



Development Alternatives

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# ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

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# ORGANISATION AT A GLANCE



## Vision

A world where every citizen can live a secure, healthy, and fulfilling life, in harmony with nature

## Approach

Innovation, Incubation, Implementation and Influence to create a large scale impact

## Mission

To create models that generate sustainable livelihoods in large numbers

**Society Registration**  
Societies Registration Act, XXI of 1860; Registration No. 12964

**FCRA**  
Section 6 (1) (a) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 1976 (FCRA Reg. No. 231650202)

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Empowering livelihoods, one sheet at a time.  
A woman artisan at a handmade paper unit in Jhansi turning sustainable materials into opportunities.

## THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year gone by has been one of resilience, innovation, and collective achievement for Development Alternatives. It reaffirmed the strength of our people, our partners, and the communities who stand at the heart of our mission.

In 2024-25, we expanded our efforts to build inclusive and green economies by mobilising resources to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems that generate livelihoods and enable dignity of work. Our work in ecosystem restoration and climate resilience translated into healthier water systems, more secure livelihoods, and communities better equipped to withstand the uncertainties of a changing climate.

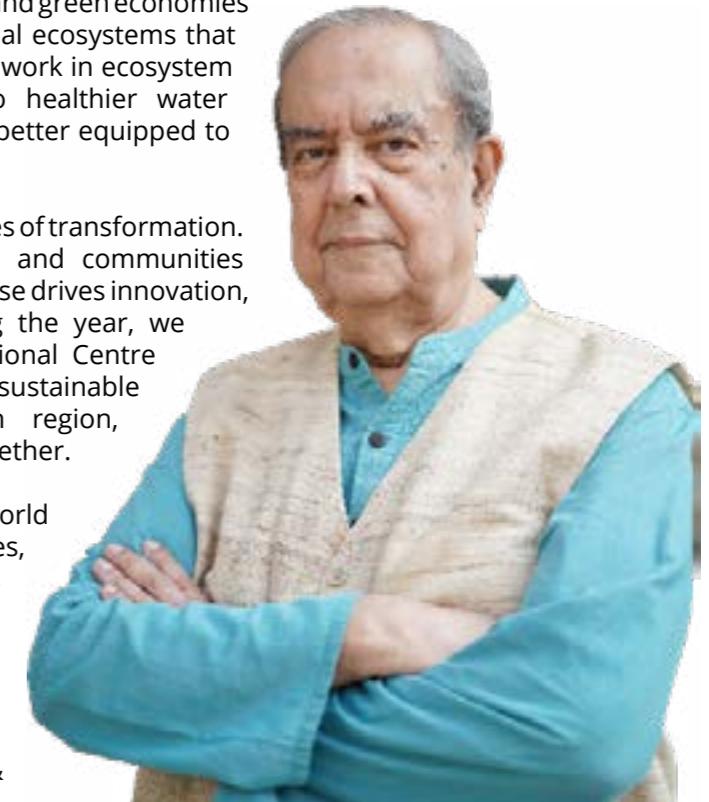
These milestones are not just outcomes, they are stories of transformation. They reflect ecosystems revived, futures secured, and communities strengthened. They show what is possible when purpose drives innovation, and innovation is backed by collaboration. During the year, we entered a long-term partnership with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development to promote sustainable climate practices across the fragile Himalayan region, addressing climate risks and ecological sensitivity together.

We also convened a landmark roundtable on World Water Day, bringing together policymakers, corporates, and civil society leaders to deliberate on innovations and partnerships for advancing water security. At the community level, our "Humare Talab Humari Pehchaan" initiative rejuvenated 91 ponds across 74 villages in three states, enhancing water storage, improving livelihoods, and earning us the Sustainable Environment Award at the Social Impact Conference & Awards 2024.

We also worked closely with the Club of Rome-India to reimagine sustainable futures for the Himalayan region. These deliberations highlighted pathways for forestry, water, farming, tourism, and livelihoods, laying the foundation for policies that address ecological fragility and human well-being in tandem.

Looking ahead, Development Alternatives will continue to act as a catalyst for systemic change. Our aim remains steadfast: to design and scale solutions that enable people everywhere to live secure, healthy, and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature.

**Dr. Ashok Khosla**  
Chairman, Development Alternatives



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As we reflect on the year spanning April 2024 to March 2025, my colleagues and I are reminded that meaningful development is rarely the result of sudden breakthroughs. Instead, it is shaped by continuous learning, a bias for relentless action, and partnerships that endure through challenges of increasing complexity. At Development Alternatives (DA), this year was defined by a renewed focus on deepening impact—strengthening locally led solutions, grounding innovation in evidence, and building scalable systems that can sustain both people and our planet.



Across our work, a common thread has been the belief that change is most durable when it is rooted in communities and made more robust by supportive institutions, markets, and technologies that resonate with the needs and aspirations of people. Whether advancing resilient livelihoods, climate action, or regenerative resource management, we continued to invest in approaches that combine practice-based learning with scale-ready solutions. These efforts have reaffirmed that people-led change, when backed by credible data and long-term partnerships, can deliver outcomes that are both equitable and transformative.

Inclusive entrepreneurship remained central to this vision. During the year, we helped thousands of grassroots enterprises to move beyond subsistence and into growth pathways – improving access to finance, and enabling local market discovery, often through innovative digital technology applications and multi-stakeholder entrepreneurship

ecosystems. Particular emphasis was placed on women's economic empowerment, recognising women as agents of change. Through tailored enterprise support, skills development, and ecosystem engagement, we worked to reduce structural barriers and expand opportunities for women to participate meaningfully in local and regional economies.

Climate action and eco-friendly technologies continued to be critical pillars of our work. In the construction sector, DA's leadership in promoting low carbon cement and sustainable building materials demonstrated how innovation can reduce emissions while remaining commercially viable. By engaging industry leaders and policymakers, we helped accelerate the adoption of resource-efficient technologies that contribute to India's climate commitments while creating green livelihoods. Equally important was our work on restoring and managing natural resources through community-led approaches. Efforts to rejuvenate water bodies reinforced the value of participatory planning and local stewardship in addressing water stress and climate vulnerability. Through community-based waste management models, we demonstrated how decentralised systems can improve sanitation outcomes, reduce environmental pollution, and create dignified employment – particularly for women and informal workers. These initiatives underscore the importance of circular economy approaches that are socially inclusive and locally adaptable.

This progress would not have been possible without the trust of communities, local institutions and the collaboration of our partners who share a commitment to innovation, the incubation of replicable solutions, and delivery of meaningful outcomes at scale, with high levels of mutual accountability. The support of several Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments, as well as the generosity of a growing family of donors have been critical in DA's ability to experiment, learn, and adapt in pursuit of impact that lasts beyond short project cycles.

As our team at DA looks ahead, we do so with renewed clarity and ambition. Guided by the lived realities of the communities we serve, DA will continue to strengthen systems that build a better world for future generations. The challenges ahead are complex, but so too is our collective capacity to address them. We look forward to advancing this journey together.

**Shrashtant Patara**  
CEO, Development Alternatives

# PROGRESS OVER THE YEARS

Born in 1982



1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First 100% earth-based urban building - DA Headquarters</li> <li>TARA Balram Mud block Press</li> <li>TARA Chulha 101</li> <li>TARA loom</li> <li>Jal - TARA filter</li> </ul>	1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TARA handmade paper</li> <li>Aqua Check vial and Jal-TARA water testing kit</li> <li>VSBK - TARA EcoKiln</li> <li>TARA MCR Roofing Tiles</li> <li>TARA Brickmek</li> </ul>	2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pawan TARA air monitoring kit</li> <li>TARA soil retesting kit</li> <li>Building Materials and Services Bank, Odisha</li> <li>Fly Ash Brick Technology Package</li> </ul>	2010s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State of Environment (SOE) Atlas for India Published</li> <li>Rural Housing policy for GOI</li> </ul>	2020s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Udyam ME - Enterprise Information Network</li> <li>Bridge2Naukri - Youth Employment Portal</li> <li>TARA Urja - Mini Grids in UP and Bihar</li> <li>CELAMED</li> </ul>	2020s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DA co-founded Green Economy Coalition</li> <li>IMEDF, Nodal agency for the ministry of MSME SFURTI Scheme</li> <li>Trialogue2047 - Sustainability Discourse Launched</li> <li>TARAGram Yatra - Annual Development Pilgrimage</li> <li>MoU with OneUN for partnership in UN programmes in India</li> </ul>	2020s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First trial of LC<sub>3</sub> in Rajasthan</li> <li>Alt Urban Campaign Launched</li> <li>Scaling Up Communities with UPSRLM</li> </ul>	2020s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement on carbon neutrality in construction sector with Bihar</li> <li>MoU with JK Cement to decarbonise cement production</li> <li>Engagement with Global AFN to double Adaption Fund country cap</li> <li>Development Alternatives (DA) and UP State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) have signed an MoU to collaboratively strengthen women-led entrepreneurship in UP, enabling Cluster Level Federations to drive enterprise creation and establish 1,00,000 women-led enterprises by 2027.</li> <li>-MoUs with Goa Institute of Management &amp; ICIMOD.</li> <li>-Relaunching Bundeli Idol.</li> </ul>	2020s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TARA Akshar+ literate 250,000 women</li> <li>SAM-Udyam launched at the Livelihoods India Summit 2021</li> <li>LC<sub>3</sub> reaches Thailand, Fiji and Malawi</li> <li>BIS Rating for LC<sub>3</sub></li> </ul>
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## OUR APPROACH

The past year witnessed DA's sustained commitment to inclusive development and environmental stewardship. From building livelihood opportunities to restoring ecosystems and influencing policy, our efforts focused on systemic change. We strengthened our presence across India and in the Global South, shaping models that address poverty, unemployment, and ecological decline through innovation and collaboration.

