



2021 - 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

**of Development Research Communication and
Services Centre**

Continuing focussing on community empowerment &
cooperation through agro-ecological interventions

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From Secretary's Desk

It gives me a great pleasure to present the Annual Report of Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRCSC) for the year 2021-22.

It is yet another year filled with actions and learnings for DRCSC. Towards meeting its goals, DRCSC has launched several initiatives in this year. Special mention needs to be made in the area of education and climate change adaptation.

DRCSC has a wing to look after education for the children of vulnerable communities. In September, 2020, owing to certain amendments in the FCRA, two projects for ensuring quality education of children, supported by "Save the Children" discontinued with a short notice. In view of this, we were facing a great challenge to continue this wing in order to continue our education programme. Fortunately, we have been able to receive support from Terre des Hommes Suisse for supporting this programme.

As climate change has become a major issue among others, for the last couple of years, we have been trying to concentrate our focus on it. Meanwhile, the tenure of climate change adaptation project in the drought prone areas of Bankura and Purulia districts, supported by NABARD and funded by Adaptation Fund Board, was nearing to its completion. This project had a significant impact on the livelihood of the target group and our intention was to replicate it in other areas of the region as well. We are happy to launch a similar type of project in this region in April 2021 with support from Ajim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives. Several other projects related to climate change adaptation are being implemented successfully in the Sundarbans areas also.

DRCSC believes that women empowerment is the most effective tool for the development of the society. So, it always tries to focus on women in all its policies. As in India, agriculture employs almost 80% of rural women, we are trying to engage them in large numbers in all our projects/programmes. In this year, one FPC (Farmers' Producer Company) namely 'AALOR THIKANA' has been registered and all of its members are women.

We are indebted to all our grant givers. Their generous support helped us reach out to most vulnerable resource poor population and to protect the environment. We gratefully acknowledge the valuable support and contributions received from the Panchayats, various Govt. departments, our partner civil society organisations, individuals including well-wishers in this regard.

I am grateful to all the members of the Executive Council of which some are eminent scientists and experts. We always receive help and guidance from them in all our activities despite their busy schedules.

Congratulations are also due to the DRCSC team and volunteers for staying true to the vision and mission of DRCSC like the previous years.



(Dilip Kumar Sarkar)
Secretary

DRCSC 2021-2022



TOTAL INCOME

In the year 2021-2022 the total income of DRCSC has been Rs. 12,39,47,394.24

IN DETAIL

• Institutional Grant	78%
• CSR Donations	10%
• General Donations	8%
• Emergency Aid Donations	2%
• Interest and Other Incomes	2%



TARGET GROUP

We have reached to 17700 resource poor marginal families and about 12000 children and youth cumulatively through different initiatives

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION

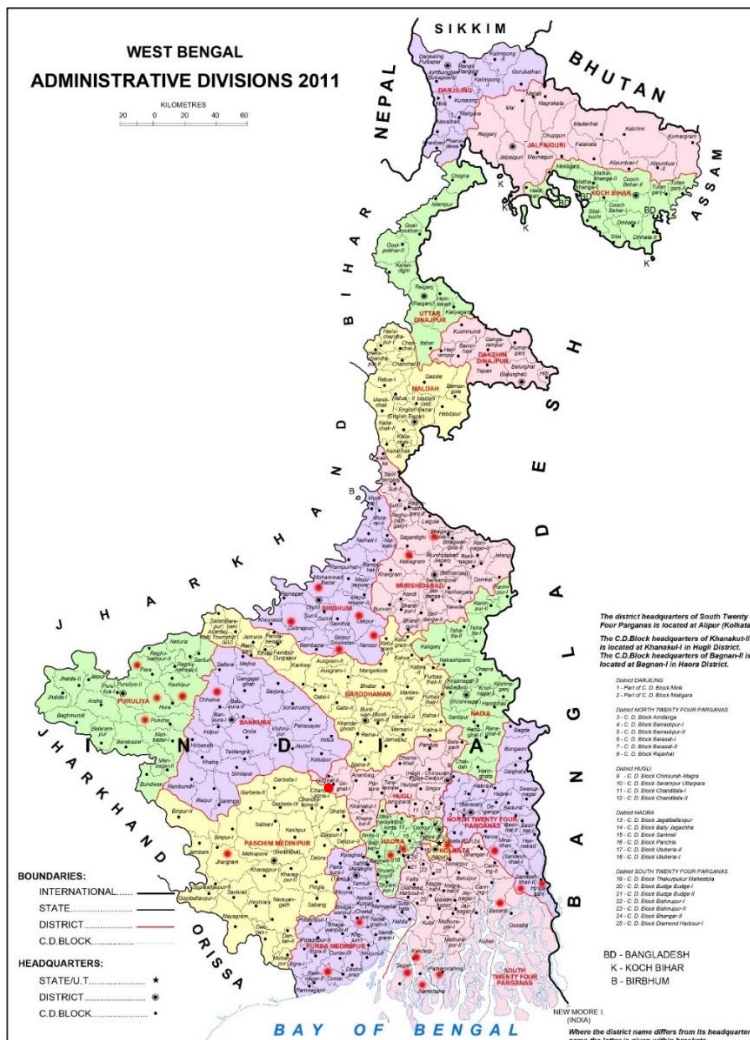
Cash contribution from target group Rs. 10,74,000

