

Field Innovations of the Year: Celebrating BCI Partners' Achievements

BCI Farmer Activity Calendar

Deshpande Foundation | India

In 2020, in the Telangana region, Deshpande Foundation launched a new calendar for BCI Farmers in their local language. The calendar addressed key sustainability issues for each cotton community, based on the season and when particular challenges may arise. A QR code was included beside each sustainability topic, directing users to detailed video training.



Images: Deshpande Foundation

Multifunctional Vegetation Buffers

Israel Cotton Board | Israel

Agricultural production can degrade ecosystems by causing erosion as well as land and biodiversity loss. To tackle these challenges, the Israel Cotton Board, in partnership with IDH and BCI, launched a Multifunctional Vegetation Buffers Campaign to mitigate those adverse effects of farming. Out in the fields, vegetation buffers create a habitat for natural enemies of typical cotton pests and can prevent field infestations from invasive weeds.

Micro-Training Programme

JFS-SAN | Mozambique

In the northern region of Mozambique, JFS-SAN launched a series of micro-training programmes containing videos, quizzes and games to deepen and strengthen BCI Farmers' knowledge of agricultural best practices. Topics were selected in collaboration with the BCI cotton community, and 22,000 farmers were reached in total. Over time, a net increase in the game and quiz scores has been recorded.

Collaborative Efforts for Sustainable Water Use

Lupin Foundation | India

In order to support BCI Farmers in retaining water for their cotton crops and enhancing soil moisture, Lupin Foundation launched a collaborative effort for sustainable water use by

constructing temporary check dams in 73 Maharashtrian villages. This practice, led in partnership with the cotton community and village leads, aimed to have a direct positive impact on the local biodiversity.

Research & Education to Mitigate Climate Change

REEDS | Pakistan

REEDS partnered with local organisations and farming communities to develop a series of innovative tools to overcome the increasing effects of climate change, including recurrent locust swarms on cotton fields, heat waves and water scarcity. The tools that were implemented included sprinkler units to address water use, and solar-powered acoustic devices to deter locusts – both approaches have seen positive outcomes.

Agricultural Technology Development

Solidaridad | China

In the Gansu Province of China, Solidaridad created a sustainable drone service to collect data on 3,000 hectares of land under Better Cotton cultivation, and to spray pesticides on the behalf of BCI Farmers. This service is coupled with a digital tool that records data and provides relevant training materials to farmers. In a context where 90% of smallholders have smartphones, the innovation has the potential for impressive progress.

Automated Voice Calls to BCI Farmers

Vardhman | India

Vardhman, in partnership with the Junagadh Agricultural University, developed free voice messages through automated phone calls to reach out to BCI Farmers in Gujarat during the Covid-19 pandemic. In total, 7,500 BCI Farmers were reached and benefitted from timely and tailored advice on agronomic best practices.

Cotton Based Agroforestry

WWF-India | India

In Telangana State, WWF-India introduced cotton-based agroforestry models to BCI Farmers, with the purpose of monitoring soil erosion and carbon sequestration. Agroforestry practices were adopted by 1,963 Farmers, effectively sequestering 4,408 tonnes of CO₂, and reducing soil erosion and wetland degradation. This practice will hopefully lead to economic benefits – from the production of fruits and timber – for the cotton growing community in the region.



Image: WWF-India