AgroSpectrum ASIA
Envisaging Future | Updating Present

Bayerâ??s smallholder farming initiatives Â strive to improve growersâ?? income

30 June 2023 | News

Since joining Bayer's Independent Research projects in India, Bangladesh, Kenya, and Mexico/Honduras, smallholder farmers' income has increased by 70 to 90 percent



Since joining Bayer's Independent Research projects in India, Bangladesh, Kenya, and Mexico/Honduras, smallholder farmers' income has increased by 70 to 90 percent

Smallholder farmers say livelihoods have improved after participating in initiatives led by life sciences company Bayer. This is the result of research by independent social impact measurement company 60 Decibels on four Bayer smallholder projects in India, Bangladesh, Kenya, and Mexico/Honduras. In each of the four surveys, a clear majority of participants states that the programs have increased their yields and farming income and improved their way of farming as well as their quality of life, ranging from around 70 percent in Mexico and Honduras to around 90 percent in Kenya.

Bayer recognizes the critical role of the 550 million smallholders worldwide in ensuring food security in low- and middle-income countries and for more resilient and sustainable agricultural systems. In 2019, the company set the goal to support 100 million smallholder farmers in low- and middle-income countries by 2030. To ensure that the implemented smallholder farming strategy contributes to that goal and delivers measurable positive impact, Bayer asked 60 Decibels to examine four projects as a starting point.

â?•The positive results are encouraging because they validate the objectives of Bayerâ??s smallholder and regenerative agriculture strategy, with its focus on sustainable production and improving the social and economic well-being of farmers and their communities,â?• said Frank Terhorst, Head of Strategy and Sustainability of Bayerâ??s Crop Science division. â??The results underline the importance of access to innovation and modern technologies for smallholders, along with knowledge

transfer and market linkage.â?•

60 Decibels surveyed between 275 and 700 randomly selected smallholders in each of the projects from October 2022 to April 2023. The core set of questions are based on longstanding sector research by 60 Decibels and are an integral part of each impact survey they conduct.

Regionally tailored programs lead to positive social impact

The different programs for smallholders are tailored to the needs and agronomic conditions in the respective regions. The Better Life Farming (BLF) initiative in **India** is part of the global Better Life Farming Alliance that Bayer established in partnership with the World Bankâ??s International Finance Corporation and Netafim, along with many local partners. At its core, the alliance aims to provide smallholders with education, modern technology, and resources to grow their small farms into commercially viable and sustainable farming businesses. More than 2,500 Better Life Farming centers operating in India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Mexico, Honduras, and Tanzania improve farmersâ?? access in remote rural regions through the last-mile delivery model. Two thirds of farmers said they have accessed a service like BLF for the first time and feel more confident than before about investing in agriculture. Through the Better Life Farming (BLF) initiative: 78% experienced increased crop production ; 72% reported increased farming income; 74% achieved a better way of farming; 71% said that quality of life has improved.

Similarly, In **Bangladesh**, GeoPotato is designed to support small-scale potato farmers by enabling preventive crop protection and easier decision-making. It is a geodata-driven early warning system for late-blight disease in potatoes to optimize fungicide use, devised by Wageningen Plant Research, Terrasphere, mPower, Bayer and governmental institutions. The study showed that GeoPotato has proven successful and is unique in late-blight alert messaging. It contributes to smallholder farmersâ?? resilience and recovery from climate shocks. Through GeoPotato: 86% experienced increased crop production, 83% reported increased farming income; 87% achieved a better way of farming; 82% said that quality of life has improved.