

Pilot Project to Promote Organic Consumption in the State of Rajasthan (ProOrganic)

Annual State-level Stakeholder Consultation and Feedback Meeting

Event Report

November 13, 2014, Jaipur



Background

India is mainly an agricultural country, where around 58 percent of the nation's population is involved in agriculture for livelihood. There is huge untapped potential of organic farming in India. Organic farming emerged as a potential alternative for meeting food demand, maintaining soil fertility and increasing soil carbon pool.

The promotion of organic consumption is directly related to consumer's safety in many ways. Use of pesticides and chemicals in agriculture production is one of the major causes of environmental degradation and also being unfit for human health. The chemical in food products adversely affects reproduction capabilities in women and girls.

Moreover, Indian societies being largely patriarchal, needs of women are not prioritised, so these women are more prone to chemical contaminations in food. So the adoption of organic consumption will benefit women and especially girls the most.

Insight into the Project

CUTS with the financial assistance from Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Sweden is implementing this two-year project. The objective of the project is to promote organic consumption in the State of Rajasthan (India) covering six major agriculture potential districts by awareness generation, sensitisation, capacity-building and advocacy activities. Increased awareness is expected to result in increased consumer demand, which will further push demand for availability and affordability of organic products contributing towards the decreasing health hazards of consumers.

Besides, in 1985, United Nations also recognised sustainable consumption as one of the consumer right under right to healthy environment in its guideline for consumer protection (UNGCP) and since organic consumption is key to healthy environment and sustainable consumption so the issue of organic culture is considered as an issue of consumer protection. The project is expected to result in better informed consumers and farmers about organic consumption and farming; better policies and enforcement thereof by sensitised policy-makers in the State. This will boost organic farming and consumption in the State and in the long run will provide sustainable environment and lifestyle. The project aims to promote organic consumption in six major agriculture potential districts namely: Jaipur, Dausa, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Udaipur and Kota.

The broader objectives of the whole project are:

- To generate awareness among consumers about organic products
- To build capacity of the farmers to adopt organic farming
- To promote and increase consumer's demand for organic products
- To encourage consumers to shift towards the use of organic products and sustainable consumption and
- To sensitise and advocate with concerned stakeholders, including government agencies to promote organic products in the State of Rajasthan.

More details and updates of the project are available at the project webpage:

www.cuts-internationala.org/cart/proorganic

Objective of the Meeting

The purpose of the consultation held on November 13, 2014 was to present, discuss and evaluate the activities conducted during the first year of the project in terms of both output and outcome. The aim of the meeting was to formulate the strategies for future with all the stakeholders so as to come out with much more focussed work on the issue in future. The event also witnessed the showcasing of key findings emerged out from the research study done, under the project as one of the major activity and provided a platform to all the stakeholders to discuss these findings, which portrayed the ground realities of organic consumption and production in the six districts of Rajasthan.

Proceedings

Inaugural Session



In the beginning, Deepak Saxena, Senior Programme Coordinator, CUTS International welcomed all the esteemed guests and delegates to the meeting. He briefly introduced all the participants about the objectives of meeting and apprised them with the day's programme schedule. Saxena invited the chief guest, special guest, delegates from SSNC and Director, CUTS on the dais for the inaugural session.

Introductory Remarks

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS, in his introductory remarks said that under National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, promoting organic farming is one of the key



components. Cheriyan said that the ‘National Project on Organic Farming’ started in 2004 but even after ten years, there is only 0.3 percent of India’s 140mn hectares of cropland is under organic farming in the whole country, which is quite meager 5.2mn hectare and out of this, 90 percent is a forest land, where vegetation grows naturally. Cheriyan said that this situation is a pathetic as far as the issue of promoting organic culture is concerned. Around 98 percent of the organic products are consumed domestically. Even though, there is a big export possibility, which is not properly trapped and out of what is exported comprising mostly animal feed, which does not give a big premium. Rajasthan is the largest State having a big untapped growth potential for organic farming and export of organic products. However, the research, under the project shows only mere 2.8 percent farmers are doing complete organic farming. Organic farming in India and especially in Rajasthan has a long way to go, he concluded. George also said that on the basis of the feedback received from all the stakeholders, CUTS would be in a position to devise the future strategy.