Total Livelihood Leverage in 2021-2022 amount Rs. 82 lakh*



* only from Line Departments, MGNREG work payments not included

DRCSC's REACH



- **17700** Rural Resource Poor Households
- **2 lakh** population
- **12000** children and youth
- **11 Districts**
- **28 blocks**
- **42 projects**

DRCSC In Brief

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

Our Values

- Compassion
- Transparency
- Environment Friendly
- Accountability
- Participatory
- Quality
- Trustworthiness

Whom do we serve

- Small, marginal and landless farming families
- Ultra-poor community
- Unemployed youth
- Children

Our Purpose

- Food, Nutrition and Livelihood Security
- Climate Change Adaptation and Awareness Raising (Disaster Risk Reduction)
- Education and Empowerment of children
- Capacity Building for Employment Generation and Participatory Group Formation
- Capacity Building for Soft Advocacy and Collaborative Activities with Local Govt. and District Administration
- Work with children and youth aiming at providing quality Education
- Humanitarian Assistance in Acute Emergencies
- Collaborative Work with like-minded Networks of NGOs and CSOs



Highlights 2021-2022

2021 has been the second year of COVID virus restrictions. Till August 2021, most of our staff, volunteers, community organisers had to work from home and movements, meetings etc. were restricted, which made participatory action-research work very difficult. We were slowly returning to normal work at villages, education centres, training centres, offices etc. We had to learn the ways of distance learning and virtual meetings.

Our main activities still remain hunger, malnourishment and poverty alleviation through mutual collaboration groups, farmer associations, youth groups etc. to organize trainings and hands on demonstration along with micro grants in kind to promote Diversified-Integrated Sustainable Farming especially with landless poor, sharecroppers and small farmers. Decreasing poverty, particularly in disaster prone regions, such as rainfed/drought prone areas, cyclone and flood prone districts etc., continued in partnership and consultation with local government institutions as well as inter-NGO forums, Rural Development Banks etc. The discontinuance of MGNREGA work by the State Govt. has negatively affected soil and water conservation and tree planting work in several areas. However, during the last financial year, DRCSC could leverage about Rs.82 lakh from different line departments of the local and regional state administrative machineries.

Grassroot groups and saving associations of local producers have raised about Rs.10,73,000 in cash and contributed materials and labour as their share of cost of various demonstration plots/initiatives like tree plantation, fish pond excavation or deepening, seed storage and exchange facilities etc.

Another focus of our work has been reducing the impact of Global Climate Change; particularly on agriculture and biodiversity. Focus has been on water storage and reducing water, fossil fuel use, identifying and promoting the use of drought/dry period tolerant crops, fodder plants, multi-use and multi-purpose trees and shrubs, renewable energy, promoting use of heat tolerant fish, bird, animal varieties, saving local seeds etc.

Our main projects in 'Paschimanchal' laterite soil districts funded by 'Adaptation Fund Board' through the Govt. nominated agency NABARD, was almost finished with no salary cost extension for almost three years. The outcome has been appreciated by the sponsoring organization including several national and international agencies. Extensive documentation has been done both by us and other universities, Govt. Expert Groups and Civil Society Organisations. A formal

closing ceremony is being planned with NABARD and other partners. Presently two-three other climate change adaptation initiatives are underway.

We have collaborated with several other lead agencies, such as PRADAN in West Bengal and USHARMUKTI project/movement based in New Delhi with major contribution by Govt. of India as well as active collaboration with state Govt. and local governance structures. Large scale tree plantation on degraded land has been facilitated in designated Blocks by DRCSC. A new phase was envisaged by PRADAN, where State Govt. will cover the administrative costs also with national grants etc. Area has been selected, technical experts were hired.

