



Darjeeling Ladena Road Prerna

Annual Report 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Vision Statement

Darjeeling Ladena 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 sustainable agro-ecology 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 with special focus on conservation and climate change.
6. Promote well being of children and communities through health and mental health interventions especially in partnership with educational institutions.

1. Community conservation : Team: Sailesh and Roshan

Human wildlife conflict (HWC) is increasingly becoming one of the major threats to agricultural livelihoods for communities living next to Protected Areas and Forests especially in the last 15 to 20 years. There are multiple factors that contribute to this growing HWC and redress has to be done at multiple levels including at the community level. There is also a need to address HWC from a mountain lens as most of the HWC discourse tends to be plains and large mammal centric. The top depredator varies between wild pig, bear and monkey depending on location but also the point to be noted is that most data shows that after the top depredator, the combination of the next three animals contribute to an agricultural depredation in value usually equal in the quantum of the top animal. And usually the next three animals are small in size like, hare, porcupine and civet.

List of 'problem animals' of HWC (not in order) till date collected from community consultations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wild Pig ● Bear ● Hare ● Porcupine ● Deer ● Monkey ● Civet ● Marten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leopard ● Jungle Cat ● Rat ● Squirrel ● Eagle ● Kite ● Thrush ● Birds
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a. **Community-based mitigation of human-wildlife conflict around the Singalila National Park, India** Team: Sailesh and Roshan

The strengthening of the bio-fence as a protective layer against the 'problem animals' of human wildlife conflict in the five forest villages (i. Samanden, ii. Bich Gaon, iii. Dara Gaon, iv. Gurdum, v. Namla) in the fringe of Singalila National Park continued through a process of infilling and restoration of the past bio-fences by the community members itself. Regular updates were made with the lead members of the community for guidance and technical inputs.

b. **Providing specific technical support to WWF-India's Khangchendzonga Landscape (KCL) program in managing human wildlife conflict in selected areas of Sikkim** – supported by WWF India Team: Sailesh and Roshan

Piloting of specific HWC interventions in Talkhadka Ward, Regu GPU, East Sikkim and Kitam, South Sikkim

- Capacity enhancement and training of progressive farmers
 - Piloted HWC management strategies with progressive farmers
 - Different forms of fencing including bio-fencing, solar fencing, wire mesh fencing were tested in strategic sites of the village and their efficacy documented
 - Chicken coop development for protection against predators were designed and adapted at the community level and proved to be the most appreciated and popular intervention
- Promoting sustainable agro-ecology through the progressive farmers.
 - Increasing agro-biodiversity with the introduction of indigenous seeds like peas, beans, turmeric, soyabean, greens
 - Enhancing agro-ecological practices with progressive farmers and the community
 - Hands on training on different composting techniques
 - Integrated pest management, making and application of pest repellants locally
 - Harvesting and use of indigenous micro-organisms
 - Designing a handbook for farmers on sustainable agro-ecology

Training and capacity building of community members in human wildlife conflict management

- Strengthening CBOs and PRI to leverage support for HWC management through various formal and informal engagements
 - MGNREGA interventions were converged to address the issue of HWC through biofencing and chicken coop expansions.
 - An exposure visit to Darjeeling was organized for the key representatives of the community comprising of the Elected Panchayat Representatives, Women SHG leaders, Progressive Farmers and Youth. The representatives visited Mineral

Spring and interacted with the Board of Mineral Spring Sunjukta Vikash Sanstha on the institutional process of MSSVS, organic certification, fair-trade and marketing and spent the night in homestays with a farm visit the following day. They then interacted with the Lebong Cantonment board on solid waste management, Hayden Hall on handicraft and Reyso for handicraft and homestays.

- Facilitate community plans for HWC management. HWC planning and mainstreaming is being taken forward with documentation of HWC and using this data to include the issue in the planning process of the Panchayati Raj Institution.

2. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:

a. ***Providing access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene in Tea Estates of Darjeeling*** - supported by Jal Sewa Charitable Trust, WaterAid

Team: Swastika, Anamika, Subash, Kareena and two community workers- Manish Subba and Inam Rai.

