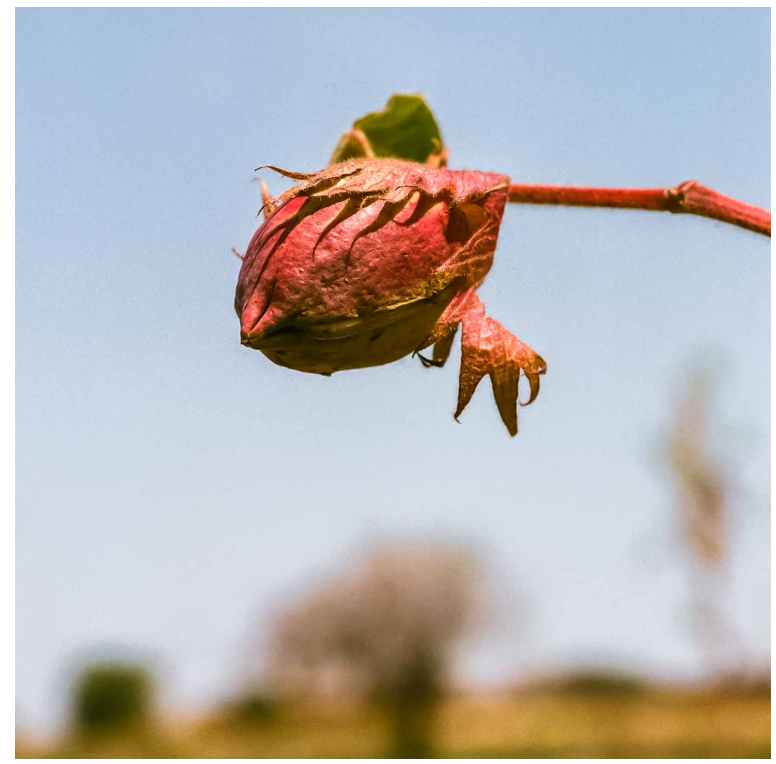
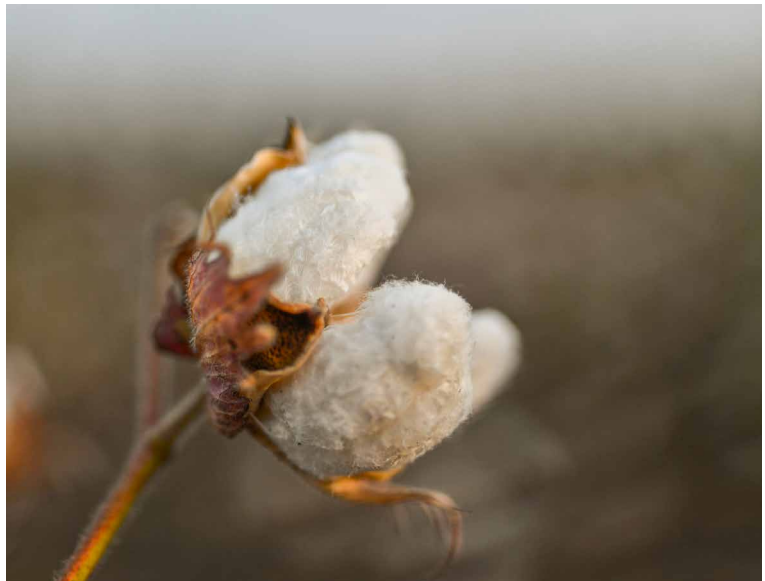


Annual Report

bioRe[®] Foundation **2023/24**





“For me, **empowerment** means having an income of my own. That gives me **courage** and the **strength** to stand up for myself.”

