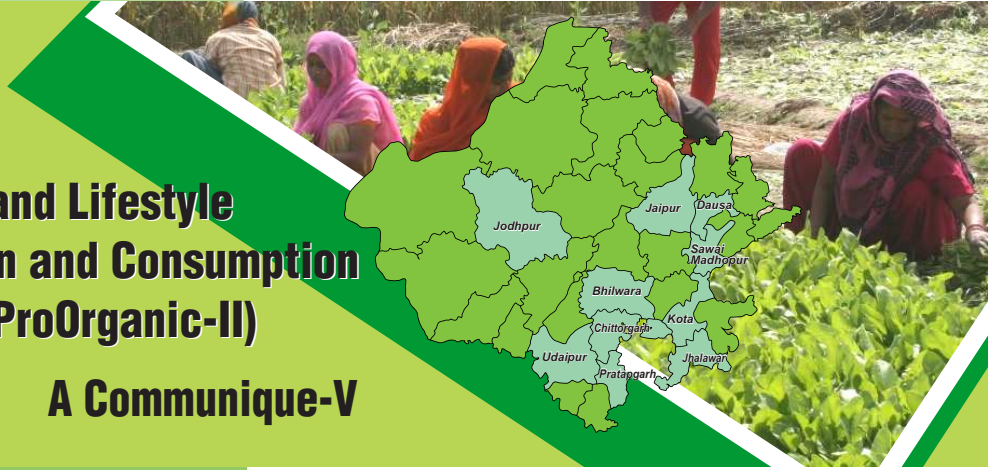


Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle through Organic Production and Consumption in the State of Rajasthan (ProOrganic-II)

A Communique-V



ProOrganic project was initiated in November 2013 to promote organic consumption in Rajasthan. The objective of this phase of the project was to create demand among consumers for organic products and sensitise farmers for shifting towards organic farming and advocacy on issues related to organic farming. The phase was concluded in March 2017, with major activities getting accomplished in three years like Awareness Generation Campaigns, Organic Fairs, Farmers' Training, and Exposure Visits, Consultations apart from research components in the project area.

This phase of the project had a deep impact as a remarkable increase in the area of organic farming was observed in the state. Also, there was a hike in demand for organic products by the consumers. Looking at the success of phase-I, the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) further agreed to extend its support for another four years to implement phase-II of the project entitled, 'Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle through Organic Production and Consumption in the State of Rajasthan (ProOrganic-II)' from April 01, 2017, to March 31, 2021, at 192-gram panchayats (in 10 selected districts of Rajasthan).

One of the basic ideas of the project is promoting sustainable consumption and production, which are important aspects of a sustainable regime. This is largely consistent with the environmental and social factors and education and empowerment of consumers.

ProOrganic-II project mainly focuses on the aspect of sustainable food and farming and to formulate an agenda to achieve the same. This will be acquired through promoting organic production of farm products on one hand and promoting organic consumption, on the other.

Consequently, this will also lead to sustainable development in Agriculture and Environmental sectors as a whole. The target group of the project comprises the entire population of the selected 10 districts namely: Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Dausa, Jaipur, Jhalawar, Jodhpur, Kota, Pratapgarh, Sawai Madhopur, Udaipur; 96 blocks; and selected 192-gram panchayats of the districts covered of Rajasthan.

Details about the project can be accessed at:

<https://cuts-cart.org/developing-a-culture-of-sustainable-consumption-and-lifestyle-through-organic-production-and-consumption-in-state-of-rajasthan-proorganic-ii/>

Gearing Up for the New Year 2019-20

Every financial year, the project activities take off with an orientation for the district and block-level partners, the purpose of which is to not only orient the partners on the proposed activities of that particular year within the prescribed time frame, target groups, areas and set direction but also to brief all the field team to implement the activities with a moto to bring changes through the intervention at the ground level. All these have not only strengthened the whole team but have started creating and building up an atmosphere, which tends towards organic farming.



This year's Partner's Orientation meeting for district-level partners of all 10 districts was organised on April 23, 2019, and for block-level partners of Jaipur district on April 24, 2019, both at Jaipur. In the orientation, the whole discussion centred around on the performance of district partners during last year, the expectations from the partners about future activities, and the overall impact of the project so far and the anticipated outcome. A detailed presentation on activities for the upcoming year with details was presented. The strategies for the upcoming activities were discussed with the participants.

ProOrganic Voice Consolidating at the Grassroots



Village Level Awareness Campaigns (VLAC) have always been an important activity at the grass-roots. The purpose is to bring forward the whole movement down the line through these awareness camps and to make consumers and farmers aware of organic products and to influence their buying/farming habits.