In partnership with Twinings and WaterAid India over a period of two years we aim partner with the communities of Nagrifarm and Barnesbeg Tea Estates to improve access to clean water and improve health and hygiene in the two estates.

Activities Undertaken:

- Project inception workshop involving all possible stakeholders like Tea Estate Management, Government Officials of departments directly or indirectly associated with water, sanitation and hygiene, civil society organizations, media houses and tea associations.

- Rapport building process with all relevant stakeholders including the various community based organizations, the *samajs*

Meeting with the Community Based Organization (Samaj) of 21 villages of both the tea estate was conducted at their respective villages. These meetings helped in building rapport with the communities and also dialogues about the Project objectives. The community representatives were actively engaged in the meeting and showed their keen interest in the project.

- Campaigns- Global Handwashing Day October 15 2019 and World Toilet Day November 19 2019

a. *Global Handwashing Day was observed in 2 Schools of Barnesbeg Tea Estate with the involvement of teachers. Through this campaign the project reached 178 students on steps and critical times of handwashing*

b. *World Toilet Day was observed in 4 schools of Barnesbeg Tea Estate (2) and Nagrifarms (2). A total of 189 students were reached through this campaign on importance of sanitary toilets as well as linking proper handwashing*

- Formation of Women Groups and training on Menstrual Hygiene Management
 - a. *Conducted Menstrual Hygiene Management Trainings to 2 groups covering 4 communities of Barnesbeg Tea estate. A total of 44 women and adolescent girls attended this training. The trainings included a peer educators section too thus the trainees continue work on menstrual health management in their communities.*
- Identification of youths and training on water quality testing process and solid waste management.
 - a. *Youth Volunteers group consisting of 16 members and 22 members was formed and trained on water quality at Barnesbeg Tea Estate and Nagarifarms respectively. Two-day training each was conducted where the Youth volunteers did hands on training on testing different parameters of water quality. The training also focussed on solid waste management on zero waste principles and emphasizing on waste prevention that encourages the redesign of resource life cycle so that waste is reduced and lives of products are extended through reuse. Waste and water contamination relationships were elaborated. The ultimate goal being no trash is to be sent to landfills as these estates are struggling with their solid waste too.*
 - b. *38 youth volunteers have completed water pre monsoon water quality testing at their communities in Nagarifarms and Barnesbeg tea estate in 31 communities of the two tea estates. Baseline survey was conducted to understand the current status of WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene) and fine tune our intervention. The baseline survey covered two aspects of worker's survey- i) Workplace and Household level using a simple random of 33% which looked at the worker's WASH facility at workplace, access to water sanitation and hygiene facilities at household and the worker's productivity and quality data, and workplace level data linking it to the reduction in absenteeism of workers. These findings will help define the Return On Investment (ROI) component from their WASH investments made and ii) KAP (Knowledge Attitude and Practice survey which aims to capture toilet use, hand and personal hygiene, food hygiene and Menstrual Hygiene Management practices using a simple random of 15%. The KAP survey was conducted with 126 workers Tea Estate) and 300 Worker's survey- workplace and household. The team also completed Institutional survey (Aganwadi centres and schools) of Barnesbeg and Nagarifarms Tea Estates.*

3. ***Comprehensive Health and Hygiene Improvement Program (CHHIP) funded by Broadleaf HEA - USA***, Team: Kriti and 5 School Health Activists, Nima, Mariyam, Satyam, Sushma and Sushmita.

CHHIP is a health education and improvement program with the following three interrelated components implemented and/or facilitated by trained, community-level School Health Activists: 1) health education curriculum taught in partner schools, 2) health monitoring and early intervention, and 3) improvement of the school health environment.

In 2019, the total number of students was 421. In 2020, 16 schools the total number of students impacted by CHHIP is 727

PROGRESS BY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: To improve the health knowledge, attitude, behavior, and skills of children in targeted communities

Health Education

The CHHIP Health Curriculum includes a total of 120 student-centered joyful lessons covering concepts of basic health and hygiene. From April to December 2019, the SHAs have delivered 81 lessons of the CHHIP curriculum in partner schools. The SHAs are supported by the core team in their intervention.

