



Nature-Positive Farming
& Wholesome Foods Foundation (N+3F)

NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING & WHOLESOME FOODS FOUNDATION (N+3F)

ANNUAL REPORT
2024-25

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NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING & WHOLESOME FOODS FOUNDATION (N+3F)

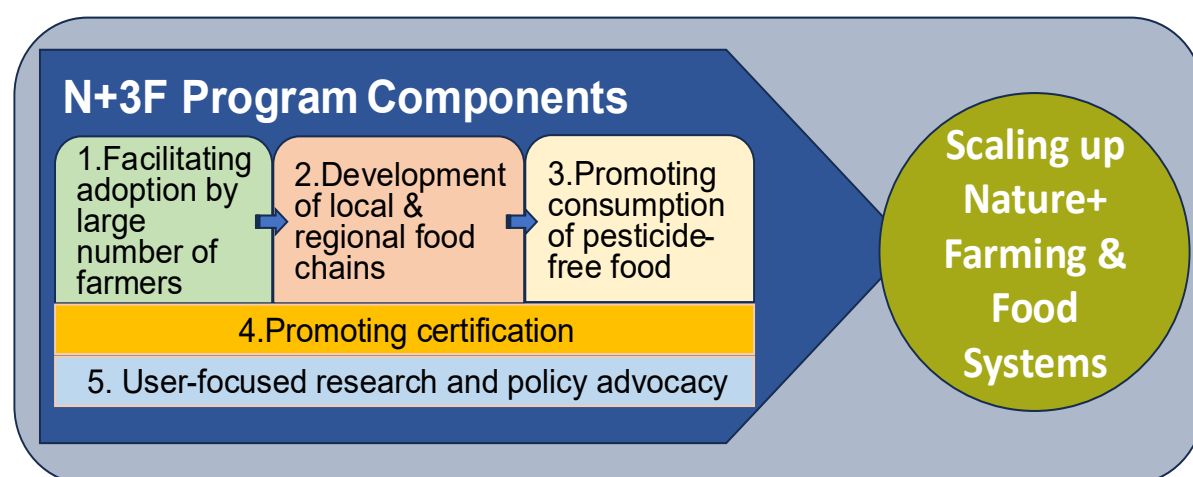
PROGRESS- 2024-25

Introduction

1. About N+3F

The Nature-Positive Farming & Wholesome Foods Foundation (N+3F) is a Section 8 non-profit organization initiated on March 13, 2021. It strives to promote Nature-Positive Farming and Food Systems (N+FFS) at scale across India in a co-creation mode with interested partners. N+3F builds on the long experience of the NPM (Non-Pesticidal Management of Agriculture) Network & its partners to promote pesticide-free sustainable agriculture and food chains.

N+3F espouses a multi-scalar farm-to-plate approach for wider adoption of N+FFS, as indicated by its five interrelated program components:



More details on N+3F can be seen at www.np3f.in.

2. Focus Areas for the Year 2024-25

Being a young organisation, N+3F focused on the following aspects during the year 2024-25:

1. Strengthening the partnership with CSOs and other organisations with similar mandates
2. Deepening the program components
3. Mobilizing resources

Progress during 2024-25

1. Strengthening the partnership

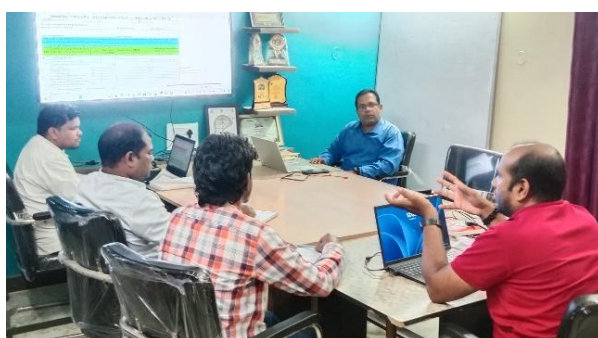
During the reporting period, N+3F has identified and built working relationships with the various partners, as described below:

1.1 Engagement with existing implementation partners

i) Facilitating annual and seasonal plan preparation

N+3F facilitated the annual planning process by the core team of partners. An in-person workshop was organised with Pragati, Views, FES and Lokadrusti of Eastern India, and SSGVS and SGVS of Central India. A one-to-one online session was organised for the rest of the partners. The following aspects were focused in the annual plan of partners:

(i) strengthening the production cluster approach; (ii) scaling up operations; (iii) deepening program interventions and (iv) experimenting with new interventions. Partners attempted to creatively integrate the nature-positive agriculture program with the existing projects and initiatives. This was followed by onsite handholding support. A similar effort was made for facilitating rabi season plan with many of the partners. The new N+3F team member visited eleven Eastern India partners to build rapport and to facilitate planning of rabi season interventions.



Annual Plan Preparation with FES



Annual plan preparation by SSGVS team

ii) Built capacity of staff and farmers in partner locations

N+3F organised need-based collective and one-to-one training sessions on production, FPO development, post-harvest and certification related training sessions and workshops for different partners. Both in-person and online sessions were organised. Some of the sessions were jointly organised with SPS.

iii) Helped in proposal preparation for some of the partners

iv) Participation in partner events

N+3F participated in and contributed to the People's Seminar on Nature Positive Solutions organized by KFA, Odisha.

1.2 Building partnerships with new partners

- An exploration for the partnership was done with the Koraput Farmers Association (KFA) and NIRMAN, Odisha, through discussions with the senior management and visits to working locations. As a follow-up, N+3F signed an MoU with the KFA and NIRMAN to affirm the partnership. Vrutti, IGS, ISAP, Arya.ag and Sampark also explored collaboration with N+3F. As on March 2025, N+3F was collaborating with 30 partners, working closely with about 50,000 smallholder farmers, in different agroecological regions of Central, Eastern and Southern India.
- An exploration for collaboration was made with the Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS-ICAR), Bhopal. The N+3F and SPS team members visited IISS to understand its mandate and activities and shared their initiatives to the Director and senior scientists. The IISS team has expressed interest in collaborating. Followed by that a tripartite MoU was signed by the three parties for affirming the collaboration.



Figure 1: Signing of MoU by IISS, SPS and N+3F

- A visit to the Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering (CIAE), Bhopal, was made to understand their mandate and interventions and to explore possibilities of collaboration.

2. Building the capacities of the staff

N+3F invested in building the capacities of the staff through following activities besides regular one-to-one capacity building:

- A set of online workshops and in-person capacity building events were organised on the science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+FS) and Community-centric Group Certification of pesticide-free foods.
- Opportunities were created to learn about N+FS, post-harvest operations and FPO

development through participation in ongoing workshops and by sharing relevant videos and reading materials

- Capacity on organizing training sessions and workshops was built through learning-by-doing

Training the staff of partners and the farming community was consciously made into a robust learning opportunity for the staff.

3. Deepening N+FFS Program Components

3.1 Facilitating the adoption of N+FFS by a large number of farmers

The reporting year was a turning point for this program component as the initiatives in this year gave a robust shape to the scientific and practical aspects of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+FS).

During the reporting year focus was given to the following two aspects:

1. *Creating an understanding of the science of nature-positive farming systems covering i) inherent capacities of crops and farm ecosystems, ii) important roles played by soil and plant microbiomes, iii) basics of nutrient and crop health management and their relationship with level of photosynthesis, iv) how conventional agriculture practices are affecting the farming systems and v) Adopting Total System Approach for transitioning to N+FS.*
2. *Educating how to practically apply the above learnings at farm-level with the focus on ensuring nutritional and microbiome integrity through diversified cropping systems, using microbiome-rich seeds, foliar application and improved package of practices, and adopting new tools and methods for measuring progress.*

Initiatives taken in this direction include:

3.1.1 Development of resources on Nature-Positive Farming Systems

a) Resource documents

A comprehensive set of resource documents and training materials was developed on understanding and applying the science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+FS). The specific topics are listed below:

1. Revised document on Total System Approach incorporating the new learnings on the science of nature-positive farming systems
2. Creating a Flourishing Soil Microbiome
3. Understanding nutrient management
4. Understanding Crop health management, including i) Conceptual framework, ii) Plant defense mechanisms and iii) Fending pests and diseases through nutrient management

5. Designing, implementing and studying diversified cropping systems
6. Ensuring microbiome rich seeds
7. Foliar application as a tool for promoting N+FS
8. Improving the Package of Practices (PoP)
9. A few tools and testing methods to measure soil and crop health
10. Summary and way forward with N+FS
11. An extensive list of references on N+FS
12. Glossary and FAQs on N+FS

b) Documentation of salient practices of resource farmers

An effort was made to document the salient and innovative farming practices of nine resource farmers hailing from Barwaha, Bagli, Punjapura, Udaynagar and Kantaphod locations of SPS.

3.1.2 Capacity building of partners

a) Training on Understanding the Science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems

1) SPS, Madhya Pradesh



First phase Training in progress with SPS team

A two-day workshop on this theme was organised for the key staff of the agriculture program of Samaj Pragati Sahayog in October. The capacity of 25 participants from nine locations was built on soil microbiome, plant microbiome, how soil as a living system works, and how adoption of diversified cropping systems helps in rejuvenating the farming.

This was followed by a second phase training organised in January 2025. This session emphasized the various aspects of crop health

management and ensuring microbiome-rich seeds. To study the diversified cropping systems (DCS) in the field, a session on studying DCS practices and results was discussed in detail with formats to capture and compare the prevailing cultivation practices with diversified cropping systems.

2) N+3F partners

The N+3F team, along with SPS, has organised a reflective workshop cum training on **‘The Science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems’** for the interested partners at the SPS campus on 8-9 November. Thirty participants from 14 partners participated in the workshop. This workshop built on the content discussed in the SPS training sessions.



Reflective training cum workshop for partners on the Science of N+FS

3) Harsha Trust, Odisha

Team leads and agriculture professionals (24 no.) of all the working locations of Harsha Trust participated in a two-day reflective workshop organized at Gram Vikas, Bhubaneshwar on 3rd and 4th December 2024. A pledge was made not to promote or use synthetic chemicals such as pesticides & herbicides and also to implement the learnings of the workshop from the upcoming season.



Training to Harsha Trust key team members

4) CYSD, Odisha



Training for staff and farmers in the CYSD location

A two-day training program on “The Science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+3F), MIS & Certification process” was organized in association with Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS) at Dasmantapur, Koraput, Odisha, for the staff and blooming women farmers of CYSD (32 participants). Along with the science of Nature Positive Farming Systems, the importance of certification was covered to make them aware of the domestic and international markets available for certified pesticide-free products.

5) Lokadrusti, SSS, JMA and BGS, Odisha

A two-day training program on “The Science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+3F), MIS & Certification Process” was organized in association with Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS) at the Lokadrusti office, Khariar, Nuapada, Odisha on 14th and 15th February 2025. Twenty-four staff from Lokadrusti, JMA, BGS and SSS participated in this training session.



Training session for the Staff of Lokadrusti, JMA, SSS and BGS

i. APF & N+3F partners



Demo of the Brix refractometer in progress

In this two-day comprehensive training on understanding and application of the science of N+FS organised with SPS, 36 participants from 11 organisations from five states participated.

b) Training on Realizing Prosperity with Nature-Positive Farming

1) SPS, Madhya Pradesh

Followed by the staff-level training on understanding the science of N+FS, a one-day training session was organised for farmers and field staff in two batches to take the message to the location level. In the first batch, women farmers from Melghat (65 farmers), Udaynagar (35 farmers), Punjapura (20 farmers) and Kantaphod (14 farmers) actively participated in the training session. At the end of each session participants from all 4 locations agreed to try diversified cropping systems in a patch of land in the upcoming rabi season.