Opening Address



Sara Nilsson, Programme Officer, SSNC in her opening address said that 2.5 percent population of Sweden is a member of SSNC, which happens to be 105 years old organisation and has world-wide partners. Sara shared that in the last two years, organic consumption has considerably increased in Sweden and SSNC wants this to increase worldwide. Sustainable consumption and promoting organic is one of the key areas of work for SSNC. Sara also shared that 40 organisations and 25 countries participated in the ‘Green Action Week’ organised world-wide in the month of October. During the event, Ulrika Hjertstrand, who is incharge of Green Action Week in SSNC at the international-level was also present at the dais. Sara said after returning to Sweden, they will share the details and outcome of consultation with the people of Sweden.

Project Progress and Key Research Findings

Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator of CUTS, through a power point presentation shared the details of activities implemented, under the project so far earmarking the outputs and major outcome from these activities. He told that in the first year of the project, activities like Project Launch and Partner Orientation Meeting, Action Research, six District-level Orientation with the farmer groups, six Exposure Visits of farmer groups were accomplished. In addition, several Information Education and Communication (IEC) material in the form of handouts were also printed and distributed to the participants. Presently, awareness campaigns in 102 *panchayats* are being conducted.



Sharing about the action research, Amarjeet informed that the coverage includes as many as 51 blocks in six selected districts encompassing selected total 102 *gram panchayats*. Further, two groups of respondents, i.e. farmers and consumer responses were covered in the given ratio:

Consumer's Responses: Sample size 1536 (Male: 64.2 percent Female: 35.8 percent).
Farmer's Responses: Sample size 1529 (64.03 percent male and 35.97 percent female).

It was supplemented by 51 qualitative modules from various sources, such as various departments, various NGOs/VCOs, agencies in consultation with CUTS and its partners at the district-level.

While showcasing and portraying the research study conducted by CUTS in six major agriculture potential targeted districts i.e. Jaipur, Dausa, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Udaipur and Kota on 1536 samples of consumers, Amarjeet said that only 25.2 percent consumers have purchased organic products at any point of time although 78 percent consumers are aware of the ill-effects of pesticides used in non-organic production. The awareness on organic farming is lesser among women, which is only 28 percent in comparison to men. In one of the interesting and encouraging findings, 98 percent of respondent consumers have expressed willingness to buy organic products, if such products were easily available and at can be accessed at affordable costs.

Amarjeet also presented the key findings culled out from the analysis of farmer's responses. A total of 1529 samples from farmers in six districts were collected from six targeted districts. It is revealed that only 2.8 percent farmers uses organic inputs, whereas 39.2 percent uses chemicals, while remaining 57.9 percent farmers use a mix of both organic and chemical inputs. Similarly, 91.3 percent of farmers are found to be aware of ill impacts of chemicals and pesticides. However, 90.7 percent farmers use chemical based fertilisers and pesticides because it gives high yield. Awareness on certification process and the related problems with the same is also an issue as only 13.6 percent farmers are found aware of the organic certification. Besides, there were many key findings, which were put forth before the audience.

Requirement and induction of female-centric advertisement, which can play a lead role in availing organic products for their family's wellbeing and good health and introduction of mass awareness activities for creating organic consumption demand, promotion of livestock

as the focus, introduction of higher subsidies for organic farming and production of organic manure/pesticides/herbicides etc. by government and reduction in usage of chemicals in farming sector were showcased as few key suggestions in the presentation.

