

Project Title: Piloting Community Solid Waste Management In Darjeeling Municipality

Reporting Period: August 2010 to October 2011 which was extended on request for an additional three months. (August 2010 to January 2012)

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Brief Project Description:

Darjeeling is the only hill district in the state of West Bengal thus bringing unique developmental challenges of regional marginalization. The hills are endowed with rich natural resources and is part of the Eastern Himalayas which is a designated world bio-diversity hotspot. It is famous for its tea, timber and tourism.

In such a scenic backdrop, the Darjeeling Hills is yet to wake up to the challenges of changing waste types as well as increasing quantum of waste. In the Darjeeling Municipality, at the official dumping site, the Dumping Chute, 30 to 45 metric tones of solid waste is dumped everyday depending on whether it is the tourist season or not. The solid waste management adopted is partial segregation, recycling and street collection and then rolling it down the Dumping Chute or any close-by water way. This has created visible and invisible hazards of smell, leaching, release of toxic gases on burning by the waste openly dumped. One can visibly see the increase in number of stray dogs and flies in the town.



Dumping Chute



Dumping Chute – Burning

In this scenario, DLR Prerna, the proponent proposes to pilot a community solid waste management initiative based on individual responsibility, primary segregation, family or community composting, community collection and linkage for further treatment and recycling. This will be done through community mobilization processes, awareness and capacity enhancement programmes.

The proponent will work with three major stakeholders from Victoria Falls; a prominent but degenerating water way, who are predominantly middle class; Dumping Chute area predominantly Municipality Conservancy Workers and the vegetable market a source for steady bio-degradable waste. The Victoria Falls community will also be linked with the Chute Community for composting, and their informal connections with the recycling industry in the plains. They will also be facilitated for vegetable gardening and selling compost as a means of livelihoods. The Vegetable Market Association and the Dumping Chute community will be linked to access the steady supply of vegetable waste which till date is just being dumped to be composted and sold. The three communities are also in close proximity geographically enabling easy transport. The communities will also be linked with the existing Municipality system of waste management.



Victoria Falls

The processes and outcomes will be documented and mass media used to advocate to the larger Darjeeling community for attitudinal and behavioural change towards solid waste management from a blame game, roll it down the hill to a responsible community.

Project Objectives

1. Awareness campaign with the communities of the lower Victoria Waterfalls watershed on solid waste management.
2. Solid waste management plan and implementation of the communities around the Victoria Waterfalls on solid waste management.

3. Promote composting, of different types, of bio-degradable waste and vegetable gardening within communities of Victoria Falls and Chute as a means of waste management as well as a livelihood option.

Activities Undertaken and outcomes:

- The project proposal was shared with the Darjeeling Municipality and their support garnered. At this time, the Darjeeling Municipality was being run by an Administrator(Sub-Divisional Officer, Darjeeling Sadar) as elections had not been undertaken.
- *Samaj*, community based organizations leaders inception meeting were conducted at a House of a community member of Victoria Falls. The Name of the Participating Samaj (CBOs) in the inception meeting are Nava Jagriti Pariwar, Kopila Sangha, Kalyan Samity and Ranihitti Samity. 12 Leaders from these CBOs participated in the inception meeting. At the inception meeting the project proposal were further discussed with the leaders along with a sensitization on solid waste management. The outcome of the meetings were community plans to take the survey and awareness campaign forward in their respective communities.
- Three community animators(part-time) were selected by the *samaj* who would work in the project on a part time basis. They were appointed and a workshop was facilitated. The workshop looked into solid waste management, action research. The workshop outcome was a survey schedule and animators capacity enhanced to take the survey at the community level.
- Project Site family survey completed. The survey looked into people's knowledge, attitude, behavior and practice with regard to solid waste management which can be summarized as most have information about ill effects of existing practice of rolling it down the hill, my immediate surrounding needs to be clean, burning and blaming others; very little knowledge on solid waste management.
- A community presentation model was designed as a power point; photographs for visual support to the presentation and a hand out on vermi-composting.
- A second workshop was facilitated looking at waste management at an indepth level and discussing issues of effective communication with the community animators. Two documentaries 'The story of stuff and story of Bottled Water – Annie Leonard was also viewed and discussed. This workshop looked into building the information, knowledge and skills of the animators to take the awareness forward.
- Community awareness programmes were conducted with the presentation developed. 10 awareness programmes were conducted in clusters of 10 to 15 neighbourhood families. The awareness was taken forward by the community animators and core staff of DLR Prerna. The awareness programmes were followed-up by the community animators at an individual level out of which 26 started home composting. This was undertaken as the behavioural change needed hand-holding to reach the level needed to make a difference in the area of Victoria Falls.



