

A group of people, mostly women, are wading through a muddy, shallow river. They are wearing colorful saris and are engaged in a collective activity, possibly a protest or a community work project. The water is murky and brown, and the background shows a dense line of trees and foliage. The overall tone is somber and documentary.

# Sustainable Green Initiative Foundation

Annual Report  
2023-24

# 01.



## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dear Supporters,

As we reflect on the accomplishments of Sustainable Green Initiative Foundation in the fiscal year 2023-24, I am proud to share with you the progress we have made in our commitment to supporting farmers and advancing our agroforestry projects.

This year, we focused our efforts on our farmers, recognizing their crucial role in sustainable development. I am pleased to report that our agroforestry projects have shown a remarkable survival rate of more than 80%. This achievement underscores the importance of ensuring high survival rates, which is integral to the success of our initiatives.

However, we have encountered challenges in our mangrove plantation projects due to unprecedented environmental conditions. Despite these challenges, we remain steadfast in our commitment to replanting and investing in new methods and technologies to improve survival rates. Our resolve to protect and restore vital ecosystems remains unwavering.

Throughout the year, we held various stakeholder meetings across Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, where we were heartened by the enthusiasm and support of our teams and the farmers we work with. These interactions reaffirmed our belief in the power of collaboration and community engagement in driving positive change.

In addition, we introduced cash incentives for farmers participating in our projects, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. This initiative not only recognizes the hard work and dedication of our farmers but also provides them with tangible benefits, further incentivizing their participation in our programs.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to our mission of environmental sustainability and community empowerment. With your continued support and partnership, we are confident that we can overcome challenges, achieve our goals, and create a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our cause.

Sincerely,

Prerna Raturi

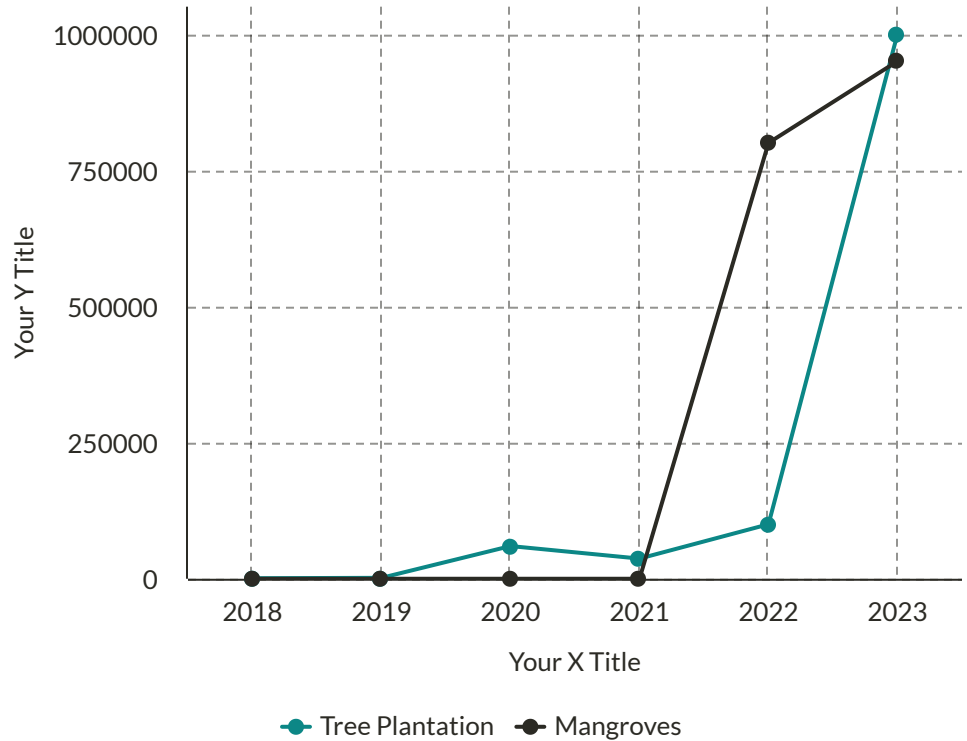
Sustainable Green Initiative Foundation







Trees Planted 2019 till November 2023



From having planted 1700 trees in our first year of operation, we have grown and have planted more than 12 lakh trees across 10 states of the country

