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# TREES FOR LIVELIHOODS: AGROFORESTRY IN SONBHADRA



# PROBLEM STATEMENT

Forests have been a source of livelihood for rural communities in India for centuries. Even today, over 300 million Indians depend on forests for subsistence. There is, however, increasing pressure on forests and a growing need to develop alternatives to source forest-based and tree-based products without negatively affecting communities and their livelihoods. Trees-outside-forests (TOFs) can be utilized to meet local demand, offset carbon to attain national commitments, while simultaneously fighting climate change. In most countries, including India, afforestation of forest land usually takes place through government agencies and investments. However, expanding tree cover beyond forests, by planting native, useful species, can strengthen rural economies, provide alternative sources of livelihood to local communities, and generally improve the socio-economic conditions of marginalized groups, tribal communities, landless groups and contribute towards empowering and enabling women to become more self-reliant. Agroforestry, community forests, sacred groves and village woodlots are also pivotal in reducing biodiversity loss, improving local climate, and boosting local rural economies.



# ABOUT THE PROJECT

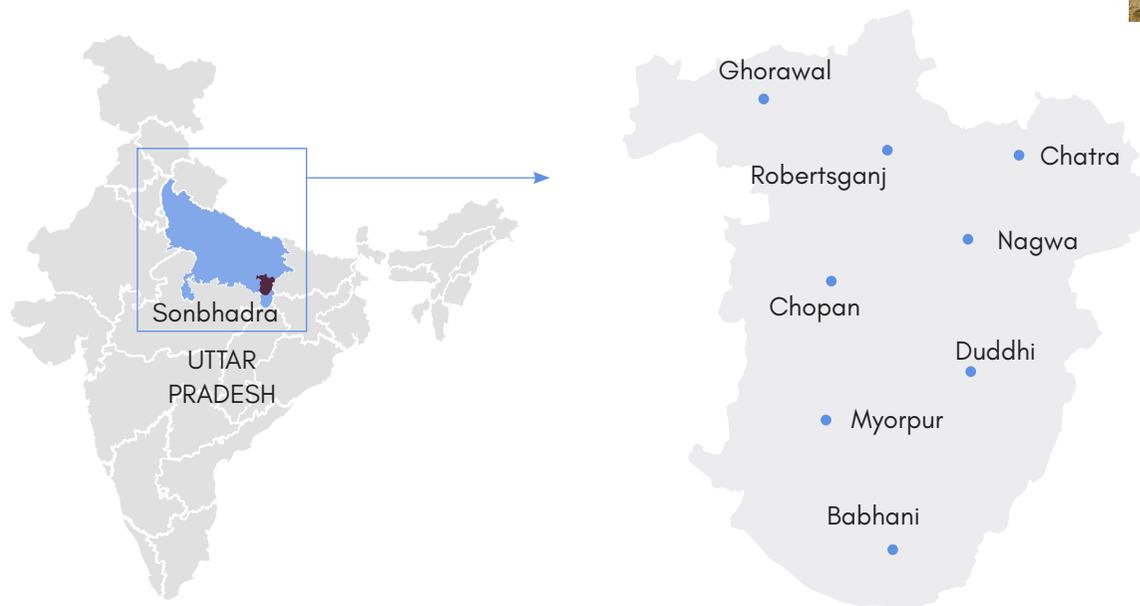
This agroforestry project aims to plant 15 million trees in two phases of planting, in the district of Sonbhadra in Uttar Pradesh, India. Trees planted will be monitored for 10 years. Situated between 23°52'N and 31°28'N latitudes and 77°3'E and 84°39'E longitudes, this is the fourth largest state in the country in terms of area, and the first in terms of population. As per the census of 2011, the state has a population of 199,581,477 with a density of 828 people per square kilometre, making it one of the most densely populated states in the country.

Sonbhadra is the second largest district by area in Uttar Pradesh and the planting will be done in all blocks of the districts, namely: Robertsganj, Ghorawal, Chatra, Nagwa, Chopan, Babhani, Myorpur, Duddhi. VNV Advisory is partnering with SGI to plan and deliver this project.