Farmers training at Melghat Cluster of SPS



Farmers training at Kantaphod cluster of SPS

In the second batch, farmers from Dhagrakheda and Dewasiya villages of Bagli cluster and Bagod and Katkot villages of Barwaha cluster participated. Being new farmers, they were not aware of the nature-positive practices which can be adopted instead of conventional

cultivation practices. More emphasis was given on maintaining soil fertility, using desi seeds/chemically untreated seeds, the ill effects of overuse of fertilizers and diversified cropping system with crop rotation and cover crops. In all the 4 places, the session was concluded with a commitment from the participants to adopt DCS on a parcel of land in the upcoming season to witness its results.



Training at Dhagrakheda of Bagli cluster



Training at Bagod of Barwaha Cluster

2) SEWA, Odisha

A one-day training session was organized for the staff and farmers of SEWA at the Angul location on 5th January 2025 on Realizing Prosperity with Nature Positive Farming Systems (N+FS). Eighteen member farmers and 10 staff of the SEWA participated in the event.



Training in progress with farmers & staff of SEWA Angul

c) Orientation on action research trials

1) MJVS, Madhya Pradesh

An online orientation session was organised for the MJVS Team to support them in carrying out varietal trails in paddy in a systematic way. Twenty-one members who participated in this session learnt about the research methods and formats to be developed for the systematic capture of data.

2) SPS, Madhya Pradesh

Another session was organised for the SPS team, in which 16 members participated. SPS is undertaking trials related to nutrient management, diversifying cropping systems, varietal performance, and seed rate and spacing. Participants learnt about the procedures to be followed to improve the research design and get valid results.

Besides these one-to-one sessions, an orientation session was organised for all the partners on how to carry out action research to evolve PoPs for pesticide-free cultivation of focus cropping systems and how to create quantitative and qualitative evidence. Twenty-five staff members from different partners participated in the session.

d) Other training sessions

Training on agroecology, PMDS and seed pelleting

A training session was organised on the CYSD campus at Boipariguda, covering the following themes: i) Understanding the concept of agroecology and its relevance in crop production; ii) Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing (PMDS); and iii) seed pelleting. Seed pelleting was

demonstrated to the participants.

Training for Kharif season preparation for team members of Harsha Trust

A two-day training program was organised for the staff on

- Use of local materials for the preparation of bioformulations and demonstration of bioformulation preparation
- PoPs for pesticide-free cultivation and
- Integrated nutrient management



Training on use of indigenous ingredients in bioformulation, Harsha Trust

Training farmers on pesticide-free PoPs

In the JMA location, a training session was organised for the farmers on adopting pesticide-free PoPs in paddy.

ToT on pesticide-free PoPs at Lokadrusti

A ToT on the adoption of pesticide-free PoPs for redgram was organised for the staff at the Lokadrusti office. Followed by this, the ability of a CRP to transfer the knowledge gained on PoPs to the farmers was assessed by conducting training to the farmers in the presence of N+3F staff.



Assessment of staff on their ability to train farmers on NPM PoP at Lokadrusti location

Orientation on the nature-positive farming approach and its practices to the Pragati team



Training on TSA and bioformulation preparation in progress at Pragati, Koraput

Pragati, Odisha, is one of the new partners of N+3F. Pragati organised a two-day training with the support of N+3F to orient its staff on Total System Intervention, pesticide-free PoP, the role of bioformulations, and the preparation of various bioformulations.

Orientation on running Bio Resource Centres (BRCs)

An orientation to the field staff of Harsha Trust, KFA, Nirman and Lokadrusti was given on running BRCs.

e) Online training sessions organised

The following online training sessions were organised during the reporting period:

- Action research with observation farmers
- Scoring of Key Production Practices
- Classification of farmers

- Creating a flourishing soil sociobiome
- Understanding nutrient management of crops

3.1.3 Implementation support

Need-based support was offered in the on-field implementation by the partners.

a) Visit to NPM chilli trials by SPS

The N+3F team visited the NPM chilli trials of SPS to understand the PoPs tried and the learnings gained from two years of trials. Based on the observations, the SPS team was suggested to increase the crop diversity and the population of crops other than chilli. They were also suggested to focus on improving the inherent capacities of the cropping system.



Visit to NPM chilli trials at Bikangaon, SPS

b) Visit to NPM chilli fields of NIRMAN

NIRMAN has initiated NPM chilli as part of a project, and they wanted to get certification. The N+3F team visited their chilli plots located in Daspalla, Nayagarh block. The crop was in initial stages, and staff were trained on POP and KPP of chilli along with standards to be adopted to get the certification.