The trees that were planted in 2018 and 2019 have started bearing fruit for the farmer and his family

We have restored more than 200 hectares of land in the estuaries of Kendrapara in Odisha and Sundarbans in West Bengal by planting more than 20 lakh mangrove spalings.



# 02.

## Agroforestry



### Locations

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar,  
Jharkhand, Maharashtra,  
Meghalaya, Odisha, Telengana,  
Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh



### Total Number of Trees Planted

10 lakhs fresh plantation,  
and 1 lakh tree in first year of  
maintenance

Fruit Trees  
Change  
Lives





# 03.

## Mangroves



### Locations

South 24 Parganas in West Bengal and Kendrapara (Bhitarkanika) in Odisha



### Mangroves Planted

9.5 lakhs fresh plantation with 8 lakhs saplings in the first year of maintenance



### Land Restored

More than 200 hectares of land restored across WB and Odisha

“

If there are no mangroves, the sea will have no meaning. It's like a tree without roots, for the mangroves are the roots of the sea.

”



# 04.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

For a project of this scale to succeed it is imperative to have constant community buy-in and interaction. Each farmer has a dedicated Vrikshasevak (VS) to interact with the farmer and the community. The VS is typically a local person who understands the social dynamics of the community as well as the needs of the project. SGIF conducted natural and organic training courses across locations. All community members including the people who were not a part of our project attended these sessions and gained valuable inputs on cost effective ways to improve productivity while fighting pests.

- Farmers who had sown the seeds provided by us have sold vegetables worth Rs.70000 (cumulatively) in one season after self-consumption and distribution of surplus veggies in the neighborhood.
- More than 6MT of vermicompost has been distributed across the project. Majority of this has been sourced locally.
- Last but not the least, SGIF rolled out a direct cash incentive program for all agroforestry farmers associated to the program. SGIF has paid out more than Rs 3.2 lakh as cash incentive to all farmers who have delivered a more than 85% survival for the trees planted with them. This is a quarterly cash incentive program.

## SOLUTION

## INCOME ENHANCEMENT

## ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

We are pleased to report that this project has led to more than 270 hectares directly towards tree plantation and increasing green cover. This will directly lead to more than 1000 hectares of land being restored to good health. Practices like mulching, use of cowdung and vermicompost area a very quick way to increase the presence of microorganisms in the soil. It increases moisture retention as well as organic matter in the top soil. Some of the trees planed in 2022 have already started bearing fruit. Several trees planted have exceeded the height of 5 feet in Odisha





## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

All of the seed collection and nursery management is carried out by community members. Other than this, all the planting as well as watching and maintaining of the plantation is carried out by local members.

The 'watchers' are also local people who understand the immediate challenges of the community and are able to feedback to the project team any remedial action that needs to be taken to protect the interests of the community while protecting the plantation.

## INCOME ENHANCEMENT

SGIF distributed 500 ducklings in the villages of the Sundarbans along the plantation areas to supplement the incomes of people in the area. The last assessment of live ducks indicated that 70% of ducklings had matured and reproduced while the remaining 30% had been consumed after reaching maturity (16+ weeks). In Kendrapara, SGIF has planned to distribute more than 10k fruit trees to the three communities in the planting season of 2024 to supplement income and nutrition

## ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

A mangrove plantation takes anywhere between 4 to 7 years to stabilise. However, there are noticeable changes to the landscape that have been observed. The presence of Nalia grass (pioneering associate mangroves) and Harkanch (Associate Mangrove) have been observed in most polygons around the plantation. These grasses are critical to stabilising the soil and arresting erosion. These help not only with the survival of the new plantation but also aid in natural regeneration of other species.

