

Monthly Progress Report- September 2013

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

Name of the Organisation: CUTS International

Supported by: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Duration: 1st January, 2013- 30th September, 2014

1. Activities carried out by CUTS in the month of September, 2013

1.1 RISTE project team participated in the workshop organised by the Seed Wing, Ministry of Agriculture, and Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh in Dhaka. The objective of the workshop was to present and discuss the draft Seed Act 2013 and to gather inputs from relevant stakeholders, including government officials, agricultural scientists, academia and other researchers, seeds producers and traders, seed association (BSA) media and others.

1.2 RISTE project team had a meeting with Ranabir Ghosh (PNG International) and Biswanath Banik (Banik Elegant Industries) in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Both companies are engaged in the export/import to/from Bangladesh, but none of them are presently into rice seed export/import; however they showed keen interest in the project and trading HYV rice seeds with Bangladesh.

1.3 RISTE project team had a meeting with Anwar Faruque, Additional Secretary, Director General, Seed Wing, and Ministry of Agriculture in Dhaka, Bangladesh to advocate the potentiality of HYV rice seeds trade between India and Bangladesh.

1.4 RISTE project team had a meeting with Moishul Alam (Bangladesh Tariff Commission) to discuss the tariff and non-tariff barriers hindering cross border trade.

1.5 RISTE project team had some other very useful meetings in Dhaka. These include meetings with Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue; Farook Sobhan, President, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute; M Anis Ud Dowla, Chairman, ACI Group of Companies and President, Bangladesh Seed Association to discuss initial project findings and to advocate the need for cooperation between India and Bangladesh in HYV rice seeds.

1.6 RISTE project team met Alok Marodia (Director, PAN Seeds, Kolkata; and also a member of Project Advisory Committee) in Kolkata to update him about the findings of field visits and preliminary research.

1.7 RISTE's project team met Raju Kapoor (Executive Director, National Seed Association of India; also a member of Project Advisory Committee) in New Delhi to update him with the findings from the interactions with different stakeholders (including farmers' focused group discussions, interactions with seed producers, seed traders, government officials and media) in four eastern states of India and in Bangladesh.

1.8 Dr P. C. Lenka, President, Samrudhi, Odisha (Odisha project partner) visited CUTS Jaipur and had a detailed discussion on the HYV rice seeds scenario, trade potential with Bangladesh and informal channels of trade in the state of Odisha, India.

1.9 A Media Outreach consultant has been appointed in Bangladesh to carry forward the media advocacy in Bangladesh. Asjadul Kibria, Business Page Editor, Prothom Alo, Dhaka, Bangladesh has taken this responsibility.

1.10 One article entitled "*Rice Seed Production and Use in Bangladesh and India: Need for Bilateral Cooperation*", was published in the September 2013 issues of Souvenir of Bangladesh Seed Association. This article was jointly written by Dr Mahfuz Kabir, Suresh P Singh and Ashfaq R Khan.

1.11 One monograph entitled "*Dynamic of Rice Seeds Trade: Need for Cooperation between India and Bangladesh*" has been published and uploaded on the RISTE webpage. It has been shared with the members of online RISTE Project Forum and the printed version of monograph will be shared with the relevant stakeholders.

2. Outline of the activities to be carried out in the month of October, 2013

2.1 Advocacy Strategy will be finalized and it will be shared with all the project partners and PAC members.

2.2 Media Outreach Strategy will be finalized and it will be shared with all the project partners and PAC members.

2.3 A Media Outreach consultant will be appointed in India to carry forward the agenda of the project in Indian media.

2.4 Initial research reports will be collected from all the partners and the process of consolidating the reports will start.

2.5 Preparation for 1st Stakeholder Conference and 2nd PAC meeting to be held in Dhaka will start.

2.6 Preparation for State Level Workshop to be organized by all the project partners in their respective states and country will start.

2.7 A discussion paper entitled "*Potentiality of HYV Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh*" is under preparation and it will be shared with project consultants and PAC members for review.

2.8 A research paper entitled “*Opportunities and Challenges in Seeds Trade in South Asia*” has been prepared. Comments made by the project consultants will be incorporated and revised version will be published.

2.9 A briefing paper entitled “*Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh: Need for Harmonization of Standards*” will be prepared.

2.10 A paper presentation entitled “*RICE Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh: An Examination of WTO Regulations and Measures*” will be presented at the International Seminar on India and WTO, to be organized by Central University of Kerala in Kasaragod, Kerala.

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Partners Work Progress Sheet- September, 2013

Partner Organizations	Planned Activities	Progress Made
<p align="center">Unnayan Shamannay, Bangladesh</p>	<p align="center">Desk and field research</p>	<p>Field visit to Hili land port, Dinajpur was conducted. Field visit to Benapole land port area in Jessore district. An article was prepared for publication in the Souvenir of Bangladesh Seed Association.</p> <p>Participated in a workshop titled “Seed Sector in Bangladesh Growth through Regulatory Reform” organised by Seed Wing, Ministry of Agriculture.</p>
	<p align="center">Advocacy</p>	<p>Several one to one meetings: Dr. Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director, CPD; Ambassador Faruque Sobhan, President, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute; Mr. Anwar Faruque, Director General, Seed Wing, Ministry of Agriculture; and Mr. M. Anis Ud Dowla, President of Bangladesh Seed Association.</p> <p>Assisted CUTS in signing Media Outreach Consultant.</p>
<p align="center">Bihar Water Development Society, Bihar</p>	<p align="center">Desk and field research</p>	<p>Collection of primary and secondary data is underway to analyse the state wide demand and supply of HYV rice seeds over the last decade.</p> <p>Field level focus group discussion with rice farmers are still going on to analyse the seed replacement issues, seeds requirements and identification of new certified</p>

		seeds of desired varieties to get high yield.
Samrudhi, Odisha	Desk and field research	<p>Meeting with Mr Debraj Mohanty, ADA, Seeds in the Directorate of Agriculture and Food Production to discuss the pattern of sale of different varieties of rice seeds in different districts of Odisha for the last decade</p> <p>Field level focus group discussion with rice farmers are still going on to analyse the seed replacement issues, seeds requirements and identification of new certified seeds of desired varieties to get high yield.</p>
Indian Grameen Services, Jharkhand	Desk and field research	<p>Collection of primary and secondary data is underway to analyse the state wide demand and supply of HYV rice seeds over the last decade.</p> <p>Discussions at Khunti and Ranchi district with Self Help groups and farmer's Group. Interviews of seeds traders in Chottanagur area.</p>
Mukti, West Bengal	Desk and field research	<p>Field surveys were conducted in the village Deopole in North 24 Pargana. Discussion with seed dealers in Petrapole region were held.</p> <p>A meeting with Dr. Bijan Adikary, Researcher, West Bengal Rice Research Institute was conducted. A meeting with Nirmalendu Samanta, Production Manager, West Bengal State Seed Production Ltd. was conducted.</p>