This year, there were in all 192 village level awareness programmes covering 192 villages in 10 districts of 96 blocks. The mode of organising these village level meetings was by way of organising street plays and other local means of cultural activities, fixing and displaying posters and distributing handouts, showing videos on the importance of organic farming on TV screens, other local and traditional ways like *Chaupal Baithaks* (village meeting) or any other cultural modes like puppet shows. In crux, an enabling environment and established patterns of sustainable consumption leading to sustainable development were realised through this grass-roots effort, which gave a feeling of an increased area under organic farming both at the farm and household level in Rajasthan.

A total of 12,373 participants attended these activities during the year, out of which nearly 41 per cent of them being women participants. The response about participation has been enormous, which resulted in such a huge number, which proves the growing popularity of the project and the demand for the issue at the grassroots.

Farmers Started Getting Recognition

Farmers' training and exposure to build the capacity of farmers and inspire them to take up organic farming through experience gained from various subject experts and live demos of organic culture has been going on steadily right since the inception of Pro-Organic project in 2013.

This year also, all the 10 farmers' training and exposure visits proved successful in terms of geographical coverage of participation, gender involvement, media coverage and overall conduction. Total of 490 farmers from 10 districts, with 40 per cent being women. Moreover, the majority of participating farmers expressed their willingness to switch over to organic farming from their present chemical farming. At many places, even those farmers, who are already involved in organic farming, have come to know many new and traditional ways of farming helpful in organic culture. Many farmers, who attended the training for the first time admitted that this training is the first of its kind besides what KVKs does for them.

This figure proves the level of satisfaction among participants everywhere. Farmers, who are cultivating cash crops, commercial crops or export-oriented agro products are taken on board even though to some extent they are losing the volume of yields and are resulting in less income.



An Old Man with Huge Cauliflower

Two farmers Jagdish Prasad Parikh and Hukumchand Patidar, who are associated with CUTS organic interventions in Rajasthan and had the honour of receiving the Padma Shri (India's fourth-highest civilian honour) award in 2019 for their distinguished contribution in the field of organic cultivation and associating other fellow farmers in their work.

Parikh is better known for organic farming and cultivation of cauliflower. He also holds his name in the Guinness Book of World Records for his unique work of bigger size of a cauliflower and popularly known as *gobhi wala baba*, which means 'An Old Man with Huge Cauliflower'. He had amazed people by growing cauliflower weighing up to a maximum of 25 kgs. Pareek has been a key speaker and guest of honour in the media sensitisation workshop held in Jaipur on November 27, 2019, which had attracted large media gathering.

Organic Clubs and Gardens – Gaining Strength and Popularity



This unique activity started in the 2018-19 period to bring the campaign of organic farming to the level of children and to target them, schools have suited to be the best platform. To inculcate the culture of organic farming and consumption, among children, school administrations were convinced to establish clubs of select school students preferably higher classes and through them create organic gardens in the school campus itself.

After the first successful phase in the last year, this activity has proved an enthusiasm among young consumers, who have proved themselves as young stakeholders in our intervention, with whom we could inculcate a culture of sustainable consumption, who can also contribute towards safe and sustainable food systems. 20 school organic clubs and an equal number of organic gardens (two in each district) are being developed.

Two earlier year schools of Deoli in Sawai Madhopur and Mundia Ramsar in Jaipur have been repeated this year also as model schools. These two schools were awarded as the best performing schools of 2018-19.

Government Accrediting Organic Kitchen Gardens in Schools

The Government of India has also started recognising the efforts of involving school children by way of issuing an official circular of '**School Nutrition (Kitchen) Guidelines (SNG)**' https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/SNG_Guidelines_0.pdf

Stating instructions and guidelines to all state-level governments for escalating this initiative of Organic Kitchen Gardens and Organic Clubs setups within schools within their respective states. All these developments in the last two-three years have provided not only a base to all the organic farmers of the state but also set a direction for both organic and chemical farming farmers of the state. CUTS perceives all these as positive developments within the project, which helps in creating an enabling environment and a better platform to work.

Community Seed Cell Management – An Unique Approach



This unique activity started this year to protect, preserve and promoting different indigenous seeds, which are existing in our country in organic farming. This activity was introduced in all the 10 targeted districts with progressive organic farmers of these districts are the main target groups. Knowledge sharing meetings are also held focused on preaching the importance of community seed bank and how indigenous seed of different crops can be promoted in organic farming; cooperative efforts for proper management of a community base seed management system and traditional methods for seed saving, which can be adopted for the proper functioning of these seed cells.