Mangroves are critical to arrest the rate of sedimentation into the ocean. Mangroves aid in building a suitable habitat for crustaceans like crabs and snails. These are an excellent source of nutrition as well as fetch a handsome price in the market. Communities in some areas have already started reporting healthier vegetation along the river bank as well as an increase in the snail and crab populations.



**Case Study Success Story: How agroforestry is offering the farmers of Odisha freedom from chemical pesticides and debt.**

The Turekela block of Balangir district is at the foot hills of the Gandhmardan. The area was an active Naxalite area less than a decade ago. The soil was fertile and it was not uncommon for the farmers to take two crops in a year with Paddy being the primary crop. A sizeable portion of the population is tribal. The ground water is stable and the area used to have droughts rarely. The region is however known to get really hot in the summers which has gotten worse in the recent past due to climate change. Hitting half century on a couple of days in the summers is not uncommon.

A few years ago cotton farming was introduced at a large scale to area. Passing through the region after the month of December is just driving past brown dry stubble of cotton plants left behind after the cotton has been plucked. Cotton is a great cash crop has always delivered profit until last year. All the farmers in the region have diverted completely to cotton farming. With this move came in pesticide, fertiliser and cotton seed companies. The deal was simple, the farming gets all these supplies on credit and pays back at the time of harvesting. As is the case with pesticides, the input (cost) increases every time while the selling price is declining. The farmer has had taking more and more of these chemical supplies to keep production steady eventually leading to debt.

The soil in the region is almost completely devoid of organic matter. This get worse when the farmer burns the cotton stubble left on the field causing irreparable damage to her soil and land.

When SGIF started conducted a survey of the villages and conducting community meetings to spread awareness on the benefits of Agroforestry and what we were offering, we were met with scepticism. Many NGOs had come for a survey and left and nothing had ever changed.

Finally, when the saplings started arriving at our unloading points in various villages, laden with Mango and Sagwan saplings some of the farmers started believing what we had promised. Our only condition to the farmers was that they cannot use any chemical fertilisers or pesticides where the trees given by us would be planted.

The planting period coincides with the cotton planting season as well. When Umashankar and Rajesh from our field team arrived at the field of Shri Sunil Sahu we found that he had hired 20 labour to start transplanting his cotton seedlings. When we refused to hand over the saplings to him as we knew he would add heavy chemicals to his cotton field, Shri Sahu took only a few minutes to ask his labour to uproot the cotton seedlings. We were conscious that he would incur a significant price to these lost seedlings. He explained to us that he has been desperately looking for an alternative to cotton. He has noticed how quickly the quality of his soil has declined. His debt to the seed company has increased and he just didn't have the Rs 60,000 that he would need to buy the 400 saplings that he had requested from us. He shared with us how he regretted giving up even an inch to cotton farming. His father had planted 200 Sagwan that he was really proud of. He wants to leave something for his grandkids. He and his son are now some of our model farmers. Their patch is something to behold and they inspire others in the village to plant more trees to finally escape the clutch of the cotton seed companies.

Our project on Agroforestry points to some very telling wins. These are :

1. The farmer's dire need to find alternate avenues of income.
2. The farmer's desire to move to natural and non-chemical farming practices
3. With just a little help from projects like ours the farmer gets a really good opportunity to impact the environment positively.







Mahogany planted in 2022 is growing well (UP)



Team delivering trees to farmer after sunset (UP)



Trees being distributed in Sonbhadra for 2023 plantation



Organic and Natural Farming Practices Training in Odisha



Pomegranate tree planted in 2022 started bearing fruit in 15 months (UP)



Mahogany tree has shown exceptional growth for planting done in 2022 (UP)





Seeds being put in bags for germination in Odisha Nursery



Mangrove propagules being transported to plantation sites. Odisha



Planting being done using seeds in Sunderbans West Bengal



Propogules being left to the tide to promote germination before planting. Sunderbans West Bengal



Germinated saplings being transported to plantation site.

