

SUSTAINABILITY

Newsletter



INDIAN TEA ASSOCIATION

July 2023-July 2024



I am pleased to note that the third edition of the Sustainability newsletter is being released on the occasion of the 141st Annual General Meeting of the Association. The ITA sustainability cell has made a steady progress in the last 7 years by forging partnerships with nationally and internationally renowned NGOs to bring about social, economic and behavioural changes within tea communities for their wellbeing and progress. It is indeed remarkable that tea management, through various program interventions, worked towards achieving a sustainable tea Industry despite various challenges.

Our collective wisdom needs to be harnessed to address issues in the Industry on conservation of energy, reduction of harmful emissions and strengthen protection of bio-diversity in tea growing regions. I am confident that ITA would work towards a holistic plan of action which would benefit the Industry and its people.

I wish to thank the sustainability cell for their efforts in publishing this edition of the newsletter.

HEMANT BANGUR
CHAIRMAN, ITA





ARIJIT RAHA
SECRETARY GENERAL, ITA

The third edition of the newsletter gives a broad overview of the positive impact of the sustainability initiatives being progressed by the ITA. In addition to the ongoing projects on agri extension services, sanitation, hygiene, prevention of Child trafficking, nutrition and empowerment of Small Tea Growers, the ITA through a collaborative effort with the ILO embarked on a project to promote occupational safety & health for estate workers and small growers. The first phase having been completed satisfactorily, the ILO has continued the collaboration for the second phase covering a larger number of gardens.

The ITA, as its commitment to progress the long term sustainability of the Tea Sector, formed the Asia Tea Alliance in collaboration with Solidaridad in 2018-19. This forum brings within its fold leading Tea Sector institutions from India, China, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Indonesia. In the year under review, in June 2024, a meeting was held along with some of the Asia Tea Alliance partners with representatives of the African Tea Sector. The meeting deliberated on several sustainability challenges like Climate Change impact, price stagnation, quality & promotion and productivity.

Addressing these challenges is a necessity for long term sustainability of the Tea Sector and security of employment of millions of workers employed by the Tea Sector across the globe.

As we look ahead, Climate Change is a major challenge confronting the industry and creation of a template for mitigation is a priority. The ITA looks forward to joint ventures with NGO's, stakeholders to progress this agenda.

The ITA Sustainability cell continues to play a vital role in addressing societal issues in tea estates. While we remain mindful of the new challenges, we look forward to the suggestions of members on the way forward.

SANDIP GHOSH
SECRETARY, SUSTAINABILITY
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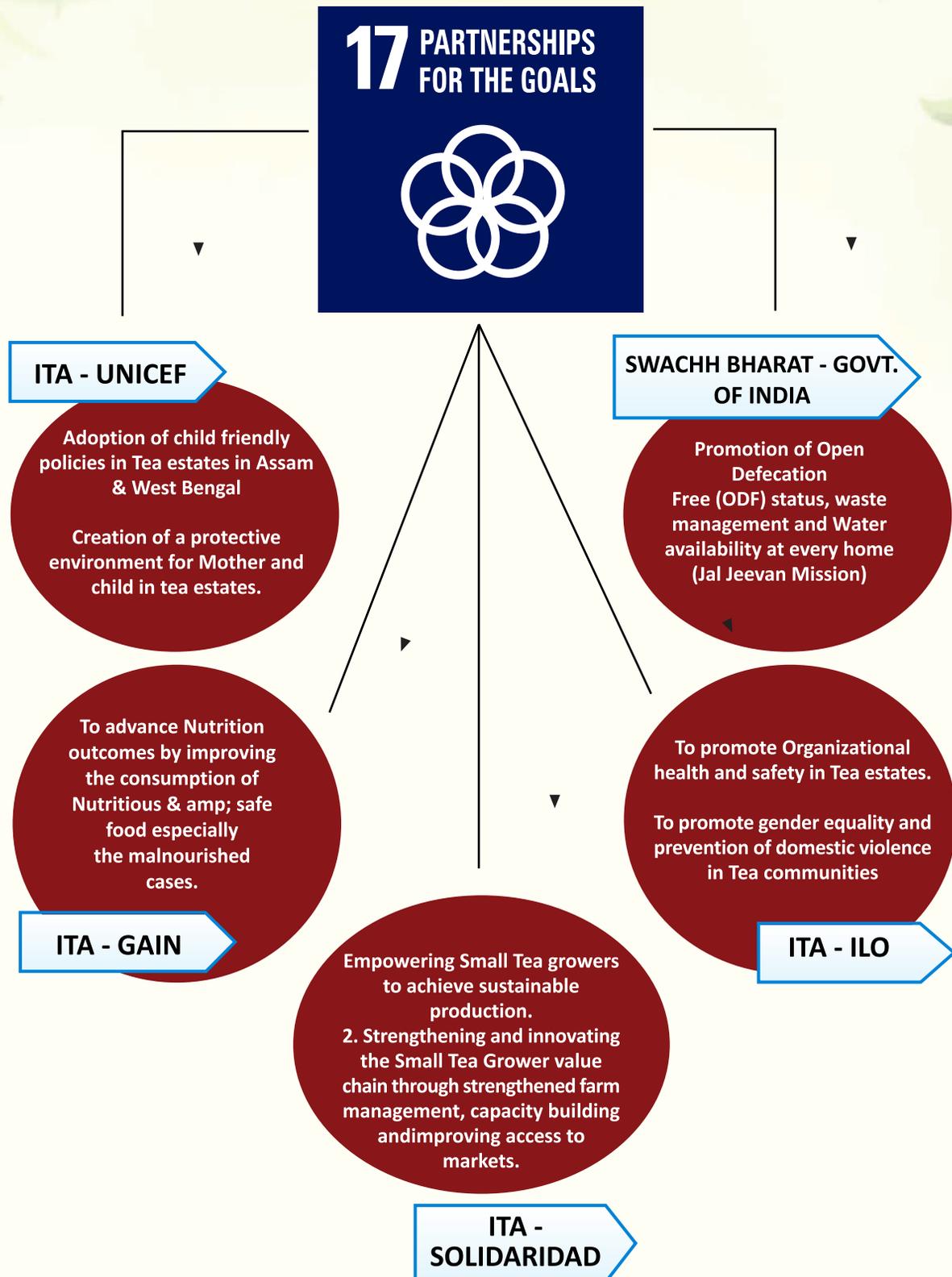
SUMANTO GUHA THAKURATA
ADDL. SECRETARY, SUSTAINABILITY

