



Solidaridad

ANNUAL REPORT

Solidaridad Regional Expertise Centre

2024-25





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FOREWORD



**DR. SHATADRU
CHATTOPADHAYAY**

The year under review is a quiet inflection point for Solidaridad Regional Expertise Centre. It marks a shift from discrete projects to durable systems, from pilot projects to structural change across value chains. What follows in this Annual Report is not a catalogue of activities but a record of outcomes that matter to Indian people, Indian markets, and Indian landscapes. We advanced regenerative agriculture from the margins to the mainstream, and we did so while promoting labour rights, increasing water efficiency and regenerating soils, and strengthening institutions like farmer producer companies that give small producers a genuine stake in the economy.

Scale without purpose is noise, but what if both scale and purpose come together? We trained more than a million farmers in regenerative agriculture and brought over a million hectares under improved management. I believe it is some sort of a record as I could not find any other programme of this size on regenerative agriculture.

Beyond farmers, we also enabled safer and more dignified work for well over a hundred thousand workers across farms and MSME clusters. We catalysed services for farmers through local enterprises and unlocked jobs where they are most needed. We supported industries to source responsibly and consumers to choose wisely, moving tens of thousands of tonnes of commodities through cleaner, more transparent pathways. These are not abstract figures. They translate into lower costs of cultivation, higher and more stable incomes, safer workplaces, and fewer pollutants entering our rivers and soils. This translates into confidence among producers that sustainability is not a slogan; it is a viable business proposition.

Our work in cotton demonstrates it clearly. Regenerative agronomy, once seen as a niche, is now a practical toolkit for risk management and profitability. Field demonstrations on biochar, rational nutrient use, and efficient irrigation showed measurable gains in yield, and savings in inputs. The MAKARA digital platform connected climate intelligence and market signals to farm decisions, reducing guesswork and time lags. Farmer producer organisations sharpened governance and business planning. Women leaders moved from the periphery to the centre of financial decision-making. Crucially, market partners validated these efforts by procuring certified volumes and by strengthening traceable supply chains. The result is a model where agronomy, digital tools, farmer institutions, and market demand reinforce one another.

In castor, the Pragati initiative confirmed that sustainability standards, when paired with practical extension and market linkage, lift both environmental and economic performance. Soil testing informed precise nutrient management. Water-saving methods reduced costs and exposure to climate volatility. Certification opened premium channels and rewarded better practice. Health and safety protocols, including protective equipment and health camps, lowered occupational risk. Women farmers gained technical and financial skills that translate into agency within the household and the marketplace. Farmers in Gujarat did not merely adopt a checklist, they adopted a system that works.

Along with agriculture, last year saw Solidaridad adopting similar systems approach in industrial transformation. Our partnership with the leather sector focused on prevention, not end-of-pipe fixes. Cleaner chemistry, desalting, and smart water management slashed water use and pollution loads at source. Where waste could not be avoided, circular solutions turned liabilities into assets, from tallow extraction to paver blocks.

Sustainability is smart business. In Panipat's textile cluster, Solidaridad's programme turned efficiency into everyday practice: water use fell by 34% (about 140 million litres a year), chemicals by 27%, and energy by nearly 9%, while more than 2,500 people worked in safer conditions. Across 45 factories, these gains translated into roughly Rs. 9 crore in annual savings. Each factory abated around 450 tCO₂eq a year, opening the prospect of about Rs. 8 lakh in carbon-credit income at €20 per tonne. This was not a one-off; these results are ready to be expanded across Asia.

Citizen power in markets has been powerfully illustrated in the tea sector. Strengthened smallholder associations, including women-led groups, negotiated better prices and reduced input costs through collective action. Policy engagement on the Price Sharing Formula moved forward, and digital traceability tools demonstrated a route to credibility in the eyes of buyers and regulators. Consumer awareness campaigns did their part to pull sustainable tea through the chain. When growers, buyers, regulators, and citizens share a common frame of value, reforms do not stall at the drafting table.

Local institutions remain the bedrock. Bharatkhand Consortium of Farmer Producer Organizations is a living example of how branded, traceable farmer goods can shorten the distance between producers and consumers, while raising trust and value on both sides. Women's groups, trained in safe work, leadership, and enterprise management, are widening economic participation and reinforcing community resilience.

Climate action is inseparable from development. Our approach is simple: measure what matters, reduce emissions where it is most cost-effective, and share gains fairly. In MSMEs and processing clusters, we have made significant emission reductions by improving water, heat, and chemical efficiencies. On farms, soil carbon and nitrogen balances improved through intercropping, residue retention, and organic amendments. Automated weather stations and advisories helped farmers act before risk became loss. Carbon programmes are emerging, and we are shaping them to reward changes in practices credibly and at scale, with farmers as beneficiaries and co-designers.

Two principles guide us. First, dignity of work. Every safer tannery floor, every compliant dye house, every farm that eliminates hazardous exposure is a statement that productivity never justifies harm. Second, stewardship. Land, water, and biodiversity are not inputs to be consumed, but assets to be maintained and renewed. Stewardship costs time and effort, but it pays back through resilience, reduced volatility, and inter-generational equity.

None of this is possible without partnership. Government departments that integrate sustainability into extension and compliance; companies that back words with procurement; financial institutions that support transition investments; universities and technical bodies that expand the frontier of practical knowledge; and civil society organisations that keep attention anchored to equity and voice. To our field teams, who solve problems that spreadsheets cannot see; to community leaders, who make common cause out of private effort; and to our partners and donors, who measure success in outcomes rather than headlines, I offer my sincere acknowledgement.

The road ahead is clear. We will deepen regenerative practice across core commodities, expand service ecosystems that make adoption affordable, and strengthen traceability that promotes trust without burdening smallholders.

Sustainability is often described as a journey. It is also a discipline. It asks for choices that privilege the long term over the quick win, for transparency when the temptation is to embellish, and for solidarity when the easier route is to go alone. This Annual Report documents choices of that kind. I invite readers to test our claims, scrutinise our methods, and use these results to set a higher bar in their own spheres of influence. When millions of producers, thousands of enterprises, and scores of institutions move together with clarity of purpose, transformation stops being a promise and becomes a practice.

Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay

Managing Trustee

Solidaridad Regional Expertise Centre

VISION

Sustainable production in agriculture and industry, combined with sustainable trade will make a significant contribution to combat poverty and preserve people's environment, in the context of a global economy.