Responses to the Key Findings

After Amarjeet's presentation, Dr S S Rathore, Programme Coordinator, *Krishi Vigyan Kendra* stated that the imbalance created by the use of chemicals and pesticides have been proving costly for consumers. Raising his deep concern over the rising trends of using chemical pesticides, Rathore reiterated the need of more usage of vermin composting, which is not only eco-friendly but also cost effective. He said that it is an effective way to recycle agricultural and kitchen wastes. The application of *vermin compost* not only supplements plant nutrients (macro and micro) but also increases soil water retention, microbial population, nutrient content and carbon content of the soil. He emphasised on the mix cropping and pointed out that organic farming leads to increased production in the long run.



Dr Surendra Babu, Assistant General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Regional Development (NABARD), citing the example of eagle pulling out old feathers said that we have to reposition ourselves to stop the use of chemicals and pesticides and expand organic production and consumption to survive long. Surendra Babu also emphasised on to make an economically viable model, so that farmers are motivated to take up organic farming. Quoting NABARD-CUTS collaboration, he appreciated CUTS efforts in bringing a change in agriculture mode, which itself is a challenging task.



Dr B D Yadav, Professor of Vegetable Cultivation in Agriculture Research Institute, Durgapura stressed on the need of low water absorbing varieties of fruits and vegetables and domestic inputs application. Yadav said that in all, introduction of organic agriculture has diversified farming operations to add few more sources of income for the family. Organic agriculture management has increased the total man-days of labour requirement by 15 percent. A substantial portion being contributed by the family itself. The opportunities for value addition and processing of organic farm produce have generated many new agri-business opportunities at farm level.



As key speaker of the programme, **Dr Shital Prasad Sharma**, Director, Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Rajasthan appreciated CUTS and SSNC for the integrated efforts to put together the production and consumption sides. Sharma suggested the need of organising farmers into 'Farmers Interest Groups'. Referring to the research, he said that districts taken in the study are low fertilizer intake districts.

Sheetal Prasad also emphasised on the need of working on 5 C formula i.e. **C**ontact (*with farmers*), **C**ontent (*with sufficient inputs*), **C**ommunication (*with better strategy*), **C**redibility (*certification*) and **C**ommitment or **C**onviction (*to convert chemical farming into organic farming*).

Sharma also appreciated the presentation and the study of CUTS as one of the major outcome of the project, which would definitely yield results, in case it is continued for a longer period of time.



Participation

In the meeting, as many as 86 participants including representatives partner NGOs, media, representatives of CSOs, government departments, agriculture university and RARI etc. participated in the event.

Open Interaction Session

In an open house interactive session, participants from all section of the society raised concerns, over the rising trends of chemical farming, which is proving hazardous to public health. Few of the farmers from Udaipur, Chittorgarh and Dausa briefed about their efforts in promoting organic farming, while few CSO/NGO representatives tried to raise concern on government's approach and attitude in providing support for promoting organic farming. It was good to know about the experience of a female farmer who shared her approach and efforts towards organic agriculture from the grass root.



Vote of Thanks

The Way Forward

Arjun Kant Jha, Project Officer summed up the days' proceedings with a vote of thanks to all stakeholders for their useful and active participation and requesting them to take a pledge to look the way forward and ensuring that the efforts and support of all would eventually help CUTS taking its initiatives to acquire success and taking to new heights and also to help in nurturing the ProOrganic project as a replicable model on organic farming issues.

Varidhi Singh, Project Officer orchestrated the whole event.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

10.00-11.00	Registration & Tea/Coffee	
11.00-11.10	Welcome	Deepak Saxena, Sr. Programme Coordinator, CUTS
11.10-11.25	Introductory Remarks	George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS
11.25-11.35	Opening Address	Ms. Sara Nilsson, Programme Officer, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)
11.35-12.00	Project Progress and Key Research Findings	Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator, CUTS
12.00-13.00	Responses to the Key Findings <i>15 Minutes (for each speaker)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. S.S. Rathore, Programme Coordinator, K.V.K. (Tankarda), Jaipur • Dr. Surendra Babu, AGM, Regional Office, NABARD • Mr. B D Yadav, Professor of Vegetable Cultivation in Agriculture Research Institute (RARI), Durgapura, Govt. of Rajasthan • Dr. Shital Sharma, Director Agriculture, Govt. of Rajasthan.
13.00-13.25	Open Interaction Session	
13.25-13.30	Vote of Thanks	Mr. Arjun Kant Jha, Project Officer, CUTS
13.30	Lunch	