The ITA Sustainability Cell is happy to publish the third edition of the Newsletter for the period July 2023 to July 2024. The projects undertaken in the period have been successfully completed after receiving unstinted support from member Companies and their estates, Small Tea Grower Association, UNICEF, ILO, GAIN, and the ADOs of the ABITA Gramin Krishi Unnayan Prakalpa. The initiatives of the ITA have had sustained impact on behavioral change amongst communities to improve their lives and livelihoods.

We shall be grateful to receive your comments on the Newsletter and welcome your suggestions to make it a point of reference.



The ITA partnership (SDG 17) with institutions of repute is implementing the sustainability initiatives as detailed below :



ITA - SOLIDARIDAD PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

ITA and Solidaridad signed a MoU for a period of four years beginning 1st January 2022 with the following objective

- Empowering the Small Tea Growers and their Associations under the Reclaim Sustainability Program by helping them build independent, democratic organizations , improve their negotiation position with buyers/employers, achieve economic stability, make joint investment and increase their collective influence.
- Strengthening and innovating the Small Tea Grower value chain through strengthened farm management, capacity building and improving access to markets.

The Agreement envisaged setting up multi stakeholder platforms in India which will include recommendations from Central and State Governments and Tea Board for developing improved business model for trading in tea of the small tea sector.

THE SMALL TEA SECTOR AT A GLANCE

ASSAM& WEST BENGAL – Situation analysis in 2023

ASSAM	Nos of Growers	Total Area in Hect.	Tea production (M. Kg)	% Share in production	Nos. of factories
Small Tea Growers	122415	114848	326	48%	330(BLF)
Big Tea Growers	767	232963	362	52%	480
TOTAL	123182	347811	688	100%	810
WEST BENGAL	Nos of Growers	Total Area in Hect.	Tea production (M. Kg)	% Share in production	Nos. of factories
Small Tea Growers	36559	24212	250	58%	196
Big Tea Growers	476	114479	173	42%	257
TOTAL	37035	138691	423	100%	453

RECLAIM SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

The Reclaim Sustainability Program in Assam and West Bengal under the TRINTEA Programme of ITA and Solidaridad Asia aims to jointly improve smallholder farmer's capacity to participate in innovative inclusive business models that support sustainable sourcing, production, trade and investment.

Attention is drawn to a success story in Assam which has seen a unique collaborative effort between the field output of the TRINTEA backed small farmers and Tea factories to produce quality teas. Rajajuli factory in Unalguri district of Assam commenced its operations in 2018. It was one of the first large BLFs in the area and has over the years contributed to defining new standards of operations in the BLF sector.

Objective: To create a sustainable model for the small tea growers in which a consistent approach needs to be established to deliver better leaf, produce better tea and fetch better prices for both the farmer and the factory. This effort requires the best agricultural practices and safe standards to co-exist.

Impact : Over the last six seasons, Rajajuli has taken a number of positive strides in achieving its objective to produce quality tea . At the time of reporting, around 268 growers supply leaf to Rajajuli either directly or through self-help groups which are verified entities under the Trintea platform. The Field services team of Solidaridad, have substantially contributed to the effort by imparting knowledge on best agricultural practices, awareness on MRL and PPC, in order to ensure supply of quality leaf to the factory by the growers. Rajajuli has its own team of extension service executives, who work on the ground to address quality requirements and co-ordinate with the small tea growers in the supply chain.

In 2024 a new mark "Dharamjuli" was introduced from Rajajuli which aimed to compete in quality with the top 20 estates under GTAC. To achieve this goal, the TRINTEA trained small farmers were motivated to supply leaf with a higher fine leaf count to fetch premium prices. This successful exercise resulted in record prices for the brand as well as a high remunerative value for green leaf to the farmer. The brand is any doing well, thanks to all round best practices being followed in sourcing the best leaf, thus ensuring consistently good teas and prices.

To add to the success story of black tea and green tea production Rajajuli factory has been receiving accolades for its quality from the BLF sector for commanding a consistent high average price. This development has motivated the small farmers to supply good quality leaf. In brief the Reclaim Sustainability Program at Rajajuli T.E under the TRINTEA platform has been able to ensure all round progress of the small grower in the region.

