

ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS
AND RURAL
TRANSFORMATION
PROJECT (APART)
E-newsletter

3rd issue ( May 2019')

## ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART)

# **APART OVERALL PROGRESS OVERVIEW**

The total project cost of APART is Rs. 1705.60 Crores (1 USD= Rs. 65) which includes a World Bank Loan of Rs. 1300 Crores, has started implementation from Jan. 2018. The project is scheduled to close on 30th September, 2024.

KEY DATA BLOCK								
World Bank Board Date:	30th Octo				Financing Plan (US \$ m):			
Effectiveness Date:	17th Janu	Borrower			50.00			
Closing Date:	30th Septem	IDA			200.00			
Project Duration		Beneficiaries			12.40			
					<u>Total</u>			262.40
Estimated Disbursements (Bank FY/ US \$ m) (as per Project Appraisal Document):								
<u>FY</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	2022	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	2025
Annual	2.00	10.00	25.00	25.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	18.00
Cumulative	2.00	12.00	37.00	62.00	102.00	142.00	182.00	200.00
Equivalent in Indian Rs. Cr. @ 1US	\$=Rs.65 13.00	78.00	240.50	403.00	663.00	923.00	1183.00	1300.00

APART covers activities under eight Administrative line Departments of Government of Assam (GoA) i.e. (i) Agriculture (ii) Industries & Commerce (iii) Animal Husbandry & Veterinary (iv) Cooperation (v) Fisheries (vi) Sericulture, Handloom & Textiles (vii) Public Works, Roads and (viii) Panchayat & Rural Development. Implementing Department wise major physical achievements of the project since **effectiveness till 31st March'2019** are as below:

# A. AGRICULTURE (AGRI, HORT &FP, AAU, ASAMB)

- Total about 11,000 Paddy Demonstrations covering around 11,700 farmers have been taken up with the technical guidance of International Rice Research Institute, Philippines (IRRI). All the demonstrations (except for premium quality Rice [PQR]) are on Stress Tolerant Rice Varieties (STRVs).
- Market-led, climate resilient production demonstrations of field crops for pea (104 nos.), lentil (101 nos.), maize (409 nos.), mustard (339 nos.) and blackgram (20 nos.) are in progress.
- 130 nos. pre & post harvest machines (including rice transplanter, seed cum fertilizer drill, solar bubble dryer, portable rice mill) & 8000 nos. super bags have been successfully introduced in Project areas to create a service economy in rice value chain.
- An exposure visit cum learning tour of 30 progressive rice farmers has been taken up to Odisha during December, 2018. In addition, an exposure visit cum Training of Trainers (ToT) for 30 extension functionaries of Assam to Odisha on Quality seed production, Nursery Management, Mechanical Transplanting of Rice and Solar Bubble drier has been completed during February, 2019.
- An exposure visit to Indian Grassland & Fodder Research Institute (IGFRI), Jhansi to explore establishing linkages for fodder crop value chains, has also been taken up for a cross cutting Project team.
- All the District Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) have been trained in preparation of District level Value Chain Development Plans. Preparation of the District level VCDPs is under progress.
- Consultants (SIMFED-CTRAN JV) engaged for establishment of Common Service Centres (CSCs) through formation of Farmer Producer Organizations/Companies (FPOs/FPCs) for Zone-2 districts i.e. Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Karbi Anglong & Cachar. The procurement process for zone-1 & 3 is under sub judice.
- Market led, climate resilient production demonstrations of vegetable crops<sup>1</sup> (750 nos.)