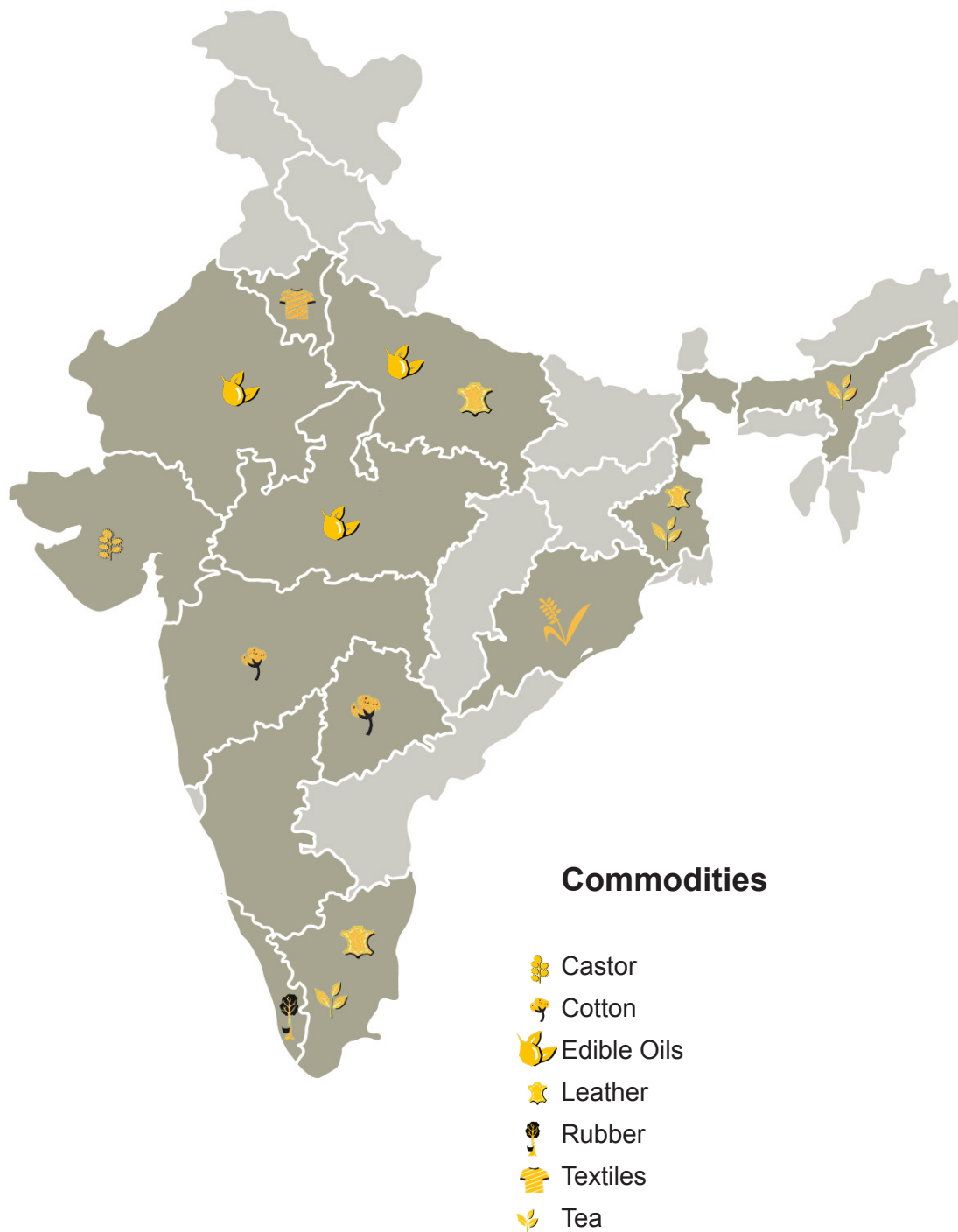
MISSION

SREC seeks to combat structural poverty through sustainable agriculture and trade. SREC's mission is based on the following convictions:

- There is only one Earth, and it is our task to look after it for our future generations.
- Poverty is degrading and should be eradicated from India.
- The balance between 'growth' and 'distribution' can only be preserved if the poor themselves are the agents of development.



OUR REACH





INDIA-RESULTS ACROSS KEY PATHWAYS

Good Practices

1,212,599

farmers have been trained in regenerative agricultural practices, establishing regenerative farming as the norm in India

1,056,524

hectares of land have been brought under sustainable management across India

509,080

farmers reported an increase in their farm income, validating that sustainable and regenerative farming has led to improved economic outcomes for smallholder farmers

436

processors were able to reduce pollution through adoption of environment-friendly practices and technologies which reduced discharge of effluents and promoted recycling of waste

1,180.6

tCO₂e emission reduction by leather processors through reduced pollution using environment friendly practices and clean technologies and conversion of waste into value-added products

123,837

workers are under improved working conditions because of Solidaridad interventions on decent work in farms and MSME units in India



Supportive Business Ecosystem



138,639

farmers reported having received new or improved services from service providers supported by Solidaridad, at an affordable price

6,271

farmers became co-owners in the supply chain, improving their income through diversified livelihood options

186

entrepreneurs were supported to build a financially viable business model. They were supported on different trades like agricultural inputs, seed production, vermicomposting, grain trading, and improved skills on book-keeping, financial management and business planning

6,866

jobs were directly generated through Solidaridad interventions in skilling and training





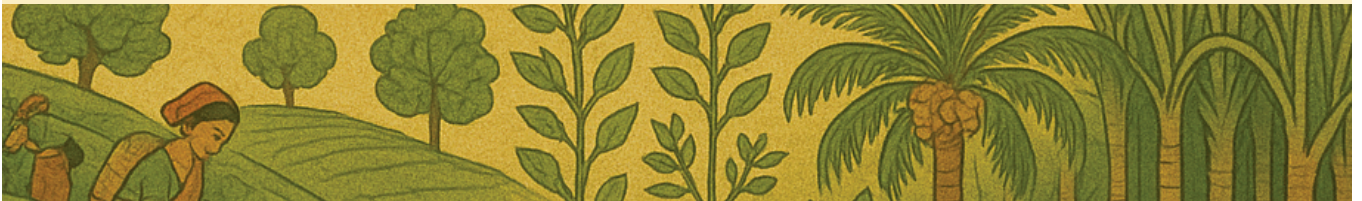
Enabling Policy Environment

51

civil society groups improved their involvement in decision-making to improve policies for smallholder farmers

85

corporates were supported to implement sustainability solutions and policies at their organisations



Market Uptake

15,300,120

individuals were activated to potentially purchase sustainable products through consumer campaigns focused on raising awareness on sustainable production and consumption