Collectivisation :

Due to the fragmented and scattered nature of small tea grower holdings which made it difficult for them to arrange the necessary resources for field maintenance, the Reclaim Sustainability program encouraged collectivization of the farmers. Poor plucking standards, improper pruning cycles, and inadequate fertilization led to higher costs and lower productivity. This situation thus needed improvement by encouraging small tea growers to form collectives—such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs) or Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). These collectives are expected to leverage financial resources from banks, purchase field inputs and machinery at wholesale rates, and negotiate better prices for their green leaf supplied to factories.

As reported, an area wise break up of Collectives is shown as per table below formed between the years 2019 – 2024

ITA - SOLIDARIDAD NETWORK ASIA

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Congratulations to Rajajuli Tea Factory for outstanding achievements

STATUS

- More than 83000 Farmers are associated in the program to improve their agronomical, social and environmental practices and to empower the Small Tea Growers Associations to achieve Self – reliance. In progress up to 2025.



Entity/ District	Tinsukia	Dibrugarh	Total	Total Farmers
Self help Groups	48	13	100	2477
Farmer producer Cooperatives	3	1	7	459
WEST BENGAL				
Entity/ District	Jalpaiguri	Cooch Behar	Total	Total Farmers
Self help Groups	43	4	47	2125
Farmer producer Cooperatives/company	1	3		1468

The ITA – Solidaridad program in 2023 – 24 has continuously emphasised on formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Farmer producer organisations(FPOs) to reap maximum benefits .The SHGs have benefitted from Tea Board of India who have assisted SHGs with implements to boost production.In Jalpaiguri , the Jai Jalpesh International is a success story of a functional and well managed Farmer Producer Cooperative with more than 500 members.The cooperative has made a mark as a quality tea producer in the small tea sector .

The effort of the Reclaim Sustainability program is to ensure the viability of the Small grower sector. It aims to encourage farmers to collectively source inputs at economical prices thus reducing the cost of production.Farmer collectives have also been able to discover assured markets for their leaf supply and fetch better prices.



ITA - UNICEF PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

ITA has been working with UNICEF to improve awareness levels of Tea garden adolescents by promoting the Child Rights program and encourage family friendly policies.

West Bengal

The Indian Tea Association and UNICEF Kolkata entered into a partnership in September 2021 with the objective of working together to prevent trafficking from Tea estates in North Bengal which is the gateway to Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. Tea estates situated in the districts with a large population (approximately 3 lakh) remain exposed to unsafe migration and abuse of young persons and hence , as a measure of Child Rights and Protection, ITA and UNICEF launched this program to bring 50000 children from 30 Tea estates under the program.

The objective was to build capacities of Managers, Welfare officers and youth on addressing trafficking related issues in the estates.

Activities included dissemination of key messages through posters, skits and plays, organizing legal literacy clinics in estates to address issues on trafficking confronting the community. Interactive sessions with District police officials in the blocks were held in the 30 month program .Under the Social and Behavioral Change program, communities were provided with both outdoor and indoor sports goods to encourage physical and cognitive development of youth .

The ITA initiated a study by the Department of Women’s studies, North Bengal University to look into the various aspects of prevention of trafficking and protection of adolescents in tea estates. After a detailed analytical study the University opined **Partnerships between government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other willing institutions can also play an important role in changing the community for the better.** The findings, among other action points, stresses on continuous awareness of tea communities on trafficking suggests a close coordination with Governmental agencies to report cases.

The ITA believes in continuing to assist communities to change for the better through continuous awareness programs, education of tea estate children and interlinking social protection schemes for the youth for their development.

A synopsis of Key activities under the ITA –UNICEF program (West Bengal) is illustrated below:



Campaign on Wash

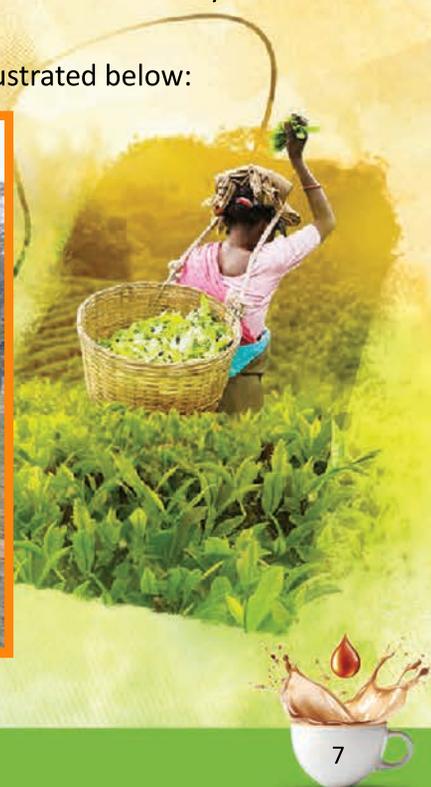
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Prevention of Child Trafficking in Tea Estates in North Bengal (pilot) 2021-2024
- March & Wash in estates