Chilli crop stage during visit



Interaction with chilly farmers of Daspalla

c) Visit to Harsha Trust field locations

The N+3F team visited Kosagumuda, Nabrangpur block, Harsha Trust's working location, to know the field status of NPM implementation. Harsha Trust has initiated BRC units to supply bioformulations to new NPM farmers. It was observed that the farmers were still in a transition phase from conventional to NPM agriculture. However, NPM interventions were started in a small parcel of paddy and vegetables by a few farmers.



Interaction with a progressive farmer at her NPM farm



Visit to community nursery, Harsha Trust

Visit to DCS plots of farmers in partner locations

The N+3F team visited DCS farmers in some of the partner locations to know the crop combinations and cropping practices adopted by them. A woman resource farmer in the Udaynagar production cluster, SPS, was found to cultivate nearly eight crops, including redgram, maize, cowpea, gourd, groundnut, etc., and was following crop rotation. Another chilli farmer from Bikangaon production cluster who has adopted DCS was visited. Few farmers from the production cluster of CYSD were also visited for understanding and assessment.



Diversified Cropping Systems in Udaynagar, SPS

Visit to Veda Vedanta Gurukula Mahavidyalaya, Madipadu, Guntur district

The N+3F team visited this Vedapathashala on the invitation of its Dharmadhikari to explore the possibilities of introducing pesticide-free agriculture. The visit helped in understanding the topography, soils, natural vegetation, prevailing cropping systems, infrastructure and the management structure. Vedapathashala has an area of 83 acres, situated on the bank of the river Krishna. It has a goshala. The management has a plan to do chemical-free agriculture and greening of the campus. An indicative action plan was shared by N+3F, which was agreed in principle by the management.



Aerial view of Veda pathashala



Organic Turmeric farm in old campus

Some of the results of these initiatives include,

- Capacity building of staff on the science and practices of N+FS
- Wider understanding and appreciation of the science of nature-positive farming systems and how conventional agriculture affects the inherent abilities of the crops and crop ecosystems among the staff of partners across Central and Eastern India.
- Appreciation of the importance of diversified cropping systems (DCS) and an attempt to try out DCS on a small scale by the staff of partners. In Eastern India it was observed that 13 partners have adopted DCS implementation at the field level, covering around 4192 farmers and 510 acres. Mostly the DCS was based on 5 types of cropping systems- Brinjal based, Chilli based, Potato based, Busy bean based and Maize based cropping systems. In Central India, SPS has initiated DCS in most of its working locations during rabi 2024.



Diversified cropping systems promoted by CYSD, Odisha

- Development of a set of training materials on understanding and application of the science of N+FS.

3.2 Supporting development of N+FFS regional/territorial value chains

Focus was given to the following two aspects:

1. Formation and strengthening FPOs
2. Supporting FPOs and CSOs in setting up value chains for pesticide-free foods

Initiatives taken in this direction include

3.2.1 Development of resources on Nature-Positive value chain development

SOP for pesticide-free operations of FBOs and its associated toolkit

A draft reference SOP for FBOs for pesticide-free operations was developed. It was finalized after incorporating inputs from a leading enterprise in the pesticide-free space and a few rounds of reviewing. Further to this, a toolkit was prepared to help in ease of utilization of this SOP by the small-scale FBOs.

Product-specific SOPs for food business operators

A draft product-specific PoP was developed for discussing with the food business operators. This PoP will help in creating a common understanding for staff of food business operators across the divisions on the specific protocols to be followed for each produce entering the facility. It will cover produce-specific protocols, including i) quality parameters to be checked during procurement and pre-process cleaning, ii) storage

requirements (like number of days in a hermetic cocoon, temperature in cold storage, need for humidifier, etc.), iii) processing requirements (like maximum level of polish allowed) and iv) handling requirements.

Training material on post-harvest management of important spices

The following spices were covered: Chilli, Coriander, Cumin seeds, Mustard and Turmeric.