### Development Alternatives Group - Impact

#### Inclusive Entrepreneurship

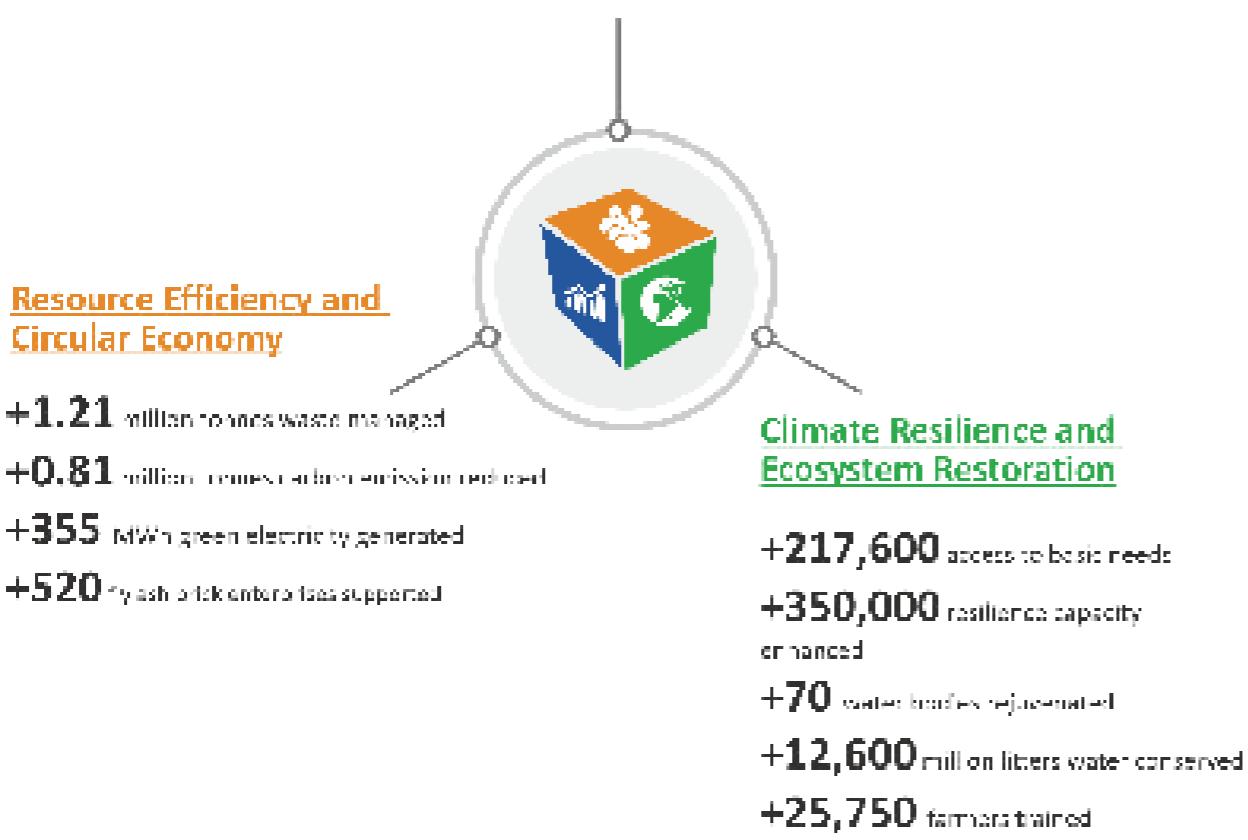
**+25,000** enterprises set up and supported

**+202,230** livelihoods secured

**+53,000** jobs created

**INR 1,840** million finance unlocked

**6%** increase in average number of enterprises set up per day from 78 per day in FY 24-25 to 85 per day in Q1 FY 25-26



**Implementation**  
We work with a wide spectrum of stakeholders to implement development solutions on-ground

**Influence**  
We develop our insights from on-ground action and analysis to provide critical advice for policy-making

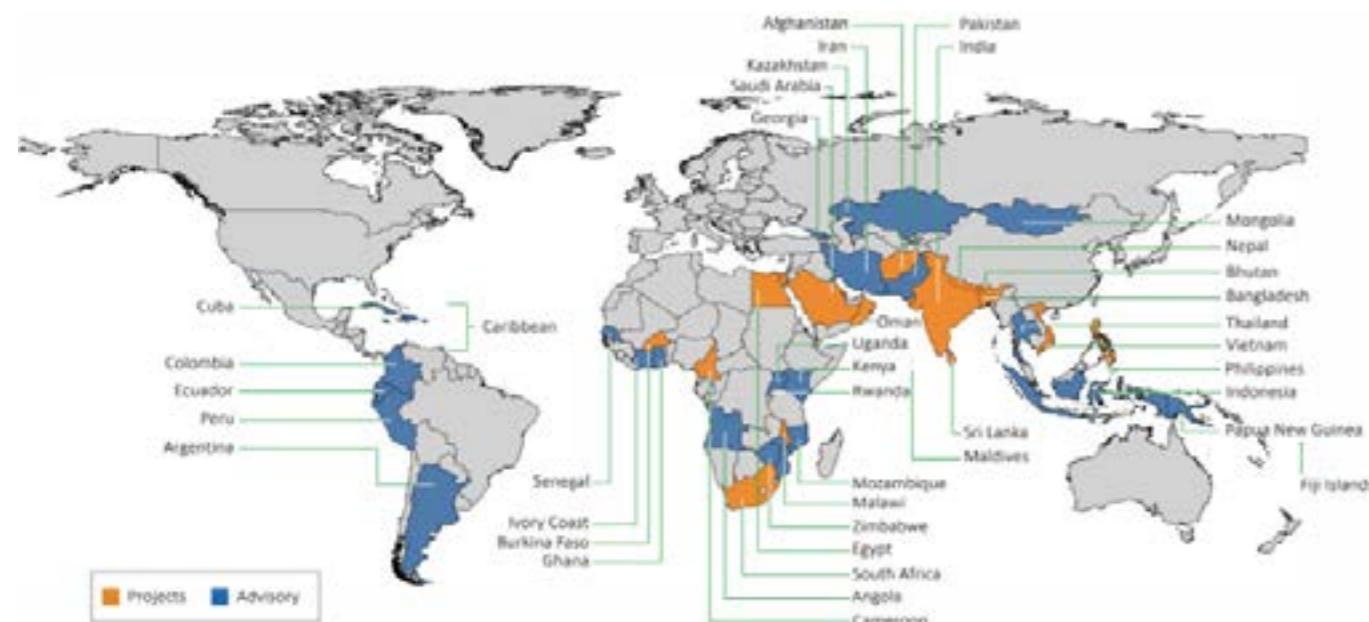
**Incubation**  
We incubate and prove the viability of business models that increase access to basic needs, products, and services

**Innovation**  
We create innovative business models and institutional systems that promote local initiative and benefit sharing

**Impact**  
We work towards creating replicable models that have a large-scale impact and speeding up multiplication



## OUR PRESENCE IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH



## OUR FOCUS AREAS

### LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND INCLUSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

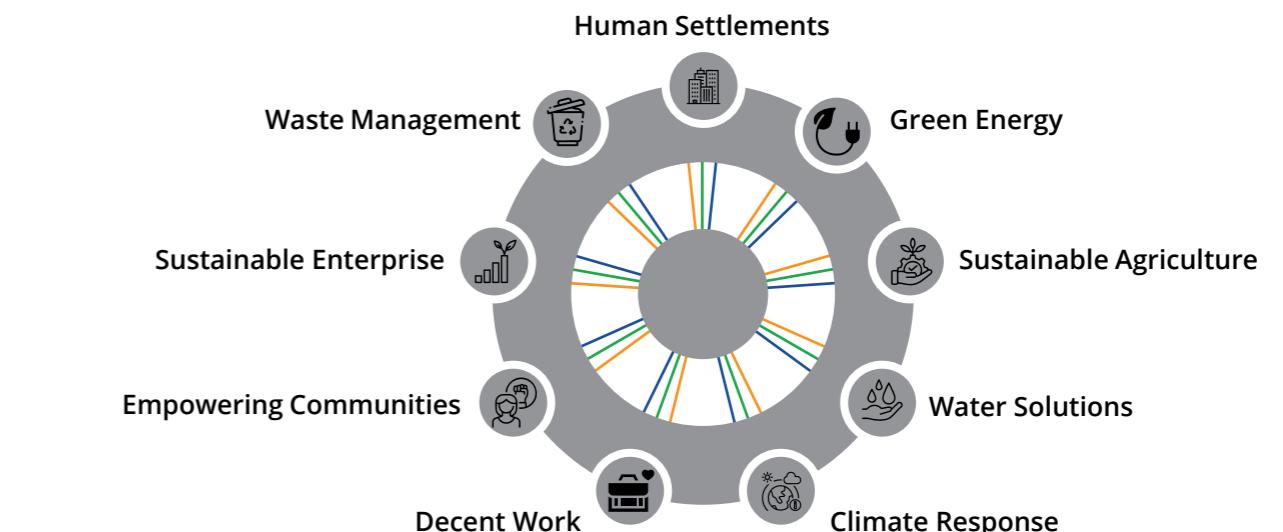
Empowering rural communities, and forging paths to economic independence, and eradicating poverty. Through innovative business models, the aim is to drive transformative change by connecting people in backward areas with opportunities. Creating a lastina impact, one life at a time we envision a society where everyone thrives.

### RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Accelerating the transition to inclusive and circular models of production and consumption by reducing carbon and material footprints across the lifecycle of economic activity while promoting local value and wealth creation.

### CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Working towards restoring degraded ecosystems in such a way that they become resilient to climate change and extreme weather events. The focus is on solutions that allow humanity to thrive.



- Innovate and package green technology solutions
- Create and support entrepreneurship
- Catalyse and service markets for alternatives
- Build community and institutional capacities for resilience
- Design and catalyse social change processes
- Influence and service policy and industry shifts

## LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND INCLUSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### Overview

**India stands at the cusp of a major demographic shift. With one of the world's youngest workforces and growing rural aspirations, the country faces both an unprecedented challenge and a transformative opportunity. By 2030, nearly 100 million people will enter the workforce according to a 2022 report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Without meaningful livelihoods, the promise of a demographic dividend risks turning into a crisis of jobless growth.**

At Development Alternatives, we are addressing this challenge by positioning grassroots entrepreneurship as a powerful engine for job creation and systemic change. By nurturing sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems through a social innovation approach, we support the growth of local enterprises that create dignified, resilient, and aspiration driven work opportunities for the underserved.

The strength of this model lies in its ability to integrate technology, finance, market linkage, and skilling in ways that are deeply rooted in local realities. By collaborating with state agencies, private partners, and grassroots institutions, Development Alternatives is enabling aspiring entrepreneurs to overcome barriers and build viable enterprises. For us, sustainable entrepreneurship goes beyond livelihood generation—it is about strengthening local economies and shaping a blueprint for India's demographic dividend to translate into a true demographic advantage. Our mission of Creating 1 Million Livelihoods by 2030 is a response to India's deepening jobs crisis, placing entrepreneurship at the heart of inclusive and sustainable growth.