Home Composting Unit

- A Faith Based Organisation, Brahma Kumari who have their meditation centre in the upper reaches of Vitoria Falls organized two workshops with DLR Prerna being the chief resource team presenting on solid waste management.
- With the change of Administrator in the Darjeeling Municipality the linkage was further followed-up as the new Administrator, Mr. Tamal Das, SDO was very proactive on the issue. We participated in plan meetings with regard to solid waste management and submitted a lead note for solid waste management for the Darjeeling Municipality.
- The Administrator, Mr. Tamal Das, SDO, Darjeeling, Medical Officer and Engineer Darjeeling Municipality was taken on a guided tour of Victoria Falls and Dumping Chute. Prior to the visit the communities were prepared to meet the Darjeeling Municipality team and thus the community placed their needs with the team. This was the first time that a team of this stature had visited the locality.



Municipality visit to the Chute and Victoria Falls

- As part of the team initiatives HEAP has been facilitated a door to door collection of solid waste in the Victoria Falls area where each household pays Rs. 50 for collection from 15th November 2011. HEAP is a non-governmental agency who provide a service of door to door waste collection.
- As part of the team initiatives DLR Prerna lobbied: I Love Darjeeling, a faith based social action group, to include Victoria Falls for a clean-up drive. I Love Darjeeling, CBOs of Victoria Falls, Darjeeling Municipality, Goodwill Animal Shelter and DLR Prerna undertook a cleaning programme of the Victoria Falls. Animal Shelter provided a service of free rabies vaccination for street dogs and on a nominal fee for community members on 3rd December 2011. On the same date at Chowrastha, main town square of

Darjeeling, I Love Darjeeling, Darjeeling Municipality and DLR Prerna undertook awareness programmes through speeches, plays, music and information kiosks on waste management.

- With the election of the Darjeeling Municipality on 11th December 2011 and an elected board taking over the Municipality after 3 years of no election. We lobbied with the Chairman and thus prepared a concept note for the Board. A working relationship was created with a study group meeting every Thursday.
- We undertook a solid waste management presentation to the all the councilors of the Darjeeling Municipality and decided that DLR Prerna would undertake ward wise awareness programmes on solid waste management. Till date we have undertaken awareness with ward number 23.

Unintended Activities

- A solid waste management technical presentation was undertaken on request of the Kurseong Municipality to community representatives as part of their awareness programme. Kurseong is one of the hill subdivision headquarters in the Darjeeling Hills.
- Representatives of Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikas Sanstha (small farmers collective) and Selimbong Tea Estate participated in the solid waste management workshop conducted for community animators.
- Waste management campaign with Loreto Convent School with classes 8 to 12 including walk to the chute.



Walk to the Chute

- Participated in the Zero Waste Himalaya Workshop at Gangtok and DLR Prerna presenting Solid Waste Management in the Darjeeling Hills and taking the lead on the discussion on composting. 25th and 26th May 2011. <http://chimalaya.org/2011/05/25/groups-meet-for-2011-zero-waste-himalaya-regional-workshop/>
- Presented an awareness paper to community leaders in Kalimpong, Darjeeling on Solid waste management in the Darjeeling –Sikkim Himalaya – Hazards and Critical Environmental Issues, 23 November 2011. <http://savethehills.blogspot.in/search?updated-max=2011-12-27T08:29:00%2B05:30&max-results=10>

Challenges:

- Ensuring that the pilot expands to the entire Municipality and that the issue is considered an important issue by the Darjeeling Municipality in the myriad issues Darjeeling town presents.
- With HEAP starting door to door collection ensuring that the communities in the of Victoria Falls continue with home composting as HEAP still dumps the waste in the dumping chute.

Financial Statement for the period from July 2011 to January 2012 for the Grant reference Number ESG-II/2010/3

A. Opening Balance	Rs. 43,662.00
B. Fund Received from EEJP during this period	<u>Rs. 1,18,800.00</u>
C. Less: Fund expended during this period	
Approved Budget Head 1 (Human Resources)	
i. Personnel	Rs. 70,000.00
Approved Budget Head 2 (Activities)	
i. Survey to understand the existing waste Management system in the project site.	Rs. 4,220.00
ii. Development of IEC Materials for Awareness and treatment of solid waste	Rs. 38,107.00
iii. Awareness on need for solid waste Management	Rs. 19,600.00
iv. Community Waste Management Plan	Rs. 10,000.00
v. Capacity Enhancement for treatment -Compost and vegetable gardening	Rs. 14,000.00
vi. Travel	Rs. 8,000.00
vii. Communication including reports	Rs. 18,000.00
Approved Budget Head 3(Administrative Overheads)	
i. <u>General Administration</u>	<u>Rs. 10,335.00</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>Rs. 1,92,262.00</u>
D. Closing Balance(A+B-C)	(-)Rs. <u>29,800.00</u>

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