STATUS

- Completed Phase 3 in March

ITA - UNICEF WEST BENGAL



DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITIES	No. of PARTICIPATING ESTATES
WASH (Water Sanitation & Hygiene., Prevention of Child Trafficking, child marriage and abuse	Capacity building sessions for Boys and girls	28
Social protection schemes for Tea estate Girls and Boys.	Orientation of Estate youth along with <i>Duare Sarkar</i> initiatives and available Social protection Schemes	28
Acquiring legal knowledge	Legal literacy Clinics	10
Reporting of Crimes, prevention and awareness	Interface with police and community	10
Workshop on Communication skills	Orientation of Community mobilizers	28
Skits and Plays	Theme based education on Rights of Children, prevention of Trafficking and promotion of Education	28



Community Mobilizers Training at Dooars Branch ITA



Home Visit



Legal Awareness Camp



Review Meeting of prevention of child trafficking for DBITA at Central Dooars Club

ASSAM

Indian Tea Association has been working with UNICEF for more almost two decades in 159 estates addressing welfare issues of tea communities with a focus on women and Children .Given the vital role the tea industry management plays in improving lives of communities in the plantation, the partnership has been crucial as it has demonstrated how Management takes responsible steps in discharging its obligations to workers and their families by adopting family friendly business policies.

The impact of the program has been visible among tea communities as it focused on improving maternal health and childcare, appropriate nutrition for the mother and child , access to improved sanitation and safe drinking water, higher acceptance of primary and secondary level education among parents and Children, prevention of child marriage and above all prevention of abuse in all forms .

In the present scenario parents value their children being educated .Surveys show that school enrolment has increased manifold, specially of the girl child. This was possible due to continuous mentoring of communities under the project to send children to school and encourage higher education. Due this attitudinal change in the community children have even completed higher studies in universities abroad.

The child protection program in estates has recorded almost 100% immunization of new born children. Mothers' too are beneficiaries of the compulsory Ante natal check up program in each estate. This practice being a family friendly step has greatly reduced maternal and infant mortality in the ITA tea estates.

Nutrition education among adolescents together with identification and revival of severe malnourished children at birth have been important achievements under the programme . Given that the inter- generational cycle of Anemia amongst women has affected Plucker productivity. the ITA -UNICEF program targets the young generation (futureworkers) through appropriate interventions by conducting awareness programs on anemia control. Nutrition advisories to children and advising mothers on complementary feeding practices have been a milestone in the program . Adopting the IFA supplementation program for Girls,under a convergence program with the Government health functionaries, has led to a shift from severe to mild anemia in estates. The results are visible as Mother's are more vigilant on ante-natal and post natal care guidelines, children are seen to be generally healthy and adolescents exhibit positive energy to pursue their goals. In brief, the overall health standards have recorded improvement under the program.

Safe and hygienic sanitation practices have been a primary concern for Management. Over the years construction of UNICEF type sanitary household toilets with water points have increased enormously. Today more than 85 % of the worker houses have access to useable sanitary toilets. The Jal Jeevan Mission, of the govt. of India, has already provided around 360 water supply schemes and has installed functional water supply points in more than 67000 households. The access to safe drinking water has reduced water borne diseases in houses, especially amongst children and improved the general health of the worker and his family.

The Child Protection program over two decades in ITA estates of Assam has seen behavioral changes amongst communities promoting the well being of Children. The adolescent Girls and boys clubs and its members have a

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Promoting Child Rights, WASH, Nutrition, Sanitation 2003 to date

STATUS

- Under Implementation since 2003. 21 years

ITA - UNICEF ASSAM

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Promotion of Family Friendly policies through Responsible Business practices 2021 – 24

STATUS

- Completed phase 3 in April 2024. Expected to continue up to December 2024

PROJECT REFERENCE

- Organisational health and Safety (OSH) in Tea estates in Assam 2022 – 23

STATUS

- Completed phase 1 . Ongoing to Phase 2 .

ITA - UNICEF NEW DELHI



strong presence in the ABITA estates. Awareness programmes , participation in Sports workshops , career and goal setting programs, interactive sessions on effective communication skills as well as gender socialization sessions have built up capacities of the young boys and girls .

The Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP) programme in the ABITA estates focuses on working closely with the Management of the estates to reinforce the important connection between economic growth of tea plantations and the well-being of workers, their children, and their wider families. The major impacts have been the initiation of integration of family friendly policies at the workplace and the adoption of action plans by Managers to make the tea estates more child friendly. Documentation of good practices initiated by Management is in progress and would be available soon.

Programme impact highlights at a glance (July 2023- March 2024)

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION SESSIONS

ACTIVITY	PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS
Prevention of School Dropout	Adolescents trained to continue education	3215
Prevention of Pregnancy	Adolescents Trained to avoid pregnancy	2746
Prevention of Child marriage	Adolescents Trained to refuse marriage below the permitted age	3362
Skill Development, Career Guidance	Boys & Girls trained	2037
Knowledge on Child Trafficking	Boys and Girls Trained	1375
Knowledge on Gender based violence	Boys and Girls trained	1993
Knowledge on Equality and Equity	Boys and Girls trained	1561
Knowledge on substance abuse	Boys and Girls trained	1245
Exposure to Child Rights	Boys and girls trained	1473

Exposure Visits to Institutions

ACTIVITY	PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS
Care, Support and Rehabilitation Services for children	Block level Govt. officials visited for dissemination of information	28 estates of ABITA participated.
Visit to the Dibrugarh University, College in Golaghat and ITI Bhergaon, and fitter mechanic workshops.	To gain knowledge on Career advancement	20 Tea estates ABITA participated
Visit to Dibrugarh District legal Aid cell	Boys and Girls were exposed to legal knowledge on prevention of abuse	10 Tea estates of ABITA participated
Visits to police stations, legal cell to familiarise with Gender based violence	Boys and Girls to gain knowledge on prevention of abuse and immoral acts	105 adolescents group members in Biswanath, Golaghat, and Sivasagar Districts