In both southern and northern coastal Sunderban districts, we have been supported by 'Sign of Hope Foundation' of Germany and 'Swissaid' under different programmes. This cyclone prone and saline soil area has been selected both as the population density is high, livelihoods are devastated by repeated high intensity cyclonic storms, etc. Sea level rise, sea water pollution, mangroves and other trees as well as habitat destruction, has now brought the region under global focus. We are working there in several Blocks either in project implementation or in need assessment oriented surveys alone and in joint NGO-Govt. forums. A new project called 'Crops4HD' will be initiated soon to document status as well as promote the cultivation of drought-tolerant crops and vegetables.

Another new initiative has started in Bankura with full or partial support by the CSR – 'Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative' after their satisfaction with our Covid-19 Relief and Cyclone Relief work in the Sunderbans, in collaboration with local health and civic authorities. The work will initially focus on Integrated Nutrition Garden and Small Farms.

HCL Foundation was also impressed by our work after AMPHAN and other cyclonic storms and decided to support various Mangrove Planting Initiatives mainly by local users' groups, mostly women.

During the last three years, a project of community forestry was supported by the Japan Fund for Global Environment. Many tree nurseries started. Apart from Block planting on degraded lands (about 12 hectares), several initiatives of roadside, school ground and home garden took place. Satisfied with the work, photo documentation, representative visit and discussions in Japan, a 3-year extension to facilitate community home gardens and tree nurseries has been approved.

Our educational initiatives to reduce dropouts from junior section of both urban slum and rural schools were temporarily discontinued due to school closure, administrative problems in supporting agencies etc. Fortunately, after

discussion, an international agency Terres des Hommes (Suisse) has decided to partially support work in this important area.

The other major partnership has been with NETZ through different activities and projects in parts of Birbhum and Murshidabad. It is focused on creating sustainable livelihoods among the very poor with little or no assets. Phase-III project activities are now being planned.

As an organization our priority areas will remain :

- Climate change adaptation in agriculture and natural resources sector; climate change awareness among the youth and adolescent groups.
- Vocational training, trainers' training in agriculture and natural resource management sector.
- Strengthening and formalizing more producer groups, consumer groups and environment protection groups.
- Use of more digital communication and education centres and using our own collection of books, films/audio-visuals documents, user-generated maps through various pathways.
- Mobilising more local support, civic associations in favour of sustainable development initiatives.



PROJECT REPORTS

Improving Nutritional Security of Landless or small landholders through integrated use of small gardens, ponds etc near adjacent to house and creating additional sources of income through small animal / bird husbandary, food processing etc.

Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger in Structurally Disadvantaged Areas of Bangladesh and India (DABI):

This project was completed successfully on time. 800 extreme poor households in 22 villages of 2 Gram Panchayats namely, Narayanpur and Mahisasthali of 2 Blocks namely, Nabagram and Bhagwangola-I of Murshidabad district have been covered.

Women under this project became united and formed groups. Social bonding among them has been increased. They are now growing at least 6-8 types of vegetables like leafy, fruit, tubers etc) around their homestead and have been able to diversify their platter with nutritious vegetables. When the project started, these women were afraid of getting out of their households to talk to outsiders but now, as self-confidence has been increased significantly among them, they are now discussing on different issues with the officials too. They together are also raising awareness on issues like domestic violence, child marriage etc. Moreover, their importance in the families is felt and they are able to get respect for their contributions, knowledge and skills.

The project resulted in increasing their income as well as income sources. Earlier, the target group had per day per capita income of less than Rs. 39/- which has now increased to Rs. 79.85/- on an average. The habit of savings has improved. They are now spending the excess income towards purchasing/leasing cultivable lands, for education support to their children, renovating their huts etc. These 800 targeted households had a maximum productive capital value of Rs. 5000/- only at the beginning of the project. Now, they have productive capital of Rs. 49,973/-. Each household has a saving of Rs. 1385 in their group accounts and in total they have contributed Rs.12,56,825 as local contribution towards implementation of the project.

Improving access to community managed lands, wetlands, long term fallows, for groups of resource poor households, migrant community, animal herders etc

UsharMukti Project

To ensure water security, rejuvenate rivers and improve productivity of land, BRLF entered into an agreement with the West Bengal MGNREGA cell and seven civil society organisations (CSOs) in 2017 to launch the 'Usharmukti' programme. Translated as 'freedom from barrenness', this mega watershed programme covers 384 Gram Panchayats in 55 Blocks across six districts in the state namely Purulia, Bankura, Jhargram, Birbhum, Paschim Medinipur, and Paschim Bardhaman. Out of these 55 blocks, DRCSC has been entrusted with 5 Blocks namely Hura, Pancha, Kashipur, Para and Purulia II.