- and **potato** (504 nos.) covering 1254 farmers have been successfully completed. In the potato demonstrations, 7 nos. **potato planters** and 7 nos. **potato harvesters** have also been successfully introduced. Technical support for the Demos. has been provided by the experts of the WorldVeg, Taiwan and the International Potato Center (CIP), Peru. The **Zero tillage** technique, a climate resilient technology, introduced by CIP in potato is gaining high popularity among the potato farmers.
- An exposure visit cum study tour to **Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI), Shimla** has been completed by a 10 member team comprising of officials from the Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, District ATMAs, AAU & PCU during **January, 2019.**
- The Market feasibility study for tissue cultured banana in Assam done by the Assam Agricultural University (AAU) revealed that the capacity of tissue culture facility may be enhanced upto 10 lakh plants per year, with intensive training and capacity building of farmers and other value chain players.
- A Rice Knowledge Bank (https://www.rkbassam. in/) has been launched by AAU with assistance of IRRI.
- Arka Rakshak, India's first & only triple disease resistant tomato F-1 hybrid developed by Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR) has been introduced under the Project. The hybrid imparts resistance to three dreaded diseases of tomato i.e. Bacterial wilt, Early blight and Tomato Leaf Curl Virus (TLCV), which are all prevalent in Assam.
- An exposure visit cum training program on Quality Seed Production, Best-bet Agronomy & Post-Harvest Management in Rice-based Cropping System for 25 staff of KVKs under AAU involved in rice value chain has been taken up to IRRI South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC), Varanasi during March, 2019
- A number of exposure visit/study tours/capacity building programs within & outside the State have been completed for project officials in the

Agri-Horti Value Chains.

 The procurement process for hiring Consultancy Services for Feasibility Study on setting up of electronic Auction and Spot Exchange in selected agricultural wholesale markets & warehouses under APART and DPR Preparation for Modernization and Upgradation of Rural Agricultural Markets and Warehouses are ongoing.





**Demonstration of Summer paddy** 

Inter district Exposure visit

## **B. INDUSTRIES & COMMERCE**

- Action for strengthening of District Industries & Commerce Centres (DICCs) in the project districts have been taken up based on the study done by Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE). The DPRs have been prepared for renovation of 15 DICCs and sanction is under progress.
- A study to identify the potential sectors (for attracting private investments in the State) and a sub-sector scan study of agri business to identify the potential sub-sectors for attracting private investments in Agribusiness sector is under progress<sup>2</sup>. The Inception report of the Study is under scrutiny.
- In order to provide Technical Assistance to the Assam Bureau of Investment Promotion setup under the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Act 2016, procurement process has been initiated for hiring a consulting agency. The RFP was issued to five firms with proposal submission

- date of 25th April, 2019.
- Procurement process for hiring of consulting agency for Setting up & Managing Agribusiness Enterprise Development and Promotion Facility (EDPF) is ongoing and currently, the proposals received against the RFP document issued are being re-evaluated based on the feedback from the World Bank.
- The study<sup>3</sup> on "Conducting Feasibility Assessment to setup an 'Investment Fund' for Small and Medium Enterprises in the Agribusiness Sector of Assam" is under progress and the final report (draft) has been submitted by the Consultant. Feedback on this report has been provided to the Consultant and revised report addressing the feedback shall be submitted by the Consultant shortly.
- The hiring of a Fund Manager for Agribusiness Investment Fund (AIF) is in process. The REOI was published on 7th March, 2019. The last

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>The study is being done through M/s Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP (JV)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The study is being done through M/S Ernst & Young LLP

- date to receive REOIs was 25th April, 2019.
- The hiring of a Legal Counsel for Agribusiness Investment Fund (AIF) under APART is in process. The REOI was published on 9th March. 2019 and ten (10) EoIs has been received.
- Hiring of in Individual Expert to support the Project in procuring Fund Manager is in process. The individual expert has been identified. The contract agreement will be signed shortly.
- RFP for hiring a consulting agency for providing "Technical Assistance to Stewardship Council to be set up under APART", was issued on 25th

- Feb. 2019, last date to receive EOIs was 3rd May 2019 and short listing is under progress.
- Contract agreement with the selected consulting agency for "formation of Industry Associations (IAs) & Implementation of Agro Industrial Development Plans (AIDPs): Cluster Development Technical Agency (CDTA)" will be signed after Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for parliamentary election. The notification of intention of award has been issued to M/s Grant Thornton and the standstill period of 10 days is over.