Awareness Programme on Financial Literacy and Bank Mela at Baghjan 1



Awareness Programme on Financial Literacy and Bank Mela at Baghjan



Convergence Bal sabha at Talap Te



Global Hand Washing Day at Rajgarh TE



VHND at Ouphulia TE



Mobila Sobha at Keyhung TE (2)



Meeting with welfare officer on Positive Masculinity at Office_T



ITA - ILO PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

Indian Tea Association in partnership with ILO commenced work in 27 tea estates and 25 small Tea grower units in 2022 to work towards improving safety and health for plantation workers in their member estates and associated small holdings in the tea sector, Assam. After receiving positive feedbacks from the Management of the participating estates under the phase 1 pilot program, the next 40 estates of CCPA member estates were slotted for implementation on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) from June 2024.

The Objective of the program is to promote a safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle as it works towards *“the protection of the worker against sickness, disease and injury arising out of his employment”*.

The ITA draws reference to the definition of *workplace* as provided in the ILO convention 155 of 1981. As per the definition *workplace* covers all places where workers need to be or to go by reason of their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer.



CCPA Cosnultation with ILO held on 16.07.2024



CCPA Cosnultation with ILO held on 16.07.2024

The OSH program implementation in tea estates under the pilot program was about capacity building of all stakeholders to prevent accidents, provide protection of workers from sickness and diseases thus ensuring a safe and decent work place. The program drew the attention of the corporate Management, the estate managers, welfare officers and the workers to successfully implement the programme.

The Chairman ITA inaugurated the second phase intervention under the CCPA on 16th. July 2024. He opined that occupational safety and health is a key element in achieving sustained decent working conditions and strong preventive safety cultures. The

Secretary General ITA speaking in the inaugural session stated that the Industry would continue to embrace OSH and remained committed to provide a “safe and decent” workplace as mandated by law. He urged the CCPA constituents to participate in the project for strengthening the OSH index in the Tea Sector.

ITA –GLOBAL ALLIANCE ON IMPROVED (GAIN) PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

ITA and GAIN ,an International NGO entered into a partnership to promote nutritious diets in Tea estates and reduce unhealthy and unsafe foods. The program aimed at improving the availability, affordability, desirability of nutritious and safe foods and worked towards its sustainability in tea estates. The project was completed in 33 estates in Assam, being implemented over a period of 20months. The thrust of the program was to demonstrate to the tea workers, especially women workers, the importance and necessity to consume nutritious diets in their daily diets from locally available food items.

ITA

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Health and Family Welfare

STATUS

- The ITA since 1951 has been participating in all major National Flagship programs on health and Family welfare of the Govt. of India. Tea estates have adopted the program to control birth rates, Death rates, promote immunization, prevent infant Mortality and Maternal Mortality. Today, the IMR and MMR rates are well below National and State averages. However, Awareness campaigns on various health parameters amongst working population needs to be sustained.

On a survey undertaken in the 33 estates under the pilot program the most satisfying revelation by the community is that there has been an attitudinal change in choosing food, i.e. from unsafe and unhealthy food available in estate *hats and bazars* to ones which are nutritionally appropriate and balanced. The growing of vegetables and fruits at worker homes, use of fortified Oils and salts have been reported from the estates which makes the program very impactful and sustainable.

On the field the GAIN team made more than 3500 home visits, met the worker families and talked about tackling anemia and general ill health issues in families. A trained Nutritionist from the medical college was also engaged in the program to offer guidance. Conducting Nutritional games, Cooking demonstrations, street plays and displaying wall paintings to deliver key messages on health and nutrition was done to assist communities to adopt nutritious diets.

ITA - GAIN

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Workforce Nutrition 2022-2023

STATUS

- Project to improve Health and Nutrition amongst Tea Workforce has been completed in 35 estates as pilot. Project focussed on improving Nutrition requirements amongst women.

Project Highlights

Project period	October, 21 – Nov 23.
No of Tea Estates Covered	34
No of Community Mobilizers	68
No of Household Covered	25,900
No of Pregnant and Lactating Women	4480
Total No of Tea Estates - 34 (Jorhat, Charaideo, Golaghat, Tezpur)	
Jorhat	9
Charaideo	5
Golaghat	8
Tezpur	12

It is expected that good nutritional practices would resolve health issues of the workforce, reduce medical costs and promote productivity of the workers



PROJECT ACTIVITY AT A GLANCE

Sl No	Activities till Date	Estimated Target	Achievements	
			Zone 2	Zone 3
	Project Activities		Zone 2	Zone 3
a)	No of Cooking Demonstrations	127	53	40
b)	No of Cooking Competitions	127	55	40
c)	No of Home Visits (HH of PW and LW x 4)	4480	3000	1480
d)	No of Street Play	85	58	27
e)	No of Nutri Games	34	22	12
f)	Wall Painting	55	27	17



Gain Cooking Demonstration Held In November 2023



Home Visit Activity



Street Play

ITA GRAMIN KRISHI UNNAYAN PRAKALPA

ITA as part of its commitment to serve communities in Tea Districts embarked on an ambitious programme on Agricultural development of communities in Assam in the year 2000. Since its inception, more than 29000 farmers from 3500 villages have been trained to adopt improved agricultural practices to increase crop yields through distribution of high yielding variety of seeds, adopt multiple cropping and encourage marketing of produce. The strategy adopted by the project was to have a two fold impact, firstly improving crop yields and family incomes and secondly drive the farmer towards self-reliance.

