



Darjeeling Ladenla Road Prerna

Annual Report 2010

1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010

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. Community Development of Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties

Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties, Pool Bazaar Binjanbari Block, Darjeeling 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" (MSSVS) S/1L/49564 of 2007 – 2008 dated 9th January 2008. The MSSVS 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.

Mineral Spring Sanjukta Vikas Sanstha activities continued in the year 2009 – 2010.

- a. Small farmers organic green leaf being sold to TPI and through TPI in the International Market as well as in Life and Leaf, Darjeeling, as small farmers organic fairtrade tea under brand name "Mineral Spring". 48 000 kg of green leaf tea sold.
- b. Fairtrade Premium received and used in a decentralized manner based on the MSSVS development and FT Premium utilisation planning. 75% hamlet wise, 15% capacity building and 10% long term of Rs. 3 30 000:00

- c. 100% internal inspections conducted by 14 member team of SVS representatives trained by Navin Tamang and Sailesh Sharma
- d. Control Union Inspection May 2009, Organic Certificate Renewed with recommendations.
- e. Financial management training for MSSVS by Ashesh
- f. Fairtrade Audit – June 2009 Producer labeled with corrective measures
- g. Post Aila Cyclone 26th May 2009:
 - Affected houses – 3 in Aila and 15 post Aila rains
 - Through the Press Guild, Darjeeling 2 houses were rebuilt – Harsing and Yangkhoo
 - With the Pool Bazaar Bijanbari Block office and Anugyalaya DDSSS, distributed essential relief materials – Clothes, Tarpaulin, Rice, Dal, Oil, Sugar and medical support.

Responses to 2008 challenges

- a. Fairtrade awareness and discussion on standards
- b. Internal inspection undertaken by MSSVS members

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 Certified Trade Mark
- d. DLR Prerna has no project funding for Mineral Spring so the intervention is based on organisational resources.

2. Strengthen civil societies for improved resource management for conservation



The project site is Namla, Gurdum, Beech Gaon, Dara Gaon and Samanden Forest Villages which fringe the Singalila National Park in the Pool Bazaar Bijanbari Block, Darjeeling.

Activities undertaken:

- a. 8 progressive farmers trained on internal control system (ICS). ICS in the project delineates roles and responsibilities of individuals and organizations for conservation friendly sustainable livelihoods and resource use practices – Trainer Navin
- b. Refresher course for 50 progressive farmers in two sets, 4 days each training at Aapbotay, Mineral Spring – Trainers Sailesh, Rohin, Navin and Rico
- c. Progressive farmers' core group formed who train community members on lessons learnt on organic farming.
- d. Mr. Marcus Rai, Anugyalaya DDSSS facilitated workshops at each forest village on improved livestock management along with Sailesh.
- e. 24 progressive farmers selected for demonstration farms with square metre vegetable gardens, compost pits and seeds.
- f. 3 rounds of community workshops at each forest village facilitated on participatory leadership and social analysis by Ashesh, Roshan, Sailesh and Rohin.

- g. Refresher course for community animators - Social analysis, Effective Communication and Self Help Groups.
- h. Workshop on Understanding Joint Forest Management and community perspectives, issues and gaps on conservation issues was organized. Representatives of 5 forest villages, Ms. Angela C. Bhutia, Additional Divisional Forest Officer, Darjeeling; Mr. Dipen Tamang, Range Officer and Mr. Milan Rai, Beat Officer, Rimbick Range, Dr. Sarala Khaling, Regional Coordinator, CEPF; Mr. Suman Rai, CEPF Large Grants Co-ordinator; Mr. Samuel Thomas, Small Grant Co-ordinator and DLR Prerna team were present at Sherpa Lodge, Rimbick.
- i. Sensitisation workshop at Rimbick Range Office on objectives of DLR Prerna and CEPF Project along with objectives of ATREE with Rimbick Range Officials. The meeting advocated the commonality of the three organizational objectives of conservation and the need for partnership.

Outcomes:

- a. Leveling of the agricultural fields by 23 % of the farmers using 'A frame technique' to reduce sloping agriculture and subsequent soil erosion.
- b. Bio fence; initial plantation of local species of fodder plants at the edge of forest villages started in July 2009 to protect against wildlife depredation of crops. This activity will be taken forward every year till the bio fence becomes effective.
- c. 23% farmers started grey water management with vegetables grown within the system.
- d. Selected progressive farmers have initiated demonstration plots.
- e. Carrots were harvested for the first time in Namla Forest Village in the month of October 2009 - 220 Kg.
- f. Internal control and regulation system conservation friendly sustainable livelihoods and resource use practices is in progress. The Community Animators and progressive farmers have started the documenting their farm activities in their farm diary.
- g. Progressive farmers have formed a core group and with support visit from the organization. At the monthly meetings the core group discusses lessons learnt and impart training at community level.

Response to 2008 Challenges.

- a. Regular interaction, reporting with the Forest Department and sensitization workshop with the Rimbick Range office.
- b. Participatory leadership and social analysis workshops at community level.

Challenges

- a. Highly excluded community totally dependent on the Forest Department.
- b. Human wildlife conflict
- c. Marketing of produce

3. DLR Prerna - CHAI Project

Report is attached as Annexure I.