**22,400**  
Enterprises Set up and Supported

**1.84 M**  
Finance unlocked

**95,177**  
Livelihoods Secured

**83%**  
Increase in average number of enterprise set up per day from 42 per day in FY 23-24 to 77 per day in FY 24-25

**38,232**  
Jobs Created

**18,000+**  
Tonnes of Carbon Emissions Mitigated



### RESILIENT REALITIES

A fellow member of the cluster-level federation (CLF) once asked .Shashibala, 'Hum itna sangharsh karte hain, humko safalta kab milegi?' (We struggle so much, when will we bear the fruits of our labour). Calmly she replied, 'Jarur milegi, bas har mat mano.' (Success will come. Just keep at it and do not lose hope). Shashibala speaks with confidence because her journey is a testament to her persistence and a system that was designed to work for her.

Shashibala Sonkar was born into a relatively educated family in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, and married young into a modest household in Mirzapur. With four daughters and a declining family income, she spent her nights sewing clothes through her pregnancies just to make ends meet, living the daily realities of rural women's invisible burdens: patriarchy, unpaid labour, and poverty.

Her turning point came in 2018 when she joined an NRLM self-help group. What began as saving and borrowing soon grew into mobilising other women, strengthening solidarity among those with unspoken aspirations. Programmes like NRLM were meant for women like her yet often lacked the bottom-up systems needed for sustained growth. Her lived experiences became a catalyst for strengthening these institutions from within.

Shashibala first started packaging and selling Darjeeling Tea online. During a comic workshop organised by Development Alternatives, a deep-listening social innovation tool, she articulated her dream of building her own brand. The ecosystem responded. With support from Development Alternatives' collective enablers, she secured a ₹10 lakh PMEGP loan, additional capital from the CLF and Community Investment Fund, and launched 'Chipshopile', her snack manufacturing venture.



Shashibala Sonkar at her chips manufacturing factory in Mirzapur

Her journey accelerated with Udyam registration, FSSAI licensing, and listings on ONDC and Flipkart. Today, with a monthly turnover of ₹9 lakh and a team of 12 earning between ₹5,000 and ₹28,000, she represents the shift from necessity-driven work to vision-led entrepreneurship. Her participation in Kaun Banega Business Leader and udyame Melas reflects her emergence as both a serial entrepreneur and an enabler for other women.

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she says. Her solidarity is rooted in shared experience, of gender pressure, poverty, and unpaid work.

Her next goal is to start a bakery and chocolate-making unit. For this expansion, continued access to finance, digital training, and institutional support from platforms like the udyame kiosk will be vital. Her story shows how accessible finance, technology, and TFMC training can enable rural women to build agency, autonomy, and leadership.

Shashibala stands as a blueprint for intergenerational change, proof that when women-led non-farm enterprises are supported through ecosystem building, the boundaries of rural economies can shift.



Shashibala Sonkar at her chips manufacturing factory in Mirzapur

## SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

### Entrepreneur Ecosystem

*Development Alternatives' Inclusive Entrepreneurship programme has made measurable strides in shaping resilient local economies and advancing green, community-led enterprises.*

- **Enterprise Creation at Scale:** Over 22,000 enterprises were set up or supported.
- **Strengthened Local Economies:** 10 district-level entrepreneurial ecosystems were strengthened, generating more than INR 1,000 million worth of cash flows within local economies and unlocking INR 1,840 million in finance, of which INR 320 million came directly through Cluster Level Federations (CLFs).
- **Women's Leadership and Collective Power:** The role of women expanded significantly, with women-led enterprises rising from 40% in 2024 to 79% in 2025. Over 30,800 women across 56 CLFs are now playing a pivotal role in shaping district-level entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- **Green and Regenerative Growth:** A growing portfolio of green and regenerative enterprises

mitigated more than 18,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, reinforcing DA's commitment to climate-positive livelihoods.

- **Expanding Access and Innovation:** The programme diversified its portfolio of enterprise prototypes, widening access to entrepreneurship for youth, women, and other underrepresented groups. This has repositioned entrepreneurship from being a last resort to becoming a viable and aspirational career choice.
- **Thought Leadership and Policy Influence:** DA has strengthened its position as a thought leader in social innovation-led inclusive and green entrepreneurship. Greater flows of knowledge, finance, and resources—supported by digital platforms—are accelerating the momentum for inclusive entrepreneurship across geographies.



Members of Nav Chetna Urja Mandal Samiti in Mirzapur switch on the solar mini-grid for the first time, supplying power to core entrepreneurs in their community.

## FLAGSHIP INTERVENTIONS



### Inclusive Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

Inclusive Entrepreneurship lies at the core of Development Alternatives' work, empowering women and youth by building district-level conducive entrepreneurial ecosystems. Instead of supporting individuals in isolation, DA supports entrepreneurs with access to finance, skilling, market linkages, technology, and enabling policies while strengthening institutional structures.

Through partnerships with State Rural Livelihood Missions, private sector actors, civil society, and grassroots organisations, entrepreneurs gain the resources and agency to establish enterprises rooted in local realities. These interventions have already unlocked INR 1.49 million in finance in FY 24-25, fostering resilient, self-sustaining local economies.

In this financial year, 15 CLFs lead DECs, advocating for financial inclusion, enabling stronger NRLM implementation, and linking women entrepreneurs with enterprise support services. Market access and digital adoption have also expanded, with 60% of women-led enterprises using UPI and digital payments and tapping into platforms like ONDC, Amazon, Meesho, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

To further accelerate women's entrepreneurship, DA co-created the Entrepreneurship Facilitation Centre (EFC) with CLFs—a systemic prototype designed to provide sustained support through finance, market linkages, and mentorship. Together, these efforts are building enterprises that are economically viable, socially impactful, and resilient.

The Work4Progress (W4P) project, supported by "la Caixa" Foundation, envisions accelerating the creation of meaningful and dignified jobs for women and youth in underserved regions. At its core, W4P promotes a systemic approach that enables underrepresented groups to access entrepreneurial opportunities. Grounded in an open innovation platform, W4P builds bridges between communities and stakeholders, incubates solutions through co-creation, tests systemic prototypes, and creates shared spaces for collaboration.

In its Phase 5 – Mainstreaming, W4P is scaling its proven models across 10 districts in Uttar Pradesh, with a target of 30,000 jobs through 12,000 enterprises, including 15% green enterprises.

Promotion of Women-led Enterprises supported by Gates Foundation, aims to establish 100,000 women-led enterprises across Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand by May 2027. The project strengthens women's institutions, especially Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) and , placing ownership of entrepreneurship solutions in their hands and enabling them to act as agents of change for local economic growth. In the first year of its implementation, the target of setting up and supporting 20,000 women-led enterprises was successfully achieved.

In collaboration with the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM), the programme is building 10 robust district entrepreneurial ecosystems and strengthening 350 CLFs, unlocking policy support and mechanisms to accelerate women-led enterprises. Additionally, 1000 women-led e-rickshaw enterprises shall be set up in 4 new districts. This will be implemented in convergence with existing government initiatives including Lakhpati Didi and Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY).

Equality4Progress in partnership with Bank of America, builds solidarity-based platforms that help rural women move from traditional to green, future-ready, non-traditional enterprises. The project is active across 10 Cluster Level Federations (CLFs), in 3 districts of Uttar Pradesh and has reached over 11,000 women, enabling more than 1,500 to launch non-traditional enterprises and laying the groundwork to improve the livelihoods of 20,000 women by 2028.

The Accelerating Entrepreneurship through Social Innovation (AeSI) initiative in partnership with the State Bank of India Foundation drove economic empowerment in underserved villages of Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand by nurturing entrepreneurship and job creation. The project supported youth and women entrepreneurs through multi-stakeholder coalitions, innovative credit delivery products, and comprehensive capacity building. In alignment with IndusInd Bank's CSR vision of "Good Ecology is Good Economics," Development Alternatives (DA) and Givfunds Social Ventures partnered to enhance income levels and improve living standards in underserved regions. As part of this collaboration, IndusInd Bank CSR became a key contributor to Mission 100,000 Enterprises, advancing two critical pathways: Unlocking Finance at Scale for Rural Entrepreneurship and Strengthening Job-creating District Entrepreneurial Ecosystems.

In partnership with Bajaj Finserv, Development Alternatives implemented the Collective Action for Entrepreneurship at Scale initiative to strengthen district-level entrepreneurial ecosystems. The project brought together government and private sector stakeholders, facilitating better access to resources, markets, and support for entrepreneurs.

The TAP-RISE initiative, supported by the SEED Division of the Department of Science and Technology and jointly implemented by Development Alternatives and Vigyan Ashram, provides a sustainable and scalable model that accelerates the adoption of innovative technologies in rural areas, fostering social entrepreneurship and improving livelihoods. TAP-RISE provides ongoing information and on-demand services to SEED-supported organisations, strengthening their capacity, market linkages, and collaborative networks. By integrating mechanisms such as product packaging, certification, validation, and market development, it accelerates technology adoption and commercialisation at scale.

Launched in 2022, the Social and Transformative Rural Economic Empowerment (STREE) Project in partnership with HDFC Bank Parivartan with Grant Thornton as technical partner worked towards accelerating the economic empowerment of women in the farm and non-farm sectors by evolving Self Help Groups (SHGs) into efficient, transparent and income-generating entrepreneurial platforms that facilitate sustainable livelihood enhancement for rural women in 24 districts in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Punjab and West Bengal.



### Green Enterprise Solutions

Development Alternatives supports local green enterprises as catalysts for inclusive, regenerative economic growth. Through community-driven, circular business models, these enterprises generated sustainable livelihoods, increased incomes, and contributed to climate mitigation, achieving over 18,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> reduced. The programme leveraged ₹100+ million across community-run models, demonstrating the viability of clean-technology enterprises in rural and peri-urban markets.

Women-led institutions, including CLFs, FPOs, and Aarya Manch (DA's platform enabling women-led e-rickshaw enterprises by addressing safety, licensing, finance, and social norms) anchored these clean-technology transitions through collective ownership and inclusive governance. Public-private-community partnerships strengthened enterprise delivery, infrastructure access, and local stewardship, reinforcing a just transitions ecosystem.