The Project officer Kriti Rai including 3 SHA's Mariyam Subba, Nima Choden Tamang and Satyam Tamang conducted three days CHHIP Educators Training for 2 SHA and 2 community workers of partnering communities and 6 office staffs from different project on 16th to 18th February 2020. The training was around the CHHIP curriculum, methodology of teaching and necessary pedagogic skills to implement student-centered and joyful learning in their classrooms. The impact of the CHHIP curriculum was assessed using pre and post Student Health Knowledge Test that looks at student knowledge acquisition CHHIP conducted Student Health Knowledge Test.

Objective 2: To improve the overall health environment of partner schools

Improvements to the School Health Environment

In March 2020, partner schools were provided with a physical activity kit and a first aid kit. We primarily focused on improvement of necessary infrastructure to one of the partner schools.

Annual Exercise Day

The Exercise Day took place in three communities Kolbong, Marybong and Maneydara in November 2019 to promote an active and healthy lifestyle while giving children the opportunity to compete in a variety of games and win educational prizes.

Objective 3: To improve the health status of Children

Health Monitoring and Early Intervention

Through a series of treatment and screening protocols performed by the SHA, CHHIP seeks to provide students with a full package of basic primary health service over the course of a school year.

Preventative Health Screening & Wellness Promotion Exam

As part of this effort all children received the Preventative Health Screening and Wellness Promotion Exam once annually. These exams provide a well-rounded and thorough health check that will help provide early identification of acute and chronic health concerns. They are designed to help the SHAs improve the overall health and well-being of the children that they serve. In June 2019, SHAs administered Preventive Health Screening in partner schools. A total of 203 students were listed for further assessment by the SHAs; 106 children received

professional evaluation, reflecting improved access to health services for children in rural primary schools.

De-worming

In March 2019, deworming medication was administered to children and school staff of 12 partner schools. We were able to treat 84% of children enrolled in the programme, and 78% of total eligible students.

Iron Supplementation

The intervention targets all students enrolled in partner schools age 5+ years, as well as all female teachers/adults employed by partner schools. In 2019, the first phase of iron supplementation implementation began in April to June. We achieved a 72.19% coverage rate for children enrolled and 93.02 % coverage rate for total eligible students. The second phase was implemented in September to December and achieved a 74.94% coverage rate for children enrolled and 94.13% coverage rate for total eligible students.

Growth Monitoring

We conducted growth monitoring twice during this school year for children enrolled. Growth monitoring I occurred in May 2019 and growth monitoring II occurred in November 2019, for children below 8 years. In GM I 12.76% of students were found to require further examination. SHAs referred them to PHCs and local clinics for further assessment. The SHAs also visited caregivers of these children and gave them an overview on balanced diets and the importance of eating nutritious diets.

Skin Disease and Screening

Children at partner schools were screened for obvious common skin disorders or other issues that could indicate a need for referral. Referrals were made to Primary Health Centers and Clinics at community level.

We conducted skin disease and screening in July and August 2019. 93.34% of students were screened for skin problems by the SHAs in partner schools. A total of 29 students were referred for further assessment; most referral cases were for scabies, 38% (5) students completed referral. This represents a significant increase in access to early and meaningful treatment for children with dermatologic conditions.

Oral Health Screening

Children in partner schools were screened for potential oral problems. In addition, the SHAs examined children's teeth and gums for any obvious infections, injuries, or other issues that could indicate the need for a referral. Referrals were made to a dentist in the case of oral problems or a community-level PHC in the case of oral infection or injury.

The oral health screening occurred in September 2019. 100% of the students were screened for oral problems by the SHAs in partner schools. A total of 228 students were referred for further assessment, showing the main reason for referral to be cavities. After a follow up with the students later in the school year it was reported 43.4% (99 students) completed referral.

Epilepsy Screening

We implemented Epilepsy Screening in schools during the month of September and October 2019. The SHA screened children for possible epilepsy using the caregiver based Epilepsy Screening Survey and referred students to a physician for further evaluation and treatment.

Case Study

School - Bal Sai Academy, Kolbong.