Participants List

S.N.	Participants	Name and Address	Mob./Ph. No.
1	Mohan Dangi	Prayatna Samiti, 26-27, Mahavir Colony, Bedla Road, Badgaon Udaipur-313 011	9414353668
2	Ratan Lal Rawat	Prayatna Samiti, VP- Banbora, Teh.- Girva, Udaipur- 313 706	9680569167
3	Manju Jhala	CRDS Sanstha, Thali, Teh.- Chaksu, Jaipur	9414263131
4	Suva Lal Choudhary	CRDS Sanstha, Thali, Teh.- Chaksu, Jaipur	9928548388
5	Rekha Devi Mahawar	CRDS Sanstha, Thali, Teh.- Chaksu, Jaipur	
6	Hardev Sanstha	SDHR, Jaipur	9887695733
7	Gurav	Ashadeep Sansthan, Pratap Nagar, Jaipur	9672324716
8	O.P. Pareek	HGVS, Dausa	9413235328
9	M.L. Pareek	HGVS, Dausa	9414820034
10	K.C. Sharma	HGVS, Dausa	9414832618
11	Prahlad Bairwa	HGVS, Dausa	7568893148
12	Shiv Shankar	HGVS, Dausa	9351787713
13	Ramdhan	HGVS, Dausa	9784313584
14	Sunder Lal Bairwa		9928927595
15	Dr. Shaitan Singh Rathore	KVK, Chomu	9829231357
16	Rakesh Kumar Sharma	KVK, Chomu	9413840935
17	Dr. B.D. Yadav	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur	9680158055
18	Govind	CECOEDECON, Jaipur	9252822402
19	Uinka Hjertshrand	SSNC, Sweden	46737703331
20	Sara Nilson	SSNC, Sweden	46706502302
21	Payal Bajaj	Payal Jan Jagriti Mahila Vikas Samiti, Jawahar Bazar, Tonk	9461611002
22	Aparna Bhatnagar	Green and Good Eco Solution	9414826322
23	Sunil Bajaj	Electronic Bajaj Comp., Jawahar Bazar, Tonk	9252712066
24	Sheetal Sharma	Agriculture Department, Govt. of Raj.	
25	Dhirendra Jain	Lokmat Media	2719173
26	Sudarshan Mishra	Aditya Seva Sansthan, Vil-Sitarampura, P.- Pahadiya, Via- Chittora Renwal, Teh.- Phagi, Distt.- Jaipur	9414553533
27	Varun Sharma	ARAVALI, OTS, Jaipur	9414193151
28	Ashok Kumar	Honhaar Sanstha, Murlipura, Jaipur	9785155158
29	Om Prakash	SDGS, Heerapura	9829459865
30	Ram Niwas	SDGS, Heerapura	9784200795
31	Brij Ballabh	Shilpi Sansthan	9314505805
32	Devki Nandan	Shilpi Sansthan	9950473611
33	Dinesh Kumar Saini	Dainik Navjyoti	9214034529
34	Asha Patel	Garibon ka Setu	9829066599