Decentralised clean-energy initiatives further boosted productivity. Women-led hubs for battery swapping, repair, and training contributed to a gender-inclusive rural mobility economy. Over 30 low-carbon enterprise models from e-rickshaws and EV charging stations to biomass pellet units scaled from pilot to community-managed enterprises, strengthening sustainable livelihoods and local resilience.

To address the need for reliable, affordable electricity for rural micro-enterprises, the Urja Mandala model

was introduced to support a just and inclusive energy transition. Operated by women's collectives, Urja Mandalas provided clean and affordable power to rural enterprises. In partnership with HSBC India, DA established 8 Urja Mandalas, benefiting 7,000 people, especially women and youth, by March 2025.



## DA SPEAKS



**Col Raman Thapar**  
General Manager, IMEDF

“

*At Development Alternatives, we believe that true prosperity begins when communities are empowered to create their own opportunities. Through our inclusive entrepreneurship approach, we are witnessing a powerful shift where women and youth in rural India are setting up enterprises that create green and inclusive livelihoods, scale local economies and inspire collective action for grassroots entrepreneurship. The journey ahead is about strengthening these ecosystems so that every district can become a hub centres of green, dignified, and opportunity-driven livelihoods.*

”



### Decent Work

The Skills to Livelihood programme aims to provide dignified and sustainable livelihood opportunities for school dropouts, unemployed women, and youth. Its broader goal is to break the generational cycle of informal work by enabling participants to secure sustainable livelihoods through placement-linked vocational training. The programme offers market-relevant technical and soft skills, empowering youth to make informed choices regarding employment, entrepreneurship, and long-term livelihood security. It has served as a bridge between young job seekers from marginalized communities and over employers, ensuring that jobs are matched to the aspirations of youth and women, thereby enhancing their incomes and overall economic well-being.

#### IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

- Income enhanced of 4,366 individuals through placement linked skill trainings
- Improved the quality of life of 25,000 individuals
- INR 647 Lakhs contributed to economy through jobs
- INR 76.48 Lakhs leveraged from government schemes

**68%**

Women participation in workforce with an average monthly income of INR 12,727

**8**

Implementing partners on Skills to Livelihood and Integrated Village Development Programme

**4 NGOs**

Implementation

**110+**

Employers Network



## IMPACT

**1.** By unlocking INR 1.84 million in finance and driving an 83% rise in enterprise creation per day—from 42 in FY 2023-24 to 77 in FY 2024-25—we expanded opportunities for inclusive economic participation.

In this financial year, our efforts enabled large-scale entrepreneurship-led growth, resulting in the establishment of 22,400 enterprises, securing 95,177 livelihoods and creating 38,232 jobs across diverse regions.

**2.**

**3.** At the same time, our initiatives contributed to environmental gains, with over 18,000 tonnes of carbon emissions mitigated, reinforcing our commitment to building resilient, sustainable communities.

## WAY FORWARD

Micro and nano-entrepreneurship are becoming vital drivers of rural economic transformation, creating dignified livelihoods for youth and women while strengthening local resilience. Nationally, India's entrepreneurship agenda is being shaped by the draft National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy (MSDE, 2025), the proposed Rural Prosperity and Resilience Programme, and the Creating 1 Million Livelihood Mission. Together, these frameworks create a strong opportunity to position non-farm entrepreneurship as a key engine of jobs, sustainable livelihoods, and inclusive growth.

In Uttar Pradesh, Development Alternatives is partnering with UPSRLM to strengthen Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) as institutional anchors for grassroots entrepreneurship. Moving beyond their traditional financial roles, CLFs are being developed as facilitators, accelerators, and incubators that support entrepreneurs from ideation to scale.



## RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

## Overview

Poor environmental management remains a major cause of ecological decline. Addressing this challenge requires a rapid transition to circular and inclusive models of production and consumption. Such an approach minimises carbon and material footprints across the entire lifecycle of economic activities, while strengthening local value chains and enabling sustainable wealth creation.

**0.36 MMT**  
CO2 saved

**1.21 MN Tonnes**  
Waste Managed

**354 MWh**  
Green electricity generated

**0.81 MN Tonnes**  
Carbon emission reduced



## RESILIENT REALITIES

Waste management is not just about technologies—it's about people. Understanding the human aspect is crucial when implementing sustainable waste management systems in rural areas. After all, humans create waste, so how can the solution be purely technical without addressing human behaviour? Traditionally, waste management has been centred on a linear model of "take, use, and dispose." While technological advancements have improved disposal methods through recycling innovations, the modern approach focuses on the "reduce, reuse, and recycle" philosophy. Achieving sustainability at each step of this process requires the perfect blend of technological solutions and human interventions, making waste management a collaborative effort between innovation and behaviour change.



Waste Collection Vehicle in Kirpalpur, Himachal Pradesh

For example, to reduce waste, a rural village has adopted eco-friendly alternatives in local markets, supported by behavioural change campaigns to promote community adoption and subsidised products for the vendors, making the shift more accessible. For reuse, families are encouraged to creatively repurpose materials through awareness programs and skill-building initiatives, combining traditional practices with modern tools to minimize waste generation. On the recycling front, a grama panchayat has established a composting plant and a Material Recovery Facility to process organic and recyclable waste. This is further strengthened by household-level source segregation training, ensuring waste is managed effectively from its origin to its final stage. Together, these efforts demonstrate the necessity of community-driven action and behavioural change campaigns for sustainable waste management.

Development Alternatives emphasizes ensuring robust Information Education & Communication and Behaviour Change Communication activities at three key stages of its projects: pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation. During the pre-implementation phase, the focus is on co-creating solutions by understanding the community's existing knowledge, practices, and attitudes. This collaborative approach helps in designing context-specific and sustainable interventions. For example, in the waste management project in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, Development Alternatives conducted 15 Focus Group Discussions with the active

participation of 500+ community members from various groups. These discussions explored the community's attitudes toward potential waste management alternatives and allowed for the development of solutions that had the full confidence and endorsement of the community.

During the implementation stage, DA focuses on knowledge dissemination and fostering behavioral change to achieve impactful results in waste management. To engage the community, DA employed various communication tools tailored to different mediums: pamphlets (print media) for concise and accessible information, wall arts (visual media) as constant reminders of proper waste practices in public spaces, jingles (audio media) with catchy tunes to reinforce key messages, and street plays (interactive media) to emotionally connect with the audience and deepen their understanding of waste segregation. However, communication alone is not sufficient. To ensure action, DA introduced a two-color sticker system for households participating in waste collection. Yellow stickers indicate that waste collection is occurring, but without proper segregation, while green stickers signify households practicing source-level segregation and correctly handing over waste. To further encourage participation, DA initiated campaigns to help all households reach the green sticker standard. Areas achieving 100% green compliance will be rewarded in public events, fostering a sense of healthy competition and collective responsibility for sustainable waste management.

Post-implementation activities primarily focus on ensuring the sustainability of the project. Impact celebrations serve as a means of reinforcing good practices by recognizing and rewarding villages or households that achieve significant waste management milestones. A key emphasis is placed on establishing community institutions to monitor and maintain the waste management system. Additionally, fostering collaborative governance structures is critical for long-term success. These systems involve active participation from the community, representatives from the panchayat and block panchayat, waste workers, and representatives from collection or recycling agencies. This inclusive approach ensures that the waste management system remains efficient, participatory, and sustainable over time.



## SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

### Waste Managed

- Integrated waste management model successfully piloted in 6 villages, catering to 3,000+ households, where the waste is being sustainably managed by women/panchayat-led enterprises.
- 3 MRFs operational with 1 to 2 TPD capacity – in Jhajjar, Nalagarh & Chhindwara.
- 1,353 tonnes of solid waste managed in 6 villages & 1 municipal corporation.
- Plastic waste managed: 1,035 tonnes.
- Wet waste managed: 264 tonnes.
- New jobs created: 16 (waste workers).
- 6,000 MT waste utilised (fly ash).

### Green Affordable Housing

- The adoption of green, affordable housing is being facilitated by policy and market transformations at both the national and sub-national levels within the states of Odisha and Maharashtra, ultimately enhancing liveability and environmental standards.



### CO2 Mitigated

- Carbon emission reduced: 0.81 million tonnes.

### Water and Air

- 1.2 M litres/year wastewater recycled.
- 100 water bodies rejuvenated, increasing surface water potential by 400 M litres.
- 50 villages having access to clean drinking water.
- 2 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) enabled on AQ mitigation interventions.
- Trained 50 citizen scientists.

### Enterprises and Livelihoods

- 11,622 individuals directly benefited from energy transition.
- Operationalised 8 solar mini grids across Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand, entirely managed by women collectives. These decentralised systems are now powering 200+ rural enterprises.



### Waste Management

Adopting circular economy principles is essential for strengthening waste management systems. This requires advancing technological solutions that enable the productive reuse of secondary resources, thereby promoting sustainable and resilient waste management practices.

Development Alternatives is working on building a solid waste management system in two rural areas with peri-urban characteristics: Nalagarh in Himachal Pradesh, Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh and Jhajjar in Haryana. The Nalagarh project, funded by HUL, operates in three villages: Rakhramsingh, Kripalpur, and Nikoowal and Sarna and Bangaon in Chhindwara.

The project in Jhajjar, funded by DB Schenker, focuses on the village of Ghubana. Through the project, DA conducted waste audits and household surveys, distributed dual dustbins to households, cleared littering hotspots, and conducted IEC activities to promote source segregation. An MRF was constructed, and bifurcated waste collection vehicles were purchased as part of the waste management infrastructure. Daily door-to-door waste collection, waste segregation at the MRF, and the final disposal or sale of valuable items were ensured throughout the project.

### Integrated Approach

- Self-Sustainable Model in Nalagarh - 75% sources segregation and 80% user fee collection. User fee collected: INR 2,37,900 and selling of valuable waste: INR 52,032
- 5,000 LPD of wastewater treated through 5 community soak pits cater for 150 households in Bundelkhand

### Knowledge Transfer and Building Partnerships

- SOP developed for household waste management

### Convergence for Unlocking Synergies

- 25,000+ plastic bottles collected during Maha Kumbh, led consortium of 12 like-minded organisations for one-month long awareness activities
- Concept developed for cluster level scaling up strategy – discussions at block level and with other stakeholders



### Sustainable Human Settlements

Designing strategies for low-carbon development in the industrial and construction sectors requires the integration of circular principles and decarbonisation efforts into sustainable and affordable housing projects.

