

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

Event Report

Partners' Orientation Meeting

Jaipur, April 08, 2016





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 right to healthy environment 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. Hence, the adoption of organic consumption will benefit women and especially girls the most.

Insight into the Project

With support from Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), CUTS in implementing a Pilot Project to Promote Organic Consumption in the State of Rajasthan (ProOrganic) from November 01, 2013 to October 31, 2015) in 102 *gram panchayats* of six selected districts of Rajasthan (India). This project is extended to 2017 to fill the identified gaps and sustain the gained momentum to achieve expected outcomes of better eco-system through promotion of organic consumption.

The project aims to promote more organic consumption in six major agriculture potential districts namely: Jaipur, Dausa, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Udaipur and Kota.

The broader objectives of the project are to:

- Sensitization awareness and education on organic consumption and production
- Capacity building of farmers to promote organic farming
- Advocacy for policies in favour of organic farming

Objective

The purpose of the partner's orientation meeting was to present, discuss the objectives of the next phase of project and to discuss on how to start up the activities with work plan. The MOU was also signed with the District Project partners on that day.

Another one is to discuss the work plan of project title: "Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption in the state of Rajasthan with special focus on Organic Consumption" FY 2017-2020.

Proceedings

Inaugural Session

Deepak Saxena, Senior Programme Coordinator, CUTS welcomed all project partners and briefly introduced the objective of this workshop to implement project activities. Saxena also informed about the need of discussion and ideas for next phase of project year 2017-2020.



District Project Partners

- Hanuman Gram Vikas Samiti, Dausa
- Ram Krishnan Shikshan Sansthan, Kota
- Manyata Sansthan, Udaipur
- CUTS Centre for Human Development, Chittorgarh & Pratapgarh
- CUTS Centre for Consumer Action Research & Training, Jaipur



Introductory Remarks

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International, in his introductory remarks shared aims and objectives of the extended phase of the project. He also shared some of the major outcomes of the project implemented during 2013-15. Cheriyan highlighted the major components of the project, i.e. educating consumers about the ill effects of pesticides



and chemicals, generating awareness and demand, promoting organic consumption and production by sensitising farmers and to advocate with the government for having policy in place supporting the organic farming. He said that findings of the base line

survey we came to know that earlier only **2.8 percent of farmers** were involved in

organic farming and based on those findings the percentage of organic farming increased which are **16.3 percent now**.

In continuation, Cheriyan also shared major goals of the next phase of the project (2017-2020) – how can culture of sustainable development and safe/healthy environment be created? While defining sustainable consumption, he said the resource of the earth is limited. The present model of development is demanding perpetual growth. However, earth is a finite system with clear boundaries. Perpetual growth in any finite system is a mathematical impossibility. Hence, there is a need to follow the sustainable production and consumption.

In continuation, Dr. K Ramakrishnan, until recently he was the Research Director of SKN Jobner University; Jaipur explained the organic scenario of Rajasthan. Ramakrishnan stated that in order to promote organic farming we have to take marginal farmers along with progressive ones which are very close to the organic farming. Ramakrishnan also highlighted that there is some kind of gap between them which can be filled up with the help of creating channelisation, so that the mode of communication can help build connectivity among them. If income of farmers will be increased, then there will be more chances of connecting small farmers with them, which will create awareness among them and promote organic farming in wider areas.

Renu Beniwal, Assistant Programme Officer, CUTS International delivered the presentation about the objectives, activities and work plan of the project in detail. Beniwal explained that 102 *gram panchayats* will be involved in project activities in some district areas but the major focus will be on women-specific *choupals* to create more awareness among them and promote organic farming and consumption.

