

## Coping with hunger and disaster through Community Grain Bank

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DRCSC took the initiative to organize and motivate the women of Hetasunra village under Chhatna in Bankura to set up and regularly maintain a community grain bank. Most of these women belong to the ST, SC or OBC communities.



A well-built community grain store locally called 'Gola ghar' was constructed with the full participation of all group members. DRCSC helped the group by providing the expenses for making the cement floor. It was made sure that the stored grain was kept dry and free of pests by constructing the store in a well lit place and making a thatched roof. The preliminary grain collection of 100 kg was shared equally by DRCSC and community members.

Stored grain was kept watertight by using the traditional method of binding the exterior of the Gola ghar with plaited straw ropes and putting straw packing buffer next to it inside. Within that the rice grains were kept. When local grain prices begin to rise, and grain supplies fall, the bank makes grains available to the villagers and even to the people of adjacent villages.



As their own supplies had run out, when local people outside the group members needed to buy grain, they were provided loan of 20 ser (18.662 kg) grains against an interest of 8 ser ((7.46 kg), whereas group members could get the facility at a lower interest rate of 5 ser (4.66 kg) against 20 ser of original loan. Since 2018, the women's group of Hetasunra has continued to store grain for the critical periods of the year.

After harvesting time, around November to December, the group decides where the price is the lowest and purchases the grains from there to increase the stock of the bank. The villagers of Hetasunra have welcomed the grain bank warmly and understand the advantage of safeguarding their grain.