35	Sunita Yadav	St. Angele Sophia Sr. Sec. School, Jaipur	9214305808
36	Babu Lal Meena	Sapna Vikas Sanstha, Jamwa Ramgarh	9667031567
37	Sapna Prajapat	Sapna Vikas Sanstha, Jamwa Ramgarh	8003017110
38	Kalu Dave	Sapna Vikas Sanstha, Jamwa Ramgarh	8003017110
39	Banshi Lal	Atra Tran Sanstha, Jaipur	7891715806
40	Bansi Bairwa	Prayas Kendra Sanstha, Harsoli, Dudu, Jaipur	9829246164
41	Dharmendra Chaturvedi	CUTS, Jaipur	9414202868
42	Varidhi Singh	CUTS, Jaipur	
43	Satya Narain Sharma	Gramin Aarthik Samudayik Puna Nirman evam Vikas Sansthan, Sanganer, Jaipur	9414552334
44	Prem Kanwar Rajpur	Gramin Aarthik Samudayik Puna Nirman evam Vikas Sansthan, Sanganer, Jaipur	
45	Prem Devi Meena	Gramin Aarthik Samudayik Puna Nirman evam Vikas Sansthan, Sanganer, Jaipur	
46	Nand Lal Dhakar	Vil.- Jaisinghpura, P- Palka, Teh & Distt.- Chittorgarh	9784690995
47	Gopal Lal Teli	VP- Gomana, Teh.- Chhoti Sadari, Distt.- Pratapgarh	9460608108
48	Rameshwar Lal Bhoi	Vil.- Bhucharton ke Khadi, P- Bassi, Teh & Distt.- Chittorgarh	9799080929
49	Kailash Chand Vaishnav	VP- Sonipana, Teh.- Gangrar, Distt.- Chittorgarh	9636850636
50	Radhey Shyam Vaishnav	CUTS CHD, Chittorgarh	9413784596
51	Madan Giri	CUTS CHD, Chittorgarh	9829285939
52	Bhagwan Sahai Dadheech	Kisan Seva Samiti Mahasangh, Jaipur	9799749363
53	Kishan Lal Yogi	VP- Bojunda, Teh & Distt.- Chittorgarh	
54	Jitendra Bairwa	Centre for Social Development, Jaipur	8742080682
55	Suva Lal	Chandra Public School, Jaipur	8386040930
56	Sunil Sharma	Labour Education Development Sanstha, Jaipur	8104811813
57	Mohan Lal Pareek	Labour Education Development Sanstha, Jaipur	
58	Dr.D.S. Bhandini	Chairman, Rajasthan	9413337541
59	Prof. Anju Bhatia	Head, Deptt. of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur	9656492693
60	H.K. Vyas	Director, Maharshi Vikas Samiti	9460188542
61	Smt. Meena	Chairperson, Maharshi Vikas Samiti	9828131382
62	Ramesh Chandra	Madhukar Schook, Kotputali	9660576701
63	Suman Bhatnagar	Madhukar Adarsh Vidya Mandir Samiti, Kotputali	9828048928
64	Chetanpuri	Sangrash Sansthan, Dhandholi	9571431963
65	Hansraj Gurjar	Sangrash Sansthan, Dhandholi	8239994134
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67	Vinod Kumar	ATMA Sanstha, Vil- Jagmalpura, P.- Jorpura, Via- Jobner, Distt.- Jaipur	9468794216
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70	Dr. A.L. Mehta	Rajasthan Gau Seva Sangh, Durgapura, Jaipur	9829273241
71	Badri Prasad Jat	KVK, Chomu	9785735373
72	Vijay Prakash	Samachar Jagat, Jaipur	9414358424
73	Swatantra Kumar Mittal	Shri Agrasen Shiksha Samiti, Jaipur	9828704313
74	Saroj Kiran	Shri Agrasen Shiksha Samiti, Jaipur	9785000085
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76	Suresh Kumar Sen	Sahara Public Secondary School, Peeli ki Talai, Jaipur	9929054955
77	Sunita Kanwar	Honhaar Sanstha, Murlipura, Jaipur	9785159758
78	Deepika Pal	Vanijya Setu	9829759597
79	Dr.Surendra Babu	NABARD, Jaipur	9462692152
80	Deepak Saxena	CUTS, Jaipur	
81	Arjun Kant Jha	CUTS, Jaipur	
82	Amarjeet Singh	CUTS, Jaipur	
83	Amrat Singh	CUTS, Jaipur	
84	George Cheriyan	CUTS, Jaipur	