Training material on post-harvest management of important cereals, pulses and oilseeds

The following crops were covered: Wheat, Bengalgram, Redgram, Groundnut, and Mustard.

3.2.2 FPO strengthening

a) Support for the formation of the FPO

- N+3F facilitated MJVS to prepare the PODF (Producer Organization Development Fund) proposal for promoting an FPO, which has been submitted to NABARD. This proposal is under consideration.
- PSI was supported for meeting the FPO registration procedures. They have submitted the application to MCA for registration of FPO under the Companies Act.

b) Capacity Building in FPO Management

Training for the Nadi Utthan Farmer Producer Company team

A two-day training session was organised by Samaj Pragati Sahayog for the board members and CEO of Nadi Utthan Farmer Producer Company, with the support of N+3F, by early June 2024. BODs of this new FPO learnt about the various rules and procedures associated with the Company Act, feasible business activities that can be carried out by the FPO, licenses to be obtained and the basics of business plan preparation. In this training program, 18 participants participated.



Training on FPO management for BODs and staff

Training to Melghat location team, SPS



Training in progress at Melghat location

participated, including the location in charge, agriculture expert, supervisor and Mithans of the Melghat location.

This training session covered essential aspects of FPO management like leadership, governance, financial management, and market linkages. Farmers learnt how to reduce FPO costs, improve bargaining power, and get access to credit and government schemes. In this training 13 members

Training for Sehgal Foundation and Adhikar Sheela Foundation

This training to the 24 FPO board members and staff covered registration, governance structures, financial management, and compliance requirements. Participants learnt how to develop a business plan, including market analysis, value addition strategies, and revenue generation models. The training emphasized bulk procurement, collective marketing, and accessing government schemes for financial support. It also focuses on risk management, supply chain efficiency, and quality control to enhance competitiveness.



FPO management training - Sehgal Foundation & ASF

c) Business plan preparation support

N+3F facilitated the preparation of the business plan for the FPO promoted by VIEWS. It involved participatory on-site identification of business opportunities with BODs and staff of VIEWS, vision building on business plan development and its implementation, and drafting the business plan. Training for eleven staff of VIEWS was given on business plan preparation and its implementation.

3.2.3 Food chain development

a) Capacity building

ii. Training to the RRPPCL team

Last year N+3F helped Ram Rahim Pragati Producer Company Ltd (RRPPCL) in developing a customized SOP. This year a one-day training was given to all the key staff of RRPPCL on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be followed during various operations. The participants learnt about the need for SOPs to ensure pesticide-free operations, precautions to be followed during aggregation in the collection centre to

avoid contamination and commingling, robust procedures for grain sample collection, the need for using safe floor cleaners and good storage practices. Six staff from RRPPCL participated in this training.

iii. Training to SPS teams in three locations on post-harvest operations

This location-level training focused on equipping field staff with essential skills to maintain quality and enhance marketability. It covered best practices for harvesting and handling to minimize losses and ensure product integrity.



Training on SOPs for post-harvest operations, Melghat location

Participants learnt about proper drying, grading, and storage techniques to preserve nutritional value and prevent spoilage. The training also included packaging and branding activities to enhance product appeal. Lastly, it emphasizes market linkages, certification requirements, and compliance with quality standards to improve access to profitable markets. Thirty-three staff from three locations participated in these sessions.

iv. Training on the Development of Agroecological Food Chains for APF partners along with SPS

This training focused on understanding agroecological food chains, quality parameters to be looked at during procurement, and warehouse management. Further, the experience of RRPPCL in procurement, quality checking, cost reduction and outsourcing processing and storage infrastructure was shared. In this training, 36 participants from 11 organisations from five states participated.



