



Darjeeling Ladenla Road Prerna

Annual Report 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012

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 organisations.
2. Promote organic agriculture and appropriate technology
3. Undertake Development and Environment Education with educational institutions and community based organisations.
4. Provide support to other organisations.
5. Undertake research, development and dissemination on developmental issues pertinent to the Darjeeling hills.

1. Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikash Sanstha(MSSVS) - Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties

“Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikash Sanstha” (MSSVS) the first Certified Organic and Fairtrade small farmers collective in the Darjeeling Hills, facilitated by DLR Prerna, continued its activities in the year 2011-2012 with the sale of green leaf tea to Selimbong Tea Garden, Tea Promoters India Pvt. Ltd. With the Fairtrade Premium, MSSVS undertook developmental programmes. The Organic and Fairtrade Certificates have been renewed for the financial year based on external audits. MSSVS undertook its own 100% internal inspection for organic farming with inspectors trained by DLR Prerna in the previous year.

DLR Prerna supported MSSVS:

- a. by conducting a mock audit prior to the Fairtrade Audit

b. documentation and communication for Fairtrade Audit
Anugyalaya DDSSS has initiated a Community managed disaster risk reduction project with MSSVS.

2. **‘Community-based mitigation of human-wildlife conflict around the Singalila National Park, India’** – 15 months pilot support from Rufford Small Grants Foundation, UK.



Brief Project Description:

Human wildlife conflict (HWC), a key stake, for communities in the fringes of Singalila National Park, India will be studied for possible community-based solutions and advocacy. HWC in mountain regions do not get its due attention as mainstream discourse is mega-fauna focused. It will ultimately reduce forest fragmentation and increase connectivity in the critical transboundary ‘Kangchenjunga Singhalila Complex’.

Activities undertaken:

- a. A HWC map was generated with extensive data of animal intrusion, crop damage and its impact on the lives of the community of Samanden FV. This data generated and the subsequent analysis shows significant HWC with 9 small animals inflicting damage to crops and livestock in the project period, wild boars topped the list. HWC impacts negatively forest fringe communities who are already marginalised. HWC discourse tends to be mega-fauna of the plains excluding HWC of the mountains. With Darjeeling Hills coming under the Eastern Himalayas, bio-diversity hotspot, has a large concentration of protected areas with the conservation interventions exclusive of communities. Thus, this data brings into light, mountain HWC as a core conservation issue.
- b. Possible HWC impact reducing interventions were studied and existing practices were strengthened. Existing bamboo fences were strengthened with moats for boars. Animal traps were also made as a deterrent to monkeys as once they fall into the trap and struggle to get out, the entire troop of monkeys stop coming that way for a long time. To strengthen the fence, bio-fence with multiple utility with different species was discussed and initiated. Tea was added to the fence with livelihood possibilities. Crops were diversified as well as medicinal plants as alternate options were discussed. Medicinal plant especially *swertia* was given approval and support promised by the Forest Department.

3. Piloting Community Solid Waste Management In Darjeeling Municipality – 15 months project supported by Environmental Equity and Justice Partnership, New Delhi



Activities undertaken:

- a. Community awareness was continued in this financial year 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.
- b. 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.
- c. With the change of Administrator in the Darjeeling Municipality the linkage was further followed-up with DLR Prerna participating in plan meetings with regard to solid waste management. We submitted a lead note for solid waste management for the Darjeeling Municipality. The Administrator, Darjeeling, Medical Officer and Engineer Darjeeling Municipality were taken on a guided tour of Victoria Falls and Dumping Chute. This was the first time that a team of this stature had visited the locality.
- d. 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 on 3rd December 2011 with local CBOs, Darjeeling Municipality. Goodwill Animal Shelter also participated with anti-rabies vaccination camp. 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.
- e. With the election of the Darjeeling Municipality on 11th December and an elected board taking over the Municipality a working relationship was created with a study group meeting every Thursday. We undertook a solid waste management presentation to the all the elected 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 who have undertaken door to door collection.
- f. The project ended in January 2012 and the report submitted to EEJP.

Challenges:

- a. 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.
- b. With HEAP starting door to door collection ensuring that the communities in of Victoria Falls continue with home composting.