# C. ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETERINARY DEPARTMENT (AHVD)

- The activities of AHVD are being supported by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya through technical advisories since April, 2018. The first six-monthly report has been submitted by ILRI and the same is under scrutiny for release of the related tranche of payment.
- The first six monthly report under the contract agreement with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)- National Research Centre on Pig (NRCP) for Technical Advisory Services to Support the Pork Value Chain interventions has been received and the same is under scrutiny for release of the related tranche of payment. ICAR-NRCP has completed the pig breeding farm assessment report, protocol for management of pig breeding farms and organized training for Govt. pig breeding farm managers.
- AHVD has procured 97 nos. piglets of Exotic Germplasm (LWYC) from Punjab with Zero

- Mortality. Another 153 nos. piglets being procured.
- Mapping of Market Actors in the milk and pork value chains as well as Training Needs Assessment (TNA) has been completed successfully with the support of ILRI.
- Assessment of laboratories under AHVD, including Directorate of Dairy Development (DDD), towards laboratories strengthening program have been completed with the support of ILRI. Short listing of candidates is under process for engagement of Lab Managers (under DDD) after relaxation of MCC.
- Under Animal Health coverage, vaccines for pigs and cattle, Dewormer, iron supplements, HS & BQ, Brucellosis vaccines etc. have been procured and distributed to the animal health dispensaries of project districts; vaccination is under progress.



Vaccination of Cattles



Germplasm piglets been transported from Punjab

## D. COOPERATION

- West Assam Milk Producers Cooperative Union Limited (WAMUL) or "Purabi" Dairy has rolled out its program extensively. About 65,854 Artificial Insemination (Als) have already been done against a target of 70,000 for FY 2018-19. Total 17239 calves registered, of which 9125 are female calves.
- 316 Mobile Artificial Insemination Technicians (MAITS) under WAMUL are onboard, of which 130 MAITS have been trained on AI. As regards other resources, out of the total 63 positions, 53 have already been recruited and the candidates for the remaining 10 positions will be joining

Women line up to deposit milk in WAMUL DCS

- after cessation of MCC for Parliamentary Elections.
- Milk procurement by WAMUL on an average stands at 32,530 liters per day from project districts.
- A two days training program on Modern Warehouse Management has been completed for the officers of Assam State Warehousing Corporation (ASWC) during 16-17 July, 2018
- Hiring of the Consultancy firm for DPR Preparation for Modernization and Upgradation Warehouses and Rural Agricultural Markets is in process as cited under para 2.A above.



MAIT performing AI for genetic upgradatiom

#### E. FISHERIES

- The activities of the Fisheries sub-sector of the project is being supported with Technical Advisories by the experts from the 'WorldFish' [i.e. International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM)], Malaysia. The first six-monthly report for the assignment has been submitted and is being processed for payment.
- A total of 90 Awareness camps have been completed.
- Market led, climate resilient production demonstrations of Polyculture in about 200 hectares, covering 728 beneficiaries is in

- progress, with harvesting planned in June 2019Climate resilient paddy-fish integrated
- demonstrations in 43 ha covering 93 beneficiaries are ongoing.
- Draft report on the rapid risk assessment of the potential invasiveness of Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia (GIFT) has been received from the ICAR-CIFRI in April'2019, and the same is being reviewed by the Fishery Directorate/PCU.
- ICAR-CIFA has also submitted the Inception Report for Revival of FISHFED, etc. The Mid Term report is being submitted.
- Brood fish stocking from wild collection has

- been completed for establishment of the fish seed multiplication centre at JB Garh Fish Farm Nagaon, and also for the upgradation of two hatcheries (Cachar and Ulubari).
- "Package of Practices (PoPs)" for fisheries/ aquaculture including climatic resilient technologies in Assam has been published
- and launched by Hon'ble Minister Fisheries on 19th Sep. 2018, which is being followed in demonstrations, training programs etc. under APART.
- A total 37 officers have been sent for exposure visits to Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Haryana & Odisha.