During one of the class SHA Nima Choden Tamang observed that one student looked sick and was not performing well during the classroom activities. Thus, the SHA asked the child why she was not taking active part in the classroom activities, the child replied that she was bothered with throat ache, SHA further asked if she had tonsil and was taking any medication, the child replied that it was not a tonsil. After the school SHA met her parents and enquired about the child, the child's mother informed SHA that the child was complaining about the throat ache after drinking milk the other day so her mother thought it was just a common cold and cough and she will get better the next day. Thus, the SHA asked the child to open her mouth and when the SHA looked inside her mouth, she notice a grass inside, she was shocked and asked the child about how did the grass get stuck inside her throat, the child then said that while she was playing in the field she happened to swallow a small piece of grass which is locally known as "sirru." So the child was immediately referred to Darjeeling hospital but the parents were so worried that they asked the SHA about the private hospital where they can treat the child as soon as possible, so the SHA informed the parents about the private ENT specialist, the very next day she was taken to the specialist and the grass was taken out from her throat. Thus, the child is healthy and actively participates in the classroom activities at present.

4. Mental Health:

Project Title: *Tealeaf Mansik Swastha*

Funded by: Mariwala Health Foundation, Team: Priscilla, Surekha, Arpana and Choden, Catherine, Emma

Introduction:

Among the various challenges we face today in terms of access to healthcare, access to children's mental health care service has also been identified as a major global health challenge. Of the 20% of children suffer from a mental health condition, 80%-90% will remain undiagnosed, untreated and affected lifelong (WHO, 2010). A fundamental underlying cause of this treatment gap is insufficient human resources. More so there is a significant mental health treatment gap for children in Darjeeling, within the limited existing health infrastructure, cultural beliefs and societal stigma around mental health, access for support and treatment on mental health for communities are lacking, which in turn widens the mental health treatment gaps.

TeaLeaf (TEAchersLEADing the Frontlines) is a research programme with the goal to develop, test, and scale alternative and combined models of education and mental health care that leverage classroom teachers and synergies between the fields of education and child psychiatry to improve the lives of children with mental health struggles. As a mental health program, *Tealeaf-Mansik Swasthya* aims to (i) improve access to evidence-based mental health care for children, (ii) improve children's mental health outcomes, and (iii) improve children's wellbeing,

development, and academic functioning. Through this intervention teachers are empowered to incorporate simple, easy-to-use yet evidence-based mental health techniques in their everyday interaction with targeted students.

Objective:

The *primary objective* of this stepped-wedge, cluster randomized trial is to evaluate the efficacy of teacher-delivered mental healthcare for school-aged children in resource-limited primary schools. The *primary hypothesis* is that children receiving the Tealeaf intervention (as compared to those receiving Enhanced Usual Care) will demonstrate improved mental health.

Trail Design:

This is a stepped-wedge cluster randomized design to assess the efficacy of the intervention. Given the nature of the intervention, each school will be in a cluster and each step will be an academic year. Randomization will occur at the school level. All schools will initially receive Enhanced Usual Care and will be randomly sequentially transitioned into the intervention arm.. A stepped-wedge approach will ensure that the study is conducted ethically and will not deny evidence-based services to children attending schools in the Enhanced Usual Care group.

Intervention:

- 3-day Enhanced Usual Care Training (EUC) on Child Mental Health:

The project partnered with 50 low-cost private primary schools in Bijanbari, Relling, Mirik, Milling Tea Estate, Gorabari, Moonda Tea Estate, Pokhriabong, Selimbong Tea Estate, Nagari Tea Estate, Mangpoo, Toongsong Tea Estate, Margaret's Hope Tea Estate, and Rimbik clusters in the year 2019, followed by delivering Child Mental Health Training to 116 teachers in the months of March, April and early May.

The project schedule followed the school academic year timeline. These schools start their session by mid February and close by early December. Training for the teachers are scheduled in the earlier months of the school year, while in the later months as schools are closed in the winters the project team spent time in planning and preparation for the next school year. The project team invested a significant amount of time in reviewing our intervention outcome for 2019, identifying areas for improvement and adjusting the Tealeaf Protocol before roll-out in 2020.

Workshop on Ethics in Social Science and Public Health Research:

A Short Intensive Course on Ethics in Social Science and Public Health Research was organised by DLR Prerna in collaboration with St. Joseph's College North Point Darjeeling on 9th to 13th November 2019. The goal of this course was to enable participants to appreciate the salience of research ethic in upholding research integrity; and identify and apply ethical reasoning to social science and public health research.

