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Newsletter | Issue 2 | April 2025



THE GREEN EVOLUTION

PATHWAYS FOR FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Image: LI-BIRD

This biannual newsletter aims to share vital information on key program interventions, recent updates, and powerful insights from the field. It will spotlight inspiring grassroots stories, showcase important milestones, and reflect on challenges, major outcomes and the long-term impacts the program strives to achieve.



In this Issue

- Progress - The visual track of the achievements
- Stories Of Change
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Achievements

During the first year of the programme, we reached out to our farmer participants and stakeholders through field schools, among other means, and supported them with sustainable inputs for their agroecological practices.

96  Farmer Field School (FFS) Completed

336  Farmer Field School (FFS) Group Formed

26  Sustainable Integrated Agricultural Systems (SIFS) Completed

1783  Critical Input Support to Farmers

Stories Of Change

Organic Farming Boost Farmers' Livelihood

Md. Sujon had followed conventional farming for years, relying heavily on chemical fertilizers and pesticides to boost yields and speed up harvests. Over time, however, the soil began to lose its natural fertility. Pests that were once easy to manage grew more resistant, requiring larger and more frequent doses of chemicals. This cycle further degraded the soil, resulting in lower yields and shrinking profits.

Sujon soon found himself in a challenging situation, where sustaining his livelihood became increasingly difficult. In search of a more stable and sustainable approach, he began exploring alternatives. His turning point came when he learned about the Sustainable Integrated Farming System (SIFS) training being offered in his community through the Green Evolution Programme. He saw it as an opportunity to



“ Shifting to organic practices will lower my costs, improve crop health and increase profits.

learn more sustainable methods of farming and eagerly joined the program.

During the training, Sujon was introduced to agroecological practices that emphasized soil health, reduced dependence on chemical inputs, and promoted long-term productivity. Motivated by what he learned, he began making organic pesticides from locally available ingredients—cow dung, cattle urine, water, jaggery, virgin soil, and bason, a plant-based component.

Noticing how effective these organic pesticides were in controlling pests, Sujon gradually replaced chemical inputs with organic ones. The shift not only improved his soil and crop health but also proved to be more cost-effective.

His actions soon caught the attention of neighboring farmers, who began adopting similar practices after understanding the benefits. Today, Sujon is committed to continuing organic farming, convinced that the benefits are greater and the risks lower.

Manikgnaj, Bangladesh

Recycling Mushroom Waste: A Step Toward Sustainable Farming



Parima Muduli, a tribal woman from Kurmakote village in Odisha, faced growing challenges managing her household of four. Married young and caring for her child, she relied solely on kharif (monsoon) crop cultivation—a seasonal income that barely met her family's needs.

Frustrated by poor yields and the limitations of single-crop farming, Parima knew she had to try something different. She joined a Sustainable Integrated Farming System (SIFS) group, where she learned to recycle paddy straw for mushroom cultivation.

Starting small, Parima recycled 20 bags of straw with an investment of just INR 600. To her surprise, the effort yielded a return of INR 3,000. Encouraged by the results, she went a step further and turned the mushroom waste into compost—creating a sustainable farming cycle.

Following her success, Parima began sharing her experience with fellow farmers and organizing awareness meetings in her community. Today, she is recognized as a grassroots leader, inspiring others through her eco-friendly approach and proving how small innovations can drive lasting impact.



Odisha, India

“

No waste goes to waste. I sell the recycled paddy straw to grow mushrooms, and then use the mushroom waste as compost.

”

Improving Nutrition Through Crop Diversification

Parvati, a 27-year-old farmer from the hills of Dailekh District in Karnali Province, lives with her husband and four children. The family depended on seasonal vegetables like cabbage, cauliflower, and onions to meet their household needs, but the harvest was often insufficient.

Challenges increased during the rainy season, when weed infestations took over the fields and consumed much of their time and effort.

Looking for ways to improve their farming practices, Parvati joined the Sustainable Integrated Farming System (SIFS) training under the Green Evolution Programme. There, she learned techniques to diversify her crops and manage her land more efficiently.

She began cultivating a wider variety of vegetables, including cucumber, bitter melon, chickpea, green amaranth, lady's finger, chillies, eggplants, coriander, Swiss chard, garlic, onions, and beans. This shift not only increased the quantity and quality of food available at home but reduced the weed infestation. Parvati now sells surplus produce at the local Rakam market, contributing to her family's income and encouraging small-scale commercial farming in her community.



Her experience has attracted the attention of other women, who now visit her farm to learn more. Parvati's efforts have helped improve her household's nutrition and income, demonstrating how practical knowledge and local resources can strengthen smallholder farming.



We now eat fresh vegetables every day without buying them, and I don't have to spend hours weeding like before.



KARNALI, Nepal

Programme Updates

Driving Behavioral Shifts in Agriculture through SIFS Training

A wave of change is sweeping through farming communities across Nepal, India, and Bangladesh through Sustainable Integrated Farming System (SIFS). Equipped with hands-on knowledge of agroecological practices, these farmers are consciously shifting from chemical-intensive agriculture to more sustainable and climate-friendly methods.