Grain grading exercise in progress

v. An online training on SOPs in post-harvest operations

Three partners from Central India (GSS, MJVS and SSGVS) and 7 from Eastern India (Lokadrusti, SEWA, YCDA, CYSD, Harsha Trust, JMA and Adhikar) participated in the training.

vi. An online training on ONDC registration

Five partners from Central India (MJVS, GSS, SSGVS, SGVS, and CARMDAKSH) and 9 from Eastern India (Lokadrusti, SEWA, JMA, BGS, YCDA, CYSD, VIEWS, Adhikar and PRADAN) participated in the training.

b) Progress with processing of pesticide-free produce by the partners

- i. Three partners, MJVS, AJSA, and Lokadrusti continued their efforts to market

pesticide-free produce in the local markets using the vending cart supported by N+3F. While MJVS and Lokadrusti could sell 493 and 568 quintals, respectively, AJSA could sell only 251 quintals.

- ii. Of the two partners supported with oil processing machines, SSGVS has processed 2,170 L of oil and SEWA has processed 1200 L of oil during the reporting period.
- iii. MJVS has continued with the processing and marketing of chilli, turmeric & coriander utilizing the pulverizer, packaging machine and vending cart provided by the N+3F through its subsidiary ALIVE. The turnover of ALIVE during 2024-25 was Rs.18.23 lakhs.

c) Facilitating market linkages for pesticide-free produce

- i. Last year N+3F facilitated market linkage between SEWA and ITC for pesticide-free chilli. This year SEWA further built this linkage through an early season agreement with ITC for a larger quantum of chilli
- ii. Regional buyers of groundnut and sweet potato were introduced to Lokadrusti, wheat to MJVS and mustard to PSI.

d) Other initiatives

- i. GSS and SSGVS were supported with document preparation for the ACCESS DEVELOPMENT GAP fund proposal; they have cleared the first stage and submitted a proposal for the second stage.
- ii. Similar assistance was given to RRPPCL; they were approved a grant of Rs. 58 lakh for two years by the GAP fund.

3.3 Developing and Promoting N+FFS Guarantee Systems (NGS)

Focus was given to the following aspects in the fourth year:

1. Strengthening the Internal Control System (ICS) of the existing Group certification clients and supporting new clients to set up ICS
2. Improving the scope of coverage of Zero Pesticide Use Agriculture & Foods Standards
3. Fine tuning the standards and modalities related to producer group and Food Business Operator certification
4. Exploring new clients and collaborators

Initiatives taken in this direction include

3.3.1 Development of resources on certification systems

Training materials on Community-centric Group Certification

A comprehensive training material on community-centric group certification was prepared for building the capacity of staff of clients/partners for two days; another one was prepared for orienting farming communities and the office bearers of farmers organisations engaged in pesticide-free agriculture and certification. These were translated into Hindi and Odia for easy understanding by the field staff and farming community.

Guidance note on internal inspection of Food Business Operators

A draft guidance note was developed and will be tested with FBOs for further improvement. This note will also serve as training material.

3.3.2 Support for the initiation of Internal NPM Guarantee Systems (INGS)

a) Capacity building of clients/partners

Organisations/clients exploring pesticide-free certification

An orientation on ICS and group certification was offered to the staff of each of the partners interested in certification during the Kharif season, namely SSGVS (12 participants), SGVS (8 participants), Harsha Trust (7 participants), People Science Institute (6 participants), CYSD, Lokadrusti, JMA, SSS and BGS. A common training session was organised for partners in Eastern India to impress on the need for group certification and its modalities (87 participants). Another online training was organized to orient the PSI team on internal inspection.

Organisations/clients already engaged in certification

SPS, Madhya Pradesh

Training on improving INGS

Customized trainings were offered for Samaj Pragati Sahayog (15 participants) for strengthening ICS as per the inspection findings and document verification conducted during the Kharif and Rabi during 2023-24. Further to the orientation training, another online workshop was organised for refining and updating the INGS manual for the upcoming season. The corrections to be done, as well as the new data to be updated in the INGS manual were covered in this workshop.

Community-centric Group Certification for Agroecological Produce



Training for staff is in progress in location, SPS

A two-day training session for staff was organized in production clusters, namely Bhagwanpura, Melghat and Kannod, Kantaphod & Khategaon where SPS is in the process of extending the certification initiative. This training session helped in understanding the purpose of group certification, how risks are dealt with certification, and the need for internal control systems and its operational modalities by the staff.