A special evening session was organized with other individuals and organizations whose work intersects with the project goals and aims.

The workshop was a process of formalising and building capacities of the Ethics Committee in partnership with St Joseph's College that has been looking at the intervention of the project with the lens of ethics and offered comments and suggestions that have shaped the project.

6-day TeaLeaf Mansik Swastha Training on Child Mental Health:

22 schools were randomly selected from 44 schools to attend the Child Mental Health Training for teachers scheduled in February 2020. To make the training effective the training was facilitated in two sets and schools were divided in two groups, the training was scheduled from 3rd to 8th February first group and 10th to 15th February second group. The first batch included 21 teachers from 8 schools and the other had 17 teachers from 9 schools. The female: male ratio in the first and the second batch was 18:3 and 15:2 respectively.

Both the EUC and Tea Leaf Mansik Swastha trainings were facilitated in a participatory manner that included theory and practise to undertake evidence based mental health interventions in the school set up. Even though the teachers selected key students to work with the training enabled them to improve classroom learning environment for all as the skills and knowledge of the training are transferred with the entire school setting.

Research:

The intervention of Tealeaf is objectively researched so that at the end of three years we collect sufficient data to enable us to inform practise and policy of task shifting mental health interventions to teachers.

Baseline quantitative data was collected from 43 schools in the months of September, October and early November, ASER was administered to 374 students to assess their academic achievement, the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System, Third Edition (ABAS-3), was administered to evaluate changes in children's daily functioning and Achenbach Teacher Report Form (TRF) was administered to determine syndrome scales and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-V) scales. This represented completion of data collection for 381 students enrolled in the research for the year 2019.

The collected Baseline data including demographic data for 43 schools, 134 teachers, 257 parents was entered in Redcap application in the month of January 2020. Entry and initial analysis of Behaviour Rating Scale (BRS) scores for every student in Class I-IV (1544 students) was done. Data entry for test scores of 381 students also begun and ASER data entry was completed.

While acknowledging that these teachers had received only EUC training and had not received the follow-up support that is crucial to the Tealeaf intervention, we identified two major challenges:

- the proportion of children identified as requiring support was above the anticipated range of 10-15% and was closer to 25%.
- the number of children identified as requiring support exceeded the number of students that could receive support based on the number of teachers trained in the school and the limit on the number of children that one teacher can support.

Focus Group Discussions:

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) on training and training experience were conducted in the month of December. 11 schools were randomly selected from 44 schools and various stakeholders were invited to participate: Trained Teachers; Untrained Teachers; and School Management Group. Schools were grouped according to geographic location and a total of 23 FGDs were facilitated.

9 FGDs were conducted with the Trained Teacher Group, 28 teachers shared their experiences of the 3-day training and their subsequent experience in applying the learning in the school environment.

The teachers expressed that the 3-day training was helpful and they used skills they had learnt in the training. At the end of the school year (2019) teachers saw changes in their students' academic and behavioural performance, while in few students they did not see any change. Introducing their work on child mental health to parents was difficult for the teachers initially, although as conversations started growing teachers were more comfortable.

Based on this feedback, we have

- incorporated a whole school parent workshop in each school in 2019. This will help teachers to broach the subject with parents and also further extend the reach of the intervention into the wider community.
- developed a Guide to Teacher-Caregiver Interaction to support teachers to have these difficult conversations and incorporated this into the training.

The teachers also shared that this takes up additional time and they felt strongly that compensation should be provided. While this would represent a change in the model, we believe that we should give this feedback strong consideration and make every effort to include some compensation for the teachers' time.

8 FGDs were conducted with the Untrained Teacher Group. Based on this:

- We were happy that teachers were all given the opportunity to attend the training. We had considered random selection and principal nomination but our preference was that teachers would self-select as we believe this would result in lower drop-out rates. We will continue to use this strategy for teacher selection.
- Given that this was for EUC schools only, awareness of the intervention and general awareness of behavioural and mental health issues had not changed significantly among this group. In Tealeaf Schools in 2020, there will be a whole school workshop and trained teachers have been encouraged to share their learnings with their colleagues so we do anticipate a larger indirect effect.
- In some schools, teachers were aware of which students had been selected to receive the intervention. This was, to some extent, to be expected as many of the teachers work in the same classroom with targeted students and would anyway be aware of any challenging behaviour and also involved in managing that behaviour at different points in the school day. However, the full details of work being undertaken with the student were not shared and we will take efforts to reinforce the importance of confidentiality with all teachers.