4. Organic Inspections

April 2009- Gorkha Tea Farmers Group- Nepal

June 2009 – Ambootia & Mullootar Homesteads, Kurseong, Darjeeling

DLR Prerna – Annual Report 2010 <Societies Registration Act of West Bengal XXVI of 1961 as Darjeeling Ladenla Road Prerna dated 13th March 2001, Registration Number S/IL/2639> www.darjeelingprerna.org

September 2009 - Morarka and Mevdir under Principal Director, Horticulture and Cash Crop Development Department, Government of Sikkim, India
 November 2009 - Ganges Jute Pvt. Ltd, Dist. Hoogly, West Bengal
 March 2010 – Gorkha Tea Farmers Group - Nepal

Challenges:

- a. Short notice commitments with strong deadlines

5. Support to Other Organisations

a. Anugyalaya Darjeeling DSSS

Fr. Valentine Rai took over the Directorship of Anugyalaya from 1st December 2006. The phase over completed with Ashesh phasing his direct supportive role completely in December 2009.

Challenges:

Phase into a partner

b. JB Continuing Capacity Enhancement Programme

Continuing Capacity Enhancement of Joint Body Representatives of Tea Promoters (India) gardens and partner small farmers' collectives.

5th to 9th February 2010 – Puttharjhora Tea Garden with support visit on the 13th February for representatives of 4 gardens at Singel Tea Garden.

Overall 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.

Specific Objectives of Puttharjhora 2010 workshop:

- a. Revisit and rediscover activities of JB and SF post workshops, 2007 to 2009 and redesign delivery.
- b. Enhance planning and monitoring and evaluation systems

Participants from:

Seeyok; Selimbong; Singell; Puttharjhora; Samabeong; Banaspaty - Tea Gardens
 Puttong Tea Workers Welfare Committee; Subarna Small Farmers Tea Society; Mineral Spring
 Sanjukta Vikash Sanstha - Small Farmers Collectives' Partners
 59 participants: 25 female and 34 male

Challenges:

- a. Workshop based only

c. Site Analysis of Salesian College, Siliguri

Roshan and Rohin went to Siliguri for a site analysis of Salesian College premises for possible management of Solid Waste on invitation from the College management and developed a concept note which has been submitted to the Salesian College.

d. Capacity Enhancement Support

- a. Internal Control System for organic farming training for CEPF project partners, MSSVS and Tea Promoters Small Farmer Partners – 5 days, Navin and Sailesh
- b. MEVDIR, Sikkim training on Internal Control System for organic farming at Aapbotay, Mineral Spring for 5 days – Navin and Sailesh
- c. 22nd October to 5th November 2009 Certified Basic Permaculture Design Course, Aapbotay, Mineral Spring
- d. Permaculture Course – short courses
 - TPI gardens and small farmer partners tea workers and small farmers – 4 days, Rico, Rohin, Sailesh and Navin
 - CHAI Partners from East and West Rangbhang, 2 workshops, 4 days each, Rico, Rohin and Sailesh
- e. Continuing Organisational development for Shanker Foundation Darjeeling Network of Positive People.

Challenges:

- a. Need to develop strategy for structured capacity building support in terms of modules and marketing

6. Development and Environment Education

a. World Environment Day 2009

Along with the Darjeeling NGO Network we continued with the theme “**Conserve Water, Reduce Your Waste**” from 2008 for 2009 world environment day. The Network partnered with CBO(*samaj*) and student leaders to promote the theme. An interactive session was organized on topics of waste, water and community initiatives with DLR Prerna facilitating the session on waste on 5th June 2009. On 6th June, students and teachers from 5 schools participated in the ‘Chute Walk’. Chute Walk takes participants to the dumping chute where the waste of Darjeeling is rolled down and to Victoria Falls as a learning experience and also skills on treatment.

Challenges:

Sustained focused intervention

- b. Seminar on “Sustainable Development, Resource Endowment and Governance: Mountain Economy in Perspective” jointly organized by Salesian College, Sonada, Darjeeling and DLR Prerna - 7th and 8th June 2009.

Series of papers were presented by prominent academics on the theme. Analysis of Fairtrade Labelling Organisations – Darjeeling Tea was presented by Rohin, DLR Prerna.

Projects proposals submitted:

- a. Piloting Community Solid Waste Management In Darjeeling Municipality – Environment Equity and Justice Partnership
- b. Piloting solid waste management in Darjeeling Municipality and two semi-urban centres, Takdah Cantonment and Rimbick, Darjeeling Sub.-Division - MPLADS.
- c. Community-based mitigation of human-wildlife conflict around the Singalila National Park, India – Rufford Small Grants.

Challenges:

- a. Need to network to access larger proposal calls
- b. Short deadlines with a high demand on quality investment on project proposals

Workshops/Trainings Attended:

- a. Workshop on trans-boundary issues at the Kunchanjunga- Singhalila landscape was held at Tumling, between CEPF partners of Eastern Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling, West Bengal – 24 to 26 May 2009 - Rohin, Sailesh and Roshan
- b. Workshop on existing government mechanism for trans-boundary illegal trade of wildlife and NTFPs with special reference to CITES – 8th March 2010, Mirik facilitated by The Mountain Institute, India – Roshan
- c. Regional Training on Biodiversity Management and Climate Change 22 to 31 March 2010, ICIMOD, Kathmandu Nepal - Rohin
- d. Entrepreneurship Development Training at Seva Kendra, Siliguri organized by FVTRS, Bangalore from 22nd to 27th February 2010 – Navin

6. Future Action Plan

- a. Strengthening community development programmes on organics, equity and governance
- b. DEE with focus on Solid Waste Management
- c. Strengthen conservation and livelihoods programme
- d. Strengthen capacity enhancement programmes on Fairtrade, Permaculture and Participatory Planning.
- e. Support to Organisations
- f. Updating Area and Issue Profile of Darjeeling Hills.

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