90,609

metric tonnes of sustainably produced cotton, castor and soy were sourced by brands supported through Solidaridad projects in India



AWARDS



Agri Business Summit Award 2024

in the category of Society
Creative Impact in Agriculture



Madhya Pradesh Business Glory Award 2024

for Promotion of Regenerative Agricultural
Practices and Good Farming Good Food
Good Health



GEEF Global Water Award 2024

(Industrial Water Project of the Year) for
interventions in the Panipat Textiles Cluster

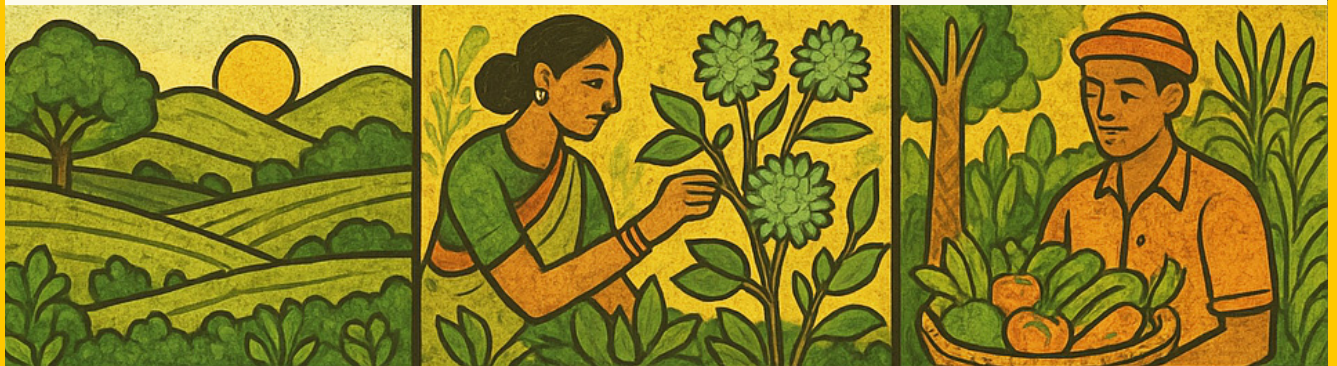


Soy Sustainability Award

at the International Soy Conclave 2024



COMMODITY PROFILES



CASTOR



GOOD PRACTICES

10,500

farmers trained in sustainable agricultural practices

36,285

hectares brought under sustainable management in India

8,250

farmers reported increase in farm income

57%

higher yields for SuCCESS-certified farmers compared to state average

ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

32

corporates supported to implement sustainability solutions and policies in their organisation

MARKET UPTAKE

86,357

metric tonnes of sustainably produced castor sourced by brands supported through Solidaridad projects in India



Castor cultivation in Gujarat, despite being central to India's dominance in global castor oil production, has long faced a series of environmental, economic, and social challenges that threaten its long-term sustainability. For thousands of smallholder farmers across Banaskantha, Patan, Mehsana, and Sabarkantha, the crop represents both opportunity and risk: while it is a vital cash crop, it has been increasingly undermined by unsustainable practices, climate stress, and social inequities. Solidaridad, along with Arkema, BASF, and Jayant Agro-Organics Limited, through the sustainable castor initiative, Pragati, aims to address these pressing challenges holistically, ensuring that castor farming continues to provide livelihoods while also safeguarding natural resources and farmers' well-being. One of the key tools used by the initiative is the SuCCESS standard, the world's first sustainability code for castor. By 2024, more than 8,000 farmers had been certified under the code, formally recognising their practices and improving market linkages with premium buyers such as Arkema, BASF, and Jayant Agro-Organics.



STORY OF CHANGE



SOWING SUSTAINABILITY, REAPING PROSPERITY

Often, castor farmers toil hard on their fields but fail to reap the fruits of their efforts. Such was the case with Daxa Patel, a small farmer from Gujarat, whose once-fertile land started demanding more water, fertilizers, and labour, as a result of conventional farming practices.

Things changed in 2022, when Daxa joined Pragati, the world's first sustainable castor initiative. His practices soon changed, as he shifted from traditional practices to modern, eco-friendly ones: 5x6-feet planting, alternate furrow irrigation, and reducing his use of chemical fertilizers (such as diammonium phosphate or DAP and urea). As a result, yields rose by 50%, while water use dropped by half, along with a simultaneous reduction in labour costs to the tune of Rs.1,300 per acre. His use of DAP has dropped from 100 kg to 30 kg per acre, and he has also reduced his use of urea from 90 kg to 45 kg per acre—leading to extra savings of Rs.3,500 per acre.

More importantly, the quality of soil has drastically improved, particularly its texture and moisture-retention capacity. This is resulting in better yields and income for Daxa—and providing his fellow farmers the motivation and inspiration to learn from him and change their practices as well.



COTTON



GOOD PRACTICES		ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT	
227,146 farmers trained in regenerative agricultural practices	168,082 hectares brought under sustainable management in India	2 civil society groups with increased involvement in decision making to improve policies for smallholder farmers	
85,958 farmers reported increase in farm income	40,000 workers under improved working conditions	1 corporate supported to implement sustainability solutions and policies in their organisations	
SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM		MARKET UPTAKE	
30,000 farmers receiving new or improved services	80 farmers have become co-owners in the supply chain	300,000 individuals activated to potentially purchase sustainable products	
1,500 jobs directly generated through Solidaridad interventions		4,249 metric tonnes of sustainably produced cotton sourced by brands	

In India, our cotton programme aims to promote environmentally friendly and socially responsible cotton production practices among smallholder farmers. In multiple states such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana, farmers are guided on regenerative practices, efficient water use, soil health improvement, integrated pest management, collection of clean cotton, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sequestration, and more.

