

1/3 of the global poor live in India

42% of Indians live in extreme poverty

Income inequality in India is increasing

60% of Indians depend on agriculture for work

Investing in growth in agriculture is four times more effective at relieving poverty than concentrating on other sectors



In 2008, severe crop losses hit India

Without a means to preserve their crops, many farmers committed suicide in the face of huge debts and the impending loss of their land

BACKGROUND

Potatoes may seem common enough to us, but for the 456 million Indians living in extreme poverty, they mean everything. Many farmers mortgage their land to pay for their crops, and a bad harvest can devastate entire communities.

In the potato growing belt of India, farmers have only a month to sell their potato harvest before the high heat and humidity cause the produce to spoil. Farmers who depend on potatoes for their income are forced to sell off their harvest at such low prices that they can barely manage subsistence living, nowhere near enough to pull their families out of poverty.

IMPACT

CTI's program in West Bengal demonstrates how simple post-harvest agricultural technologies can dramatically improve the livelihood of people in struggling rural communities. Farmers who use the CTI cool storage shed have seen the shelf life of their potatoes increase by five months. As a result, farmers who sell their potatoes off-season can sell their produce at a 300% market value increase. Additionally, families who use CTI equipment to process their potatoes into dried snacks are learning a new trade, diversifying their agricultural yield, and finding new opportunities for economic development.

SOLUTIONS

CTI volunteers Bibek and Purnima Ray work in a village in West Bengal several months out of every year, and during this time, they help farmers and families make a decent living from their potato harvest.

To extend the shelf life of the potatoes, CTI has developed and funded the construction of cool storage sheds made from local materials and built by farmers.

In addition, the Rays set up a public CTI facility where families can process their potatoes after harvest. Equipped with CTI peelers and slicers, families use the facility to process their potatoes into higher-value sun-dried potato snacks.

For nearly 30 years, nonprofit **Compatible Technology International (CTI)** has been helping people in developing countries pull themselves out of extreme poverty and hunger. By designing and distributing life-saving food and water devices, CTI provides the world's poorest populations with the tools they need to feed and support themselves.