Sustainable human settlements are being advanced through initiatives that integrate circular economy, resource efficiency, and climate resilience. Alt Urban is enabling green, inclusive, and regenerative cities, with the ambition of creating one million green homes by 2030 through low-carbon housing, climate-adaptive planning, and people-centered communities. A national housing design competition under this initiative was launched for a 9.5-acre site, aiming to develop models for around 800 low-carbon and resource-efficient houses. Under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS), eco-smart villages are being developed in Ladakh to strengthen eco-tourism, waste management, and disaster-resilient construction. Complementing these, the International Resource Panel (IRP) initiative examines the social and economic implications of resource efficiency and circularity, generating insights to guide equitable and region-specific sustainability transitions.

## Low Carbon Development Pathways for the Industrial & Construction Sector of Bihar

Over the past three years, Development Alternatives has been actively working towards mapping and assessment of Greenhouse Gas footprint of several primary polluting industries in Bihar. This initiative, supported by the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, has been a key driver in establishing the carbon footprint of the industry sector as well as the Brick sector in Bihar – a major polluting sector, characterized by over 7865 kilns across the rural and peri-urban landscape of Bihar.

Under this, DA has carried out extensive ground surveys of industries like the Calcined Petroleum Coke, Distilleries, Soft Coke Industry, Rice Mills, and Cement industry in Bihar – assessing the carbon emissions from these sectors, holding stakeholder consultations to bring key players and government bodies together in formulating strategies for a low-carbon growth by 2070.

DA leverages extensive primary datasets, GIS-integrated dashboards, and stakeholder consultations to support the State's low-carbon growth through targeted policy recommendations, recommendations on technology upgradation, and energy efficiency measures tailored to each sector. This initiative has successfully laid the foundation for a low-carbon future, empowering industries in Bihar to embrace sustainable practices while contributing to global climate action.

*Outcomes – The project achieved significant milestones, including the GHG inventorization for the Calcined Pet Coke industry, Distilleries, and Soft Coke industry across Bihar. A total of 517 fly ash enterprises were mapped and geocoded – integrated into a GIS-enabled dashboard for visualization and data access, enabling the Fly Ash Brick making enterprises in the State.*



Facilitating access to decentralised renewable energy systems empowers rural communities, paving the way for an inclusive and equitable green transition. The Urja Mandala initiative, titled Energy Transition for Rural emPowerment, is an innovative project. This initiative leverages decentralized solar mini grids to provide renewable energy solutions to rural communities, addressing energy poverty and fostering sustainable socio-economic growth.

The initiative goes beyond providing energy; it challenges societal norms and transforms power dynamics in rural India. In many parts of the country, gender and technology are often perceived as incompatible. Urja Mandala actively dismantles this misconception by involving women collectives from the outset in critical roles such as energy operations, customer acquisition, and financial management. By integrating technical training, leadership opportunities, and knowledge-sharing platforms, the initiative positions women as leaders in energy management.

By empowering women in leadership roles, Urja Mandala creates a paradigm shift, driving economic resilience and environmental protection. The initiative catalyzes community empowerment by enhancing access to reliable power for productive uses, such as irrigation, agro-processing, and small-scale businesses. This approach stimulates local economic activity while fostering sustainable development through renewable energy solutions.

11,622 individuals directly benefited from energy transition

58,110 individuals indirectly benefited from energy transition

60% increase in annual income of micro-entrepreneurs

20% increase in operating hours of enterprises due to reliable supply of electricity

340 tonnes of CO2 eq. Mitigation potential from 293 kWp

40% increase in income of 73 women's collectives

## DA SPEAKS



### Dr Debojoyoti Basu Roy

Program Officer (Technology)  
Development Alternatives

“

*Right in the middle of the decade leading to 2030, it is important to see resource efficiency in low carbon building materials as a cornerstone for climate-resilient growth in the Global South. By advancing materials like limestone calcined clay cement (LC3) and other regionally sourced alternatives, we are reducing dependence on high-emission clinker and imported raw materials. In regions where rapid urbanisation is inevitable, resource-efficient construction offers a way to grow sustainably without increasing the carbon footprint. To me, every effort toward improving material efficiency represents a step towards constructing a green business economy where it is profitable for industries in reducing extraction pressures, conserving energy, and empowering local resources to lead the global shift toward low carbon development. Resource efficiency is not just a technical strategy; it is a practical imperative for a sustainable future.*

”



## IMPACT

- 517 fly ash brick enterprises surveyed, geotagged, and integrated into a GIS-based dashboard under low carbon pathways for the industrial sector in Bihar.
- Over 100 industries surveyed, geotagged, and GHG inventorisation carried out for key industries like Calcined Petroleum Coke, Soft Coke, Distilleries, and coal briquette units across Bihar.
- 0.36 MMT CO<sub>2</sub> saved.
- 9,600 MT of CO<sub>2</sub> saved through ponded bricks technology in Muzaffarpur, Bihar.
- Successfully operationalised 8 solar mini grids across Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand, entirely managed by women collectives under the

Green Energy initiative. These decentralised systems are now powering 200+ rural enterprises, which previously had no electricity or relied on costly, polluting diesel generators, unlocking cleaner, reliable energy access and placing women at the forefront of India's energy transition.

- 2 circularity solutions developed and demonstrated in 3 states (Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh).
- Policy and market shifts influenced at national and sub-national levels in 2 states (OD, MH) to improve the liveability and environmental performance of 15,000 affordable homes

## WAY FORWARD

Looking ahead, Development Alternatives will focus on deepening and scaling circular economy solutions that simultaneously address environmental sustainability and inclusive development. The organisation aims to expand integrated, community-led waste management systems and strengthen women-led enterprises that turn waste into resources. Efforts will also concentrate on mainstreaming green and affordable housing by promoting low-carbon materials such as LC<sub>3</sub> and fly ash bricks, while supporting state and national governments in shaping enabling policies and markets. Greater emphasis will be placed on circular water use, rejuvenation of local water bodies, and equipping urban local bodies with strategies for air quality management.

At the same time, decentralised clean energy systems like women-managed solar mini grids will be replicated to power rural enterprises and enhance local livelihoods. By piloting innovative circularity models, building digital tools for monitoring and scaling, and fostering supportive ecosystems for adoption, Development Alternatives will continue to drive a transition towards low-carbon, resource-efficient production and consumption systems that minimise ecological footprints while creating sustainable wealth for communities.



## CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

## Overview

India stands at a critical crossroads: its ecological wealth and human development ambitions are being tested by the accelerating impacts of climate change. From recurrent flash floods in Himachal Pradesh to prolonged droughts in Bundelkhand, the country's varied geography renders each region uniquely vulnerable. Rising temperatures, erratic monsoons, depleting groundwater and shrinking forest cover are not merely environmental concerns—they directly threaten food security, public health and the stability of rural livelihoods. In this context, building climate resilience is no longer optional; it is essential.

Ecosystem restoration through nature-based solutions, reviving degraded ponds, regenerating forests, restoring soils and protecting biodiversity, offers a pathway that is both adaptive and regenerative. These approaches strengthen natural buffers against climate shocks, secure vital ecosystem services and create opportunities for sustainable economic growth, especially for communities whose survival depends on the land and water around them.



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (2024-25)

**68.71** crore litres of water potential has been successfully created through sustained efforts.

**25,751** farmers have been trained in sustainable and climate-smart agricultural practices.

**12,602** million litres of water have been conserved through multiple field interventions.

**50,000+** individuals have been reached with knowledge on climate-resilient farming and biodiversity.

**342,158** individuals have strengthened their overall resilience capacity through focused initiatives.

**217,612** individuals have gained improved access to basic needs through various partner programs.

**30,702** acres have been cultivated under paddy using climate-resilient and sustainable practices.

**44** community water bodies have been rejuvenated and restored for long-term sustainability.

**1,353** tonnes of waste have been effectively collected, processed, and sustainably managed.

## RESILIENT REALITIES

### Seeds of Change: The Quiet Rural Revolution by Chandrawati Devi



**The Driving Force of Nigai's SHG , Chandrawati Devi of Madhya Pradesh**

In the heart of rural India lies the village of Nigai, where terraced fields shape the rhythm of daily life. Here lives Chandrawati Devi, a mother of four, whose days are a careful balancing of household responsibilities and the labour of tending the land alongside her husband, Bhagwan Singh.

For years Chandrawati's life followed the familiar patterns of subsistence farming: hard work, limited opportunities to dream beyond day-to-day survival, and little scope for economic independence. Then, about a year ago, Development Alternatives (DA), together with partner LIC-HFL, introduced Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the neighbouring village of Dumur under the HRIDAY project, small, safe and empowering spaces where women pool savings, access credit and support each other.

Chandrawati did not just join; she stepped forward to lead. She became the driving force of Nigai's SHG, running monthly meetings, managing savings and guiding discussions on community issues and income-generation. Under DA's guidance, the group began vermicomposting, a simple yet transformative enterprise. In a few months, the women generated 110,000 by converting organic waste into nutrient-rich compost. Encouraged by this success, they diversified into goat farming to broaden their income streams.

Today Chandrawati is the secretary of the Jagrook Self-Help Group. Her responsibilities extend beyond bookkeeping: she steers operations, nurtures ongoing projects and embodies the quiet leadership that transformed her community. She credits the HRIDAY project for the training and support that catalysed change, but the achievement is the community's own. Chandrawati's story reflects the resilience of countless rural Indian women who are reclaiming agency and building secure futures, one savings pool, one compost pile, one goat at a time.

## SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

### Community engagement and ownership

- 50,000+ individuals reached with knowledge on climate-resilient farming, biodiversity and women-focused climate impacts.
- 2,000+ senior citizens engaged under MoSJE, increasing awareness of entitlements.
- 1,500+ individuals trained in WASH practices.
- Water and Sanitation Committees from 20 villages trained to manage water treatment plants sustainably.

### Ecological restoration and climate-resilient farming

- Enhanced water availability for 3,000 hectares by creating 1,500 million litres of surface water potential, benefiting 15,000 households.
- Food security ensured for 7,500 households; incomes for 38,000 households increased by 15-20%.
- 3,700 hectares treated through soil and water conservation practices.
- 44 water conservation structures constructed/rejuvenated, creating 68.71 crore litres of water potential and impacting 1,134 hectares of command area.
- 30,702 acres under paddy with climate-resilient practices, conserving 1,178 crore litres of water.