In 2024, our efforts focused on the following pathways:

1. Farming for the Future: Biochar and Low Emission Practices

- Alignment of profitability with reduced emissions
- Information dissemination on the benefits of biochar through demonstration sessions in Maharashtra
- Focus on low-carbon practices such as rational fertiliser use, residue management, and efficient irrigation

2. Technological Transformation: MAKARA 3.0

- Digital outreach and exposure: more than 2,000 farmers introduced to predictive climate insights and real-time market data via onboarding on the MAKARA 3.0 application. MAKARA supports farmers manage their farms efficiently and reduce financial risks
- Digital capacity building through collaborative sessions and workshops
- Optimization of input use, monitoring of activities, and informed decision-making to improve income and sustainability

3. Strengthening Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

- Targeted outreach to 54 farmer producer federations and 850+ self-help groups (SHGs)
- Socio-economic resilience for women
- Enhanced institutional efficiency and leadership among farmer groups

4. Decent Work and Gender Awareness

- Focus on fair wages, workplace safety, child rights, and gender inclusion
- Workshops and field trainings help empowered women leaders, SHGs and FPOs champion safe, fair, and inclusive environments in agriculture



5. Mainstreaming Regenerative and Climate-Smart Agriculture

- Partnerships with several government agencies for policy alignment
- Promotion of regenerative practices: natural farming, intercropping, crop rotation and biodiversity-friendly practices
- Distribution of input kits and biopesticides to reduce costs and improve farm productivity
- Farmer field schools, agri-exhibition and knowledge-sharing workshops regularly organised to scale up adoption

6. Strengthening Sustainable Cotton Supply Chains

- Farmer-market linkages reinforced through strategic partnerships with Organic Cotton Accelerator, Bestseller, STING, and Kontoor
- Improved traceability and transparency, in alignment with global sustainability standards

7. Building Market Linkages for Regenerative Cotton

- Multistakeholder efforts: The Alliance of Cotton & Textile Stakeholders on Regenerative Agriculture (ACRE) platform aims to promote regenerative cotton farming practices in India and endeavours to enable stakeholders along the cotton and textile value chain to embrace regenerative farming
- Strengthened collaboration across India's cotton value chain to expand regenerative cotton sourcing

STORY OF CHANGE



Regenerating Farm, Securing Children's Future

For Narendra Raut, a progressive cotton farmer in the village of Waroda in Maharashtra's Nagpur district, the transition to regenerative farming has been marked by significant savings on water and inputs. "I used to practise flood irrigation before, but that required a lot of water," he says. Raut, who has since shifted to drip irrigation, saves as much as 42% on water use today.

On his 4-acre farm, Raut cultivates cotton on nearly 3 acres. Previously, he used to rely on chemical inputs and fertilizers for pest management, which not only adversely affected the quality of soil, but also increased the annual cost of cultivation—as much as Rs. 93,604. After participating in Solidaridad sessions, he has successfully adopted integrated pest management (IPM), involving the use of jeevamrut, vermicompost, biochar, yellow and blue sticky traps, pheromone traps, and neem-based pesticides. The result? A significant decrease in annual cultivation costs—today, it stands at Rs. 81,620, a nearly 13% drop.

Raut is also using precision agriculture techniques to improve his decision-making. The use of a digital app provides him access to regular weather and crop advisories that help him stay better-prepared to face the effects of climate change. The soil gateway (an IoT equipment measuring soil moisture) helps him prepare irrigation schedules well in advance, while the drip irrigation system, powered by electricity from solar panels, leaves minimal environmental footprint. For Raut, this overhaul of practices has resulted in a 17–18% increase in cotton yield—from an annual output of 21 quintals to around 24 quintals now.

Raut has also increased the diversity of crops on the remaining 1 acre of his farm. He cultivates various mixed crops and inter crops such as cotton, toor, soybean, gram, fodder, other vegetables and perennial crops, ensuring the land rarely remains fallow. This provides him with extra income as well. "The increased income from agriculture has helped me pay for my daughters' education," says Raut, whose two daughters are now college-bound.



EDIBLE OILS



GOOD PRACTICES



235,830

farmers trained in regenerative agricultural practices



240,500

hectares of land brought under sustainable management in India

SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM



24,998

farmers reported having received new or improved services from service providers supported by Solidaridad, and at an affordable price



6,191

farmers became co-owners in the supply chain, improving their income through diversified livelihood options

In Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, Solidaridad is working with multiple stakeholders to maximise self-sufficiency in the edible oils sector, by reducing reliance on imports. We are working with lakhs of oilseed farmers in these states to establish resilient farming systems that feed rural families and lead to more prosperous livelihoods. The focus is on promoting and helping farmers adopt regenerative and climate-smart practices. Recognising the urgent need to restore soil health and ensure long-term productivity, our interventions aim not only at improving yields but also at halting the deterioration of soil through sustainable solutions.

At the same time, our work under the sustainable soy programme also involves educating families, schools, and other community stakeholders (especially women) about the importance of including soy in daily diets, ensuring adequate health and nutrition for all.

Our efforts boast of a multistakeholder approach, enlisting the help and support of partners from the public sector (the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, the Madhya Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission), government institutions (the European Union), the private sector (Vippy Industries Limited, East-West Seed India Private Limited), and farmer-owned entities (Samarth Kisan Producer Company Limited). This holistic, collaborative approach helps us strengthen both supply and demand sides—from seed to market—addressing not only immediate cultivation issues, but also restoring agroecological balance, enhancing productivity, and improving socio-economic well-being.



STORY OF CHANGE



Mustard Farmer Balkrishna Patidar Finds the Recipe for Success

For Balkrishna Patidar, a mustard farmer, recent years have been marked by learning, adaptation, and success. Patidar, a resident of Paheda village in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district, has now emerged as a lead farmer in his community.

"I've been farming for most of my life, but [procuring] good-quality seeds always seemed to be a luxury for small farmers like me," he says. "For years, I relied on traditional methods, often struggling with low yields and rising costs."

In 2023, Patidar started experimenting with superior variety of seeds on a 1-bigha (0.11-hectare) demonstration plot. "That season, I witnessed an increase in yield from 4 quintals to 5 quintals in the plot," he says. This increase in yield also led to a rise of Rs. 5,500 in his income. Seeing the improvements, Patidar decided to increase the land under regenerative agriculture by 4 bighas. "The yield on the expanded field has gone up to 5.5 quintals per bigha.

Patidar has sold 4 quintals of these improved seeds directly to fellow farmers at the rate of Rs. 6,500 per quintal—a win-win scenario for both Patidar and the farmers. In the case of the farmers, they are able to save Rs. 3,500 per quintal, compared to market rate (for buying).

Certain improvements in agricultural practices—his adoption of integrated pest management techniques, for instance—have also contributed to Patidar's success. "By using yellow sticky cards to trap insects, I am saving Rs. 500 that I would have otherwise spent on chemical sprays. This also protects my crop from exposure to chemicals. These days, I am also using vermicompost instead of chemical fertilizers," he explains.

The efficient use of water has also helped Patidar minimize the number of irrigation cycles from 5 to 3, saving him an additional Rs. 500–Rs. 700 per bigha.

"Today, I'm proud to say that not only am I growing better crops, I have also developed a good seed variety that I share with other farmers in my village. Their success now feels like my own," he says.