The project commenced in the year 2000 in 10 centres in Assam covering Mangaldai, Dhekiajuli, North Lakhimpur, Jorhat, Moran Chabua and Doom Dooma. The centres have since been merged to currently operate at Doom Dooma, Lahoal, Moran, Sonari and Panery and Binduguri.

OBJECTIVE

Dissemination of modern and appropriate technical know-how to the farmers by participatory method.

- Upliftment of Rural economy through increasing crop yield in the area of operation in a sustainable manner.
- Initiate the farmers to multiple-cropping and diversification of market oriented crops.
- Introducing horticultural crops as a subsidiary income generation activities.
- Training farmers on judicious use of fertilizer, soil and water management and proper crop planning for maximization of yield.
- Organization of youth into production groups and empowerment of Women.
- Dissemination of knowledge through Trainings and Workshops.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF CENTRES :

Period July 23 - July 24													
Centre	Total Area covered in bigha	Total Village	Total Farmer	Total Area Cereals	Total Area Pulse	Total Area Oil seed	Total Area Vegetables	Total Area Spices	Total Area others Crops	Total no. of Group Discussion	Participants	Total no. of Training cum Meeting	Participants
Doomdooma	329	17	104	105	50	40	121	2	11	26	190	4	74
Bargang	517.5	22	309	153	33.5	101.5	193	29.5	7	41	280	1	47
Binduguri	404.5	40	286	125	37	100.5	169.5	33.5	11	40	255	2	86
Panery	509	108	232	130	30	98	115	116	20	26	244	1	35
Moran	168	10	73	124	10	35	97	16	22	31	168	2	39
Lahoal	334	14	135	112	53	40	95	14	20	27	181	1	19
Sonari	303	19	137	120	5	5	152	20	1	39	215	1	20
	2565	230	1276	869	218.5	420	942.5	231	92	230	1533	12	320
Percentage				34.93	8.51	16.37	36.74	9	3.5				

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Agricultural project for Non- Tea farmers on improving Crop yields, production and drive towards self-reliance. ABITA Gramin Krishi UnnayanPrakalpa .Year 2000

STATUS

- Presently more than 28000 farmers in tea districts in Assam have benefitted from advisory and demo. Services . Presently in progress in 6 centres in Assam

ITA



Best Farmer receives award from Hon'ble Minister for Shipping Shri Sarbananda Sonowal at ABITA AGM 2023 at Dibrugarh.



Field Demo . plot under Abita Gramin Krishi UnnayanPrakalpa .

Ms. Nayantara Palchoudhury Chairperson, Mr. Atul Asthana, Vice Chairman and Mr. Arijit Raha, Secretary General, ITA attended the Asia Tea Alliance (ATA) Meet in Bandung, Indonesia organised by Solidaridad Asia from 23rd to 25th August, 2023.

Asia Tea Alliance (ATA) Meet in Bandung, Indonesia: 23 rd – 25 th August, 2023

In the meet, Indonesia Tea Board, UPASI & amp; CISTA joined the Alliance; thereby strengthening the mutually beneficial ties among Alliance partners.



Transition of Chairmanship - ATA

The Chairmanship of Asia Tea Alliance was handed over to Mr. Hemant Bangur, Chairman of the Indian Tea Association (ITA) by the out going chairperson ITA Ms Nayantara Palchowdhuri. The occasion took place on 8th July 2024 at the ITA office in Kolkata. Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay MD Solidaridad, attendedvirtually. Dr. Chattopadhyay introduced the Asia Tea Alliance (ATA) to the ITA Chairman, stating that it was established in 2018 underthe chairmanship of the China Tea Marketing Association (CTMA) with Solidaridad Asia as the convenor.

Ms. Palchoudhuri expressed gratitude for the support she received during her tenure, highlighting the significant contributions of Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay, Mr. Arijit Raha, and the Solidaridad team at Kolkata.

MEETING ON SUSTAINABILITY OF THE GLOBAL TEA SECTOR-7TH JUNE, 2024 AT THE TAJ DUBAI, BUSINESS BAY

A meeting of stakeholders representing leading Tea Producers' Associations from Asia and Africa was held at Taj Dubai, Business Bay on 7th June, 2024 to discuss the Sustainable Development Goals of the global tea sector with primary focus on Addressing quality, restoration of the demand-supply equilibrium and the long-term Sustainability of the tea sector.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Hemant Bangur, Chairman, Indian Tea Association & Consultative Committee of Plantations' Association (CCPA) and was attended by :Mr. Arijit Raha, Secretary General, Indian Tea Association; Mr. Mayank Beriwal, Chief Executive to Chairman, Dhunseri Tea & Industries Ltd., Mr. Arthur.D. Sewe, Chairman, East African



Meeting On Sustainability Of The Global Tea Sector- 7Th June, 2024 At The Taj Dubai, Business Bay

Tea Trade Association; Mr. Adi Hussein, Vice Chairman, East African Tea Trade Association; Mr. George Omuga, Managing Director, East African Tea Trade Association, Mr. Robert Koech, Director, Independent Tea Producers

Association of Kenya (ITPAK) Mr. Sangwani J Hara, Chairman, Malawi Tea Association and Ms Rukia Muwango, Manager for Planning, Promotion and Evaluation, Tea Board of Tanzania.