Orientation On Community-Centric Group Certification For Farming Community

A one-day orientation session was organized in the production clusters for the office bearers of community organisations and farmers to educate them on certification and to induce their active engagement in the same. The locations covered include Bhikangaon, Barwaha, Udaynagar, Punjapura, Kantaphod, and Bagli. The participants gained an understanding of the purpose of group certification, how risks are dealt with certification, and the need for internal control systems and how they can play an important role in the same.



Orientation to farming community on Group Certification, Bagli, SPS

MJVS

Training on improving INGS

Customized trainings were offered for the core team of MJVS (24 participants) for strengthening ICS as per the inspection findings and document verification conducted during the Kharif and Rabi during 2023-24.

Refining the INGS manual

Further to the orientation training, another online workshop was organised for SPS and MJVS for refining and updating the INGS manual for the upcoming season. The corrections to be done as well as the new data to be updated in the INGS manual were covered in this workshop.

3.3.3 Offering certification services

a) Developing and improving the standards and procedures

Developing additional standards

Zero-Pesticide Use Agriculture and Foods Standards were expanded by developing and adding standards for beekeeping practices and livestock rearing. A first draft has been prepared, which will be further refined. The standards related to Food Business Operators were revised.

Improving the protocols and formats

- Operational documents for Group certification were improved based on the two years of certifying the clients.
- An INGS evaluation checklist was prepared for conducting the evaluation of the INGS by N+3F and for self-evaluation by the clients.
- The inspection checklist and inspection report for food business operators were revised.

b) Group certification

Group certificates were issued to CYSD, Lokadrusti, SPS, MJVS, and SEWA.

c) Certification of Food Business Operators (FBOs)

N+3F certified Safe Harvest Private Limited, one of the leading food business operators in the pesticide-free space. It also certified RRPPCL.



Inspection of the rice mill engaged by SHPL



Inspection of the godown rented by SHPL

3.3.4 Promoting certification services

Efforts were made to identify potential clients for group certification through different contacts and websites and to reach out to them. They were informed about the certification services offered by N+3F and how they could avail themselves of them.

3.4 Carrying out user-friendly research and policy advocacy

- On the N+3F website, a sub-section on the resources related to indigenous traditional knowledge of agriculture was created.
- N+3F offered inputs to the resource material on Marketing and Certification of Agroecological Produce developed by GIZ. The resources of N+3F on certification were included in this resource document.
- N+3F has offered its feedback on the new national policy on FPOs.
- The film 'Nature positive farming: A holistic approach' was disseminated widely.

Initiatives for raising funds

- Follow up efforts were taken with the ATE Chandra Foundation team, and a revised proposal note was shared with them. They have responded that they are not in a position to support.
- Based on the invitation of the GIZ team, the following proposals were shared with them: i) Strengthening Market Linkages for Agroecological Transformation in Madhya Pradesh, ii) Enhancing Market Readiness For Sustainable Agroecological Transitions and iii) Proposal notes on developing training materials, offering training, and short studies. Due to procedural constraints, there was a delay in response. and the response is expected by April.
- N+3F again has reached out to the BRLF for collaboration this year. Based on the discussion with BRLF, a proposal was shared with them. This was followed by an in-person meeting in January. Further response from BRLF is expected by the end of

March 2025.

- SPS has come forward to submit proposals jointly with N+3F to meet the FCRA requirements. SPS and N+3F together have submitted the proposal, '*Accelerating Transition To Sustainable Nature-Positive Farming And Food Systems In Central And Eastern India By Nurturing Rural Youth*', to AGCO Agriculture Foundation. It was not selected.
- Through training, certification, consultancy and document preparation, around Rs. 15,21,000 was raised by N+3F during the reporting period.

Other developments

- N+3F has received the approval letter for Form CSR 1 from the competent authorities.

Acknowledgement

We are deeply thankful to Caring Friends for their continued support during the reporting period, which has been profoundly helpful in building the team and shaping up the program components. We are also profusely thankful to Shri Rangu Rao for his generous support during the reporting period. We also acknowledge with gratitude the joint engagement and contributions of our partners in promoting nature-positive farming and food systems.