RUBBER





India accounts for around 5% of the world's production of natural rubber, and is a key driver of income and employment particularly in the southern states. However, in recent years, price fluctuations and declining production and yield (from an average of 1,533 kg/ha in 2016–17 to 1,482 kg/ha in 2022–23) have posed serious challenges.

From 2022, Solidaridad joined hands with Bridgestone India to start Unnati, the sustainable natural rubber initiative. This initiative focuses on improving the livelihoods of smallholder rubber farmers by promoting better agricultural practices, enhancing quality standards, and introducing digital tools for effective supply chain management and information sharing. Key interventions include capacity building for farmers, establishing demonstration plots, and strengthening the services provided by Rubber Producer Societies (RPSs).

The project seeks to enhance the livelihood of 5,000 smallholder rubber farmers, and build capacities of 95,000 smallholders in better rubber cultivation by 2027. The interventions are also expected to:

- Improve the quality of rubber sheets provided to suppliers through RPSs
- Improve access to quality services provided through RPSs
- Identify and strengthen entrepreneurs to improve rubber quality, increase efficiency of smokehouses, employ integrated farming approaches, and more

LEATHER



GOOD PRACTICES

414

processors
reduced pollution

30,077

workers under improved
working conditions

1,180.6

tCO₂eq of GHG
emissions reduction
by leather processors

ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

4

civil society groups with
increased involvement in
decision making to improve
policies for workers and tanneries

2

corporates supported to
implement sustainability solutions

The challenges faced by India's leather sector have been well documented over the years: from pollution due to tanning processes, effluent discharge, and waste disposal, inefficiency in water management, greenhouse gas emissions, health and safety risks, and more.

At Solidaridad, we have been developing solutions for each of these issues with the further goals of advancing the goals of a circular economy, and employment generation—in the leather clusters of Kanpur–Unnao (Uttar Pradesh), Bantala (West Bengal), and Tamil Nadu. The adoption of clean technologies and processes such as enzymatic dehairing, low salt pickling, conversion of fleshing into bio-manure, desalting operations, solenoid valves, tallow extraction, waste-to-value interventions, bar and drum screens, water flow metres, Smart Water Saving System has made a significant contribution to pollution prevention, efficient water and resource management, waste utilisation, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and green job creation. In addition to this, workers in the leather industry are also instructed on occupational health and safety through training modules and the provision of safety gear and equipment (PPE). Partners in our efforts include the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), the European Union (EU)-SWITCH-Asia, Stahl, PUM, Dugros, Uttar Pradesh Leather Industry Association (UPLIA), Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI), Ganga Pollution Control Unit (GPCU), Il Politecnico Internazionale per lo Sviluppo Industriale ed Economico (PISIE), Calcutta Leather Complex Leathers Association, Council for Leather Exports (CLE), Indian Finished Leather Manufacturers and Exporters Association (IFLMEA), and Tata International Limited.

The positive outcomes have led to a behavioural shift among the tanners in these clusters, who are now investing in solenoid valves, enzymatic dehairing, and desalting units. Models promoting circular economy goals (for example, waste-to-paver blocks, tallow extraction) are also being validated and scaled. For instance, a tallow plant can prevent 5,184 tons of fleshing from entering water streams every year, while also generating an estimated net revenue of Rs.45.5 lakh from waste recovery in a single year.

STORY OF CHANGE



A Ray of Hope for Small Tanneries

H Rahman Tanning Industries, a tannery unit in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, used to face the problems that thousands of small tannery units in India are accustomed to. The unit consumed massive quantities of water during processes such as fleshing—and poor standards of leather processing meant that the unit released pollutants in large quantities, significantly increasing its environmental footprint, and struggling to maintain market competitiveness.

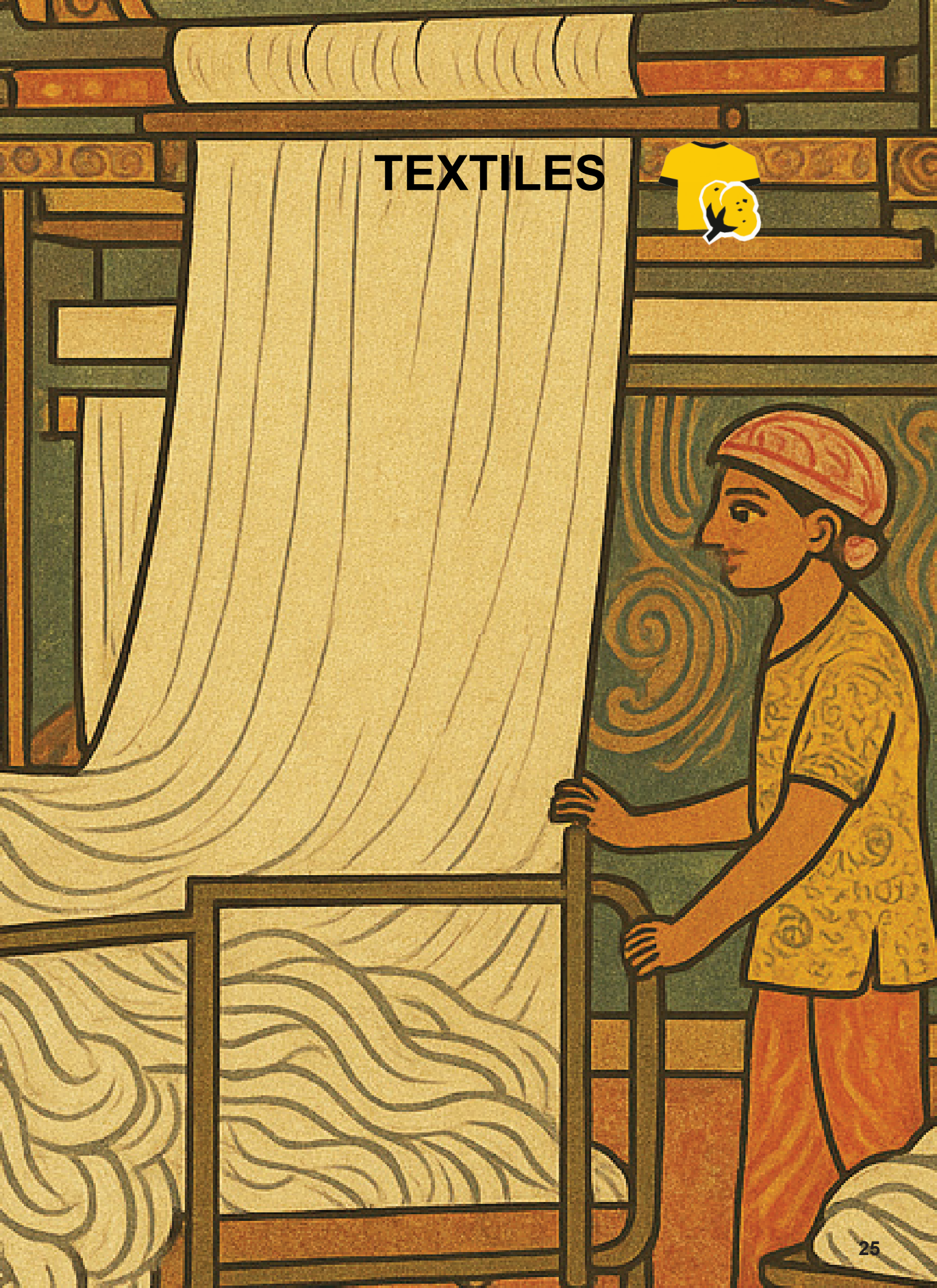
“There were incidents where workers fainted due to toxic gases,” says Hifzur Rahman, owner of the unit and President of the Small Tanners’ Association. “We neither had the knowledge nor access to resources for effective pollution control. Our workers handled chemicals without gloves or masks. Salt was manually removed from hides, using hand brushes, as we had virtually no idea of enzyme-based dehairing.”

