Theory of Change Document

trustea sustainable tea foundation

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trustea is an Indian sustainability code and verification system for the tea sector. The Code is working with smallholder tea growers (STGs), bought leaf factories (BLFs), estates and packers to address some of the key challenges in the industry including working conditions, health and safety of tea workers, water pollution, food safety, soil erosion and contamination.

The code enables producers, buyers and others involved in Indian tea businesses to obtain tea that has been produced according to agreed, credible, transparent and measurable criteria. *trustea* has the following mission and vision.

trustea's Mission:

To sustainably transform the Indian tea industry for the benefit of consumers, workers, farmers and the environment, by:

- *Verifying tea producers against a world class sustainability code of conduct.*

- *Working with tea industry to address key sustainability challenges such as food safety, stagnating yields, pest and disease control, living wages, worker welfare and equality, preservation of bio-diversity and improvement of livelihood of smallholders.*

trustea's Vision:

Indian tea industry provides high quality and safe tea for consumers, good livelihoods for producers, workers and their families, whilst at all times caring for the natural environment.

Trustea is a not-for-profit, registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act. Its secretariat is located in Kolkata.

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Purpose of the Theory of Change

This is a narrative description of *trustea's* Theory of Change (ToC). It presents the pathway for *trustea* to achieve its sustainability goal. The TOC has been developed by *trustea* through stakeholder consultations.

trustea will be looking for ways to strengthen this engagement in the future, and all stakeholders are invited to comment and contribute to all parts and aspects of the Theory of Change at any time, and can contact *trustea* at support@trustea.org

The TOC represents the various 'activities' of *trustea* that are intended to achieve certain 'outputs'. The outputs achieved are likely to result in the broader 'outcomes' which will lead to the 'impact' on Environment, Society and Economy that *trustea* envisages. These impacts will eventually enable *trustea* to achieve its overarching goal of having…

An Indian tea industry providing high quality and safe tea to consumers, good livelihoods for producers, workers and their families, whilst at all times caring for the natural environment.

To achieve this goal *trustea* will be working with various stakeholders. The key activities, outputs, outcomes and impact envisioned by *trustea* are discussed in this document.

trustea will be regularly monitoring its activities, outputs and outcomes and periodically evaluating its impacts.

The measurements will be done through a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation framework, using objectively verifiable and measurable indicators. Any deviation in the activities or the intended outputs will be monitored, and the required course correction will be done. The M&E Framework of *trustea's* TOC, defines these indicators.

The M&E framework also lays down policies and processes to be followed for monitoring and for conducting evaluations.

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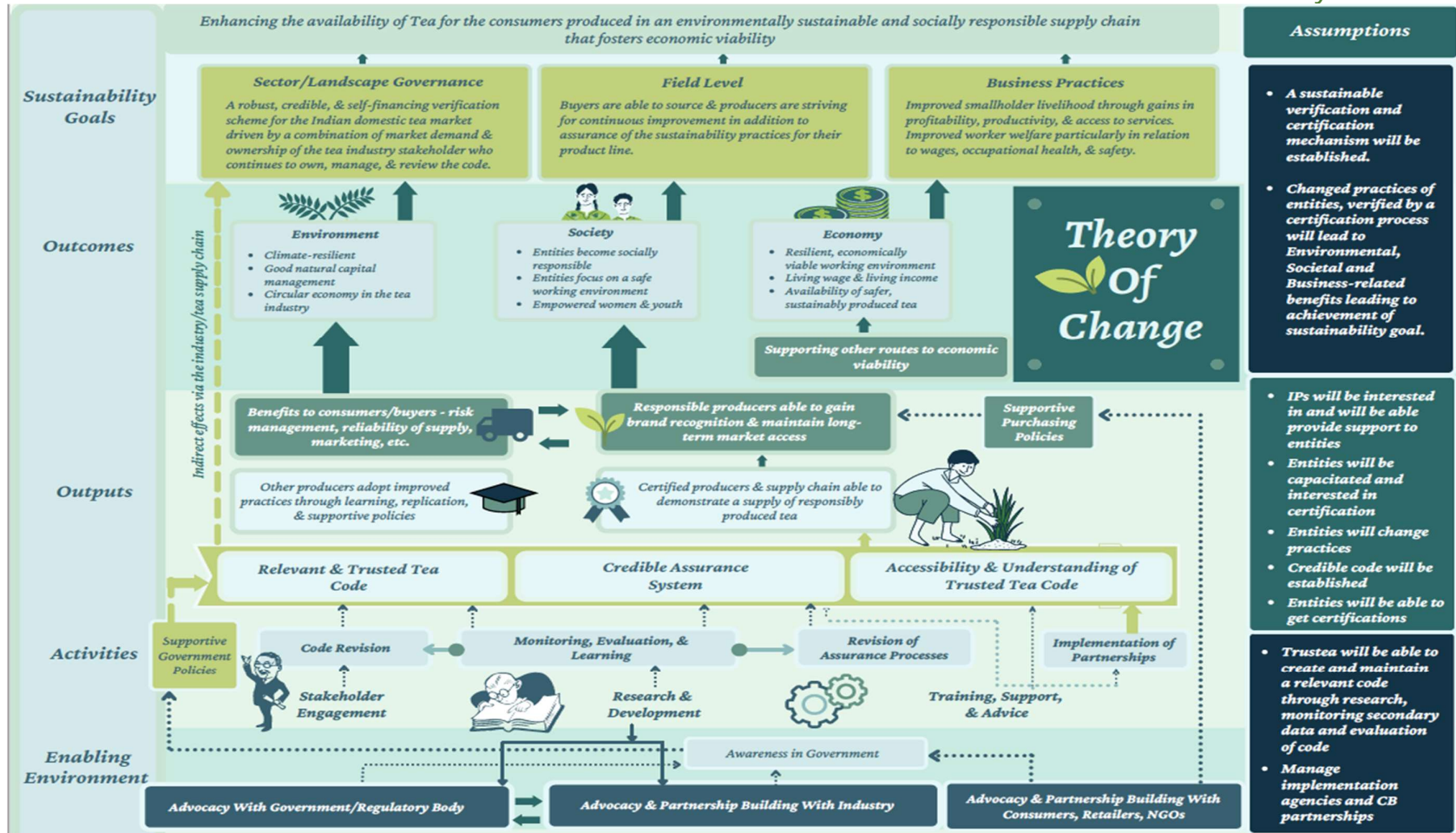**Kolkata - 700026**
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trustea's Theory of Change