6 FGDs were conducted with the School Management Group. All 7 school management gave positive responses to the teacher training and the teachers response to students in their classrooms and they would like to continue partnering with DLR Prerna in the following year.

The results that are emerging from our interventions are showing that we have a very good intervention logic of task shifting mental health interventions with teachers in low cost primary rural schools. This needs to be further expanded and tested for further validation.

5. **Agro-Ecology, Climate Change:** Anamika, Sailesh and Swastika

Climate change resilient Sittong II – funded by CASA, India

The project focused on strengthening resilience of five villages of Mamring and Turyok under Kurseong Sub- Division in Sittong II through a process of community institutional strengthening by conducting trainings and workshops on soil health and its importance, methods on improvement of soil through different techniques like vegetative composting, vermi- composting; harvesting of indigenous microorganisms and liquid manure; training on integrated pest management and application of bio pest repellent; special focus on intercropping, rotation of crops with 16 identified progressive farmers and community members.;Set up kitchen gardens with 16 progressive farmers from which 4 farmers have also constructed a greenhouse for germination of seeds and seed saving .

Distribution of indigenous varieties of seeds (peas, beans, soya bean, millet, maize and vegetables) to 16 identified progressive farmers for improvement of kitchen garden, nutrients, local market and seed saving.

Review meeting conducted with Disaster Management Task Force(DMTF). Refresher training conducted regarding quick response and preparedness in collaboration with Gram Panchayat and Primary Health Centre. In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, one session was conducted regarding myths and facts about the disease with community mobilisers who again disseminated the knowledge within the communities.

Anamika and Sailesh attended a workshop attended meeting with donor Bread for the World in Kolkata for planning of Phase II followed by Alipurduar and Siliguri.

Regional Level meeting on Disaster Preparedness and Climate Smart agro ecology was also held with North Bengal partners where representatives from CASA, Kolkata, UNICEF, different NGOs, academicians had attended the programme at Darjeeling.

Refresher trainings was also conducted with 20 women leaders from different SHGs Sustainable Menstruation health and Hygiene.

6. **NMA- Nutrition Sensitive Mountain Agro_ecology-** Anamika, Sailesh - Lok Chetna Manch

The nutrition in mountain agro eco systems II (NMA II), funded by the SDC and the project is implemented by IFOAM- organics international, HELVETAS and FiBL with national partners in five mountains ranges (Himalaya, Hindukush, Pamir-Tian Shan, East-African Highlands and the Andes), with field -level interventions in eight focus countries. NMA has the overall goal of contributing to the improved access to sufficient nutritious food for rural communities in

mountain regions. This is to be achieved through a network of actors, facilitating innovation and the diversification of proven agro- ecological and other nutrition sensitive practices.

The project is ongoing at Harsing and Mineral Springs, Darjeeling, Mamring and Turyok under Kurseong Sub- Division, Kolbong and Padeng under Jhepi GP, Maney Dara and Marybong Tea Plantation and 20 low cost private schools.

Under this project 25 RSPs (Rural Service Providers) were selected for the Capacity Development programme and 5 days face to face training programme on Nutrition based agriculture was conducted at Mineral Springs. After the completion of the training 25 identified RSPs (Rural Service Providers) started up with Micro intervention projects such as Nursery, Vermicomposting, Sustainable Menstrual Health and Hygiene, Seed saving and sharing, waste management, Kitchen garden, Floriculture.

Under Scaling up Nutrition Sensitive Agricultural Interventions varieties of indigenous seeds were distributed to the farmers of Mineral Springs.

7. **Agro-Forestry** – supported by Pur Project, France: Anamika and Sailesh

Agroforestry is the land use management system in which trees or shrubs are grown around or among crops or pastureland. This diversification of the farming system initiates an agroecological succession like that in natural ecosystems and so starts a chain of events that enhance the functionality and sustainability of the farming system. Trees also produce a wide range of useful and marketable products from fruits, nuts, medicines, wood, products etc.