However, with Solidaridad’s support, things have now changed at this unit. “Solidaridad provided safety gear (gloves, masks, boots) for the workers,” says Rahman. “Hydrogen sulphide and water flow metres have been provided to monitor pollution and water use with precision. The introduction of solenoid valves in our fleshing machines has reduced water wastage by nearly half. And, with the installation of bar screens and drum screens, pollutants are removed even before they enter the effluent treatment plant, making the process more efficient.”

In addition to introducing these tools, training sessions on enzyme-based dehairing have helped the tannery improve the quality of products and make them eco-friendly. Another significant aspect of the interventions is the training of Sustainability Service Providers (SSPs). “SSPs play an important role in improving occupational health and safety in the tannery. Through fortnightly sessions, they train workers in the best safety practices, such as the use of PPE kits and the safe handling units. They also maintain records of pollution parameters, and report any issue where we need to take preventive action,” Rahman states.



TEXTILES



GOOD PRACTICES

22

processors
reduced pollution

2,399

workers under improved
working conditions

1

billion litres of
water use avoided
in textiles industry

Like leather, the textiles sector in India also faces similar challenges: pollution, inefficient water and chemical management, health and safety issues, among others.

Our efforts in India's textile clusters—in collaboration with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA), Panipat Dyers Association, and TANATEX Chemicals—have focused on ensuring water and effluent reuse, reducing water, chemical, and fuel usage, and process optimisation through the use of eco-friendly technologies—tied to the larger national ambition of cleaning the river Yamuna. Textile workers have also been supported through sessions on occupational health and safety, fire and chemical safety, information on effluent treatment plant operations, safety signage in industries, as well as through the distribution of PPE kits and first-aid boxes.



STORY OF CHANGE

Embracing Sustainability and Transforming Safety Approaches at Mukesh Furnishing

For Mukesh Furnishing, a textile unit based in the Panipat cluster, Haryana, the use of conventional dyeing practices and poor safety practices posed a significant challenge in their operations, leading to excessive water consumption, risky handling of chemicals and accidents, in turn leading to high attrition rates among workers.



Supported by Solidaridad, the unit deployed a number of technical solutions to address these issues. By adopting an auto-controller for optimizing water use in the dyeing process, the unit was successfully able to reduce water wastage by 15% without compromising the quality of dyeing. To address the issue of heat loss during dyeing, the unit has insulated/cladded the jet dyeing machine with a layer of mineral wool and an aluminium sheet. The insulation reduced the temperature of the external surface of the machine (from around 120°C, previously, to around 40°C, now) thereby preventing heat loss and minimizing chances of worker injuries. Mukesh Furnishing also employs a circular model, whereby they are reusing the treated wastewater from its effluent treatment plant. This practice avoided freshwater use, and the unit dyes around 2000 batches of textile fabrics a month using the recycled, treated water.

Improving workers' safety is also a key concern for Mukesh Furnishing. It has already implemented an Integrated Chemical Management System to improve workers' handling of chemicals and prevent mishaps. Comprehensive safety training sessions have also equipped workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent accidents. As a result, the company has completely eliminated fire and occupational accidents. Workers have also reported improved safety conditions, with fewer incidents of chemical exposure and minor injuries, fostering a healthier and more secure working environment.

Rishabh Narang, Director, Mukesh Furnishing, states: "With the help of Solidaridad, we've managed to reduce our water and chemical usage while enhancing energy efficiency. Their support in improving occupational health and safety [standards] has also made a noticeable difference in the workplace."



TEA



GOOD PRACTICES

108,435

farmers trained in regenerative agricultural practices

67,898

hectares brought under sustainable management in India

57,413

farmers with increase in their farm income

51,361

workers under improved working conditions

SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

83,641

farmers receiving new or improved services

5,366

jobs directly generated through Solidaridad interventions

ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

10

civil society groups with increased involvement in decision making to improve policies for smallholder farmers

43

corporates supported to implement sustainability solutions and policies in their organisations

MARKET UPTAKE

15,000,000

individuals were activated to potentially purchase sustainable products

Although tea is a much-in-demand commodity in India and the world, smallholder farmers, who produce more than half of the country's tea, continue to face challenges. They battle the adverse effects of climate change, marginalisation in supply chains, fluctuating prices, inadequate access to markets, and inadequate access to markets.