### Institutionalisation and government convergence

- 25 villages provided access to safe drinking water: 8,380+ individuals (1,583+ households) through nine water treatment plants and linkages with the Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Three Jal Samuhs trained to operate and maintain WTPs.
- Technical support extended to replication sites, including Nepal (watershed) and Patiala (block-level watershed management), drawing on Nalagarh learnings.
- Policy recommendations developed to support adoption of community-led water and pond rejuvenation models.



### Radio Bundelkhand

Radio Bundelkhand (RB) has become a pivotal platform for inclusive climate communication, amplifying the links between climate change and gender. In 2024-25, RB reached 50,000+ individuals with content on climate-resilient farming, biodiversity and women-centred climate impacts. Programming has elevated women's voices, integrated lived experiences into climate dialogue and promoted equitable participation in resilience building.

Collaborations with SMART-UNICEF ensured targeted sanitation and hygiene messaging for women and children, while partnerships with Bundelkhand University are designing a gender-sensitive climate communication module. Across these collaborations, Radio Bundelkhand has woven a strong gender lens into its programming, ensuring that women's perspectives, needs and leadership shape how climate and WASH issues are communicated. Strengthening institutional roles, RB entered a partnership with the Jal Shakti Ministry, deepening its contribution to water and climate action and solidifying its role as a trusted, community-driven communications platform.

## FLAGSHIP INTERVENTIONS

### Natural Resources Management

Alternate solutions emphasise the link between practice and policy with on-ground demonstrations of resilient models for land and water management. The Natural Ecosystem Restoration (NER) Programme is DA's flagship initiative to restore and sustain 50,000 hectares of degraded and climate-stressed ecosystems by 2030. Anchored in partnerships, technology, convergence and strong institutions, NER co-develops solutions with communities to build long-term resilience and harmony with nature.

NER has shifted from short-term, donor-driven interventions to sustainable models that endure beyond project cycles. Community institutions and local governance are central to ownership, maintenance and continuity. This evolution is supported by a diversified donor base, blended finance models and multi-stakeholder partnerships with government agencies, research institutions, the private sector and grassroots organisations.

#### Annual achievement — Access to safe drinking water (25 villages)

8,380+ individuals (1,583+ households) from 25 villages now have access to safe drinking water through nine water treatment plants and linkages with the Jal Jeevan Mission. Approximately 300 school and anganwadi children benefit from water and sanitation facilities.

#### Community-led model

- Three Jal Samuhs trained to operate and maintain WTPs.
- Water and Sanitation Committees from 17 villages trained for long-term sustainability.
- Enhanced drinking water storage through 40 water tanks in Sonebhadra (40,000 litres capacity).
- 1,100+ individuals trained in WASH practices.

#### Knowledge transfer and recognition

- Special recognition award for clean drinking water in Nalagarh (HUL Prabhat).
- SOP for a community-led drinking water model developed.

#### Convergence for scale and replication

- Nalagarh project provided technical lessons for WTP set-up and replication.
- Technical support opportunities emerged for partners replicating LOCO models (LIC-HFL).

*The programme operates through thematic components: biodiversity conservation, watershed management, community institutions, and climate communication. Initiatives such as Harit Bundelkhand (with IORA Ecological Solutions) aim to transform Bundelkhand into a green economy hub by transitioning 1 million hectares into productive, carbon-negative systems, generating 50,000 green jobs and improving livelihoods for 3 million people. Tools such as Jal Chaupal, Pani ki Pathshala and Pond Health Scorecards, combined with community radio and citizen science, ensure restoration is technically robust and socially rooted.*



### Climate adaptation and resilience

The Climate Adaptation and Resilience programme leverages climate communication and citizen science to empower communities with nature-based solutions. In 2024-25, the programme:

- Reached 50,000+ individuals with knowledge on climate-resilient farming, biodiversity and gendered climate impacts.
- Engaged 2,000+ senior citizens under MoSJE to raise awareness of entitlements.
- Disseminated sanitation and hygiene messages through SMART-UNICEF.
- Trained 1,100+ individuals in WASH practices.

*By blending folk culture, workshops and media formats, jingles, podcasts and narrowcasts, the programme strengthens climate dialogue and advances inclusive community resilience. Annual initiatives such as Bundeli Idol help revive local culture, promote climate and gender dialogue, and ensure SC/ST and women's representation.*

### Sustainable Agriculture

The Sustainable Agriculture programme connects smallholder farmers with eco-technologies and promotes resilience through the WADI model.

In 2024-25:

44 water conservation structures were constructed or rejuvenated, creating 68.71 crore litres of water potential and enabling 1,200+ farmers to access improved water across 1,134 hectares of command area. 30,702 acres cultivated under paddy, conserving 1,178 crore litres of water. 4,420 acres under horticulture.

25,751 farmers trained in integrated WADI and paddy farming techniques. Partnerships with HUL, SIPL and Lubrizol helped scale innovations from ponds to policy.

## WAY FORWARD

The Development Action Domain (DAD) will scale proven models from pilot villages to block and cluster levels, to achieve impact at scale across water, agriculture, waste and climate communication. Targets for FY 2025-26 include:

- Construction or rejuvenation of 150 water conservation structures.
- Restoration of 3,700 hectares of land.
- Provision of clean drinking water access in 15 villages, directly reaching 1,500 families.
- Expansion of WADI-based and paddy farming interventions, and training over 25,000 farmers in climate-resilient practices.

Deepening community ownership remains central: strengthening Jal Samuhs, Panchayats and farmer groups will ensure long-term sustainability. Tools such as Jal Chaupal and Pond Health Scorecards will support transparent, community-led monitoring. On the science-policy interface, DAD will leverage satellite monitoring and low-cost water conservation models to influence government missions. Partnerships with ministries, academic institutions and technical agencies will enable scale. Communication investments - including Radio Bundelkhand- will continue to amplify women's leadership, youth participation and citizen science, while new collaborations with funders and technical partners will secure resources for sustained resilience.

## DA SPEAKS



**Aakriti Uttam**  
Programme Officer  
Capacity Building and Livelihoods,  
Development Alternatives Group

“

*Building climate resilience and restoring ecosystems is no longer just about the environment — it is about securing livelihoods, dignity and harmony with nature. At the heart of our work lies co-creating solutions with communities, fostering partnerships and scaling technologies, all toward a future where healthier landscapes and stronger communities thrive together.*

”



## IMPACT

Over the past year, the Development Action Domain has strengthened people and ecosystems through integrated interventions in water, land, livelihoods and climate communication. Pond and water-structure restoration revived local water availability and reduced farming communities' vulnerability to erratic rainfall. Sustainable agriculture practices have begun converting degraded land into productive fields, improving both food security and ecological balance. Inclusive livelihood initiatives have enabled women to build enterprises and strengthen household incomes. Access to safe drinking water improved health outcomes and reduced the burden of water collection, disproportionately borne by women. Knowledge and awareness campaigns, delivered through citizen science, capacity building and community radio, equipped communities with practical adaptation tools. Together, these efforts demonstrate how community-led action drives lasting impact.

## KEY METRICS

**1,134** hectares of command area now have enhanced water availability.

**12,425** hectares restored through sustainable agriculture & land development interventions.

**44** water conservation structures restored.

**1,583+** families received direct access to clean drinking water.

**4,990** women (98% of 5,092) benefiting from enterprise models established.

**50,000+** individuals equipped with knowledge on climate-resilient practices.



# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS 2024-25

## TARAGRAM YATRA 2024: INVESTING IN LOCAL AND GREEN

In December 2024, Development Alternatives (DA) hosted the annual TARAGram Yatra around the central theme "Investing in Local and Green." The Yatra brought together policymakers, development practitioners, researchers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders to deliberate on how investments in local economies and green innovations can accelerate India's transition towards sustainability and resilience.



Yatris in action during the Climate Yatra under the TARAGram Yatra 2024 in Orchha, MP

Over the course of the multi-day event, participants engaged in immersion visits across DA's innovation sites, witnessing first-hand how local solutions are driving transformation on the ground. From climate-resilient agriculture and green enterprise development to sustainable construction and decentralised renewable energy, the field engagements demonstrated that when communities are empowered to innovate, they can lead the way in creating low-carbon and inclusive futures.

Plenary sessions and roundtable discussions further enriched these experiences, offering insights into how policy frameworks, finance mechanisms, and institutional collaborations can support such grassroots innovations at scale. The Yatra also provided a rare opportunity for dialogue between government representatives, civil society organisations, and the private sector, fostering a shared understanding that investing in the local and green is not merely an environmental imperative but an economic one.

The discussions underscored the urgency of rethinking development models—placing people, nature, and



A successful Nadi Kinare Chaupai took place with our Yatris on the 3rd Day of TARAGram Yatra 2024 in Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh

local enterprises at the centre of decision-making. The Yatra concluded with a renewed call to channel financial, institutional, and social capital towards strengthening community-led green transitions.

TARAGram Yatra 2024 reaffirmed DA's conviction that true transformation begins where innovation meets inclusion—at the grassroots. The insights and partnerships forged during the Yatra continue to guide DA's efforts to scale sustainable livelihoods, restore ecosystems, and shape resilient local economies across India.

## GOYN GLOBAL CONVENING 2024, DIALOGUES ON DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT (DoDM 2024)

On 20th and 21st November 2024, our CEO Shrashtant Patara was invited to speak at two important panels at GOYN Global Convening 2024 and Dialogues on Development Management (DoDM 2024). At GOYN's panel discussion on "When Jobs Do Not Exist - Building Demand for Labour" he shared insights from DA's work focused on job creation by co-creating local entrepreneurship ecosystems and at DoDM 2024, hosted by the Indian School of Development Management, he shed light on "Resilience through Collaboration" during the panel discussion on "Cultivating a Resilient Growth Culture."



### Sustainable Environment Award at the Social Impact Conference & Awards (SICA)

Development Alternatives has been honored with the Sustainable Environment Award at the Social Impact Conference & Awards (SICA) 2024. This recognition is for our work under the "Hamare Talaab, Hamaari Pehchaan" program, which focuses on the rejuvenation of 91 ponds across three states: Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh.



The award is a testament to our unwavering commitment to environmental innovation and creating impactful solutions. Together, we are shaping a future where both people and the planet can thrive.

