



The Focus

River lifting irrigation in Purulia



The Bhalukgajar village is situated on the eastern side of Kashipur block in Purulia. Here the soil is rocky lateritic with very low water retention capacity. The annual rainfall varies between 1200 to 1400 mm but the entire rain falls within a period of 2 months in a year. The entire semi-arid region is a single cropped area which is entirely dependent on rain. No crop can be grown in the rest 8 - 9 months due to absence of water. The only rainfed crop is also getting disturbed by the recent erratic changes in the climate due to global warming.

Most of the lands are thus left unutilized for a very long period. Scarcity of food forces the able-bodied men and women to migrate to neighboring resourceful districts in search of work.

Such fallow lands are also not rare in Bhalukgajar village. But the Bhalukgajar farmers' group has made it possible to

convert such a 300-350 bigha land from a single crop area to double even triple crop area. River Dwakeswar flows by this village. They dug a well near the river and made channels so that the river water when in spate during the rainy season flows

through the channels and fills up the well. They planned to use the water for irrigating the adjacent fields during the dry season. They had to face many difficulties while digging this. But after many hindrances they were finally able to dig a well of 15 ft depth and 16 ft circumference. With the help

of a 10 HP pump they are now able to irrigate the seasonal fallows within a stretch of 300 - 350 bighas around the well. Apart from the rainfed paddy, two more crops could be grown with the river lift irrigation system.

Most of the members of this group are landless labourers. According to the contract the group made with the land owners, the owners will cultivate paddy in the rainy season and allow the group members to cultivate the land during the rest of the year. Last year, they grew winter crops like wheat, mustard, linseed, lathyrus, horse gram, lentil, peas, tomato, pumpkin, eggplant, potato, onions etc. They could harvest 110 Q wheat, 700 kg mustard, 35 kg lentil, 10 kg lathyrus, 55 kg chickpea, 5 kg linseed, 210 kg tomato, 22 kg ridged gourd, 400 kg pumpkin etc which



amounted to Rs. 120,000/-. It is expected that in the next 2 – 3 years, it will not be necessary for the members of this group to migrate to other districts during the lean season.



Collaboration with ICDS centres at Birbhum



In tribal villages, children, particularly age of 0-6, are neglected as their parents had to go to work everyday keeping the infant to a minor of age 8 or 10. Their nutrition and intelligence level are affected seriously.

We started a village crèche at Srabanandapur village of Birbhum, for 0-6 year's old children with nutrition garden and a play & learn space. Children are assisted to build social, natural, communication and logical skill through games and activities. A sumptuous nutritious meal is served with vegetable from the school garden and other staffs come from the parents in the form of egg, paddy, potato etc.

Mothers are assisted to raise their own kitchen garden, save money, grains & seeds in group for the stressful period. There are regular literacy

classes in the evening for them. There are nutrition education sessions so that they can take care of the health and nutrition of the family too.

ICDS center is using our facilities now. The CDPO of that block has agreed to form a network with 10 ICDS centres to spread the idea of integrated development according to our model at Sarbanandapur through share skill, ideas and expertise.

RTI popularization triggered off in North Bengal

DRCS, along with its partner organization started mass awareness campaign to activate Right to Information act in 4 districts of North Bengal.

Announcement

Enjoy our training centre facilities

Our training centres at Bolpur in Birbhum and Jhargram in West Medinipur are upgraded with multimedia training hall and accommodation facilities for 40 trainees at a time. Food is homely, tasty and organic. Special discount is available for NGOs for conducting training with more than 20 participants.



Discussion on “Politics of West Bengal”

The well known economist and social activist Subhendu Dasgupta will facilitate an interactive session on “*Politics of West Bengal*” in September. Contact our public education division for details.

Sharing session between schools

We initiated school garden in 12 schools by the students, as we believe that garden can be a wonderful tool to learn science and environment. Students will meet in a sharing session. For details contact drcsc.ind@gmail.com



Workshop on Micro-enterprise

Workshop for SHG promoters from West Bengal, Jharkhand, Orissa on agro and natural resource based micro-enterprise development at Bolpur DRCSC unit during 24-25th September, 2008.

Contact us for registration.

Happenings

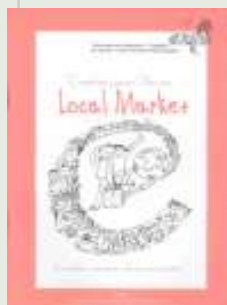
- Attended learning event on 'South East Asian Learning Event on Climate Change' organized by Christian Aid at Chennai in June 2008.
- Attended exposure visit on 'Mainstreaming HIV AIDS Campaign' organized by Christian Aid in May 2008.
- Christian Aid (UK) climate coordinator Richard Ewbank visited DRCSC's work in Purulia and Sundarbans June 2008.
- A discussion session facilitated by economist Subhendu Dasgupta on "Recent Trends of Food Crisis in India" in July 2008.
- KKS (Germany) country representative visited our work on June 2008.
- All of our users and readers of our resource library met to give their feedback on improving our facilities and future perspective of DRCSC as a information dissemination centre.
- DRCSC organised a national meeting for formation of an integrated farming

network. For details, contact aicp.sc@gmail.com

- One of our workers completed certificate course on International Perspective of PME from PRIA and Victoria University with grade A.

New Productions

Lesson Plan on Local Market for educators



'Local Market' (English), the latest addition in the 'Basbhumi Series' is published. This series of booklets will help you to do environmental

activities in your school & community. Other siblings are Tree, Insect, Bird, Medicinal Plant, Vegetable, Waste, Rice, Water are available with us both in Bengali and English.

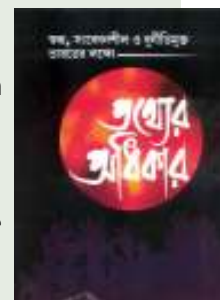
"Gene Phashal – Banchabe na Marbe" (GM crop - boon or ban)

This 25 page booklet gives an idea about the genetically modified crops and the disastrous effects they might have on our crop diversity and existing ecosystems.



"Tathyer Adhikar" (RTI)

Right to Information Act was passed in 2005. As is the case in most of the acts passed, people have very little knowledge about this act also. This is a very useful book that elaborates the provisions under this act and contains information about how a person can make an application under RTI, to whom the application may be made, what are the bindings on the government etc.



The World of Social Insects (CD / DVD)

A film on the life of 4 social insects viz. Bees, Ants, Termites and Wasps as a supplementary study material for children in the age group of 12 - 14.



Aranyak (CD / DVD)

This is the Bengali version of the film 'The Old Man and His Jungle' on the impact of Joint Forest Management in 11 forest fringe villages of South West Bengal.

"Proshnottare RTI" (RTI FAQ)

Small public awareness booklet on frequently asked questions on RTI.



For information, training, ideas, books, films, techniques on alternative development through natural resource management contact

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