Pushpa, entrepreneur, India

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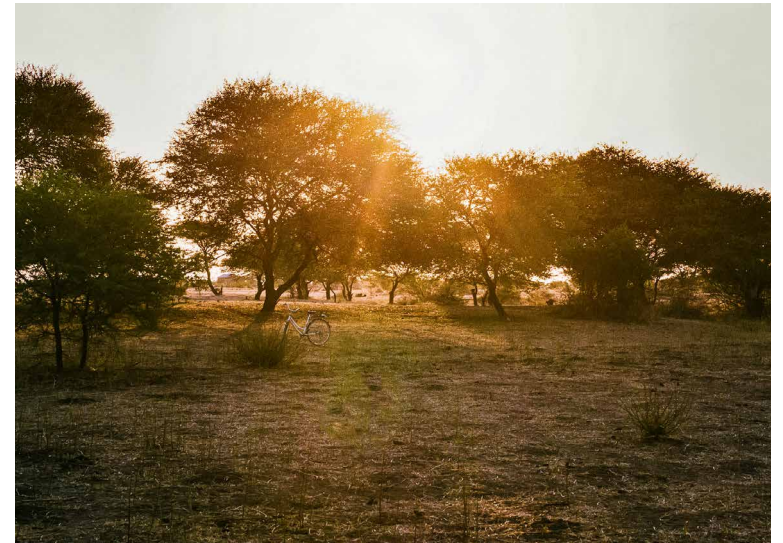
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Vision and commitment

Over the past 26 years of cooperation with organic cotton farmers in Tanzania and India, the bioRe Foundation has developed an in-depth understanding for ecological and social responsibility. Through the promotion of organic cotton cultivation and the associated development projects, we are committed to the sustainable improvement of living conditions for the farming families and have been able to make a significant difference.

We demonstrate commitment in these areas:

- Promoting organic and biodynamic cotton farming in India and Tanzania
- Raising and diversifying the incomes of farming families
- Improving and preserving ecosystems
- Primary education and professional development
- Health care
- Water, sanitary facilities and hygiene



Thanks to the many years of experience of our foundation, we are now more than ever convinced that there is a strong connection between organic farming and social impact, and see this synergy as the key to real sustainability. Under the new slogan “Empowerment”, we are taking the foundation into the next phase, promoting the interaction between the projects and strengthening the voice of cotton farmers.

Editorial

Dear Donors

In Hindi, “empowerment” means “sashaktikaran”. Translated literally, it describes the action of encouraging people or communities to be more confident and stronger. The aim is a transformation towards greater independence. And that is exactly what the work of the bioRe Foundation is all about for me. With our projects and activities in India and Tanzania, we want to strengthen the voice of organic cotton farmers.

And because empowerment is a process that starts from within and has a lot to do with oneself, I am particularly committed to the further development of the bioRe Foundation Switzerland. Only an independent foundation with strong partnerships on an equal footing can make a difference in the long term. I thank you for your commitment and hope you enjoy immersing yourself in our empowerment stories.

Anna Vetsch

President bioRe Foundation



Review by the Managing Director

During the last financial year, our partners in India and Tanzania showed me their multifaceted work. I got to know organic cotton farmers and their families and learned about their challenges and visions.

Their commitment and conviction impressed me. Together with our local partners and in dialogue with the farmers, we began to combine the various projects under the umbrella of empowerment. This programme, proudly named by the local organizations, symbolizes our collective strength and collaboration.

For me, empowerment means learning from experience, taking responsibility for one’s own decisions and actions, and consistently standing up for one’s beliefs.

Nicola Roten

Managing Director of the bioRe Foundation



Together for greater empowerment

We launched the Empowerment Programme in September 2023. Together with our local partner organizations in India and Tanzania, we have embarked on this journey with important milestones:



April to September 2023

The common denominator is empowerment

Those responsible for the individual projects in Tanzania and India presented their work and areas of responsibility. Together, we worked out who is involved, what goals are pursued, what the daily work entails and what the challenges are. A common denominator of all projects is the key to success: strengthening the competency and direct responsibility of the farming communities.

September to December 2023

Empowerment starts with our organizations

Together with the project teams, we have developed an overarching vision of empowerment in India. The former individual project managers in the field came together to form the empowerment leader team. A holistic programme that combines all the topics of the bioRe Foundation was thus established. By transferring more responsibility to the project managers, we strengthen our local partner organizations and promote sustainable development that meets local conditions.





November 2023

Integration of the key stakeholders – the farmers

The farmers' experience, opinions and ideas are important building blocks in the strategy process of the empowerment programme. In Tanzania and India, the topics of empowerment were discussed in focus groups with over 300 farmers. The topics from the group discussions were explored in greater depth during family visits. The farmers told us that they felt that they are taken seriously and heard – but also clearly demanded to be listened to more.

From April 2024

Empowerment through formalized participation

By formalizing the participation of farmers, we want to strengthen the farming communities. In doing so, women in particular are encouraged to have a greater say. They should support decisions in favour of the community.

