



Annual Report 2019-20

**Development Research Communication and Services Centre
58A, Dharmatala Road, Kasba, Bosepukur, Kolkata 700042**

Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRSC) is a 38-year old organisation and has been working in the natural resource management and ecological agriculture sector since 1982. We are working with about 13000 small and marginal farming families directly in order to ensure their food, nutrition and livelihood security with sustainable natural resource management. We are, at present, nurturing about 825-850 groups of women and men in about 7 districts directly and building capacity of grassroot organisations to work with vulnerable poor households in about 3 districts of West Bengal. We are also working with about 2225 children at 33 schools in West Bengal (among which there are 25 KMCP schools in Kolkata) and reached over 5000 children indirectly and have built capacity with regard to intervene in Education sector .

DRSC provided **capacity building support** to 'Gram Vikas' and 'Living Farms' this year. We have been providing capacity building sessions for the mentally challenged patients in mental hospitals, in collaboration with Anjali – at 3 hospitals in Berhampore, Purulia and Kolkata. We have provided capacity building support to 10 organisations (CASA partners) on climate adaptive livelihood and sustainable natural resource management in the Sundarbans areas. We have been able to increase their **production and productivity** from their small patches of land which are generally much less than an acre. They are now able to make a little surplus at an individual level after consumption. The work is also going on to diversify the livelihood opportunities and empower the farming families to become climate adaptive so that they can bear with the changing climate scenario. The weather information and crop advisories in advance helped the farmers in Purulia and Bankura to save their production from the erratic behaviour of rainfall. A detailed report in this regard has already been published.

A report has been published, in collaboration with **Jadavpur University** on the use of scientific measures and people's perception together to make a robust plan for the semi-arid region which has helped the farmers to extend their growing season and increase their total production of different crops and vegetables. One weather station has also been installed at Patharpratima, Sundarbans and a trial is going on if farmers / volunteers themselves can provide data from the machine as forecast and based on that if the agro-advisory can be generated by them only.

Changes in the land shape have often helped the farmers in the Sundarbans (North and South 24 parganas) to combat with salinity and to get ensured about increased production. **The diversification of sources of income** through small animals and birds rearing, introduction of alternative income generation programmes (honey processing, jaggery making and value addition to farm products, aquaculture, bee keeping, crab fattening etc) have unleashed an additional income opportunity for the families.

Orientation and rigorous trainings on climate change impacts and how to increase the adaptive capacity are going on in both the districts. The rainwater harvesting is providing a scope for irrigating the nutrition gardens and do aquaculture which, in turn, is helping to diversify their food baskets.

Several assessments and evaluation studies have been made this year by UNFCC, NABARD, donors etc. and we are happy to receive appreciation from different corners for this effort and the impacts as well.

In Usharmukti programme, we are intervening in 1 intensive and 4 non intensive blocks of Purulia and working in close collaboration with MGNREG Cell and government machineries. Near about 475 Nos. of schemes have been implemented this year and treatment has been made in approx 2750 Ha of land. **More than 1100 HHS directly got benefit from all these interventions and near about 6.44 Cr. Could be leveraged in the intensive block.**

Nearly 2263 No. of schemes have been implemented this year in non intensive blocks, and treated near about 73945 Ha of land. **More than 5700 HHS receive direct benefit from the interventions and almost 21.43 Cr. could be leveraged.**

The Farmers Producer Company have been duly registered and are operating successfully. Bankura farmers' groups applied for FSSAI registration and received the same. The project which was submitted to KVIC got its due sanction from April 2020.

We have been able to extend our work with ultra poor beneficiary families in two other GPs of Nabagram and Bhagobangola blocks. 800 women have been engaged with us in this phase who have been supported with productive assets (livestocks, land etc). If we look into the facts and figures, those who hardly had any savings and even bank accounts as well, **have accumulated a savings amount of Rs. 307600/- with an average of Rs. 384.5/- out of the target of Rs. 780/- on an average by the end of the project. They have also accumulated a contribution amount of Rs. 874750/-out of a target amount of Rs. 1280000/-**. Presently they have 2281 nos. goats, 5910 nos. chicks/ducks, 141 nos. pigs, 109 nos. cows. Though some of the livestock assets died after asset transfer, still they have managed to recover the numbers which are gradually increasing. Para-vets are earning around Rs. 800/- per month through practicing at their respective locality. Apart from the regular safety net programmes 399 beneficiary households have received different safety net supports with regular facilitation and follow-up by the field facilitators. Three Clusters have already been formed (2 at Nabagram and 1 at Bhagwangola I) with the leaders of these groups. Basic orientations and meetings about the roles and responsibilities are going on.

