

## **Monthly Progress Report - March 2015**

**Project Title:** ‘Addressing Barriers to Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh’ (RISTE project)

**Name of the Organisation:** CUTS International, India

**Supported by:** The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

**Duration:** 1st January 2013- 30th June 2015

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### **1. Activities carried out by CUTS and its partners in the month of March, 2015**

1.1 A final report of the project’s last phase titled “**Trade and Knowledge Sharing in HYV Rice Seeds: Scope for Cooperation between Bangladesh and India**” has been prepared and is currently being published.

*This report will be shared with the fellow participants and other stakeholders in Dissemination and Advocacy Meeting of RISTE Project on 30<sup>th</sup> April.*

1.2 CUTS have prepared a compendium of all the news related to RISTE project that has been published in various print media channels in India and Bangladesh throughout the project cycle.

*Part 1 of this document will be published and shared in the final dissemination meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April. The final document will include more articles covered under RISTE till June 2015 and will be published in the same month.*

1.3 CUTS conducted meetings with several seed dealers in West Bengal in order to know their views on formalisation of HYV rice seed trade between India and Bangladesh. The same activity will be carried out by Unnayan Shamannay (US) in Bangladesh. The outcome of this activity will be a publication of case study report voicing the views of private seed dealers in India and Bangladesh for efficacy of rice seeds trade between India and Bangladesh.

*The case studies have been completed and are currently being published. The document will be also shared in the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April.*

1.4 RISTE Documentary Film shooting has been completed in India and Bangladesh. The documentary film is currently being edited.

*The Documentary Film will be ready by the month of March and will be screened in the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April.*

1.5 CUTS have started the preparations for the final Dissemination and Advocacy Meeting under RISTE project. The meeting will take place in New Delhi on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.

The objectives of this meeting are:

- *To disseminate and advocate key messages on trade and knowledge sharing between Bangladesh and India in high yielding variety rice seeds*
- *To discuss larger aspects of agricultural cooperation between Bangladesh and India*

1.6 Samrudi, Odhisa conducted a workshop at Singhberhampur village of Delang block in Puri district on 21.02.15. It was a farmers-scientists-students interaction camp on seed

production and marketing in the state of Odisha. It was attended by about 40 students of the Department of Agribusiness Management, Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneswar and about 29 seed farmers of 10 villages from three adjoining districts of Puri, Khurda and Cuttack.

1.6.1 Another training workshop was conducted at Juanga village of Niali block in Cuttack district on 8.03.15. It was basically a farmers-scientists interaction meeting entitled “**Rice seed production Karmasala: Farmers-Scientists Interaction**”. It was attended by about 36 rice farmers of 5 villages from Cuttack district.

1.7 Mukti, West Bengal organised a Kisan Ghosti in Petrapole on 24.03.15. The output of the meeting is as follows:

- Joint Press conference will be organized (India & Bangladesh) on exchange of rice seed varieties between two countries.
- R & D input should be shared between the two countries.
- Country partners should organize a “Mass Signature Campaign” of their respective states to formalize rice seed trade.
- Lobbying work through government officials, political representatives, bureaucrats, seed companies, farmers and other stakeholders to change the existing policies on rice seeds import and export between the two countries.

1.8 IGS, Jharkhand organised a total of 7 Village level Kisan Gosthies in the month of March. The theme of these meetings was about the promotion and usages of high yielding varieties and seed replacement. It was found in most of the places that farmers are using own saved seeds and also purchase new seeds mostly hybrid varieties. The high yielding varieties they purchase or got as grant from government are kept for next 5-6 years. This practice reduces the productivity of the specific HYV seeds. Also, the farmers are using the old varieties which are at present replaced with upgraded variety by the research stations (Lalat). It was decided to have a variety diagnosis to be done at three locations for starting the seed production program in the three blocks namely Bundu, Namkom and Satbarwa.

1.8.1 On 31st March a workshop was organized at IGS office premises in Jharkhand. It was attended by IGS officials, JSLPS-Farm-Head, NABARD officials and some other agriculturists. On the whole, the question on the model of seed production unit was discussed in this workshop. Consequently, it was decided that a detailed plan on this will be developed by IGS-Jharkhand.

## **2. Outline of the activities to be carried out in the month of April, 2015**

2.1 Final research report will be published in this month. For the advocacy component, the outcomes of this report will be disseminated for wider outreach in the final dissemination meeting.

2.2 Part 1 of the Media coverage booklet will be published. For the advocacy component, the document will be disseminated in the final dissemination meeting.

2.3 The report on the case studies conducted in India and Bangladesh will be published in this month and will be shared along with the final project report under the last phase.

2.4 US, Bangladesh will organise one TV talk show in Dhaka with the objective to sensitise a wider stakeholder group on the outcomes of the RISTE project and the importance of cooperation on rice seed trade.

2.5 Various other advocacy meetings with key stakeholders will be conducted in New Delhi and Dhaka.

2.6 Preparation for the RISTE Final Dissemination Meeting is under process. The meeting will be held in New Delhi on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

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