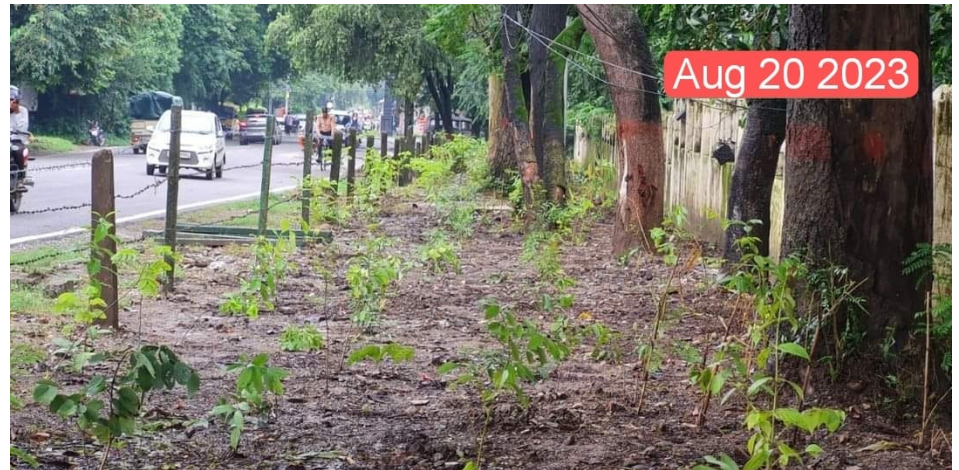


2023

2024

We successfully trialled the plantation of a Miyawaki forest in an urban area in Dehradun

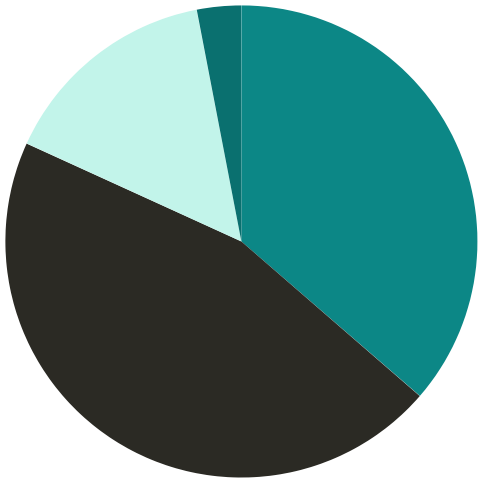
- The project focussed on native flowering and fruit plants.
- More than 400 saplings were planted in area slightly less than 500 sq feet.
- The species chosen were such that they would compete as well as help each other to thrive in this environment.



Soil Parameter	Before Planting	After Planting
Organic Matter	0.75%	0.77%
Nitrogen	0.94%	0.84%