The project employs a ridge-to-valley approach that leads to the restoration of rivers and their catchment areas, while mitigating soil erosion and replenishing groundwater through plantation and water harvesting.

Till the FY 2021-22, 12,208 Ha of land has been covered and 21,833 households have been reached which is around 72% of the target among 229 identified watersheds. About Rs. 53 lakh has been leveraged from different line departments during this year. We are approaching towards the saturation level in 38 model watersheds where more than 50% area treatment has already been made. Now, our main focus is to shift 185 more model watersheds towards saturation.

Deepanjali

This project is in its 2nd year (5-year project). The objective is to aware and sensitize the government officials (in blocks and panchayts) to reach to people so that MGNREG fund and other department funds can be utilized effectively through increasing access of marginalized community to access common lands, wetlands, etc and also to facilitate mobilization of people and capacitate them to make plan for their own areas in an effective manner.

Promotion of Agroforestry practices in different ecosystems and its sustainable management and utilization in Birbhum district, West Bengal

The work is going on with 600 extreme poor households in 25 villages of 6 GPs of 2 Blocks (Md. Bazar & Labhpur) of Birbhum district.

A total of 9.26 hectares area has been planted with around 8600 saplings (24 types) in different eco-systems like road/canal side, fallow/waste land, surrounding rice fields and homestead lands as well. During the plantation activities, around 603 person days have been created and a local contribution of Rs. 36260/- has been generated. Two Community nurseries along with 10 satellite nurseries have been set up in 2 Blocks. Around 25,000 seedlings (24 types) were raised in these nurseries. After covering the plantation areas, those groups who prepared the nurseries have earned around Rs.20,500/- by selling the surplus 2975 seedlings to others. 10 ponds have been excavated which are going to help in providing life-saving irrigation in the dry season. During the earthwork of pond excavation, around 1021 person days have been created and an amount of Rs. 66503/- has been generated as local contribution.

Restoration and Rehabilitation of Mangrove and Social Forestry Ecosystem in the Coastal Sunderbans

The overall project objective is protecting environment through community plantation, regeneration of natural habitats of animals, birds, insects etc through plantation and conservation of mangroves and multi-purpose trees.

Work for plantation of 3,00,000 new mangrove and multi-purpose trees has started this year in 6 hectares of land, in addition to the conservation/protection of the existing 25 hectares of land. This is a one-year project for which the sanctioned amount is Rs. 50 Lakh. It has potential to continue after successful completion.

8 Improving farms of small holders with about ½ Ha irrigated or 1 Ha non irrigated lands (often in smaller parcels)

Climate Resilient Indigenous Seed systems (CRISP)

DRCSC has implemented Climate Resilient Indigenous Seed systems (CRISP) Project at **7 villages in 2 Gram Panchayats of Hingalganj Block, North 24 Pgs.** The total number of **beneficiary households is 617** and **45 nos. Mutual Cooperation Groups (MCGs)** have been formed. All the groups have opened their bank account with local cooperative banks. **Savings is done regularly** and **till December 2021 approx. Rs.7,10,775/-** has been saved by the members covering 45 groups. Amount of **Revolving fund** generated is **Rs. 1,69,655/-** through different activities like livestock rearing, fish cultivation etc. **These MCGs have been associated with CROPS4HD Project from Jan'2022.**

During the last year, despite several cyclones and natural hazards, these households tried to cultivate vegetables and crops in homestead gardens as well as in the fields. Almost **80% of the targeted households** are practicing seasonal nutrition garden where various techniques like **circle bed, use of trellis, cultivation in sacks, use of amritpani, liquid manures, compost etc.** have been applied. Around **300 farmers** have applied mixed cropping concept in their fields. In mixed vegetable cultivation, the crops have been harvested following different space management principles. Almost all the beneficiary households are saving seeds and continue gardening irrespective of their garden spaces. In the project area **more than 300 farmers are cultivating indigenous paddy (Dudheswar variety).**

Name of Project: Consumption of Resilient Orphan Crops & Products for Healthier Diets (CROPS4HD)

Consumption of Resilient Orphan Crops & Products for Healthier Diets (CROPS4HD) project has initiated from **July 2021** (4-year project) with an objective to improve food security and nutrition of smallholder peasants, especially women, through sustainable use and conservation of peasants' cultivars/landraces, neglected and underutilized species respecting agro-ecological approaches. **The project implementation is going on in 25 villages covering 5 Gram Panchayats namely Ramganga & Durbachati in Patharpratima & Hingalganj, Sandeler Bill & Dulduli in Hingalganj Blocks of South & North 24 Parganas respectively with 1500 families & 3000 men & women farmers.** Outcomes of the project are: a) demand for urban and rural consumers for products from farmers' varieties/ landraces, neglected and underutilized species and a healthy diet are increased, b) Smallholder farmers, especially women, grow farmers' varieties/ landraces, neglected and underutilized species as a viable business and improve their livelihoods and c) Regulatory frameworks, strategies and policies at local, national, sub-regional and global level reflect the particularities of integrated seed systems, create an enabling environment for innovative market approaches, and incentivize the consumption of healthy, diverse and agro-ecologically produced food.