Stocking of quality brood fish

Mola and SIF farming at Dimoria Development Block

## F. SERICULTURE, HANDLOOM & TEXTILES

- Orientation training of Directorate staff (Sericulture) has been completed. A total of 53 nos of such trainings are being conducted.
- Awareness programs have been conducted by the Directorate of Sericulture in all the five sericulture districts under the Project and construction work of eri rearing houses has commenced.
- Project share released for Som plantation in 180 acres, covering 180 beneficiaries, and Seedlings are being distributed to the beneficiaries. Similarly, Project share has also been released for Kasseru plantation in 270 acres (covering 270 beneficiaries) and Seedlings are being distributed.
- Market Share and Market Size Study of Eri and Muga Silk under the Directorate of Handloom and Textiles is underway through Yes Bank, since February, 2019 and a revised inception report received. Field survey is under progress

- and the Consultant is expected to submit the interim report shortly.
- e EOIs received for the three consultancy studies namely: i) Feasibility study of Muga Silkworm seed production and certification, ii) Threats to Assam silk industry from Muga silkworm diseases and key solutions to manage them, iii) Entrepreneurship model of Muga food Plantation through Vegetative nurseries. Shortlisting is in process and the RFP will be issued after MCC.
- Diagnostic study on weavers' needs in respect of eri and muga silk under the Handloom & Textiles Directorate is being conducted by IIT, Guwahati. The contract shall be signed soon after MCC.
- Intensive Awareness camps on project orientation have been conducted in all the five Project districts under Handloom & Textiles value chain.





Construction of eri rearing house in progress

Spring Eri crop rearing under Dimoria block of Kamrup district

#### G. PWRD

- Out of a total Project target of rehabilitation of 100 km access roads, 60 km has been identified.
   Work order issued for 24.59 km roads and another 8.98 km roads work order shall be issued after MCC. For the rest, procurement is under progress.
- Renovation work for the 6 OPIUs (Operational Project Implementation Units setup at the HQ of the Directorate/Commissionerate of the implementing departments) out of targeted 7
- is under progress. For remaining one, bids are under evaluation.
- DPR for renovation of 12 ATMA offices have also prepared and the bids received against the procurement process are under evaluation.
- In addition, DPRs have been prepared for renovation of 15 DICCs, and the same is under the process of sanction by the PCU after the MCC.

#### H. PROJECT COORDINATING UNIT (PCU)

- The PCU is taking lead in the procurement of all the key consultancy assignments.
- APART newsletter (monthly), ATMA newsletter (monthly) and different value chain newsletters (quarterly) eg. silk value chain newsletter and rice value chain newsletter have been started by the Project.
- Online beneficiary data portal: An online beneficiary data portal has been launched
- wherein the APART beneficiary data from districts can be entered by the field staff which can be accessed at headquarter and any other place through the website of ARIAS Society.
- Strategic International Partnership Centre (SIPC): All the five international agencies working with APART for Technical Support have been provided with a common office in the vicinity of PCU

# I. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATUS AS ON 31ST MARCH, 2019 (RS. CRORE)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=(4+5+6+7)	9	10	11=(9+10)	12	13																		
SI.	Department/ Provision SI. Directorate/ in AWP		Fund Received from GoA by ARIAS Society				Fund Limits	Fund Limit		Exp.	Gross Claim sent																			
	Agency	2018-19	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	TOTAL	Allowed	Advance	Released	•	to W.B.																		
1	Agriculture	28.31	13.50 8.00					6.13	4.08	10.21	1.94																			
2	Horticulture	5.99			8.00 105.00			4.63	0.66	5.29	2.60																			
3	AAU	27.01						12.09	0.62	12.71	4.97																			
4	Industry	23.51						1.62	2.99	4.61	0.43																			
5	A.H.&Vety	15.55								3.43	2.83	6.27	0.12	2																
6	ASAMB	3.93		13.50 8.00 105.00					0.41	0.00	0.41	0.23																		
7	ASWC	0.42									00 00 00		66.00	66.00		66.00	66.00					66.00	0 66 00	66.00	102.50	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.02	24.42
8	Fisheries	16.14				05.00 66.00	192.50	4.47	3.55	8.02	3.44	34.43																		
9	Sericulture	13.56						3.30	1.46	4.77	0.04																			
10	Hand & Text	1.47							0.38	0.92	1.30	0.15																		
11	PWRD	48.76						0.00	12.47	12.47	0.00																			
12	Dairy Dev.	9.29																0.98	0.97	1.95	0.14									
13	WAMUL	82.52												19.82	6.43	26.24	9.51													
14	PCU	66.69								29.39	0.00	29.39	29.39																	
	TOTAL	343.16	13.50	8.00	105.00	66.00	192.50	86.70	36.98	123.68	52.98	34.43																		

#### 33RD GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING OF ARIAS SOCIETY

The 33rd Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of ARIAS Society was held on 10th April 2019 at the Assam Administrative Staff College, Guwahati. The meeting was chaired by Shri Rajesh Prasad, IAS, Principal Secretary to the Govt. of Assam (Agriculture Department), Agriculture Production Commissioner (APC) and Chairman, ARIAS Society in the presence of members of GB and other Officials of the Govt. of Assam.