One of the main objectives of our work in building sustainable tea chains in India has been to strengthen farmer collectives, and increase policy advocacy, arguing for better and fairer prices and compensations for farmers. To this end, our efforts in 2024 focused on the following pathways:

1. Strengthening Smallholder Tea Grower Collectives

- Establishment of self-help groups across different regions, enlisting small-scale tea farmers
- Facilitation of collective bargaining, access to government schemes, training, market linkages, financial inclusivity, and community-based solutions
- Formation of the Federation of Darjeeling Hills Small Tea Growers with several small tea grower associations
- Reduction in input costs through bulk procurement of fertilisers and pesticides

2. Policy Advocacy and Engagement with the Government

- Recommendations submitted to the Government of India through the Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers' Associations (CISTA)
- Discussions initiated with the Tea Board of India on revising the Price Sharing Formula
- Government-level conversations on implementing crop insurance for small tea growers, aimed at mitigating financial risks arising from climate change and pest infestations

3. Consumer Awareness and Market Linkages

- Media-wide promotion of sustainable tea and ethical sourcing practices
- Media coverage and public recognition of the role of women in the tea sector
- Direct trade agreements between ethical tea buyers, corporations and small tea grower collectives

4. Job Creation and Economic Empowerment

- Diversification of income. New avenues include vermicompost production, weaving, mushroom farming, tea nurseries, artisanal tea production, and tea tourism

5. Sustainable Practices and Income Growth

- Guidance on regenerative, climate-smart farming practices
- Increased farm incomes for small tea growers, including women
- Significant Increase in net income per hectare compared to previous years
- Decline in chemical fertiliser use and pesticide application



STORY OF CHANGE



Baidya Borah's Sustainable Tea Farming Transformation

Baidya Borah, a veteran tea farmer with over 35 years of experience, is at the forefront of a sustainable transformation in the village of Rasbari in Assam's Tinsukia district. "In the early days, I had a modest farm of only 10 bighas (1.3 hectares). Over time, I have persevered to expand it, and it now stretches over 120 bighas (16 hectares)," Borah explains.

It is not Borah alone who has benefited from this transformation. His plantation supports the livelihood of 25 families and generates an impressive annual income of over Rs. 2,400,000. Both Solidaridad and government organizations have supported him in this transition.

Borah has also diversified his efforts. On an additional 1.3 hectares, he now employs multi-cropping techniques to cultivate crops such as cabbage, pepper, brinjal, chili, oranges, and areca nuts, which are a source of nutritious food for his family and local community and act as an additional source of income when sold in the local market. As part of an integrated farming system, Borah is also rearing livestock. The manure is utilized to make vermicompost that not only reduces cultivation costs but also improves soil quality and promotes sustainability.

Borah established Chikarajan Jatiya Vidyalaya, a high school, in 2003, with the goal to educate young students in sustainable tea cultivation. The school runs on the proceeds obtained from the tea produced from a 1.3-hectare-large garden on the school premises. He also spearheads a tree-planting initiative in the village, involving students and parents.



PARTNERS/DONORS



Netherlands Enterprise Agency



CLC TANNERS ASSOCIATION
(We Care for the Environment)



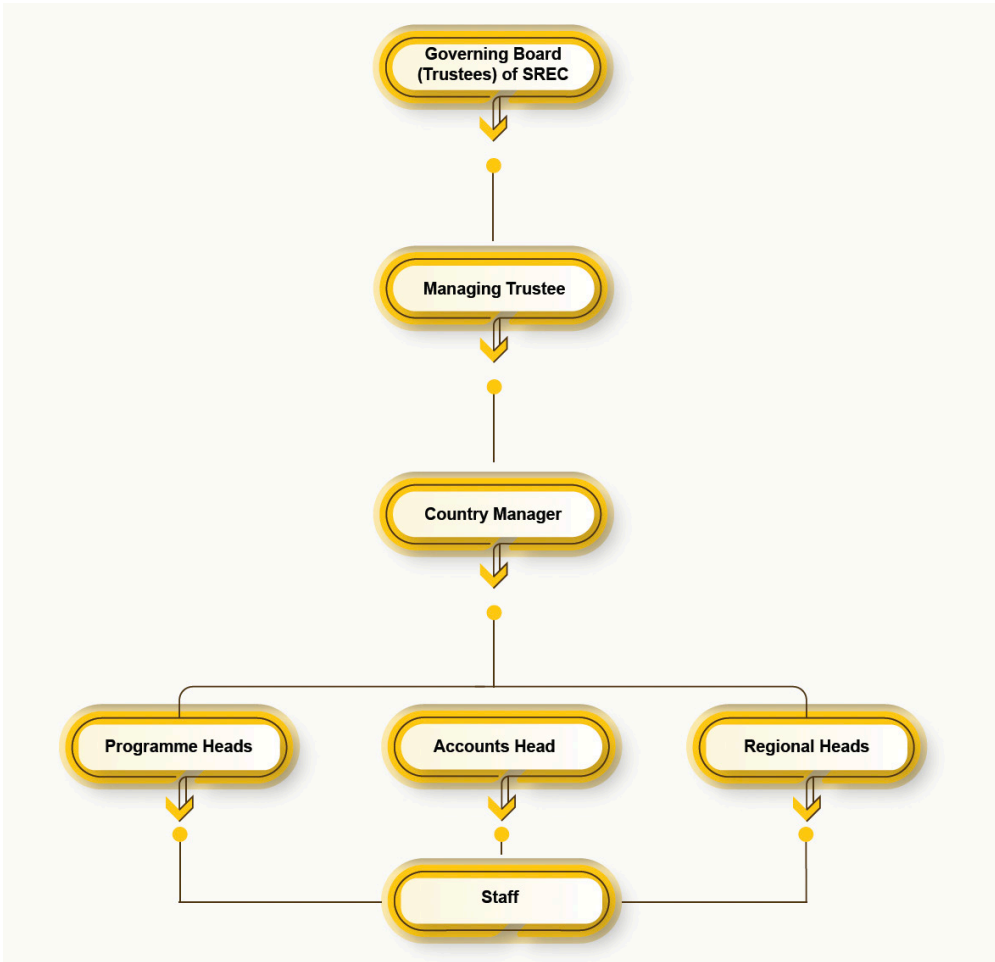
Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend
Nederland



JAYANT AGRO-ORGANICS LTD.
Leadership through Innovation

Small Tanners Association (STA)

HUMAN RESOURCES



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

There were few changes in Human Resources in the year 2024.

 172 +  123 =   295

Category	Female	Male
Full Time Staff	47	125
Associate Consultants	18	105
Total	65	230



ONBOARDING AND INDUCTION

We provide structured orientation to all new joiners at two stages—

On immediate joining of staff, we conduct orientation and share information related to their employment terms, Code of Conduct, POSH, clarity of role and responsibilities. This is done by HR team along with respective Line Managers during the first 2 weeks of their joining. All new recruits have been oriented on the Code of Conduct, and POSH policies.

Group induction is the next stage—to bring together the new staff who are yet to complete 6 months. The 4-day programme is organised to provide new staff an opportunity to feel and connect with the organisation. SREC's senior experts are invited to impart knowledge and information to them, provide in-depth understanding of our mission, multi-annual strategy plan, commodities, programmes, policies, operational systems and procedures which support in effective delivery of the organisation's mission. Overall, it gives them a broad perspective of the organisation, and a sense of belonging. At the end of the programme, the staff take with them more clarity, motivation, confidence, and alignment with organisational strategy. We believe this experience translates into their daily work, helping them to become more effective and contribute to the organisation.