December 2023

Empowerment is more than just a word

The new programme vision was discussed and revised in detail in several sessions by the board of the farmers' association in India and the empowerment team. In December, the empowerment programme was officially adopted as a future strategy by the board of the bioRe Association – chaired by a farmer and with five other organic cotton farmers and a local representative of Remei management as members. This marks an important milestone for local organizational development and the assumption of responsibility. The Indian model serves as a guide for the Tanzanian partner organization, which is now also embarking on a journey.

January to March 2024

Getting to work: implementing empowerment

For the first time, the empowerment team planned the entire programme activities for the coming phase with a focus on strengthening the competency of the farming communities, local networking and improved data management. A higher degree of personal responsibility has already been achieved and determines future cooperation.

As of the 2024/25 financial year

Empowerment includes digitalization and networking

We plan training courses to promote digital skills in order to create new information and knowledge exchange platforms for farmers through local digitalization projects. Since most farmers already own a smartphone, we can use these virtual platforms to connect the community and create an important basis for more participation.

Our partners in India ...

We are convinced that empowerment is strengthened by role models, and we are proud that we have so many courageous and important voices in the communities in which our projects are involved.

“Empowerment for women increases their ability to make their own decisions and translate them into desired actions and results.”

Dr. Shahina Ansari

Coordinator of the Health Component
bioRe Association India



The empowerment leader team in India.

“Empowerment frees me up to do what I really want and brings with it greater responsibility for my actions.”

Yogendra Shrivastava

Coordinator Seed Research
bioRe Association India

“For me, empowerment means self-determination – for every person and for the community.”

Aashish Joshi

Programme Manager
bioRe Association India

... and Tanzania

“Empowerment is the courage to do something that would otherwise not be possible in my cultural context.”

Lamek Daniel
Coordinator Agroforestry
bioRe Foundation Tanzania

“Empowerment enables the community to expand its prospects, skills and abilities.”

Justina Samson
Programme Manager
bioRe Foundation Tanzania



“Empowerment is the community’s ability to evolve.”

Kinu Kabakuli
Coordinator Smokefree Ovens
bioRe Foundation Tanzania

The project managers in Tanzania.

Review: Highlights from the projects

Superheroines: women are the change agents of organic farming

Last year, 1,754 women took part in the organic farming training programmes. The training managers were commissioned to talk to the farmers not only about organic farming methods, but also about finances and business management in order to identify and promote female entrepreneurs in organic farming. We found that many women already market alternative products and show entrepreneurial talent.

Visits to women like Lalita, who proudly runs her flower farm, helped us to better understand her strategies and ideas. It became clear that many women would like targeted business training and support in building small businesses. For them, empowerment means making a significant financial contribution to household income and taking decisions about the money they earn. Our facilitators have therefore started to focus more on promoting entrepreneurship among women.





bioRe farmers are shaping the future of organic cotton production

Empowering organic farmers is impossible without ensuring access to quality seeds. That is why the bioRe Association has been conducting seed research in India for over twelve years. Last year, 158 varieties were tested under organic field conditions. The most promising 50 were evaluated by farmers in order to jointly decide which varieties should be approved for mass production in cooperation with Gwalior University. It is only possible to bring the seeds from research to the field with the involvement of the farmers and their preferences. The bioRe Foundation therefore attaches great importance to the participatory implementation of seed projects.

Celebrating health

On 21 March 2024, together with over 450 farming families we inaugurated the new mobile hospital, which was replaced and expanded after 17 years. In collaboration with the local community and the bioRe Association, the bus offers vital health services in underserved areas. The close network with local authorities and health institutions enables comprehensive care.

Holistic health is a fundamental basis for empowerment. The long-term positive influence on their health is also the most frequently mentioned reason why the farmers we interviewed opted for organic farming. But in addition to healthy habits this also requires basic healthcare.