Catalyzing robust livelihood with small and marginal women farmers in endemically poor regions of Howrah, West Bengal through Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

5168 target households covered across 25 villages from 2 blocks of Howrah district.

We have selected and are working with more than 1000 principal and student farmers through 40 FFS (Farmer's Field School) and covered more than 750 hectares of land. The farmers are gradually adapting ecological farming concept and principles. We have supported 100 beneficiaries in 2 districts with livestock support (Goat, Chicks, Ducks etc) along with livestock management training. We also provided fingerlings to some farmers for small scale fishery promotion with pond management training. We have imparted more than 1000 trainings for capacity building and mass awareness on various aspects on which we are working like strengthening of SHGs, ecological farming, livestock rearing, fish-farming etc.

We have successfully developed 32 Pausakhis' in both the districts. They have been trained to provide livestock management support in their villages. 100% vaccination support has been provided to 1985 households (for PPR and Ranikhet disease). We have organised 8 numbers of exposure visits on ecological farming, fishery and livestock. The feedback of the beneficiaries is excellent about these exposure visits. They have learnt a lot from these visits and wanted more this type of exposure visit for their benefit. We have also organised several meetings and discussions with the Government officials, the PRI members, the local bodies to share our works with them and tried to facilitate the access of benefits for our beneficiaries. We have developed IEC materials in a simple understandable way to the villagers. With the help of these IEC materials, they can gain the maximum benefit from organic farming, livestock rearing, fishing etc in future.

In nutshell,

400 hectares of homestead lands are being utilized at optimum level with different techniques of ecological agriculture; The average number of livestock has been increased from 2-3 to 6-7; We have directly supported 50 beneficiaries for fishery. But another 135 households have adopted the better management practices; Additional monthly income of Rs.1200-1400 has been generated through support services for each participating household.

Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Enhancing Adaptive Capacity and Increasing Resilience of small and marginal farmers in Purulia and Bankura districts of West Bengal

It was the first project in India sanctioned by the Adaptation Fund Board. 5,000 households in Kashipur block of Purulia and Chhatna block of Bankura, belonged to vulnerable small and marginal farming communities and dependent on natural resources as livelihood option, have been the direct beneficiaries of this project.

15 step ponds have been excavated in the reporting period. Life-saving irrigation has been arranged in 150 hectares of Kharif paddy using the water whereas 67 hectares of land have been converted into double crop cultivation. Fish-farming has been introduced in the ponds, providing fish for the consumption of 210 families throughout the year. Plantation with soil-water conservation structure has been completed on 1 hectare of land during this period. 146 hectares have been planted with indigenous varieties of trees in the whole project period which not only improves the biodiversity of the area but also acts as food, fodder, fuel reserve.

Support in terms of drought tolerant indigenous seeds and organic inputs like neem cake, neem oil, yellow sticky paper, pheromone trap, azospirillum, rhizobium, TDV etc. has been provided to promote organic methods of farming. In total, 1954 hectares of land has been treated for 5000 farming households which helped them maintain nutrition security, reduces dependency on market and input cost of agriculture. Farmers can now make pest repellents at home using organic wastes.

Organic farming has been practised in 77.36 hectares of land in the kharif season and mixed cropping in 37.16 hectares in late kharif season. A total of 79.92 hectares land has been brought under relay cropping during this period. Rabi crop has been grown in 32.58 hectares of land whereas 32.5 hectares of land cultivated in pre-kharif season. A total of 326 hectares of land has been covered under mixed cropping in baid as well as fallow land.

Nutrition Gardens have become a successful intervention in this project. About 68% of the households have developed nutrition gardens in their homestead land to secure and diversify food throughout the year.

324 households have been supported with native varieties of livestock and improvement of shed in the reporting period. A total of 2042 households have been supported by the project which led to 93% of the beneficiary households rearing small ruminants and birds as an alternative source of livelihood to diversify their income opportunities. 19 nos. of ditch and dug-well have been made during this period. A total of 498 micro irrigation structures have been constructed in the project which has made possible to cultivate around 200 hectares of kharif paddy. Over and above, instead of a single crop, three crops have been cultivated each year.