Project Activities

- ✓ Partner's Orientation Meeting
- ✓ Training of Farmers
- ✓ Exposure Visits of Farmers
- ✓ Awareness Campaign
- ✓ Organic Fair
- ✓ Global Green Action Week
- ✓ Workshop on Human Rights Based Approach
- ✓ State-level Dissemination & Advocacy Meeting

Project Activities in detail

- **Trainings of Farmers:** There will be six district-level trainings of farmers on next generation of organic issues, such as organic certification, market linkage etc.
- **Exposure Visits of Farmers:** There will be only exposure visits for around 20 farmers identified from six project districts to showcase successful organic farming techniques and practices
- **Awareness Campaign:** There will be awareness campaigns continued in selected 102 *gram panchayats* of target districts

- **Organic Fair:** In each of six districts, an organic fair will be organised to display and sell organic products and organic farming methods. This will provide an opportunity to all stakeholders to come together and not only to see but also discuss their issues
- **Preparation of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials:** Hand-outs and posters in simple vernacular will be produced for distribution during the activities for awareness generation
- **Global Green Action Week:** The proposed activity is to enhance the consumption of organic vegetables and fruits by generating an increased demand of the same amongst consumers of Jaipur city of Rajasthan. The project will cover 10 new localities in the urban areas of Jaipur to generate awareness to buyers and sensitise the line department to provide space for organic farm products among the urban consumers of Jaipur
- **State Level Dissemination & Advocacy Meeting:** One such meeting will be organised to discuss various policies and schemes as well the hindrances in enhanced use of organic products by consumers in Rajasthan
- **Workshop on Human Rights Based Approach:** There will be two-day workshop on HRBA which will see the participation of GAW, ProOrganic partners and some officials from SSNC team

Activity Time Line

| <i>Work Plan 2016-2017</i> | <i>Time-Line</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Activity | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | March |
| Partners' Meeting | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Training of Farmers | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Exposure Visits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Awareness Campaign | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Organic Fair | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Green Action Week | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Workshop on HRBA | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State level Disseminatio & Advocacy Meeting | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Reporting | | | | | | | | | | | | |

CUTS Proposal on Sustainable Consumption in 2017-2020

Further to discuss new ideas for developing the culture of sustainable consumption in the state of Rajasthan to promoting organic consumption Varidhi Singh, Project Officer, CUTS International delivered a presentation of future activities of CUTS on Sustainable Consumption. The title of the presentation was 'The Way Forward 2017-2020'.

Proposed Activities of the Project

- ▶ Awareness campaigns in urban and rural areas
- ▶ Training of farmers
- ▶ Exposure visits (within districts in year 1 & 2; Rajasthan in year 3; and India in year 4 respectively)

- ▶ Establishing seed bank and organic compost cell
- ▶ Developing organic gardens in schools

Proposed New Districts: Bundi, Dholpur, Bharatpur, Alwar, Ganganagar
Existing Districts: Jaipur, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Kota, Dausa, Udaipur

MoU Signing-Partners and Team



Vote of Thanks

Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Project Officer delivered vote of thanks to all participants. He also said that partners will continue to meet farmers regarding adoption of organic agriculture. This would eventually help CUTS taking its initiatives to acquire success and also nurturing the project as a replicable model on organic farming issues.

**Promoting Organic Farming in Rajasthan
'ProOrganic'**

**Friday, April 08, 2016
Jaipur**

| Time | Subject | Facilitator |
|--------------|---|---|
| 11.00- 11.05 | Welcome of Participants | Deepak Saxena |
| 11.05-11.15 | Introduction about Objective of the Meeting | George Cheriyan |
| 11.15-11.45 | Overall Scenario of Organic Culture in Rajasthan | Dr Ramkrishna, retd Professor of S K N University, Jobner |
| 11.45-12.00 | Presentation on ProOrganic Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • About the Project • Objectives of the Project • Geographical Area of the Project • Activities to be Implemented • Period | Renu Beniwal |
| 12.00-12.15 | The Way Forward Presentation of future CUTS activities on Sustainable Consumption | Varidhi Singh |
| 12.15-13.00 | Feedback from Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner's Experience in Organic Farming • Partner's Expectations from the Project • Any Other Issue with the permission | ProOrganic Team led by Deepak Saxena |
| 13.00-14.00 | Lunch Break | |
| 14.00-14.30 | MoU Signing | Partners and Team |
| 14.30-15.30 | Discussion on Activities with Budget and Timeline of 2016 | Partners and the Project Team |
| 15.30 | Summing Up and Vote of Thanks with a pledge from Partners to Look Way Forward | Dharmendra Chaturvedi |

List of Participants

| S. No. | Name | Name and address of the Organization | Phone/ Mobile No. | Email |
|--------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
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| 17. | Dr K Ramakrishnan | SKN Jobner University, Jaipur | | |