

## South Asia Regional Programme

Our work in South Asia is currently focused in India and Bangladesh.



Traidcraft has been trading with producer groups in the region for over 30 years and we began implementing development projects in India in 1995. We have offices in Dhaka (Bangladesh) and Hyderabad (India).

### Why do we work in South Asia?

South Asia is one of the fastest growing regions in the world but millions still live in extreme poverty. The region is home to over half the world's poor – that's more than 400 million people - the largest concentration of poverty on the planet.

Over the last decade, South Asia has seen strong economic growth. However at the same time there has been a rise in inequality in the region. Uneven growth within countries has resulted in large sections of the population (particularly poor, rural communities) being excluded from the benefits of growth.

### Some facts:

- Average life expectancy in India is just 64 years of age (67 in Bangladesh)
- In Bangladesh nearly half the population (49.6%) is struggling to survive on less than \$1.25 (roughly 75p) a day
- In India 69 children out of every 1,000 don't live to see their 5th birthday
- In both countries 12-13% of children aged 5 to 14 are involved in child labour
- In Bangladesh only 17% of people are educated to secondary level or above (22% in India)
- Over 20% of the population in both countries is under nourished

(Source UN Human Development Report 2010)

### Our focus in the region

In Bangladesh our efforts are focused on supporting marginalised households through work in the sustainable agriculture, jute, tea, fair trade and handicraft sectors. Helping producers to adapt and cope with climate change is an important aspect of all projects in the country. Other cross-cutting themes include appropriate technology, fairer trade practices, gender equality and policy change.

In India cotton and tea are priority areas, in particular playing a bigger influencing role in bringing stakeholders together to facilitate far-reaching changes in the sectors. In Nov 2011 we completed a scoping study in North India where poverty rates are high and social indicators low. This will be the focus of our work going forward, and we are exploring various opportunities to work in the textiles, jute and honey sectors. Across all our projects in the country we will work on cross-cutting themes including fair trade, climate change, gender, sustainable agriculture, and reducing vulnerabilities.

Meet some of our South Asia [project beneficiaries](#).



#### [A Fighting Chance](#)

This three-year project seeks to tackle the problem of child labour in the Indian home-based craft sector.



#### [EqualiTEA](#)

This five-year project aims to improve the livelihoods of 51,000 small tea growers in Bangladesh and India.



#### [Golden Fibre, Bangladesh](#)

This five-year project aims to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of poor jute growers in two of the poorest districts of Bangladesh.



#### [Jute: an eco-friendly alternative for a sustainable future](#)

This four-year project will reduce poverty in Bangladesh and India by encouraging a switch to more environmentally sustainable practices in the jute industry.



#### [Shop For Change, India](#)

This ongoing project is supporting the development of a fair trade market in India. With a rapidly growing middle class, this will offer a huge opportunity to poor producers in India.



#### [Sustainable Livelihoods for Poor Producers in Northern Bangladesh \(SLIPP\)](#)

This five-year project is reducing poverty among poor and marginalised communities in two poor districts of northern Bangladesh (Mymensingh and Netrokona) by increasing income and employment opportunities.



#### [Sustainable Livelihoods through Small-scale Agriculture \(Bangladesh\)](#)

This new three-year project will ensure sustainable livelihoods for disadvantaged communities in two poor districts of northern Bangladesh (Mymensingh and Sherpur), through improvements to small-scale agriculture.



#### [Sustainable Textiles for Sustainable Development, India](#)

This four-year project will reduce poverty and improve the quality of life among artisans in the textile industry in Rajasthan, India.