196 vermicompost pits were constructed during the reporting period which states that a total 2014 pits have been built to produce organic manure. This has helped the farmers to refrain from using the use of chemical fertilizers. They produce vermin compost yearly two times and use it at their own agriculture land and save Rs 5000/- per year.

The community was supported with 177 smokeless ovens in this period. This has led to 2297 ovens operating in the project area. It helps women in reducing drudgery as well as incidence of health hazards. One community-based drinking water system has been installed in this period and total 5 facilities are in operation in the projected area, reducing women's drudgery and occurrence of water-borne diseases within the community.

The weather data was collected at regular intervals and sent to the meteorologist for preparation of weather forecast. Apart from the direct beneficiaries, these forecasts reached others, whose livelihoods are directly impacted by the weather received these forecasts.

Sundarbans Climate Adaptation Project

The project has been successfully completed. A follow up project has started since July 2021. Major thrust is on upscaling the work in the extended areas of Patharpratima block and Namkhana block. Emphasis is also on marketing the products. Construction of a Processing Unit and registration of the FPC is in progress.

One FPC (Farmers Producer Company) has been registered and all the members of this FPC are women. Name of the FPC is 'AALOR THIKANA'. Through Farmers Producer Company consumers can get chemical free crops and processed products throughout the year. This will definitely be a great source of income for the FPC members. 10 women farmers are the Members of the Governing/Executive Body of this FPC. One Common Facility Centre has been set up at Rajrajeswarpur in Ramganga. Office of the FPC is situated in that CFC building.

Improving the Climate Resilience of the Community through Integrated Natural Resource Management

This project is being implemented in 4 blocks of Sunderbans district involving 1600 households. The food insecure months could be reduced to 2 months from 4 to 5 months in a year. Participating household earns an additional income of at least Rs.1800 per year through sale of excess vegetables, fruits & animal products. Each women group saves seeds of at least 25 kinds of vegetables and 2-4 varieties of fruit trees. Farmers are no more dependent on markets for HYV seeds, which show less climate tolerance. More than 80 small farms developed into model demonstration plots for integrated farming. Around 110 group based seed bank and 8 community managed seed banks established / improved.

More than 120 mutual cooperation groups with 10-20 members formed, they are able to maintain meeting & financial records, manage revolving funds & operate savings account/passbooks, sanction small loans to members both for productive & emergency use. The MCG members are able to save and contribute Rs 400-600 per year. Around 8 Cluster level organisations are operative in the two districts of North and South 24 Pgs. They will also help government projects in the area, especially for environment conservation, frontline mangrove plantation etc. Empowered MCGs spread the awareness regarding the causes and impacts of climate change and the possible ways to build climate resilience to the communities living in the hamlets much beyond their periphery.

Green Livelihood for a Sustainable Society (GLASS)

The project is being implemented in 2 Districts - Bankura and Purulia, 3500 vulnerable households.

This is a 3-year project. The overall objective is to develop climate adaptive and resilient livelihood systems through diversification, technology adoption and natural resource management for small and marginal farmers associated with agriculture and allied sector. There has been a slow start of the project due to COVID-19 situation. Selection of the target group, group formation has been completed.

Strengthening climate resilient agriculture for marginalized smallholder farmers in the dry lands of West Bengal, India (SEWOH)

The project is being implemented with 1200 members from ultra-poor families in Purulia and Bankura. Beneficiary selection is under process. 39 groups have already been formed. Capacity building trainings are going on.

TECSAI project

The project is being implemented with 1200 members of ultra-poor community residing in 2 blocks of Birbhum. The project is in its 2nd year out of a total project period of 3 years. The progress has been slow in the beginning but now the pace is picking up. Transfer of the asset (in terms of livestock, seeds, net, saplings, support for agriculture, garden etc.) is about 80% completed. Here we also work to raise awareness about climate change impacts in the area, sensitize different stakeholders and children on the climate change impacts and apprise them of the adaptive measures that can be taken.

8 GP level CSOs, 2 block level CSOs and 1 District level CSO have been formed to take one step forward to enhance and protect the rights of marginalized groups. The CSO meetings at different levels are being held for focussing their demands and rights. Some applications have already been submitted to respective GPs and Blocks regarding local issues like repairing of tube well, solar light etc. which have already been addressed by the local authorities.