After the initial Knowledge Sharing Meetings in all the targeted 10 districts with the selected farmers, who have cooperated, participated and have changed their mode of farming from chemical to organic, there have been Feedback Meetings at same places with group leaders and other farmers about the progress of establishing Seed Cell, difficulties in establishing it, if any and further guidance to take it further. During the year, Knowledge Sharing Meetings were organised and got an overwhelming response, which was later on transpired with Feedback Meetings.

Media Sensitisation Workshops – Overwhelmed

The aim of this activity 'Media Sensitisation Workshops' was to spread awareness among the consumers about organic products, their benefits, and availability, to build the capacity of farmers to adopt organic



farming and to sensitise the stakeholders concerned, including government agencies, to promote organic products in the State of Rajasthan by using the tool of the fourth pillar of democracy, that is Media.

Total 10 Media Sensitisation Workshops were conducted at the district headquarters of the 10 targeted project districts.

Being an activity of its kind

exclusively for media, an important stakeholder was well received and highly acclaimed. The overall response in all the 10 workshops has been very good and through these, several contacts in media came closer to the project mission, through which, the dissemination and the message now being forwarded among masses.

Organic Fairs – A Productive Platform for Farmers

This being an old and highly acclaimed activity of the pilot phase, which has now been repeated after a gap of almost three years. The purpose of the fair was to provide a platform and guidance to the farmers for selling their organic products and make them further awareness about the importance of the issue and also make the consumers aware about the available organic products and its benefits by bringing both farmers and consumers on the same platform. Though the farmers are producing organic products they are not getting any outlets to reach the



consumers and sell their products. Thus, this was an attempt to help them in this direction.

During the year, a total of nine Organic Fairs got conducted. This activity has received an overwhelming response with the majority of the stakeholders coming to the same platform like farmers, consumers, media, government officials, organic product retailers, and NGOs working in the same field. This year, nine organic fairs out of a total of 10 were conducted with good participation. The highlights being

organic retailer stalls, different activities, and tools of awareness like by way of local cultural programmes, dances, and puppetry shows.

Green Action Week in Rajasthan

Every year CUTS observe Green Action week (GAW) in Jaipur District as an activity under the Project. This year the activities were extended beyond Jaipur to the districts like Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Bhilwara, Dausa and Banswara, which was the highlight of the whole campaign. The theme for this year was 'Sharing Community'. Focusing on the theme and with the rationale of influencing consumer behaviour in favour of organic food and sharing culture, various activities in the form of

workshops with school children, cottage meetings with women groups, street plays along with signature campaign and community level stakeholder's consultations were held at different locations of Jaipur.

To promote the idea of sharing in the society and within the community, a 'Wall of Kindness' was also set up. The campaign got concluded with the Stakeholders' Consultation on October 15, 2019 at Jaipur.



E-waste Bins Becoming Popular

As consumption patterns have changed drastically in recent years resulting in unsustainable lifestyles. Mass consumption is also due to innovations, technology, open markets etc. While this trend continues, there is a sizable population that is unable to meet even its basic needs, like access to food, clothing, shelter. Increased consumption is also resulting in generation of more waste, which is harmful to the environment. While



sustainable consumption is all about the 'use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, by minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials, that also insist on minimum emissions of waste and pollutants'. It is important for consumers to recognize their rights to a healthy environment and behave responsibly.

This year's GAW campaign in Jaipur was mainly focused on collection & disposal of E-waste, as common man doesn't know about

how to dispose of E-waste or take it to recycle centers. In India, Rajasthan comes as 6th largest E-waste generator. Also, only 0.036 million tonnes of India's 2 million tonnes E-waste was treated and 95% of India's E-waste is recycled in the informal sector in a crude manner. E-waste contains toxic components such as lead, mercury and cadmium, which could lead to severe issues such as; birth defects, kidney failure, cancer, and it could even harm the skeletal system.

Looking at the seriousness of the issue, CUTS in collaboration with Etco E-Waste Recycler Pvt. Ltd. (An authorised recycler and dismantler for E-waste by State pollution control board, Rajasthan) has undertaken an awareness campaign and installed six E-waste collection bins at different localities of Jaipur, which can be used to deposit electronic as well as electrical waste items, which are of no use and worth for effective disposal of them. A launch of E-waste Bin was held on October 11, 2019 at the CUTS office in Jaipur, which was attended by staff from all the Jaipur centres of CUTS. One E-waste bin was inaugurated by the Mayor of Jaipur, during Stakeholders' Consultation held at Jaipur.