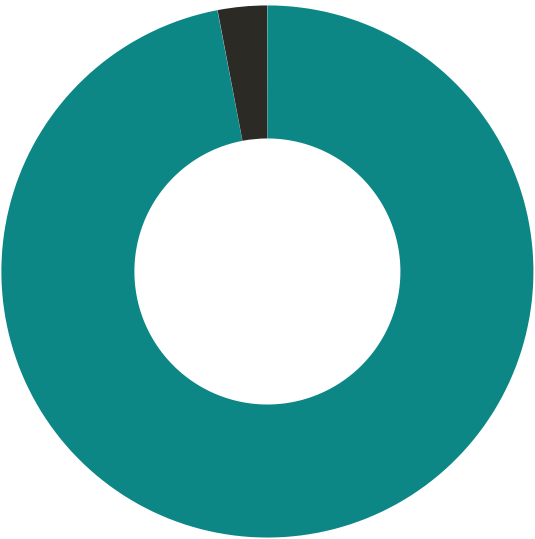


Project wise Revenue



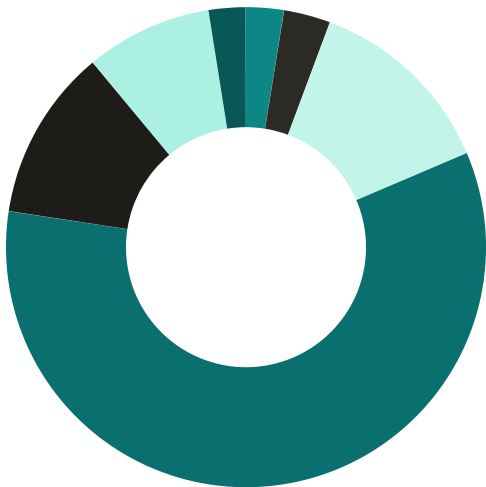
Agroforestry (36.36%) Mangroves (45.45%)  
Other Projects (15.15%) Misc (3.03%)

Donor wise Revenue



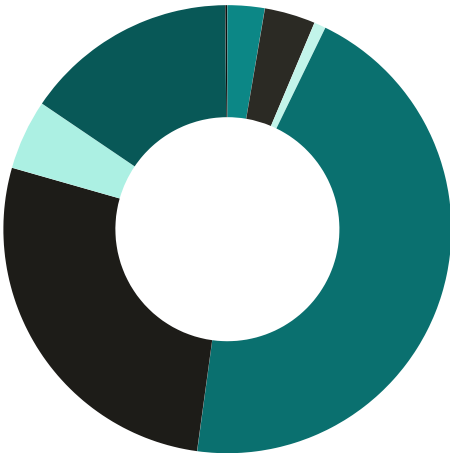
Institutional (97%) Individual (3%)

Expenses Analysis  
Agroforestry



Admin (2.55%) Maintenance (3.15%)  
Fertilisation (12.89%) Sapling (58.82%)  
Planting (11.57%) Salaries (8.51%) Travel (2.51%)

Expenses Analysis  
Mangroves



Administration (2.69%) Audit (3.68%)  
Livelihood Support (0.84%) Saplings (44.96%)  
Planting (27.28%) Protection (5.03%)  
Salaries (15.38%) Volunteer Support (0.15%)



Dear Supporters,

Looking forward to the 2024-2025, Sustainable Green Initiative Foundation is committed to advancing our mission with a renewed focus on creating livelihood options, building a stable team, and prioritizing the survival of plantations while always putting the farmer first. Our roadmap for the year ahead includes the following key priorities:

- **Creating Livelihood Options:** We recognize the importance of economic empowerment in achieving sustainable development. In the coming year, we will prioritize the creation of livelihood options for our beneficiaries, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. This includes promoting agroforestry, sustainable agriculture practices, and income-generating activities such as beekeeping . By diversifying income sources, we aim to improve the economic resilience of communities while promoting environmental conservation.
- **Building a Stable Team:** A dedicated and skilled team is essential for the success of our initiatives. We will invest in capacity-building programs, leadership development, and employee welfare initiatives to ensure that our team remains motivated, engaged, and equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to achieve our goals.
- **Ensuring Plantation Survival:** The survival of planted trees is fundamental to the success of our reforestation efforts. In the coming year, we will continue to strengthen our monitoring and management systems to ensure the health and growth of our plantations.
- **Putting the Farmer First:** At the heart of our work is a commitment to empowering farmers and rural communities. In the coming year, we will continue to prioritize the needs and interests of farmers in all our initiatives. This includes ensuring equitable access to resources, providing training and technical support, and facilitating meaningful participation in decision-making processes. By putting the farmer first, we aim to build trust, foster ownership, and create sustainable solutions that benefit both people and the planet.

As we embark on this journey, we are grateful for your continued support and partnership. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of communities and the health of our planet.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our mission.

Sincerely,

Durgesh Raturi (Secretary)

Sustainable Green Initiative Foundation