Climate Change and Environment Education

Establishment of student forums and organizing libraries in secondary schools

Student forums have been formed in 8 secondary schools, with 30 students in each school in Mohammadbazar and Dubrajpur Blocks of Birbhum District. Learning circles are going on with a focus to build more awareness related to climate change issues. Some books have also been provided to the libraries to enrich them with more information relevant to the subject.

Awareness with regard to Climate Change

Regular awareness with regard to climate change is going on in Sunderbans among the school children. Different talk shows, presentations, small surveys, seminars, quiz competitions street theatres etc are used to aware the children about the phenomena. They also in turn aware their peers, their parents, their teachers.

Consumer Education

This is also an area where DRCSC has been actively engaging itself during this year also. We could have been in connect with at least 5000 only this year and promote the concept of safe food. We could facilitate the linkage between the producers and the retailers so that the natural or organic produces get better price in the markets and the consumer gets safe products at competitive prices.

Education in Kolkata Slums

Ensuring access and continuing education and protection of vulnerable children, youth and community with a participatory approach of children and youth during COVID in 3 slums of Kolkata, West Bengal, India

The project has been launched with the goal to build resilience to COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the vulnerable people residing in three slums (Dhapa, Betbagan, Kapalibagan) of Kolkata and ensure that children and young people have access to basic rights such as education, protection and participation. It will ensure continuity of education and protection

services while building the resilience of vulnerable children and their families to the health risks and impacts of the pandemic in Kolkata. It has made provisions for tutoring 510 children (of them 270 are girls) after the reopening of schools to better prepare them for final exams after a long closure of schools. In addition, distance education is also being provided through courses on WhatsApp or distribution of worksheets, notes or learning materials. We have gradually moved on to support education by establishing four (4) Supporting Education Centres (SECs). The project worked intensively with 300 parents to make them aware of reproductive child care and child education as well as preventive aspects of COVID-19. Promotion of the Rights to Education and protection provides the fundamental elements for achieving the objective. 35 Teachers of public schools are developing skill & knowledge on management of children and giving better educational support to them. Emergency aid are also being provided to families faced with the health risks and the impact of the pandemic on their loss of income in COVID-19. Youth and children groups are leading awareness programmes on COVID-19 through display of posters, street play, leaflet distribution in all the 3 slums. It has developed a very strong communication with communities so that around 6000 community people have become sensitized on these issues. 2500 health kits and 500 nutrition food kits have been distributed within the community and the initiative also tried to compensate for the loss of income through cash support to improve their livelihoods. 10 selected families have been given cash support to meet their most essential and immediate needs with the engagement of local stakeholders.

At the community level, 125 youths have been engaged in forming youth groups, 263 children in Child Clubs and 45 community people have been organized in CLCPC etc. Children and young people who are members of local clubs are able to continue their mobilisation to defend children's rights through concrete actions that they have proposed to carry out. Monitoring of the children are done by the young people in each slum to find out the situation in each family and to prevent the risks of violence or abuse. This monitoring is done through home visits and weekly telephone exchanges. In addition, the youth groups are supported by the club facilitators to submit their requests to the local authorities. Since the beginning of the pandemic, several alerts from these groups have, for example, helped stop child marriages or obtained support for certain families. **Creative therapy support has been provided to children and youth in the form of dance therapy, drawing competitions and virtual exchanges. In the education centres or communities,** children are able to stay connected and engage in creative activities that are useful to unload and channel their emotions while occupying their time in a constructive way. Youth groups are trained on dance therapy and they have led initiatives to support 300 children.

Capacity Enhancement of Local Entrepreneurs in Natural Resource based Vocations

Green College: The purpose of establishing Green Colleges in three districts of our project area, viz. Purulia, Bankura and Birbhum is to increase number, outreach and effectiveness of skill building institutions that provide training, extension and business development support in rural trades, and significantly improve livelihood opportunities of smallholders and rural youth.

12 short duration (one day) farmer's training programs were conducted in the Green Colleges at the 3 districts mentioned above. The training programmes were supported by the District ATMA Cell, Department of Agriculture, Govt. of West Bengal. In all, 600 active farmers took

part in the whole training session and the resource persons were Deputy Director of Agriculture, Project Director ATMA, Assistant Directors of Agriculture of the respective blocks and one agriculture specialist from DRCSC. We are conducting farmers training with almost self-employed farmers.

Uthkarsh Bangla: We were given permission to conduct 3 agriculture related training programmes of medium duration (200 hours) under Paschim Banga Society for Skill Development on Utkarsh Bangla Scheme, Government of West Bengal. We completed one batch of Organic Grower Course Training Programme, where 30 trainees participated, of which 10 trainees have already been self-employed in agricultural activities and some are on their way to get self-employed. But the Department is now not ready to consider self-employment as an employment, hence the evaluation process is held up as well as the support. This is ultimately hampering the relationship with the trainees.