The natural resource- based skill development programme for the underprivileged youth is continuing especially in Purulia, Bankura and Birbhum through Green Colleges. **During the last year, we imparted training to about 1077 youth among which 954 youth have started working.** Of them, about 36 are earning more than INR 10000, 118 trainees are earning within the range of INR. 5000-10000 additionally per month, 348 trainees are earning within the range of Rs. 2500-5000 per month and the income of rest has also increased but below Rs. 2500 per month.

18 High Potential Rural Youths (HPRY) have started their own enterprises and are engaging at least 115 people on regular basis. At present, the income of more than 10 trainees went upto INR 30000 to 50000/- per month.

“PATHEYA” Purulia Green College has been duly registered under Paschim Banga Society for Skill Development (PBSSD) and also got affiliation for 3 courses, 1. Organic Grower; 2. Paddy Farmers; 3. Vermi Compost Producer.

The Green College in Purulia is also conducting trainings for small and marginal farmers under ATMA project of GoWB. This year 5 blocks of Purulia have been covered under this and 500 farmers have been provided training on sustainable agriculture. The farmers have initiated sustainable agriculture in their fields.

This year, we have been able to generate Rs.1,14,450.00 from the course fees. And generated at least Rs.3,89,414.00 from ATMA course fees. This is also to mention that we need to relook at Jhargram Training Centre because this Training Centre remained underutilised throughout the year in spite of it being appropriate for organising training with a residential capacity of 20-25 participants, along with a reasonably large farm surrounding it.

DRCS this year has organised different fairs as part of its consumers' awareness programme. The Safe World Festivals provided a platform where the producers, retailers and consumers met and learnt about the organic produces, about safe food, how adulteration is made etc. In these festivals other cooperatives like Sundarini, Badaban etc also attended who mainly deal with safe food. The natural handicrafts and recycled products produced by the marginalised families are also sold in the festivals. Traditional cooked food tasting was done and this has helped us to reach Consumers who are enquiring now for safe food. The guests from WE 21 also attended the fairs and brought recycled products from Japan to display and taught general audience easy processes of making useful products by recycling. The stall in Bankura is still running successfully and bearing its administrative costs from its own sales. We have reached at least 13000 consumers this year through different programmes. An international journal reporter Mr. Gurbinder Singh has worked with us intensively and prepared 8 short videos on various topics of Safe Food and urban gardening issues.

A unique concept of "Taal Utsav" was also organised this year through which at least 25 vendors were trained on different recipes, and 2000 consumers were reached to popularise the nutritious extinct fruit and its uses.

5 sessions of urban gardening course were conducted during this period where 72 trainees participated in the training and 50 are practicing urban gardening in their small homestead and rooftop area. In 19 schools of Kolkata, school gardens were developed and our volunteers are nurturing these gardens on a regular basis.

Climate Resilient Indigenous Seed systems Project (CRISP) supported by Swiss Aid has been duly completed. In the project we mainly worked among a network of organisations working in the Sundarbans. In the process, 7 nos. of Community Seed Bank (CSB) have been established covering 3 Districts. 30 nos. of CSB cadres (seed producers) shared their knowhow and experiences to other groups and farmers for popularization of traditional seeds - reached nearly 450 farmers. Seed Diversity of West Bengal & Plant Propagation Manual were published as part of the project. Negotiation for new phase is going on.

The Promotion of Agroforestry practices in different ecosystems and its sustainable management and utilization in Birbhum district, West Bengal supported by JFGE has successfully completed one year. For this successful completion, JFGE has granted the 2nd year of implementation.

Every day, the leaders, workers and members of the Kisan Swaraj Samity perform various small and little activities such as individual discussion, dialogue between farmers, agriculture personnel, planning strategizing day to day activities etc. which are adding value to the organization.

Total number of members of KSS is 6792 (till February 2020) and the percentage of women members is 21 %. Apart from that, nearly 11000 farmers are associated with KSS activities. Number of women members in different committees have increased and they are actively participating in the decision-making process. KSS Committees at different levels are regularly sitting and discussing the plans and implementing strategies on activities. Farmers are regularly negotiating with stakeholders and officials and accessing entitlements. Live contacts with some government official and Panchayati Raj institution & people's representatives have been established. The capacity of taking prompt action (such as response to agrarian crisis) increased. 1 new block preparatory committee of KSS was formed at Hasnabad block, Uttar 24 Parganas on 22-01-20. Farmers are accessing different Government schemes and also collaborating with CSRs for different support eg. Pumps for agriculture etc. Members of Nadia district Kisan Swaraj Samity has been working in organic farming for the past 6 years. Along with other movement related activities, they also preserve vegetables and paddy seeds,

plantation of indigenous plants and trees for biodiversity conservation. A bi-weekly (Monday and Thursday 4-6pm) poison free Farmer's Market in Shantipur Municipality in Nadia district is running successfully, 2 more stalls formally opened in Marishda, Kanthi Purba Medinipur and Addir Bagar Pathar Pratima, South 24 Pargana. 3 more stalls (2 in Purba Medinipur and one in Uttar 24 parganas) are running informally. Social media presence of KSS has also improved a lot during this time. The viewership of different AVs are increasing day by day.