At the outset, the Principal Secretary (Agri.), APC & Chairman, ARIAS Society welcomed all the members & officials present and requested the State Project Director (SPD), ARIAS Society to proceed as per the Agenda. A detailed presentation was made on the Agenda Items for discussion and after threadbare deliberations was done.

the preparatory period of the Project being over, the field implementation of the project activities should be focused, by the Project team and also the implementing agencies for the next five years. The implementing agencies should maximize the utilization of fund utilization and ensure that the benefits reach the beneficiaries. OPIU level review should be conducted every 15 days and SPD; ARIAS Society should review the Project progress on a regular basis. Any issues of the Departments should be brought to the notice of APC for resolving. In case of sanction and fund release proposals submitted by OPIUs, if any documents are lacking, the concerned officials of OPIUs may approach PCU, ARIAS Society and the issues should be resolved by the OPIUs through meetings and discussions. Accordingly, the OPIUs should submit correct documents timely.

APC & Chairman, GB remarked that with





33rd GB meeting chaired by APC & Chairman, Governing Body

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARD INITIATIVES IN APART**

The Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) conducts Environmental Screening for each and every activity that the project implements. Environmental Screening is a process by which the environmental assessment (EA) is determined for a given project on the basis of its likely environmental impacts. This exercise is a useful tool to identify the environmental issues and integrate them into the project preparation, and not as an exclusion criterion for avoiding environmental impacts.

The PCU and Line Departments are carrying out screening exercises for all proposed subproject interventions (department wise) prior to initiation of the activities. So far, environmental screening has been carried out for 18 rural roads to be constructed by the PWRD through financial support from APART. Subsequently, Site specific Environment Management Plan (EMP) has been formulated to be enforced for the contractor to implement during process of the construction.

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**Environmental Screening in progress** 

## **ORIENTATION PROGRAMME OF DISTRICT ENVIRONMENT COORDINATORS**

The Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), APART conducted orientation programme for the newly recruited 16 District Environment Coordinators (DEC) on the 5th & 6th of April 2019 and one field day at the respective districts. The programme orientated the DECs on Environmental Safeguard functions undertaken by APART. These newly joined DECs are placed in

the project districts for taking up environmental safeguard activities.

At the field level, the Environmental Safeguard team will conduct surveys in prescribed formats and prepare site specific environment management plans (including health and safety) before the activity is implemented.



Participants of the orientation programme

The Environmental Safeguard team will also develop sector specific environmental monitoring formats i.e, for roads, agriculture, fisheries, accident reporting format for construction site, etc. They will also conduct environmental monitoring of all construction sites to ensure compliance to environmental safeguard

Environmental Monitoring Conducted as on 30th April 2019

Type of Monitoring	Monitoring performed nos.
Agricultural Demo	9
Polyculture demonstration	7
Roads	6

and issue noncompliance note to the contractors, in case of any safeguard violation. Besides, the team is also conducting field verification of different demonstrations of agriculture and fisheries activities, to check the safeguard integration into demonstration activities and prepare a compliance status report.

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#### WOMEN FARMERS DISSEMINATE IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY OF RICE CULTIVATION

"We had a zeal to support our family by contributing to the monthly income. Our family had never considered us as an income generation source, rather we were thought to be a person who loves to look after their children, cook food which amounted to be our prime responsibilities" said Amiya Devi, KrishiSakhi and a bookkeeper of Manikanchan village organization (VO).