From composting and crop diversification to integrated pest management and the use of biofertilizers, they are adopting practices that not only protect the environment but also improve their health and livelihoods. They are seeing notable changes in their farming methods,

Growing change from the Ground Up – Empowering the Local Champions

In the programme areas, farmer groups of 25–30 members have come together under the Farmers Field School (FFS) model. Each group is guided by a lead farmer trained as a Master Trainer in Sustainable Integrated Farming Systems (SIFS). These lead farmers serve as both facilitators and change agents—helping their peers adopt eco-friendly practices and build resilient, community-led food systems.



experiencing lower input costs, and gaining a deeper understanding of how their choices impact the ecosystem.

These lead farmers are stepping up as changemakers in their communities—sharing insights and inspiring others to make the switch to sustainable agriculture, strengthening local food systems, and building resilience against climate change.

A total of 21 farmers have completed Training of Trainers (ToT) across the Nepal, India and Bangladesh. The training covered integrated farm management, homestead nutrition gardening, farm resource mapping, landscape micro planning, input management, and the FFS process. It also promoted cost-effective production techniques, including the use of bio-fertilizers.

To date, 336 farmer groups have been formed, and 96 FFS have completed FFS across all three countries.

Establishment of Bio-Resource Centers (BRCs)

Six BRCs have been set up in Koraput District, India, two in each block, led by trained lead farmers. These centers train farmers in preparing organic manures and adopting effective pest management, helping reduce dependence on chemical inputs. Designed with a revenue model, the BRCs aim to remain financially sustainable while supporting local farming communities.



Image: Abhiyakti

Shaping Young Minds

The School Awareness Program in India is sparking curiosity in young minds through fun, hands-on learning about agroecology, nutrition, and the environment.

To help students grow with an intrinsic respect for sustainable living and agroecology, they took part in the Tiranga Thali activity—arranging colorful, local ingredients to learn about balanced diets in a playful way. Creative art sessions encouraged them to think about protecting the planet, while a foraging activity took them outdoors to discover wild edible plants, connecting them with nature, biodiversity, and traditional food knowledge.

“It’s amazing how they’re learning without even realizing it,” shares Mr. Vishnu Yadav, teacher at Utkramit Prathmik Vidyalaya, Deoghar.

Event Highlights



Image: Pragati

Public Meetings and Food Walk

In five Koraput clusters, India food walk events engaged 789 community members, showcasing 50 traditional, oil- and spice-free dishes made with indigenous ingredients. Beyond food, the events highlighted the nutritional value of traditional diets and sparked intergenerational knowledge sharing—reviving culinary traditions at risk from modern farming and migration.



Image: PRAVAH

Healthy Food Awareness & World Food Day

An awareness session on healthy food practices was held in Deoghar, India engaging 60 children as part of ongoing efforts to promote informed food choices in rural communities. Another event was organized at the Panchayat premises on World Food Day in Jarka-2, India where 57 students and 36 smallholders participated, reinforcing the message that access to healthy, affordable, and sustainable food is a basic right.

Advocacy and Communications Workshops

Advocacy workshops were held in all three countries: Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. Participants gained insights into understanding the advocacy process and the roles of civil society organization, identifying ,prioritizing advocacy issues based on urgency and potential impact and developing clear pathways for implementing advocacy strategies and actions. It showed a strong commitment across multi- sectoral to boost advocacy efforts across three countries which focused on deepening participant’s understanding of the advocacy process and influencing policy and driving social change.



Karnali Celebrated Pesticide- Free Week

Karnali Province, Nepal, celebrated "Pesticide-Free Week" from March 16 to 22, with a campaign organized by the Integrated Agriculture Lab, the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture, and Cooperatives (MoLMAC), and the Green Evolution programme. The event focused on raising awareness about pesticide impacts and promoting eco-friendly practices through rallies, school sessions, street dramas, and biopesticide demonstrations. Over 120 participants attended the closing workshop, discussing the challenges and opportunities of biopesticides. This event highlighted Karnali's aim to become Nepal's first organic province.



Indigenous Flavors From Project Area

SLYHETI FARAS SEED CURRY



Faras seeds, a protein-rich winter legume from Sylhet, Bangladesh are loved for their unique flavor. To prepare the traditional curry, cook 750g of soaked and peeled Faras with sautéed onions, green chilies, cardamom, and cinnamon. Add ginger, garlic, turmeric, and chili powder, then simmer until tender. Finish with fresh coriander and serve hot with rice or roti—a simple, hearty taste of Sylhet’s culinary heritage.

ASURO: JUMLA'S WINTER STAPLE



In Jumla, Nepal locals prepare Asuro—a fermented, sun-dried radish dish—to get through harsh winters. Made in early autumn, grated radish is fermented in airtight containers for 10–15 days, then dried and stored. Before eating, it’s soaked, squeezed, and fried with spices or potatoes to make a tangy soup served with rice or roti.