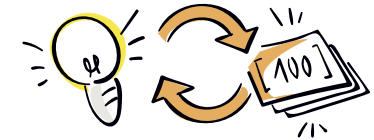
Figures

Results for the 2023/24 financial year

Conducted training courses for organic farming	742
Conducted focus group discussions with farmers	42
Profitable beneficiary-run small businesses	2 of 4
Animation schools operating in the villages	18
Children who benefited from health checks	3 082

Project expenses	2022/23*	2023/24	2024/25**
Agriculture and Biodiversity	155 914	256 627	272 276
Health	88 570	242 194	117 759
Education	88 262	95 900	124 989
Entrepreneurship	–	11 768	25 520
Innovation	–	17 798	18 400
Climate protection	75 532	48 167	42 902
Programme contributions	224 994	129 745	–
Total	680 295	802 199	601 846

*Adjusted **Forecast



Entrepreneurship

Women who took the entrepreneurship introductory course

28

Agriculture and biodiversity
Participants in training courses for organic farming

12977



Education

Children who benefit from primary school education

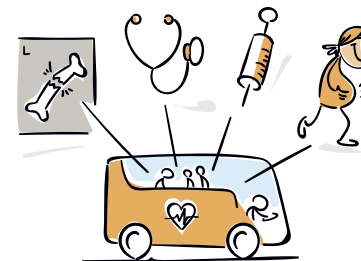
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Health

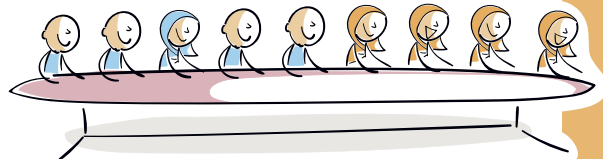
Patients who benefited from healthcare services

9517



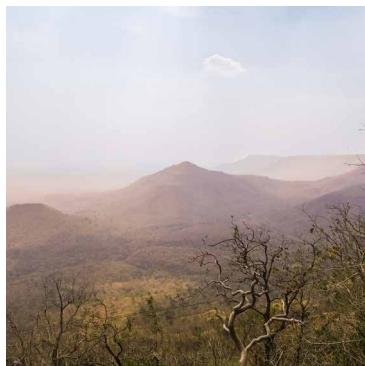
Participation
Participants in the Farmers Challenge Assessment 2024

364



We will send you the financial statements upon request.
info@biorestiftung.ch

Outlook



Empowerment baseline

Since May 2024, a large-scale study has been carried out in Tanzania and India to understand the farmers' diverse experiences and perspectives. The aim is to find out what changes they have experienced in the last 30 years and where the journey of empowerment in organic farming should go. Through this participatory process, we want to ensure that our empowerment programme is continuously adapted to the needs and requirements of our community and has a lasting positive impact on farmers' lives.

School programme expanded

Our educational programme for children and adolescents must be adapted to current needs and challenges. Since the start of our school project in 2006, the educational landscape has changed considerably due to the expansion of state schools in the organic cotton-growing areas. We want to design our offering so that children from families with no education can successfully make the transition to the regular school system.

That is why we want to offer a holistic package of support services and expand our programme to include support and tailored learning and peer-to-peer exchange sessions so that the children in the growing areas can develop their individual potential.

Stronger networking

As a foundation in Switzerland, we also want to develop further, strengthen our network and participate in the discussion in the conflicting areas of consumption and responsible production. The revision of the bioRe quality label is important for us for the 2024/2025 financial year: we want a standard that stands out clearly from organic and fair-trade certificates. The new fundraising strategy of the bioRe Foundation should also be geared to empowerment. The aim is to ensure planning security and basic financing for the holistic development on the ground by focusing on and building long-term financing partnerships.

Thank you

We would like to thank all donors who support the empowerment of our organization. The most important thanks go to the organic farmers in Tanzania and India. Their daily commitment and conviction are the heart of our work.

Special thanks go to the field staff who work closely with the farmers' reality. Through their commitment, they create a trusting and appreciative partnership on an equal footing.

We also wish to thank the project managers who promote and implement empowerment on a daily basis, as well as the ambassadors and benefactors of the foundation who pass on the idea of empowerment in their circles and thus support our work.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our institutional donors: the Coop Sustainability Fund, Remei AG, the Edith Maryon Foundation, the Dreiklang Foundation, Helvetas, the UVO Foundation and the Sonnenschein Foundation. It is their financial support that makes our projects possible.

Many thanks to the Coop Content House for implementing this annual report.

Donations

What does empowerment mean to you?
Become part of our empowerment journey:

Foundation's donations account

IBAN: CH72 0070 0114 8074 5220 5

SWIFT: ZKBKCHZZ80A

Zürcher Kantonalbank

You can donate here

<https://biore-stiftung.ch/spenden>



Foundation board

Anna Vetsch, President



Pia Bracher, Vice-President



Simon Hohmann, Member



Andrea Kramer, Member



Management

Nicola Roten





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