Green Action Week in India

In a run up to our continuous efforts to educate and aware consumers, policy makers and other key stakeholders on environmental and other impacts of consumption, who can ultimately contribute to sustainable patterns of consumption, CUTS reached to wider masses and some new areas in the current year.

In 2019-20, a total of 12 states namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa, Tripura, Karnataka, Delhi, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand were covered and the activities got conducted in partnership with local civil society organisations. The monitoring of activities conducted by partners in respective states was done by the project team.

Finally, an evaluation meeting with a purpose to share the activities conducted by partner organisations of GAW India was organised on December 06, 2019, at Jaipur. Each representative of partner organisations, made PowerPoint presentations on their campaign activities based on impact, outcomes, and challenges. Each presentation was followed by a question-answer by participants. It was a good opportunity to interact with partners and discuss their campaign activity.



Stakeholders Consultation – Taking Stock

The State Level Feedback and Stakeholder Consultation for the year 2019-20 were held at Jaipur on March 13, 2020. As usual, the purpose of this final activity of the year was to critically analyse the boons and banes of activities implemented in the last year including the achievements and the targets. The key speaker in the meeting was A K Gupta, Director, Research, SKN Agriculture University, Jobner, Jaipur; R K Yadvendra, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture and Gajendra Sharma, Research Officer, Department of Agriculture both from Government of Rajasthan.

This was clubbed with the commemoration of World Consumer Rights Day, 2020 and the theme of this year's WCRD is 'Sustainable Consumer', so the event started with an address by George Cheriyan stating the importance, history, and purpose of WCRD bringing it down and clubbing it with project objectives and the overall status and future scope of sustainable consumption worldwide. Rajdeep Pareek made a presentation on last year's activities with some very key achievements as part of project outcome over the last one year.



SDG 12 – A Consumer Perspective

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) has emerged as an important part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It promotes social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and raises efficiency, reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste. CUTS is conducting a study to frame the understanding of SCP beyond the SDG 12 and expand it beyond its current environment dimension from a consumer perspective. Same time, study will also see the desired progress of SDG 12 in India.

Project activities started with consultations with NITI Aayog, which is nodal department of Govt. of India for SDGs implementation throughout the country. CUTS team had consultation with UN Resident Coordinator's Office at New Delhi with regard to study. Mapping of state level agencies is done by the team and based on various reports and geographical representation, five states are selected for the study namely Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Team did literature review for all five states regarding SDGs implementation, specifically Goal 12.

For the purpose of qualitative interviews, team members visited targeted states and met with the concerned government officials to discuss the progress of SDG 12. Visits were made to Lucknow on January 09-10, Raipur on February 12-13, Himachal Pradesh on March 03-05 and Kerala on March 05-10 to meet the officials concerned with SDG 12 and conduct qualitative interviews.

Additional Initiatives

Learning Green Action Week Skills

George Cheriyan and Deepak Saxena attended Consumers International Summit, 2019 at Estoril, Portugal between April 29-May 2, 2019. Both attended number of plenaries, side events, and parallel sessions. This included a side event on April 29, 2019, co-organised by SSNC on 'Green Action Week Skills'.

Inter-governmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy

George Cheriyan visited Geneva and attended the 4th Session of the Inter-governmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy organised by UNCTAD at Palais des Nations, Geneva on July 8-9, 2019. On July 9, George also attended a Round table on 'Contribution of Consumer Protection to Sustainable Consumption', where he made an intervention from the floor and spoke in detail about the initiatives of Government of India and CUTS interventions on Sustainable Consumption Practices.

Project Outputs

Another achievement during the project period is an announcement by the Government of India regarding its plan for tabling a Bill to promote safer pesticides, the autonomy of ports in the Budget session of the Indian Parliament. The new draft bill is aimed at protecting the interest of the farmers so that they get safe and effective pesticides. Farmers would be empowered to get all information regarding the available pesticides, their strengths, weaknesses, and risks from the dealers they choose to purchase the pesticide from, environment minister Prakash Javadekar said after the Union cabinet approved the Pesticide Management Bill, 2020.

More info can be seen at:

<https://www.livemint.com/industry/agriculture/centre-to-introduce-pesticide-management-bill-2020-in-parliament-11581502990037.html>

Project in Media



CUTS
International

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)
D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India, Ph: 91.141.2282821, Fx: 91.141.2282485
Email: cart@cuts.org, Website: www.cuts-international.org/CART/ProOrganic-III
Also at Delhi, Kolkata and Chittorgarh (India); Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland); and Washington DC (USA)

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