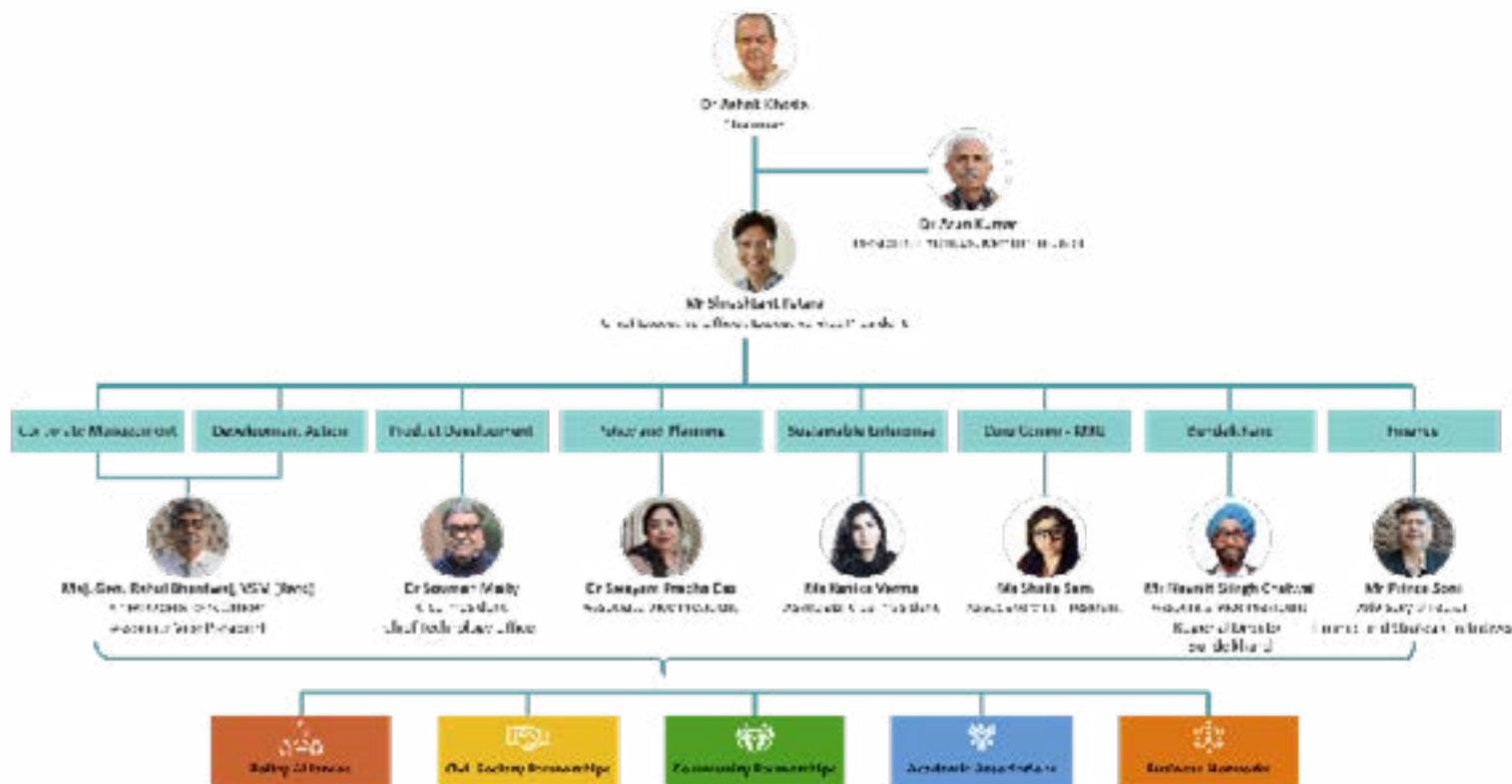
### Special Recognition Award by HUL Prabhat : Drinking Water in Nalagarh

Development Alternatives has been honored with the Special Recognition Award by HUL Prabhat for its initiative in transforming drinking water in Nalagarh on 18th December, 2024. Through the Prakriti

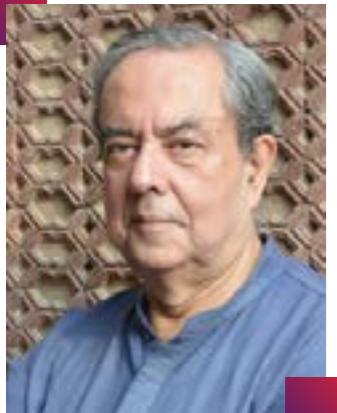


Project, DA addressed and tackled water contamination in Nikoowal and Rakhramp Singh villages, where high TDS, chloride, and nitrate levels caused severe health issues. Using Nano-filtration technology, DA established a customized water filter plant, now providing clean and safe drinking water to both villages.

### DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES GROUP 2024-25

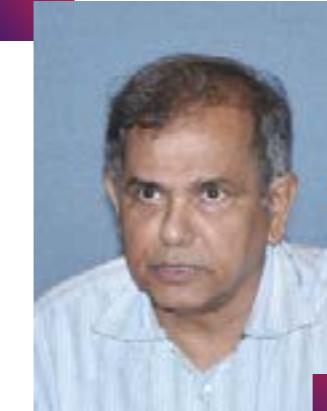


# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Dr Ashok Khosla**  
Chairman, Development Alternatives

For nearly five decades, Dr Ashok Khosla has been a pioneer in finding paths for development whose benefits reach everyone and can be sustained by the Earth's resources. He has been Co-Chair of the UN's International Resource Panel, President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and President of the Club of Rome. He was a member of the Government of India's National Security Advisory Board and Scientific Advisory Council to the Cabinet. For his contribution, he was awarded the OBE by the UK Government, the UN Sasakawa Environment Prize, and the Zayed International Environment Prize, among others.



**Prof. Amitabh Kundu**  
Professor of Economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Distinguished Fellow at Research and Information System for Developing Countries, he chairs the Standing Committee for the National Survey for the Swatch Bharat Mission at the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. He has chaired Committees on Housing Start up Index at RBI and Committee to Estimate Shortage of Affordable Housing, and Post Sachar Evaluation Committee, Govt of India. He has been Regional Advisor on Poverty at the UN, Professor and Dean at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, and a member of National Statistical Commission, Govt of India. He was the Director at the National Institute of Urban Affairs, Indian Council of Social Science Research, and Gujarat Institute of Development Research.

**Mr Lalit Mansingh**  
Former Foreign Secretary, International Relations

A former Indian Diplomat, Mansingh has more than 40 years of extensive international experience across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. He is also a former foreign secretary. He has served as the Indian Ambassador to the United States and the United Arab Emirates and as India's high commissioner to the United Kingdom and Nigeria. Mansingh has dedicated his career to promoting India and its role in the global marketplace. He is also the chairman of Kalinga International Foundation, a national think tank focusing on India's relations with Indo-Pacific.



**Ms Gita Sidhartha**  
Former Chairperson, Indian Council for Child Welfare

As President and Secretary General of the Indian Council for Child Welfare for nearly 30 years, she has implemented programmes that cover a gamut of concerns in every state of India. She has overseen and promoted programmes covering street and working children, child labour, children of sex workers, malnutrition, among others. She has played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of children and articulated plans for their welfare and development.



**Prof. Ravinder Kaur**  
Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

She serves as a Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Her core specialisation includes Sociological Theory (Classical and Contemporary), Sociology of Gender, Development, Urban Social Systems, Technology and Society, Kinship, Family, and Marriage studies. She has also worked as a consultant for various national and international organisations such as the World Bank, UNDP, and UNFPA.



**Lt Gen. Arun Kumar S**  
Former General Officer Commanding in Chief, Indian Army



A second generation and decorated soldier, he was superannuated as Commander in Chief of an Army Command on India's Western borders. He was a recipient of the Sword of Honour and President's Gold Medal on commissioning, for standing first in order of merit. Over a career spanning 40 years, he has served in most of the active and challenging operational environments in India and abroad. Presently 'pro bono', he is mentoring startups in the domain of cyber, robotics, and AI and steers an environmental policy group, COR - India. He is a Distinguished Fellow with two premier 'think tanks' in Delhi, the USI and CLAWS and on the Board of Governors of the prestigious 'India Foundation'.

**Mr Shrashtant Patara**

Chief Executive Officer, Development Alternatives & Executive Vice President, Development Alternatives Group

Shrashtant Patara is an architect by training. He has been with the Development Alternatives Group since 1988, providing research expertise, management capability, and strategic direction to teams working in the areas of Entrepreneurship Support Systems, Habitat, Renewable Energy and Waste-to-Wealth initiatives. His current work is focussed on systems change, social innovation, and entrepreneurship, resulting in the co-creation of multi-stakeholder-based service delivery models that promote sustainability through local economic development, regeneration of the environment, and greater social equity. Patara is a Fellow of The Rockefeller Foundation's Global Programme on Social Innovation and has completed a programme on Leadership for System Change conducted by Harvard Kennedy School in conjunction with the Schwab Foundation. He has been instrumental in the establishment of several social businesses within the Development Alternatives Group and currently leads the team that is incubating 'TARAurja', a renewable energy-based micro-utility business and the Indian Micro Enterprises Development Foundation.



## COMPLIANCE

### CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE

#### IDENTITY

Society for Development Alternatives is registered as a not-for-profit society under Society registration Act. XXI of 1860 (Reg. No. 12964).

Visit us at the addresses given on the 'contact us' link on our website: [www.devalt.org](http://www.devalt.org)

Society for Development Alternatives is registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (FCRA Reg. No. 231650202).

Name and address of main bankers: Axis Bank Limited, K-12, Green Park, New Delhi - 110 016, India

Name and address of auditors: K G Somani & Co LLP, Delite Cinema, Asaf Ali Road, 3rd Floor, New Delhi - 110002, India

### COMPLIANCE - DA

Development Alternatives was set up in 1982. The Society for Development Alternatives is registered as a not-for-profit society under the Societies Registrations Act. XXI of 1860 (Reg. No. 12964). Also, it is registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (FCRA Reg. No. 231650202).

[Check out more at devalt.org](http://www.devalt.org)

### GOVERNANCE

None of the society for Development Alternatives' Governing Council member are related to each other.

The Governing Council Members met twice in the FY 2024-2025, on 21st February 2025 and 28th March 2025. The minutes of the Governing Council meetings are documented and circulated.

### STAFF DETAILS

(as on 31 March, 2025)

No sitting fee or any other form of compensation has been paid since the inception of the Society of Development Alternatives to any Governing Council Members.

### ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

No sitting fee or any other form of compensation has been paid since the inception of the Society of Development Alternatives to any Governing Council Members.

REGULAR STAFF			
Salary Range (INR)	Male	Female	Total
	33	21	54
<10000	0	0	0
10000 - 25000	8	1	9
250001-50000	8	5	13
50001-1000000	7	10	17
> 1000000	10	5	15

## OUR PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

### NATIONAL & STATE GOVERNMENTS



### ACADEMIA & RESEARCH



### NETWORKS



### INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS



### CIVIL SOCIETY & THINK TANKS



## MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL AGENCIES



## FOUNDATION AND PHILANTHROPIC



## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAA	-	Action Aid Association
CSC	-	Common Service Centre
DA	-	Development Alternatives
DEF	-	Digital Empowerment Foundation
DIU	-	Development Intelligence Unit
EPR	-	Extended Producer's Responsibility
GHG	-	Green House Gases
GPDp	-	Gram Panchayat Development Plan
IMEDF	-	Indian Micro Enterprises Development Foundation
IRMA	-	Institute of Rural Management Anand
IUCN	-	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LC3	-	Limestone Calcined Clay Cement
LGE	-	Local Green Enterprises
LOCO	-	Locally Owned and Community Operated
MSME	-	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NABARD	-	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NbS	-	Nature-based Solutions
NRLM	-	National Rural Livelihood Mission
RSETI	-	Rural Self Employment Training Institutes
RTS	-	Rooftop Solar
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
SFURTI	-	Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries
SMART	-	Seeking Modern Associations for Real Transformation
TARA	-	Technology and Action for Rural Advancement
TRIF	-	Transforming Rural India Foundation
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
W4P	-	Work4Progress
WADI	-	Watershed Development Projects
WWF	-	World Wide Fund
ABNAMRO	-	Algemene Bank Nederland and The Amsterdam and Rotterdam
ACGF	-	ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility
ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
AMC	-	Asset Management Companies
APC	-	Agro-Processing Centre
APMC	-	Agricultural Produce Market Committees
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASI	-	Annual Survey of Industries
ASPIRE	-	A Scheme For Promotion Of Innovation, Rural Industries & Entrepreneurship
APY	-	Atal Pension Yojana
BIA	-	Bihar Industries Association

<b>BSPCB</b> -	Bihar State Pollution Control Board
<b>BSE</b> -	Bombay Stock Exchange
<b>CA</b> -	Commission Agents
<b>CCB</b> -	Central Cooperative Bank
<b>CFA</b> -	Contextual Financial Analysis
<b>CEFIM</b> -	Clean Energy Finance and Investment Mobilization
<b>CFLI</b> -	Climate Finance Leadership Initiative
<b>CGTMSE</b> -	Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises
<b>CII</b> -	Confederation of Indian Industry
<b>CIPHET</b> -	Central Institute of Post Harvest Engineering and Technology
<b>CLCSS</b> -	Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme
<b>CPCB</b> -	Central Pollution Control Board
<b>CSO</b> -	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DFI</b> -	Development Finance Institution
<b>CITUS</b> -	Coir Industry Technology Upgradation Scheme (CITUS)
<b>DOEFCC</b> -	Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
<b>DOI</b> -	Department of Industries
<b>DLTF</b> -	District Level Task Force
<b>DRT</b> -	Debt Recovery Tribunals
<b>DRAT</b> -	Debts Recovery Appellate Tribunal
<b>EDC</b> -	Enterprise Development Centre
<b>ESG</b> -	Environmental, Social and Governance
<b>EP</b> -	Equator Principles
<b>EU</b> -	European Union
<b>FABA</b> -	Fly Ash Brick Association
<b>FCBTKS</b> -	Fixed Chimney Bull's Trench Brick Kilns
<b>FGD</b> -	Focused Group Discussion
<b>FICCI</b> -	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry
<b>GDP</b> -	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEC</b> -	Green Economy Coalition
<b>GOI</b> -	Government of India
<b>HUF</b> -	Hindu Undivided Family
<b>IBEF</b> -	India Brand Equity Foundation
<b>ICAI</b> -	The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
<b>ICT</b> -	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IFC</b> -	International Finance Corporation
<b>ILO</b> -	International Labour Organization
<b>IPSF</b> -	International Platform on Sustainable Finance
<b>IRDAI</b> -	Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority
<b>IREDA</b> -	Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited
<b>ITDC</b> -	India Tourism Development Corporation
<b>KCC</b> -	Kisan Credit Card
<b>KVK</b> -	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
<b>LBI</b> -	Livelihood Business Incubator
<b>LLP</b> -	Limited Liability Partnership
<b>MFI</b> -	Micro Finance Institutions
<b>MOEFCC</b> -	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

<b>NAAS</b> -	National Academy of Agricultural Sciences
<b>NACAS</b> -	National Advisory Committee on Accounting Standards
<b>NAPCC</b> -	National Action Plan on Climate Change
<b>NBFC</b> -	Non-Banking Financial Company
<b>NDUW</b> -	National Database of Unorganized Workers
<b>NGFS</b> -	Network for Greening the Financial System
<b>NGO</b> -	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NGT</b> -	National Green Tribunal
<b>NPA</b> -	Non Performing Assets
<b>NSS</b> -	National Service Scheme
<b>NSSO</b> -	National Sample Survey Office
<b>NSFDC</b> -	National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation
<b>NSE</b> -	National Stock Exchange of India Limited
<b>NSIC</b> -	National Small Industries Corporation
<b>OECD</b> -	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PACS</b> -	Primary Agricultural Credit Society
<b>PAGE</b> -	Partnership for Action on Green Economy
<b>PFRDA</b> -	Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority
<b>PLI</b> -	Production Linked Incentive
<b>PMGSY</b> -	Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
<b>PMJDY</b> -	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
<b>PMSBY</b> -	Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
<b>PRC</b> -	Permanent Resident Certificate
<b>PMEGP</b> -	Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme
<b>PRI</b> -	Principles for Responsible Investment
<b>PV</b> -	Photovoltaics
<b>RDB</b> -	Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy
<b>RDDB</b> -	Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act
<b>RTSOI</b> -	Responsible Tourism Society of India
<b>SARFAESI</b> -	Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act
<b>SCB</b> -	Scheduled Commercial Bank
<b>SEBI</b> -	Securities and Exchange Board of India
<b>SEED</b> -	Supporting Entrepreneurship for Environment and Development
<b>SIDBI</b> -	Small Industries Development Bank of India
<b>SLMC</b> -	State Level Monitoring Committee
<b>SME</b> -	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SRI</b> -	Socially Responsible Investing
<b>SSE</b> -	Sustainable Stock Exchange
<b>TFCI</b> -	Tourism Finance Corporation Of India Limited
<b>TIC</b> -	Training-cum-Incubation Centres
<b>UNWTO</b> -	United Nations World Tourism Organization
<b>UNEP</b> -	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNCTAD</b> -	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>VSBK</b> -	Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln
<b>ZED</b> -	Zero Defect Zero Effect

Society for Development Alternatives  
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Schedule	As at 31 March 2025 ₹	As at 31 March 2024 ₹
<b>Sources of funds</b>			
<b>Funds</b>			
General fund	1	(82,12,437)	(1,70,64,817)
<b>Liabilities and provisions</b>			
Unspent grants, net	2	12,57,17,410	11,26,33,133
Long term borrowings	3	39,20,825	30,22,405
Other Non current liabilities	4	-	12,00,000
Current liabilities	5	5,57,08,899	3,00,26,077
Provisions	6	62,63,365	26,29,458
		<b>18,33,98,062</b>	<b>14,04,46,266</b>
<b>Applications of funds</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	7	83,43,366	98,11,197
Current assets, loans and advances			
Cash and bank balances	8	16,29,65,866	11,85,49,940
Loans and advances	9	1,15,88,830	1,20,85,189
		<b>17,45,54,696</b>	<b>13,06,35,129</b>
		<b>18,33,98,062</b>	<b>14,04,46,266</b>

Summary of significant accounting policies and other

16

explanatory information

The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the financial statements.

As per report of even date

For K G Somani & Co LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
FRN:006591N / NS00377

  
(Bhuvnesh Maheshwari)



For and on behalf of the Society for Development Alternatives

  
Shrashtant Patara  
Chief Executive Officer



  
Amit Chhabra  
GM Finance

Place : New Delhi

Date : 01-11-2025

Society for Development Alternatives

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Schedule	Year ended 31 March 2025 ₹	Year ended 31 March 2024 ₹
<b>Income</b>			
Grant income	2	89,19,93,769	89,09,30,313
Donation	10	3,54,470	1,00,11,075
Other income	11	28,23,619	20,83,735
		<b>89,51,71,858</b>	<b>90,30,04,624</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Grant expenses	2	76,20,21,392	78,76,98,085
Personnel expenses	12	6,26,50,424	4,61,13,844
Finance costs	13	7,13,306	3,07,115
Depreciation	7	9,48,511	10,55,283
General and administrative expenses	14	6,78,41,531	4,54,55,604
		<b>89,47,75,364</b>	<b>88,06,29,931</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) before exceptional items</b>		<b>3,96,494</b>	<b>2,23,74,693</b>
Add/(Less) : Exceptional items	15	84,55,886	18,00,000
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year transferred to general fund</b>		<b>88,52,380</b>	<b>2,41,74,693</b>

Summary of significant accounting policies and

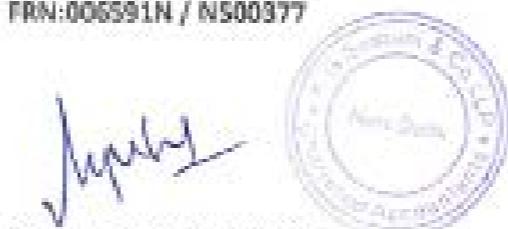
16

other explanatory information

The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the financial statements.

As per report of even date

For K G Somani & Co LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
FRN:006591N / NS00377

  
(Bhuvnesh Maheshwari)



For and on behalf of the Society for Development Alternatives

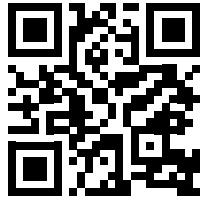
  
Shrashtant Patara  
Chief Executive Officer



  
Amit Chhabra  
GM Finance

Place : New Delhi

Date : 01-11-2025



## TO CONTACT US, CONNECT AT

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