

District Rural Development Cell

The Vanguard of Socio-economic Development of Uttar Dinajpur District

The District Rural Development Cell (DRDC) of Uttar Dinajpur added a feather to the rural development venture since its inception as District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) on 20th November, 1992. After bifurcation of West Dinajpur district on 01.04.1992, the West Dinajpur District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) divided into two, of which Uttar Dinajpur District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) came into existence w.e.f. 20.11.1992.

In this time DRDA deals with the main scheme **Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)** along with some sub-schemes like DW CRA, TRYSEM and SITRA etc. IRDP was a poverty alleviation scheme. Later on, the DRDA merged with the Uttar Dinajpur Zilla Parishad w.e.f. 01.04.2000 and thereafter the Uttar Dinajpur DRDA renamed as DRD Cell of Uttar Dinajpur Zilla Parishad. Since then it is functioning as a nodal agency of Uttar Dinajpur Zilla Parishad for spearheading the developmental intervention for sustained livelihood of rural community

In the meantime the scheme IRDP has been wind-up and thereafter incorporated by introducing the new scheme named as **Swarnajayanti Gram Swaraj Yojana (SGSY)** w.e.f. 01.04.99. The concept of the scheme is uplifting the poor families living below poverty line in the rural areas by formation Self Help Groups with the members of the families' lives below poverty line. This flagship programme was implemented by this organization in the district with utmost support of the Block level administration, local Panchayati Raj institutions and Banking system within the district.

As the time passed, the pattern and nature of poverty has got a makeshift. Therefore, the then ongoing programme has been rollback and the Govt. of India launched a re-modeled programme "**National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**", also called *Aajeevika* in some states. In West Bengal, this was launched on 17th May 2012, styled as "*ANANDODHARA*". Henceforth, the maneuvering dynamics of DRDC has got a thrust and DRDC became the Anandodhara District Office of Uttar Dinajpur.

..... continued

By this time, the Panchayat and Rural Development Department of Government of West Bengal decided to implement "**Menstrual Hygiene Management Programme (MHM)**" in the District of Uttar Dinajpur in collaboration with the UNICEF. The District Rural Development Cell (DRDC), Uttar Dinajpur had extended its helping hands by providing an infrastructural support to setup a low-cost Sanitary Napkin Factory by Kamlabari-II Kaveri Sangha, an SHG Cluster with its membership to 115 SHGs. The present effort relating to Production, Distribution and Disposals of Sanitary Napkins through the Self-Help Group (SHG) Network is relevant to the extents of *Development of Entrepreneurial Avenues* at SHG level and Management of Menstrual Hygiene of the mass as well.

Moreover, community development supports such as providing non-credit inputs, building rural infrastructure for income generation to SHGs and food assurance project "**SAHAY**" etc. are also included as functional area of this institution. SAHAY is a state initiated project in which cooked food is being supplied to those for whom "one square meal a day" is not guaranteed. At present, the scheme is discontinued by the Gram Panchayats due to paucity of fund.

This office is also maintaining the funds for SSK (Sishu Siksha Kendras) and MSK (Madhyamik Siksha Kendras) under **Sarva Sisksha Aviyan** which is actually implemented by the Zilla Parishad, Uttar Dinajpur. Only the requisite fund is released by this office on the instruction of the Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad.

However, the crux of these initiatives is to extending livelihood supports to bring the poor families above poverty line by ensuring appreciable sustained level of income over a period of time. At present, this office is providing support to more than thirteen thousand SHGs spreading in all over the district who is, otherwise, engaged in **convergence** with the other central or state sponsored programmes like MGNREGS, IAY, Mid-day Meal Scheme, T.L.C, T.S.C, N.R.H.M and Diet Supply to the Health Centres etc.