

CII Foundation Receives the UNSDG Action Award for its work on Crop Residue Management

The CII Foundation's work on crop residue management has been awarded the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG) Action Award by UNDP in partnership with the Government of Punjab under the category 'Integration, Convergence, Joint Action and Holistic Solution Approach – Industry'. The SDG Action Awards recognise efforts of change makers who are working towards making the world a better place. This is the third edition of the SDG Action Award which identifies outstanding initiatives that are accelerating action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Crop residue burning in the north-western states of India is an established contributor to the deteriorating air quality in the region, which is aggravated around October.

In 2017-18, the CII partnered with the NITI Aayog to research the issue of air pollution, and a roadmap for action on crop residue burning emerged from that engagement. The CII Foundation then launched a field project in Punjab in 2018.

Because the magnitude of the problem is large, CII took the lead to bring together diverse industry stakeholders such as Birlasoft, BPCL, PTC, CLP India, Cummins, ONGC, GAIL and Royal Enfield etc., to deliver a large, collaborative project. Grassroots organisations such as GBDSGNS Foundation, Doctors for You and the Guru Nanak National College Trust, in partnership with farmer co-operatives, were involved in building awareness and support for community-centric extension services to farmers. In collaboration with the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana; Department of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare of Punjab and Haryana, the initiative has brought about significant changes through awareness drives, technical training and viability gap funding to enable procurement of requisite farm machinery.

CII Foundation expanded the initiative last year to cover **147 villages, involving 20,000 farmers and 1.02 lakh acres of farm area** in the districts of Ludhiana, Patiala and Barnala in Punjab, and Rohtak, Sirsa and Fatehabad in Haryana.

The efforts have yielded meaningful results. In 2019, a total of 183,000 tonnes of rice straw was prevented from burning and was recycled in the soil, leading to a saving of an estimated 1.3 thousand tonnes PM10, 770 tonnes PM2.5 and other green-house gases. An estimated 158,000 tonnes of organic matter was added to the soil and 10 billion litres of water saved.

CII's initiative has successfully shown that viable alternatives to stubble-burning can be utilised on a large-scale to create greater impact. CII is now expanding the Programme in existing districts and entering new districts to help improve the quality of air in the region.

To know more, visit <http://ciifoundation.in> and refer to:

- A short film on the Programme - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGLmKV8xqE8>
- CII Programme Impact Report, 2020: https://sustainabledevelopment.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CRM_Report-1.pdf
- Farmer Impact Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6jm83b51pY>