We have submitted a project to Azim Premji Philanthropic Institution (APPI) which is still under the Institution's consideration.

The project sanctioned by Oak Foundation has started in Gopalnagar GP of Patharpratima block.

Thanks to ITC for extending its support to initiate work in Howrah district covering 3 Blocks. At present, 3 months initial support has been sanctioned to carry on baseline studies, farmer identification etc. Based on the performance, sanction for the next one year will be considered.

DRCS currently has 150 staff members which includes Head Office and Field Offices and also includes full time, part time and apprentice staff members. About 50 volunteers are engaged with us and helping us in different ways. Several trainings on concepts, development sector etc have been organised for new as well as old staff members. Since its inception, DRCS has always been paying due attention for the wellbeing of its staff members and this effort on the part of DRCS is continuing. In this regard it may be mentioned here that DRCS has been registered with EPF and providing its benefits to the staff members.

This year we have attended several workshops, meetings etc – to mention a few: we have attended Community Based Adaptation 13 workshop in Ethiopia, workshops on sustainability of Green Colleges organised by WHH, Review meetings organised by NETz, capacity building workshops organised by NABARD etc. A workshop was also organised in collaboration with Swiss Aid and MASIPAG (in Haldia) for the farmers of different region on pollination of rice.

Several Govt. officials visited our working areas in Purulia and Bankura like PS to MIC Agriculture, Govt. of West Bengal, Project Director, State ATMA Cell, DDA (Admin), Dept. of Agri, Purulia. Project Director, ATMA, Purulia, SAO Raghunathpur, ADA, Dept of Agri, Kashipur Block etc.

Negotiation is going on regarding the scaling up of Weather Prediction & Crop Advisory. A cost estimate (Proposal) has been submitted to Dept. of Agriculture and also PS to MIC, Agriculture, Govt. of West Bengal.

Regular sharing of project activities, learnings is done with panchayet, block and district officials in all our project area.

Society's income from membership during the last year increased to Rs. 2100.00 and local donations of Rs. 8,79,820.26 were received during the year.

DRCS has received the renewal of its FCRA registration for 5 years till 2021. It has duly complied with the Income Tax Rules and had been able to submit zero return.

We are thankful to Honb'le Minsiter Sri Purnendu Basu, Prof Prabir Bhattacharya, BCKV, Dr. Prasanta Biswas, Jadavpur University(JU), Dr. Sugata Hazra, JU, Dr. Joyashree Roy, JU, Prof. T.K. Bose, Professors of Siddho Kanho University, Sri Pratap Bhattacharya, Sri Dinanath, representatives of our donor agencies, our partner organisations and others for their immense support and encouragement towards achieving a sustainable future free from poverty, hunger and environmental degradation.

The Central Government awarded Sri Sainen Chandi (farmer from NADIA, member of KSS) the Plant Genome Saviour award. On 22 October 2019 Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Narendra Singh handed over the award and prize money of Rs. 100,000 to Mr. Chandi. 2 members of Nadia and one of each Purba Medinipur and Dakshin 24 pargans have received Krishak Ratna Award in the last six months.

This year, the total amount of local grants received is Rs.5,63,15,902.00 and the foreign grants is Rs. 5,85,82,521.50.

VISITS / WORKSHOPS ATTENDED / ORGANISED / EXPOSURE VISITS

- **Regular monitoring visit from NABARD**
- **Internship** : Two intern had been send from NABARD RO for 7 day internship on enhancing adaptive capacity and increasing resilience of small and marginal farmers.
- **Impact Assessment** : **Ms Gitika Goswami & Kavya Arora** from Development Alternative nominated by Adaptation Fund Board have visited our project area for Impact Assessment. She presented her report in UNFCC Conference at Bonn, Germany.
- **Ms Soudamini Das, Chair Professor, NABARD, Mumbai** visited Purulia & Bankura for Impact Assessment of Climate change adaptation project.
- **Evaluation: Ms Anita Yadav**, member of BIRD, Lucknow visited this project for evaluation purpose.
- **Documentation** : Mr. Andrew Millison from USA visited Bankura and Purulia for documentary purpose. He documented on permaculture and water conservation.
- **Local Govt.:** ADM (ZP),Purulia,ADM(Dev)Bankura, DMDC,Raghunathpur sub division,Purulia, BDO Kasipur, BDO Chhatna, DDA (admin)Bankura visited the project.
- 21 no members from Gram Bikas, Odissa visited for learning about Automated Weather Station.
- **CBA13:** Participation at the International Conference on “Community Base Adaptation to Climate Change” in Addis Ababa at Intercontinental Addis Hotel from **01.04.2019 – 04.04.2019**.
- **Attended workshop on Health System Resilience in the Sundarbans Delta: Redressing Climate Change Vulnerability to Population Health in South Asia** on 25th June 2020.