Collaborative Projects with other NGOs

A brief report on Development of Nutrition Garden session – Anjali.

Mental health is a fundamental component of health. Lack of understanding about mental disorders are major barriers to seeking help and promoting better mental health. Increasing understanding and overcoming stigma through strategic communications and social activities are crucial steps towards strengthening mental health. In general, those who are living on a temporary basis as residents in Mental Hospital are mentally challenged. They are also deprived from society and their family. They are mentally weak and mostly backward. They are under the treatment by the Hospital and gradually after a period of time feels better and express their interest of living in society with their family.

In collaboration with Anjali, we have introduced nutrition gardens in 4 mental hospitals (Pavlov Mental Hospital and Lumbini Park Mental Hospital at Kolkata, Berhampore Mental Hospital in Murshidabad District and Purulia Mental Hospital in Purulia District). The nutrition gardens have been grown organically with different ecological agriculture techniques like mixed cropping, raised beds, water management techniques like pitcher irrigation, drip irrigation etc., circle beds, integrated pest management processes etc. The participants learn joyfully and are spontaneously involved in maintaining the gardens. Continuous motivation session is done with them to promote sustainable agriculture methods.

Over the last one year also the harvest of safe nutritious vegetables is going on. The various seasonal seeds of Spinach, Malabar spinach, Yardlong bean, Winged bean, Coriander, Pumpkin, Red leaf amaranth, Tomato etc. are sown. Brinjal, Chili, Radish, Tomato, Aloe vera, Basil, Lemon and Lemon grass have been planted. A good amount of vegetables are harvested from these gardens. Fish cultivation has also been initiated in Purulia.

Collective Form of Cooperation Project

Second phase of this project has been started in 2019 in two villages of Ramganga and Rajrajeswarpur under Ramganga GP and has served 67 beneficiaries. This is the final year of the project. This year the emphasis has been on more and more strengthening the groups and the clusters.

Supporting Farmers Groups through Sustainable Agriculture Advocacy

Kisan Swaraj Samiti (KSS) support during pandemic:

During the last two years of COVID Pandemic, like other sectors, the organizational work of Kisan Swaraj Samiti (KSS) was primarily hampered. However, KSS, which has been developing over several years, has proved to be a united force during this pandemic. Our members have helped their neighbours in every possible way. The patients were taken to the hospitals. Food was arranged and provided to the affected families. Campaigns, orientation programs and trainings were organized to deal with the situation. Besides, livelihood support was provided to 3000 plus migrant families with support from AID, government, and other NGOs. We think that without the organizational strength of Kisan Swaraj Samity, this unprecedented and inclement situation could not be tackled.

Post disaster support: Amphan and Yash – two consecutive super cyclones had hit West Bengal during COVID-19 Pandemic. In our operational areas in Purba Medinipur, North and South 24 Parganas, there had been major loss of lives and livelihoods. With support from AID, we have provided livelihood support to 250 plus farming families in those areas during and in the post-disaster period in various ways.

Farmer's Market: We currently run a total of 3 Poison free Farmers' Market in Jhargram, Purba Medinipur and Nadia. We have been able to continue these markets even during the pandemic. Local consumers and administration have been very supportive and provided necessary permission and essential support to us. As a result, both consumers and farmers have benefited.

Rights and Entitlements: As we all know the condition of farmers in India including West Bengal is worsening day by day. Most of the farming families in the state are living in a hand to mouth situation. We continuously negotiate with the administration to make the schemes, services and facilities available to the farming families. We also work with them to fight for their rights and entitlements. In this connection, Kisan Swaraj Samity and two other organizations have been jointly organizing various discussions.

Follow-up of Sustainable Agriculture Policy in West Bengal: We submitted the Sustainable Agriculture Policy for the state to the Government of West Bengal in September 2019. The Director of Agriculture and other officials were present during the process and assured us to implement some of our suggestions. This year ex-agriculture minister and an influential member of the ruling party and some other individuals and organizations have initiated some activities for the promotion of Sustainable Agriculture in West Bengal. We are actively participating in this coalition and continuously promoting our Agenda regarding Sustainable Agriculture.

Our Donors

			
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We acknowledge the receipt of individual donations throughout the year. Your donations have helped us to bring a positive difference in the lives of our target people.

The 10 member Executive Council of DRCSC during 2021-22 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
Dr. Saroni Biswas	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.