The Meeting was also attended virtually by Mr. P K Bhattacharjee, Secretary General, Tea Association of India (TAI); Mr. Kamran Tanvirur Rahman, Chairman, Bangladesh Tea Association; Mr. M. Shah Alam, Past Chairman, Bangladesh Tea Association; Mr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman, Committee Member, Bangladesh Tea Association; Dr. Kazi Muzafar Ahammed, Secretary General, Bangladesh Tea Association; Mr. Albert Bomukama, Member, Uganda Tea Association; Ms Victoria Ashabahebwa and Tamteco Team.

The meeting majorly deliberated on the following issues :

- The increasing impact of climate change, Price stagnation, high labour and input costs, mismatch between demand and supply leading to oversupply, high transaction costs and fair price discovery challenges are adversely affecting the economic viability of the global tea sector and making it difficult to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The tea industry is facing a crisis with regard to exports and declining value of produce thereby threatening the livelihoods of millions.



- Cost reductions have led to lower quality, which decreases consumer demand and perpetuates a negative cycle of over supply and the industry needs to start focusing on both improving quality to boost demand and restoring the supply-demand balance to stabilize prices.
- Africa should consider sustaining quality drive by reducing pruning cycles, increasing tea consumption and regulating new tea plantations.
- Global oversupply is a phenomenon which is creating mismatch in the Demand-Supply equilibrium and adversely impacting prices. Tea Prices across all Black Tea auction centres have been stagnating over the last few years.
- Due to large scale expansion of tea growing areas in the last decade, global tea production has increased from 5228 mtkgs in 2014 to 6603 mtkgs in 2023 – an increase by 26.30%. Consumption levels have not kept pace with the growth in production and there was an apparent oversupply of 391 mtkgs in 2023 as per ITC Bulletin.
- Concerted efforts and strategies to correct the mismatch between production and consumption and demand should be implemented by tea producing countries as a price stabilization mechanism for the sustainability of the tea sector.
- Economic recession and geopolitical challenges in the traditional bulk tea export markets has been a major factor in tea prices volatility. Tea prices and trade have been adversely impacted by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, as the Russian Federation was the largest importer of Indian tea, the third largest importer of Sri Lankan tea and the fifth largest importer of Kenyan tea.
- Conflicts in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden has exuberated tea buying and export challenges due to increase logistics costs and shipping disruption there by diminishing the producers returns hence affecting millions of smallholder tea farmers households.
- Adoption of climate resilient adaptation strategies in the tea producing countries to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change in the tea sector is crucial for long term viability of the tea sector.
- Mr. Arthur Sewe, the Chairman of East Africa Tea Trade Association (EATTA) stated –“The increasing impact of climate change is partly to blame for the declining tea quality as it is adversely affecting the tea sector globally,”
- Mr. Sangwani Hara, Chairman of the Malawi Tea Association (MTA) stated -“Climate change is a big problem that must be addressed in order to sustain the level of tea productivity,”



30TH PLENARY MEETING ON ISO/TC 34/SC 8 TEA ISO PLENARY MEETING IN COLOMBO ON 23 RD JULY2024:

An Indian delegation led by Tea Board Of India which included the Secretary General, participated in the plenary meeting of ISO/TC 34/SC8 'Tea' held on 23 July 2024 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Some of the key outcomes from India's point of view included:

The proposal to develop an ISO Standard on specification for tea bags was supported by the Subcommittee and an adhoc group was created under the leadership of India to discuss the proposal further.

Based on India's comments, SC 8 agreed to extend the timeline of ISO/TS 5617 'Tea classification by chemical analysis' by 9 months to collect more data for Darjeeling tea to modify the proposed Fisher formula used in the ISO document for tea classification.

India will participate in collaborative trial being organized for ISO/PWI 20254 'Determination of total monomeric anthocyanins content in purple tea — pH Differential Method' and ISO/PWI TS 7820 'Tea — Chemical analysis of chlorophyll'.



ISO Plenary Meeting in Colombo on 23 rd July2024



CONGRATULATIONS TO APPL FOUNDATION

Introducing APPL Foundation

APPL Foundation is a public charitable trust established in 2011 by Amalgamated Plantations Private Limited (North India Plantation Division of Tata Consumer Products, erstwhile Tate Tea Limited.). The Foundation's mission is to drive significant improvement in the quality of life and livelihood of marginalized communities in and around the tea growing areas of Assam and North Bengal.

The four pillars under which APPL Foundation works are: Healthcare; Skills & Education; Environment; and Culture. Through 8 interventions, we impact approximately 3.5 lakhs people across 12 districts of Assam and North Bengal, every year.

HEALTHCARE

1. E-Healthcare and TB Active Case Findings

It is an IT-based hub and spoke model for medical diagnosis in various remote locations, through consultations with specialists based at the Referral Hospital in Chubwa.

E-Hubs are located in 5 tea growing regions and close to **70000 patients get medical support**



annually. Apart from this, 10 Health Kiosks are also running which can do medical tests along 50 parameters and helps in creating a medical database.