VO is a primary level institution constituted by involving all Self Help Group (SHG) members within the village. Manikanchan VO is an organization of 22 women SHGs involving 225 women members of Boragaon village (Kachomari), Nagaon district. The VO was formed on 27th January 2017, with a primary membership of 44 women under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). This VO's and SHG's experience proves how women can organize themselves and work towards prosperity by eliminating poverty.

The six members of Monikanchan VO, namely, Mrs. Amiya Devi (30), Mrs. Lipi Deka (40), Mrs. Jugaprabha Raja (30), Mrs. Latamoni Bordoloi (35), Mrs. Subhadra Deka (34) and Mrs. Babita Deka (37), with different educational background (4th standard to graduation) were initially members of different SHGs, but they joined hands and came together with a mutual understanding and zeal to do something new in agriculture, particularly in rice cultivation. Mrs. Amiya Devi, being an energetic and dynamic woman had been in constant touch with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nagaon and was associated with its various activities for several years. Manikanchan VO, under her leadership, was instrumental in cultivating green gram in 50 bighas of land during 2016-17 and obtained a good harvest. During last Sali (2018) season, the members of the VO cultivated Ranjit-sub 1 and Swarna-sub 1 varieties of rice in 60 bighas of land and were able to get an average yield of 5.5 t/ha. With her amiable, enthusiastic and leadership qualities, and as the backbone of the VO, Mrs. Amiya Devi received appreciation from the Indian of foundation day celebration program, during 2018 at Patna, Bihar. During the last Boro season, with an aim to utilize the barren areas of the village for cultivation, they approached the head, KVK Nagaon, Dr. Niranjan Deka to seek advice and support. In the meantime, under

the APART Project, Assam Agricultural University with the technical support of IRRI and Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nagaon planned for supplying the quality seed of short duration Stress Tolerance Rice Variety (STRV) Binadhan 11 for early Ahu and Boro season, 2019.



Mechanical Paddy Transplanter



The motivated team

The KVK after considering their experience and enthusiasm of these ladies allotted them a demonstration on Mechanical Transplanting of Rice (MTR). Initially, they hesitated to accept the proposals as the variety was totally new, and the farmers of the region were not familiar to its production technology. However, the receptive and technologysavvy women farmer, Mrs. Amiya Devi agreed to take it as a challenge. Resolute, she motivated the other members of the groups also. The APART team of KVK, Nagaon provided training to the members on Best Management Practices (BMPs) of Binadhan 11, mat-type nursery preparation, and finally on machine transplantation, which helped in boosting their confidence. It is pertinent to mention here that a paddy transplanter was provided to the KVK under APART, and mechanical transplantation was done with this transplanter.

These women took 13 bighas of land on Adhi system with the arrangement of providing three mounds per bigha to the owner of the land. "Since the farmers of the area are reluctant to go for boro paddy cultivation we took the opportunity. The farmland has one irrigation-pump too. So we started the cultivation. Since, KVK has transplanted it by machine and also supplied the seed, our input cost was reduced to a great extent. My personal expense for ploughing, irrigation till now is Rs. 3,400 per bigha. Since, I have taken a loan from my SHG to meet my expense, once the produce comes I will pay back the money." Mrs. Babita Deka, a graduate, and member of the group described how they are managing their expense for cultivation. "Mechanical transplanting of rice (MTR) is a cost-effective establishment method for rice when compared to the existing method of manual transplanting. I feel the machine will make paddy farming very interesting. It saves time, energy and money. It has thwarted the need for depending on farm workers for transplantation. Moreover, the submergence-tolerant variety of rice is a valuable gift for us" Mrs. Amiya Devi said.

When asked about support from their family members, Jugaprabha Raja proudly said "My husband does provide support; it is not like that he supports only on field works, but in household works too, as I have to go for meeting and field regularly. My family members have experienced the benefits of the technology. He is impressed and feels proud for what I am doing now."

The rice field is in an active tillering stage at present. They are expecting a good yield from the field. The group's activities have been recognized throughout the community, and many people, especially women, often come to them to express their willingness to start transplanting by machine, to adopt new STRVs in their field. The inspirational story of these six mighty women has awakened hope, ambition, faith and inner strength of other women farmers which may lead to social and economic empowerment of the women.



The team, happy with their initiatives

#### ARIAS Society

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