4. Electronic Waste (e-waste) Campaign – I Phase

Supported by Toxics Link, New Delhi and Nokia India



Solid waste including electronic-waste(e-waste) issues are increasingly becoming pertinent globally and the Darjeeling Hills with change in type and increase in waste. In this increasing waste world-wide, e-waste is the fastest growing waste in the industrialized nations. No longer can we roll our waste downhill but need to evolve strategies to manage our waste effectively and responsibly.

Nokia, Toxics link New Delhi, DLR Prerna, Anugyalaya DDSSS, Friends of Trees Forum and Real Rimbick came together to create awareness among school children on environment, focusing on e-waste and recycling. The program provided an opportunity to students increase their knowledge about waste and contribute in this environment campaign by recycling their e-waste responsibly. The awareness has interactive sessions along with an E-waste recycle bin placed in school premises for a week (or an agreed period) allowing school children to recycle mobile phones, batteries, and chargers. The collected e-waste will be handed over to an authorized E-waste recycler through Nokia. 25 schools were covered in this phase of the project.

5. DLR Prerna - CHAI Project

Report is attached as Annexure I.

6. Organic Inspections

April 2011

- Rohin, OSP Bangladesh, 4 days

May 2011

- Rohin, Nepal Gorkha Tea; East Nepal, 6 days

August 2011

- Rohin, Sikkim Organic Mission, Govt. of Sikkim, 4 days

September 2011

- Sailesh, Sikkim Organic Mission, Govt. of Sikkim, 9 days
- Rohin, Mullootar Home Stay, 7 days
- Sailesh, Sikkim Organic Mission, Govt. of Sikkim, 5 days
- Sailesh, Mullootar Home Stay, 5 days

March 2012

- Rohin, Nepal Gorkha Tea; East Nepal, 4 days

7. Support to Other Organisations

November 2011 – Facilitated St. Joseph’s College, Sociology Department 3rd Year students with their field study at Mineral Spring.

March 2012 - Permaculture Design for JIVA Ashram, Vrindavan - (Report attached as Annex II)

8. Development and Environment Education

a. Resource person for Organic Agriculture and Fairtrade under Food and Agriculture module for Masters in Sustainable Development Practices, TERI University, New Delhi – 26 to 30 August 2011 to 30 August 2011 with a field visit to Navdanya, Dhera Dun

b. Permaculture Design Course

Rico Zook, Certified Permaculture Trainer conducted a **14 days certified Permaculture Design Course** from **22 November to 5 December 2011** in Aapbotay, Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties 11 students: 8 International, 2 National and one from Darjeeling participated in it. Sailesh and Rohin worked with Rico as under-trainee teachers.

9. Everyday religion and sustainable environments in the Himalayas

Everyday Religion and Sustainable Environments in the Himalayas is a multi-stakeholder research project lead by India China Institute, New York. DLR Prerna is attached to project under Dr. Mahendra P. Lama along with Sikkim University and looks into Everyday Religion and Sustainable Environments in Darjeeling Town with focus on water. The field research work has been undertaken with a preliminary report prepared.

Workshops/Trainings Attended:

- a. Human Wildlife conflict and mitigation organised by Nature Conservation Society, Friends for Trees Forum, Mirik, India funded by WWF Nepal at Mirik, India on the 25th of April 2011 – Sailesh and Ashesh
- b. 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/>
- c. 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>

6. Future Action Plan

- a. Strengthening community development programmes on organics, equity and governance
- b. DEE with focus on Solid Waste Management and targeting Takdah Cantonment, Rangli Rangliot Block, Darjeeling
- c. Strengthen conservation and livelihoods programme
- d. Expand community based HWC management
- e. Strengthen capacity enhancement programmes on Fairtrade, Permaculture and Participatory Planning.
- f. Electronic Waste (e-waste) Campaign – II Phase with 75 schools.
- g. Support to Organisations

7. Note of appreciation

a. DLR Prerna extends its gratitude to EEJP for their solidarity and partnership on the issue of solid waste management.

b. DLR Prerna wishes to thank Navin Tamang for his 15 years of service. His work on small farmers organic farming, internal control systems and certification was invaluable. Navin has decided to explore other avenues in life and we wish him every success.

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