Development Research Communication and Services Centre was established in the year 1982 and is registered under Societies Registration Act, 1961. DRCS is also registered with FCRA, IT12A and Niti Ayog.

Vision

To work for a Sustainable future free from poverty, hunger and environmental degradation

Mission

Ensure food, nutrition and livelihood security of the resource poor population through skill development, action research, and networking oriented to collective self sufficiency

Values

- We are a learning organisation
- We ensure that our decision-making is open and transparent
- We follow principles of mutual cooperation and social justice
- We undertake participatory actions that are environment friendly, economically feasible, socially equitable & viable.
- We remain accountable to the people for whom we work and for effective utilisation of the resources entrusted to us
- We are committed to protect the planet's scarce resources for the sake of future generations
- We encourage equal participation of women in all decision making forums

Strategies

1. Discuss and suggest policy changes with planners & administrators in favour of small & marginal farmers as well as forest dwellers, artisans & animal herders.
2. Build projects and implement them for extension of proven models to address ecological problems of coastal and saline zones, semi-arid zones, river bank erosion zone and terai region of West Bengal for ensuring food and livelihood security of the poor and the marginalised sections of population living in these areas.
3. Build capacities of vulnerable communities and encourage them to get involved in participatory action research to develop climate change adaptive models in agriculture and allied sectors in the ecologically fragile zones.
4. Assess the possibilities of resources available in the semi arid region and build capacities of the adolescents and youth through short term courses on natural resource based vocations so that they can process such resources and develop small enterprises either individually or collectively or earn livelihood as instructors.
5. Support small and marginal farmers engaged in producing organic products to establish backward and forward linkages in marketing.
6. Consolidate our identity as a Resource Organisation for ecological agriculture and extend capacity building services at all levels like farmers, field workers, organisers, individuals and organisations interested to promote organic farming in South and South East Asia.
7. Support local institutions and CBOs in West Bengal and strengthen their existing capacities in order that they may carry forward the efforts to sustain food and livelihood security among the poor and marginalized.
8. Facilitate formation of networks/forums of organic farmers in West Bengal and provide training and other technical support for improving their production & marketing strategies.
9. Work for identification of child leaders who are leading the environment actions in the villages, and for ensuring rights towards free and compulsory education

10. Distribute the published results of the actions to the government and non-government agencies, convince the state government to up-scale the successful models and inspire change in the area.
11. Promote public participation in informed discourses on ecological agriculture and natural resource management, which critiques public policies and generates demands for appropriate public policy and legislation.
12. Promote school gardens, particularly in primary & secondary schools and develop garden based learning materials.
13. Document knowledge of indigenous resources and how they are utilised. Help in developing efficient collection method & processing technology of under-utilised or lesser known plants & animal resources.

The 9 member Executive Council of DRCSC during 2019-20 was as follows:

Sri Ardhendu Sekhar Chatterjee	President
Sri Dilip Kr. Sarkar	Secretary
Sri Samir Kr. Bhattacharya	Treasurer
Smt. Somjita Chakraborty	Member
Sri Raja Xavier	Member
Smt. Sudeshna Sinha	Member
Sri Avik Roy	Member
Dr. Sugata Hazra	Member
Dr. Pratap Mukhopadhyay	Member

The Executive Council of DRCSC met four times last year to discuss and take decisions on several issues concerning the organisation.

Our work has received appreciation from various government departments, donors and individuals. Dedication and spirit of our staff members/volunteers have always been the main strength behind our success.

OUR DONOR AGENCIES

• AFB through NABARD-India	• Welthungerhilfe, Germany co-funding with BMZ & GIZ
• Save the Children,UK	• WE21, Japan,
• Climate Justice Relief Fund	• Sign of Hope, BMZ
• Swiss Aid	• Aid India, Boston; USA
• NETz co-funding with BMZ	• NABARD, WB,India
• CASA & Bread for the World	• Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation, India
• Sheffield Halam University	• ITC, CSR – Mission Sunhera Kal