DLR Prerna has been partnering with PUR Project based in France, Paris for the Agroforestry programme in Darjeeling for the last six years since 2014. During the planting of WAVE 2019 DLR Prerna planted 17000 different local species of trees in different villages of Sittong II in different planting models like block forestry, intercropping, boundary planting.

This project was done in partnership with 39 farmers who were identified during a socialisation meeting which was conducted during the inception meeting of the WAVE 2019 and after plantation regular monitoring of planted trees was conducted and 82% survival rate was reported.

8. **Farmer's empowerment** - supported by Pur Project, France: Swastika and Sailesh

DLR Prerna is partnering with PUR Project based in France, for farmer's and women's empowerment programmes.

The project team conducted an inception meeting with Community Based Organisation (CBOs) in different villages of Sittong II Block Kurseong to discuss the project aims, objectives and activities.

Baseline Survey on current practices, knowledge and attitude on Menstrual health and hygiene Management and agriculture was conducted with 25 farmers and 25 women and girls from the communities and Mamring Turyok High School.

20 each peer educators were identified and selected for both farmer and women empowerment programmes who were trained. The selected peer educators for the farmer empowerment programme were trained on different topics such as Integrated Farming System, Integrated pest

management, Crops and cropping patterns, Animal Husbandry, Improved Cooking Stove for fuel efficiency, personal health, Food security through kitchen garden.

These 20 progressive farmers who have undergone these training will play the role of a peer educator who will help in disseminating knowledge with the other community members and also create demonstration models. Till date 20 demonstrative models of Improved Cooking Stove have been installed.

Women's Empowerment

20 peer educators who have been identified and selected have undergone a training on Sustainable Menstrual Health and Hygiene where topics covered were on social stigma and taboos, biological aspect and products which mainly focussed on sustainability in terms of health and environment.

Refresher trainings were also conducted and taking this knowledge forward these peer educators have conducted several awareness campaigns with Self Help Groups from the communities.

9. Development and Environment Education

a. Zero Waste Himalaya: Roshan, Swastika and the entire team

i. *The Himalayan Cleanup*

IMI and ZWH conducted The Himalayan Cleanup which was undertaken on 26 May 2019 as a follow up of the successful 2018 campaign. DLR Perna is a key anchor of ZWH especially in the Darjeeling Himalaya and a number of institutions and organizations took The Himalayan Cleanup with waste and brand audit this year too. We hosted the Mall Road Cleanup this year.

This year corroborates that there has been a dramatic increase in plastic waste in the mountains. The process of the cleanup was taken forward as a process of self reflection too for the volunteers to see what makes up our waste and make changes to reduce the waste. The cleanup also brought about a great sense of solidarity and volunteerism.

Developed a road map for Kalimpong Municipality going zero waste and sustainable waste management which has become a framework for other cities across the IHR to refer too. Developed a write-up on plastic waste for elected representatives. Series of presentations and interactions were undertaken with the Kalimpong Municipality on the road map to sustainable waste management. This came about due to the raging fire at the landfill at Kalimpong.

ii. *Maasika Mahotsav*

The celebration of Maasika Mahotsav is an acknowledgement of Menstruation, an important biological change which makes the existence of life possible, yet the culture of silence around menstruation is so complete that most of the girls have no knowledge on menstruation before their first period. The social stigma and societal silence has a negative impact on health issues and mental health. Our celebration focused on sustainable products and challenging the 'plastic pads' also keeping an alarming attention on social stigmas and biological changes which has an adverse effect on mental health if not taken care of at an early stage. Through the Maasika

Mahotsav, 21 to 28 May 2019 we worked towards breaking the silence around periods and conversing at various platforms. Maasika Mahotsav 3rd edition was observed in 9 states in India and Nepal. We undertook open conversations in Darjeeling and Kalimpong with various institutions, schools and colleges and well-being centres. A public pop up stall at Chowrasta on 28 May – World Menstrual Health Day was the culmination of the week long Maasika Mahotsav. Also to mention some of the important yet silenced issues that revolve around menstruation came into highlight. The event tried to include all gender, breaking the silence on periods and taboos. In Darjeeling town, the major focus was 7 schools where the girl students from classes 5 to 10 were the target audience. On 22 May, we organized a workshop with Government officials, NGO's and women's groups working proactively on women and girl child issues. In the rural Darjeeling, the awareness campaign was facilitated by Community Workers of DLR Prerna who were trained on Sustainable Menstruation. They conducted awareness sessions in schools, women and girls of the communities including tea plantation workers.