APPL Foundation is a part of the National TB Elimination Programme of the Govt. of India, to identify and treat TB cases. Using the latest machines and equipment, over **2 lakhs people** are **screened for TB annually** across all 25 tea growing areas of Assam and North Bengal.

2. Fungal Free Frock (3F) and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)

At the start of the programme, **11 local women were appointed and trained as community leaders**, across 7 tea growing regions of Assam. These women were trained under medical officers and are now in charge of awareness on prevention and cure of fungal infection, and on good



hygiene practices during menstruation. These local leaders visit challans and labour lines regularly, where they conduct awareness sessions, sell sanitary pads at a low cost, and refer the potentially positive cases of fungal infection to the estate hospitals. During subsequent visits, these positive cases are also followed up on to ensure that treatment is being taken.

These women have been associated with the Foundation for over 3 years now and are dependent upon the programme for their livelihood. Every year, they manage to ensure screening of over



15,000 women for fungal infection, while managing to cover **100% of the female population (approximately 30,000 women) through the awareness sessions.**

They also conduct medical camps with support from the estate hospital and medical officers, on a quarterly basis.

3. Referral Hospital and Research Centre (RHRC), Chubwa

Established in 1994 by Tata Consumer Products Ltd. (erstwhile Tata Tea) with the aim to provide quality medical service to the public in and around its location in Dibrugarh, including Arunachal Pradesh. RHRC is an NABH Certified, 80-bedded Secondary Care Hospital, providing treatment at affordable rates. It is also the only SA8000 certified centre in the region.

In the last few years, RHRC has **treated 50,000 people** annually, under various departments, with around **2000 surgeries** performed, and **over 2 lakh diagnostic tests** conducted.

The various Department include- Orthopedic, Cardiology, Eye & ENT, Pathology Department, Dental Department, with Outpatient and Inpatient Departments, including emergency, with a team of highly skilled and experienced doctors .Executive cabins are also available.

Other advanced facilities include- Laparoscopic surgery, Pathology with latest diagnostic facilities, Radiology Department with USG, Digital X-Ray & C Arm, CT Scan machine, 24*7 SCU and ICU with Ventilator, Modern Anaesthesia Unit, Echocardiography Uni, 24 X 7 Blood Bank services, 24 X 7 ambulance services, Medicine shop, Cashless insurance, etc.

SKILLS & EDUCATION

1. Amalgamated Plantations Private Industrial Training Institute (APPITI), Rowta

Established in 1997 by Tata Consumer Products Ltd. (erstwhile Tata Tea) with the aim to provide training on essential employable skills to the local youth and increase their employment opportunities.

The Institute also has earned **8.1 Grade Score** for 2024-25 from the Directorate General of Training (DGT) under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Govt. of India. This puts **APPITI in the Top 3000 ITIs of the country, out of a total of 15000 ITIs.**

APPITI is affiliated with the National and State Councils of Vocational Training.

Along with a total capacity of 354 trainees, the centre also has a separate hostel for boys having 72 beds and for girls having 96 beds. The centre also has 5 workshops, 2 IT labs and 1 Brew Master Lab for practicals.

The ITI course, Bachelors in Vocation, and Diploma in Vocation are the three long-term courses running at the centre.

Apart from the mainstream trades such as sewing machine operator, electrician and fitter, APPITI has also introduced new-age trades such as Brew Master, Food & Beverage Associate and Retail Apprenticeship. Trained candidates are also being placed with reputed companies across the entire country. Training under Government Schemes such as DDU-GKY and the PM Vishwakarma Scheme are also conducted at APPITI.



Approximately **800 trainees graduate** from the centre every year with **80% placement rate**, with the remaining trainees choosing self-employment.

2. Vocational Training Centre (VTC), Chubwa

Started in 2016, this training centre increased accessibility to short-term training courses for the youth of surrounding regions, especially due to the introduction of residential facilities for Boys and Girls.



Here too, training under Government Schemes such as DDU-GKY and the PM Vishwakarma scheme is conducted.

Approximately **400 trainees graduate every year** with a **placement rate of 80%**.

3. Teach Me Digital Education Programme

In 2020, APPL Foundation launched the Teach Me Digital Education Programme for school going children of classes 4 to 12, in an attempt to combat the damage caused by Covid-19 to children's education. Digital Learning centres were set up with a smart TV and video-based state board study materials in 2 tea growing regions in North Bengal. Since then, due to the traction gained by the programme locally, 5 more centres were started- 1 in North Bengal and 4 in Assam, bringing the current total to 7 digital learning centres. Teachers were appointed from among the local youth who would conduct classes for these children in the evenings.

Across the **7 centres, 700 students** enrolled and have been attending classes regularly with **91% attendance rate**.

Overall, an improvement in the school grades of these students in Math, Science and English has been observed.

ENVIRONMENT

APPL Foundation also issues an annual publication by the name of Organic Growth, in contribution to the global discussions around environment conservation. Each issue picks a pertinent topic and highlights the developments in that field, such as- the latest issue released in May 2024 discusses Regenerative Farming.

CONTACT US

W: <https://applfoundation.in/en/about-us>

Address: Unit No.302A, 3rd Floor, Elgin Chambers, 1A, Ashutosh Mukherjee Road, Kolkata – 700 020

E: chaynika.pasari@applfoundation.or

Contact: 9830778423

