of ABCD, West Bengal

Partnered with Dr. Joachim Schmerbeck, consultant to CARITAS Germany, Dr. Haridas NRM Head of Department CARITAS India and 8 partners of ABCD to evolve and NRM concept note. ABCD is a network of 8 Diocesan Social Service Societies of West Bengal including Anugyalaya.

Co-facilitated two workshops

The **1st NRM workshop** was held from April 25-28 2007 in Kolkata. The workshop focussed on general concepts of NRM, with key decision makers of partner organisations, international partner agencies, government officials and also elected representatives. A general road-map was developed and capacity building needs were identified.

The **2nd NRM workshop**, held from June 18-22 2007 in Aap Botay, The workshop was focussed on developing basic conceptual and field skills for NRM point persons from the partner organisations. It was a very hands-on workshop where theory was tested against field experiences. An organisational and regional plan was developed which looks at further enhancing the capacities of partner organisations, identifying pilot areas of work and undertaking details of research of the area identified.

Both the workshops were facilitated by Dr. Joachim Schmerbeck, consultant to CARITAS Germany, Dr. Haridas NRM Head of Department CARITAS India and DLR Prerna.

3. Organisational development of Shanker Foundation Darjeeling Network of Positive People

Challenges:

- a. Understand tea garden mentality and evolve specific tea garden capacity enhancement modules.
- b. Define roles of DLR Prerna according to strengths of organisation while working with diverse socio-ecological systems.

7. Development and Environment Education

- a. Pitzer College - Darjeeling Issues Profile and Mineral Spring exposure visit.
- b. Where there be Dragons - Darjeeling Issues Profile
- c. Morning Star College, Barrackpore - 3 days social analysis
- d. World Environment Day 2007 in association with PROD, ATREE, Darjeeling Police and Inner Wheel Club, Darjeeling – 5th to 8th June 2008 at Hayden Hall.

The event was titled Waste Art and Mixed Media Show 2007 and incorporated Waste to Art exhibits as well as Art Pieces of educational institutions representatives and artists of Darjeeling Hills. It had technical walls on waste management and also a Products Himalaya fairtrade shop selling eco-friendly small farmer products. Every evening there was a discussion led by experts on specific issues. The discussions were open to all. DLR Prerna's input was on waste management and also a Walk to the Chute, an exposure visit to the waste dumping area of Darjeeling.

Responses to 2007 challenges

- a. We undertook DEE in a big way with the Waste Art Show for World Environment Day
- b. Undertook specific DEE interventions with educational institutions

Challenges:

- a. Sustained focused intervention

8. The Critical Ecosystems Project Fund



The project has been granted for 3 years from 1st April 2008. Time was spent in getting permission from the Forest Department, Government of India, building rapport with community, primary and secondary data research for the project.

Title:

Strengthen civil societies for improved resource management for conservation

Long term Goal

Improved status of key floral and faunal species and their habitat in Singhalila National Park through conservation friendly sustainable livelihood practices

Project Purpose/ Short Term Impact

The capacity of communities in the five villages of the buffer zone of Singhalila National Park enhanced to practice sustainable livelihoods and environmentally friendly agriculture that contribute to the conservation of the national park.

Outputs

1. Community based organizations strengthened and mobilized to promote conservation friendly sustainable livelihoods and resource use practices.
2. Communities in 5 villages adopt environmental friendly agriculture practices to enhance agro-biodiversity that supports forest cover.
3. A system of sharing knowledge and skills about conservation friendly livelihood practices among communities in the project site established.

5 community sites

Samanden Forest Village, Dara Gaon Forest Village, Bich Gaon Forest Village, Gurdung Forest Village, Namla Forest Village

Challenges:

- a. Strengthen capacity to work with forest villagers and department.
- b. Difficult terrain of project site – high altitude and lack of communication infrastructure

9. Relief and rehabilitation

Incessant rain in the first week of September 2007 led to major landslides all over the Darjeeling Hills on the 7th September. Landslides hit Harsing Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties too and 3 houses were washed away leaving 35 in danger.

With the initiative of Loreto School Alumini, the play “Annie” was screened by the Loreto Convent School students as a fund raising event. Rs. 85 000:00 was collected in the event. This was matched with CARITAS India Rs. 7 25 000:00 relief funds and 36

houses were built all over the Darjeeling Hills. In Mineral Spring 3 houses were constructed and food relief was provided to all the affected families for a week.

10. Project Proposal

a. A five year concept note with a 2 year work plan with JB and Small Farmers representatives has been submitted to TPI

11. Future Action Plan

a. Continuation of existing programmes

b. Marketing of Green Vegetables in partnership with ATREE and Anugyalaya DDSSS under the brand name Products Himalaya

c. Strengthening community development programmes on organics, equity and governance

d. Strengthen eco-tourism concept for SVS

e. DEE with focus on Solid Waste Management

f. Support to Organisations especially Anugyalaya and Shanker Foundation Darjeeling Network of Positive People, Edith Wilkins Street Children Foundation

DLR Prerna and members of SVS would like to place on record sincere gratitude to Loreto School Alumini, Loreto Convent and all who made the fund raising “Annie” a success. The event bridged the gap between rural and urban Darjeeling.

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