# KEY PROJECT DETAILS

<b>Country</b>	India
<b>State</b>	Uttar Pradesh
<b>District</b>	Sonbhadra
<b>Blocks</b>	Robertsganj, Ghorawal, Chatra, Nagwa, Chopan, Babhani, Myorpur, Duddhi
<b>Project duration</b>	2022 Onwards



## BUDGET

<b>Phase</b>	I & II
<b>Number of Trees</b>	15 million
<b>Budget (USD)</b>	27.9 million
<b>Estimated Carbon Sequestration (in tonnes)</b>	3.1 million tCO <sub>2</sub> e



## EXPECTED ACTIVITIES

- Conduct a detailed field site and plot assessment.
- Set up village/block/district level meetings with community groups & village governments to explain the merits of the project and sign agreements.
- Train local communities on tree planting and growth monitoring.
- Develop local, plastic-free nurseries, and seed collecting facilities.
- Transport seedlings & planting of saplings.
- Growth monitoring, data collection and reporting.
- Training and capacity building activities for the community to develop livelihood opportunities and grow self-reliance.
- Use rainwater harvesting as part of the project to help with integrated community development.
- Utilize solar pumps & vermicompost to aid survival, growth and fruiting.



## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Increase tree cover outside forests.
- Increase farmer and community income.
- Enhance wage employment and livelihood opportunities.
- Increase availability of small timber products & Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs).
- Wood based microenterprise promotion.
- Promote self-reliance and income opportunity for marginalized groups and communities.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Climate resilient farms through practice of diversified agriculture.
- Reduction of heat & moisture stress.
- Empowered communities.
- Improved land productivity.
- CO2 sequestration.

# ACTIVITY PLAN

## ■ Nursery development

Crucial step to ensuring success of large scale planting implementation.

## ■ Planting site identification

Identifying large scale planting sites as well as getting adequate community support for implementation.

## ■ Site development

Working closely with the community to ensure they reap long term benefits from the program, including creating water harvesting moats, solar pump installations and other capacity building and support mechanisms.

## ■ Planting

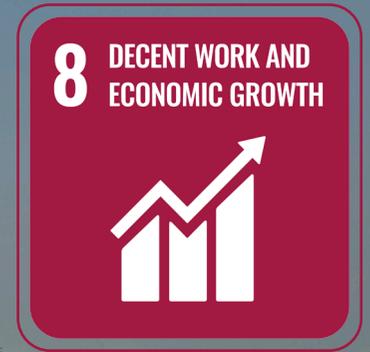
Identifying and raising locally profitable agroforestry tree saplings and helping plant with vermicompost & biopesticides to ensure longevity & growth.

## ■ Monitoring & reporting

Done over a period of 10 years to help ensure requirements of planting partners and impact assessment needs.



# SDGS ADDRESSED



# ABOUT VNV

VNV Advisory Services has been at the forefront of working with climate change and livelihoods. Our decade long experience has seen us develop low carbon projects that support these communities in getting their basic needs while adapting to and mitigating the harsh impacts of climate change. We work in areas of clean cooking, social forestry, sustainable agriculture, rural energy access and many other related community-based technologies.

With support from over 60+ NGOs & implementation partners, our work encompasses over 6 million rural households, and 2 million hectares of forest areas under management across the South Asian region (10+ countries). Furthermore, we engage with businesses to address issues of Social Responsibility, Environmental Sustainability, and Carbon Neutrality.



# IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER



## SUSTAINABLE GREEN INITIATIVE (SGI)

Sustainable Green Initiative (SGI) was founded with the objective to distribute, plant and nurture fruit trees that will help those in most need, while contributing to the country's green cover. They maintain these saplings for three years to ensure high survival rates. Their mission has been supported by a variety of partners. The space they require has been provided by community lands, homesteads, orphanages, old-age homes, government schools and others - who all enjoy the fruits of this work.

Since 2012, SGI, with the help of 32 partners, has overseen the planting of 3 million trees in 11 Indian states and the number will only grow from here. SGI's activities address seven of the 17 SDGs set out by the United Nations.



**No poverty:** *Fruit trees provide an alternate source of income for farmers.*



**Zero hunger:** *Fruits trees are an excellent source of nutrition.*



**Good health & well-being:** *Native fruit species meet a number of dietary requirements, especially for women & children.*



**Clean water & sanitation:** *Increased green cover results in more rainfall & recharging groundwater. We also implement rainwater harvesting at all our sites.*



**Decent work & economic growth:** *Assisting marginal farmers to sell and process their produce. This also addresses forced migration.*



**Climate action:** *SGI's key focus is to increase green cover by planting native species which are fast-growing, fruit-bearing & long-lasting.*



**Life on land:** *Increased green cover creates new eco-systems, supports biodiversity & reduces soil erosion.*



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