Zero Waste Himalaya undertook sessions in Sikkim too as part of the Maasika Mahotsav. .

iii. **Plastic Freedom Challenge - #PFC 2019**

Darjeeling Municipality and Zero Waste Himalaya partnered to undertake the Plastic Freedom Challenge where institutions encouraged all students/community members to take a break from using plastic items for a week (August 8 - August 15). With this experience of #PFC week institutions were urged to continue to champion a sustainable zero waste lifestyle. Series of presentations were held at various educational institutions and organizations to garner participation for the #PFC. Memorandums to GTA, NCC, Cantonment board was also submitted for the #PFC and especially to make the Independence Day celebration plastic free.

To kick start the #PFC 11 schools and colleges, Darjeeling Municipality and CSOs came together for a discussion and pledge to take the #PFC.

The #PFC was taken in other mountain states of India too.

iv. TOT on Menstrual Health and Hygiene, State Institute of Rural Development, Sikkim - 9th to 11th May 2019

Swastika and team facilitated a training of trainers for all the field facilitators of SIRD that looked at breaking the silence on periods, biology, menstrual health and sustainability

v. Zero Waste Writeshop, State Institute of Rural Development, Sikkim

Facilitation team to develop IEC material on zero waste and sustainable menstrual health with all the field facilitators of SIRD, Sikkim. This was a follow up of the TOT on menstrual health.

vi. Peer Educators Workshop Kalimpong 10 to 12 Dec 2019

Over 50 youth from Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sikkim participated in a 2 days peer educators workshop that looked at the zero waste movement in depth as a means of enabling leaders in their communities. The participants applied for the workshop in an open call for applications.

The workshop dates included the International Mountain Day on 11 December that was observed under the aegis of Darjeeling Himalaya Initiative with Mr P. D. Rai being the Chief

Guest of the event. The peer educators presented their experiences in the form of a debate at the event with representatives of media and CSO participating in the event.

vii. Peer Educators Workshop Rural Management and Development and Swachh Bharat Mission Sikkim. 6 to 7 March 2020

Facilitation team for zero waste principles and practices for over 50 key community trainers and staff and Panchayati Raj Elected Representatives of RMDD from the state of Sikkim that resulted in a road map for the staff in their interventions.

b. Permaculture

Permaculture Design Course: This year, Rico Zook, Certified Permaculture Trainer conducted two, 14 days certified Permaculture Design Course from **2nd November to 17th November 2019** with total 9 trainees local, national and international participants in Aapbotay, Harsing, Dabaipani and Yangkhoo Busties. Sailesh continued working with Rico as under-trainee teacher.

Workshops/Trainings Attended:

a. Indian Mountain Initiative, Seventh Sustainable Development Summit (SMDS) held in Shillong, Meghalaya on 3rd and 4th October, 2018. Was in the core group of Zero Waste Himalaya that ensured that the SMDS was single use plastic free.

9. Future Action Plans

1. Partner and strengthen community based organizations
2. Strengthen conservation and sustainable livelihoods programme
 - i. Agro-biodiversity conservation, agro-forestry, nutritional agriculture, slow food
3. Strengthen capacity enhancement programmes on sustainable agro-ecology, nutritional agriculture, fairtrade, permaculture and participatory planning.
4. Expand community based HWC management as well as advocacy initiatives through: networking and linkages; lobbying; publishing
5. Strengthen community based water and sanitation interventions
6. Promote school health interventions
7. Strengthen mental health interventions in schools.
8. Zero waste strengthening innovation, expansion and campaigns
9. Climate smart interventions
10. Increase media and online presence
11. Network with national, international platforms and academic institutions

10. Note of appreciation

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