HR POLICIES & SYSTEMS

Policies

- The revised SREC HR Manual has been rolled out in the month of February 2023. An education and clarifications session for all finance and administrative staff of project offices was conducted as part of rollout.
- Policy guidelines on consultants and service providers have been developed in consultation with project leads, finance heads, and other functional heads.
- POSH: We have constituted Internal Committees in 3 offices as per the POSH policy. Organised capacity building sessions for the members of IC on their roles and responsibilities, better understanding the law, prevention mechanisms, redressal processes, etc. As prevention mechanism, posters on anti-sexual harassment, and IC members lists are put up in the prominent places of the office premises.

Systems

Automation: SREC India is in the implementation stage of automating certain HR/Administrative processes such as—managing employee information/dashboard, travel, attendance, leave, payroll, etc. by introducing a Cloud-based Human Resources Information System. The purpose of this automation is to enhance efficiency and give staff and managers a positive experience.

Learnings & Culture

We have initiated a monthly engagement and learning session (stepping out of one's regular work on desk!) for Delhi-based staff who holds cross-functional roles that requires higher level of collaboration. The purpose of this initiative is to bring different departments and people together, engage in conversation that matters, promote a positive workplace, team bonding, shared learning, and enhance collaborative culture in the organisation.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024–2025

DHINGRA & JUNEJA *Chartered Accountants*

13/82, LGF, Vikram Vihar
Lajpat Nagar-IV, New Delhi-110024
Tel. : 011-41729407, 46103248, 9811991182
E-mail : vdhingra1231@gmail.com
Vikas.dhingra@dhingrajuneja.com

Extract of Independent auditor's report of the trustees of the Solidaridad Regional Expertise Centre

In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the financial statements give the information so required and give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in India:

- a) In the case of Balance Sheet of the state of affairs of the Trust as at 31st March 2025,
and
- b) In the case of Statement of Income and Expenditure, of the excess of expenditure over income for the
period from 1st April, 2024 to 31st March 2025.

For Dhingra & Juneja

Chartered Accountants

Firm Registration Number: **018799N**



Moienuddin Jaga
(Partner)

Membership No: **575521**

UDIN: 25575521BPUAEP2114

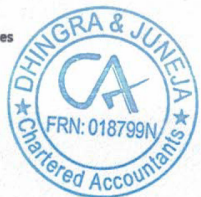


Place: New Delhi

Date: September 26, 2025

Funding Agencies	Source of Fund	Purpose
Vippy Industries Limited	Local	To implement the Project on "India Sustainable Soy Program"
Nayara Energy Limited	Local	Enhancing Agricultural Outputs Through Tech enabled Regenerative and Organic Farming in Gujarat
National Mission for Clean Ganga	Local	Pollution Prevention And Effective Waste Management of Panipat Textile Cluster
Jayant Agro Organics Limited	Local	Sustainable Castor Initiative "Pragati"
Vodafone Foundation	Local	Smart Agri : Leveraging technology for self subsistence to enterprise farming
The Solvent Extractors Association of India	Local	SEA - Solidaridad Sustainable Rapeseed-Mustard Mission
Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)	Local	Formation and Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) under Central Sector Scheme
Bridgestone India Private Limited	Local	Unnati-Sustainable Natural Rubber initiative
Reliance Foundation	Local	Through the "Inclusion through Integration - Women in Formal Dairy Supply chains"
STAHL	Foreign	Effective waste management and Promoting circularity (Kolkata & Chennai)
Laudes Foundation	Foreign	Establishing an Organic Cotton Hotspot in Maharashtra, India
European Union	Foreign	Effective waste management and Promoting circularity (Kolkata & Chennai)
Solidaridad Network Asia Limited	Foreign	To support farmer in Sustainable production in agriculture & industry, combined with sustainable trade and significant contribution to
Bayer AG	Foreign	To Promoting the implementation of good Agricultural Practices to Ensure high production in a safe working conditions
Australian High Commission	Foreign	Promotion of irrigation efficiency and enhancing water
Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform	Foreign	Sustainable Dairy Partnership – India (SDP – India)
Coca-cola Foundation	Foreign	Regenerative and Resilient (Climate, Water & Workers) Sugarcane Supply Chain in Maharashtra
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	Foreign	Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains

Statements of Financial Position				Statements of Activities			
	As at 31st March 2023	As at 31st March 2024	As at 31st March 2025	Particulars	Financial Year 2022-23	Financial Year 2023-24	Financial Year 2024-25
Funds & Liabilities				Revenues			
- Trust Fund	10,000	10,000	10,000	Restricted Income (Grants & Donations)	45,87,41,126	63,42,47,882	47,64,16,709
- Capital Fund	5,53,01,020	9,63,93,790	8,68,44,673	Unrestricted Income			
(Represented by Fixed Assets)				Overhead Support	1,59,88,722	2,18,07,931	3,03,11,441
- Restricted Fund	10,60,02,534	12,75,65,198	6,92,39,160	Interest from Bank	11,56,800	18,29,835	15,16,109
- General Fund				Voluntary Contribution (Donation)	52,90,444	37,69,905	7,15,000
Towards general objectives of the Trust	27,78,529	79,18,936	75,25,397	Other Income	-	-	69,150
Towards specific objectives of the Trust	96,26,000	-	-				
- Current Liabilities & Provisions	2,53,01,727	3,14,83,851	4,44,63,254				
	19,90,19,811	26,33,71,775	20,80,82,484		48,11,77,092	66,16,55,553	50,90,28,410
Property & Assets				Expenses			
- Fixed Assets				Programme Related Expenses	45,94,33,560	64,40,55,846	47,64,61,387
Gross Block	8,27,99,627	13,87,28,258	14,30,77,613	Management & General Expenses	1,72,21,039	2,20,85,300	3,29,60,562
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	2,61,46,623	4,11,98,273	5,52,32,422	Total Expenses	47,66,54,599	66,61,41,146	50,94,21,949
Net Block	5,66,53,004	9,75,29,985	8,78,45,191	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	45,22,493	(44,85,594)	(3,93,539)
- Current Assets and Loans & Advances							
Cash & Bank Balances	12,06,47,317	10,28,16,368	2,19,92,653				
Other Current Assets	65,05,302	5,12,71,924	8,78,89,145				
Loans & Advances	1,52,14,188	1,17,53,498	1,03,55,495				
	19,90,19,811	26,33,71,775	20,80,82,484	Changes in Net Assets	45,22,493	(44,85,594)	(3,93,539)



Solidaridad