Voices From Ground



Before the SIFS training, I relied heavily on chemical inputs, thinking they were the only way to get a good harvest. But after learning about organic alternatives, I realized they offer a healthier and more sustainable approach to farming. Today, I feel confident adopting these practices for better long-term results.

- Rowshanara Begum, Farmer, Joymontop Union, Singair Upazila, Manikganj District, Bangladesh



Under the Green Evolution Programme, I was chosen as a Lead Farmer and trained organic farming, seed production, and SIFS. I adopted agroecological practices—recycling farm and livestock waste into compost, bio-pesticides, and mushroom cultivation using paddy straw—earning ₹3,000 from 20 beds. Today, I run a bio-resource unit.

-Parima Muduli, Farmer, Kurmakote Village, India



In the three-day advocacy workshop, we didn't just learn strategies — we learned to plant seeds of transformation. The workshop reaffirmed that true advocacy starts with awareness, grows through collaboration, and thrives on the courage to demand change.

-Krishna Lamsal, Senior Program Officer, LI-BIRD, Nepal



Did You Know?

883 litres of water is needed to grow just 1 kg of apples!

For every 10°C decrease in temperature, the shelf life of harvested produce doubles.

Neglecting post-harvest safety in food systems contributes to child stunting.

About the Project

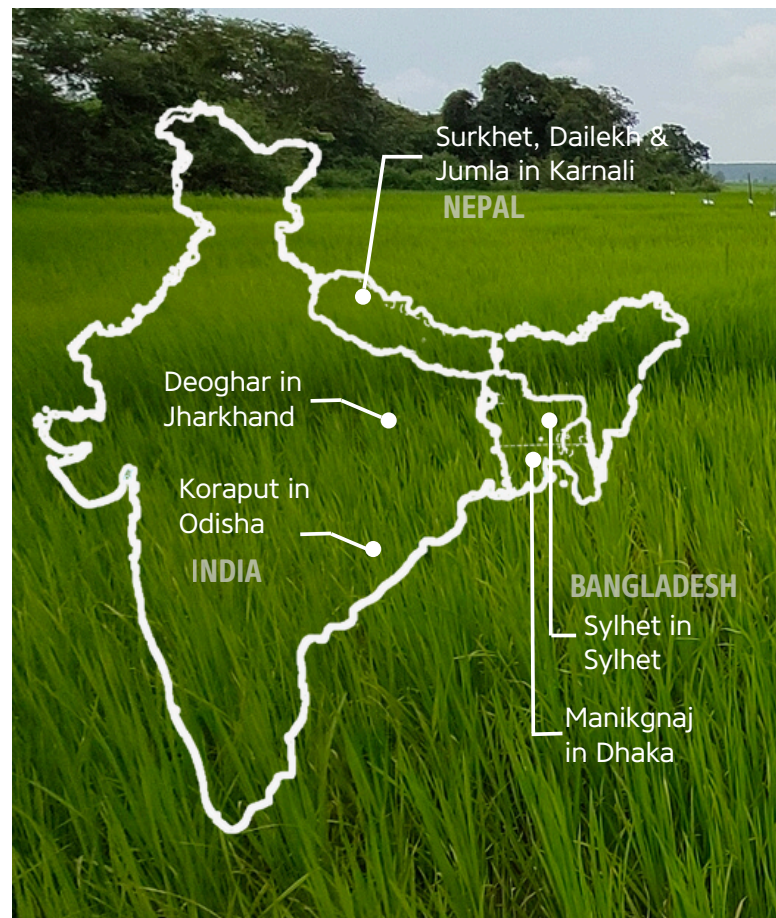
The Green Evolution program seeks to advance sustainable, equitable, and climate-resilient food systems in Nepal, Bangladesh, and India through an agroecological approach. By promoting resilient farming practices, shaping supportive policies, and fostering collaboration across local, national, and international levels, the initiative champions food sovereignty and equitable access to safe, nutritious food, contributing to the global effort to achieve Zero Hunger (SDG 2).

Overall Objective

- Support the implementation of national strategies in Bangladesh, Nepal and India for equitable, resilient and sustainable food systems.

Program Objective

- Local agroecological food systems in Bangladesh, India and Nepal will be strengthened through improved policy frameworks, operational structures and multi-stakeholder cooperation at all levels.



About WHH

Welthungerhilfe (WHH) is one of the largest private aid agencies in Germany; politically and religiously independent. The organization fights for “Zero Hunger on a Healthy Planet”.

Since being founded in 1962, it has provided funding of EUR 5.07 billion for more than 12,128 overseas projects about 72 countries.

With a goal to end hunger, we work with people who give their all to improve their living conditions. We support them with sustainable concepts and strong partnerships.



www.welthungerhilfe.org

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For a world without hunger

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