1   Activities of *trustea*

Activities ➤ Outputs ➤ Outcomes ➤ Impacts

Following will be the key activities of *trustea.*

1. **Code revision**
   trustea has developed a sustainability code for the tea industry. One of the important activities of *trustea* will be to ensure that the code remains relevant for the industry with the changing times and is able to capture and address emerging risks towards sustainability. The code cannot remain static and must evolve along with any major change in government policies, industry practices, growth of industry etc. To check the relevance of the code the, *trustea* will be annually reviewing the code.

2. **Revision of assurance process**
   While certification bodies will be conducting the audit and awarding certification. *trustea* has to ensure the compliance and adherence to the code by the certified entities, during the certification validity period.

   The assurance process must also ensure that CBs are performing properly, and the certifications are being done as per the laid-out process with adequate rigour. Thus, *trustea* will be performing the System Assurance Audits (SAA). *Trustea* will not just perform the SAA, but also has to ensure that the SAA process is robust. Therefore, *trustea* will be reviewing the assurance process annually.

3. **Stakeholder engagement**
   Stakeholder engagement will be one of the most critical activities for *trustea.* Stakeholder engagement will help in building awareness about sustainability code, greater adoption of code, receiving feedback from the stakeholders, in capacity building of the entities and in efficient certification and assurance process. The stakeholder engagement for *trustea* will mean engaging with:

   - Entities – Tea Estates, Bought Leaf Factories (BLFs) and STGs,
   - Implementing Partners (IPs)
   - Certification Bodies (CBs)
   - Commercial Partners (CPs)
   - Government agencies – Tea Board, Auction Houses, relevant Ministries
   - Civil Society
   - Other industry level bodies
   - Tea consumers

4. **Research and Development (for code and process improvement)**
   In order to keep the code and the associated processes relevant, *trustea* will have to regularly involve in research and development activities. This will entail engagements with stakeholders and scanning the environment to see the need for change in code or any process.

5. **Monitoring of code and processes**
   Along with Research and Development, any identified changes related to code or process need to be assessed and checked. Post internal evaluation, it has to be then proposed to the

Code committee for deliberation and approval. Thus, relevant *trustea* teams have to internally monitor the need for and assess change in code or process, evaluate different options for any change and then propose it to the Code Committee for approval.

6. **Training support and advice**
   trustea will be playing a role in not just conducting sustainability related verifications and certification but also in enabling entities (STGs, estates and BLFs) to be able to achieve the certification. *trustea* will provide the handholding support to entities to improve their policies, processes and systems to be able to reach the various sustainability benchmarks as defined in the code.

7. **Implementation partnerships**
   Implementation Partners (IPs) will be directly responsible for providing support to entities and ensuring that they are ready for certification. Thus, for *trustea* managing IPs i.e. their selection, training of IPs and overseeing their work will be an important activity.

2   Outputs of *trustea*

Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Impacts

The various activities of *trustea* are likely to result in certain outputs. These include:

1. **Capacitated entities**
   With the training and support provided, it is assumed that the tea industry will have more capacitated entities, that are able to comply with various sustainability indicators.

2. **trustea Certifications**
   With the *trustea's* engagement with stakeholders, trainings and handholding support, it is likely that more entities will be aware of the importance of sustainable tea production, sustainable processing and sustainable handling. Furthermore, with handholding support, more entities will ideally be able to comply with the benchmarks. Hence, it is expected to result in higher number of *trustea* certifications.

3. **Non-member entities adopt improved practices through learning, replication, and supportive policies**
   trustea activities and the growing number of certifications will spread awareness about the code. This is likely to result in non-member entities adopt better practices and to also register and go for certification.

4. **Certified producers and supply chain able to demonstrate supply of responsibly produced tea**
   As entities adopt the code and are certified, they will ideally be able to demonstrate responsibly sourced tea to the buyers. This means that more entities will be able to deal with responsible domestic and international buyers.

5. **Relevant and credible *trustea* Code**
   Various activities of *trustea,* towards ensuring relevance of the code, robustness of the certification and assurance process, should result in a relevant and credible code. A relevant and credible code would be one which is acceptable to the industry, is recognized or

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endorsed by the government, is endorsed by the civil society, by the national and international buyers and the trade bodies.

6. **Credible assurance system**

trustea efforts towards revision of assurance process and conducting assurance exercise is expected to result in a strong assurance process for certifications. A credible assurance process means, adequate number of assurance audits and internal audits are being conducted and appeals of entities are being effectively handled. It also means that those audits must be credibly carried out by approved certification bodies and that the entities have confidence on, and satisfaction with the overall assurance process.

7. **Accessibility and understanding of *trustea* Code**

Sustainability code for the industry will be useful if it is well understood by the stakeholders and is accessible to them. The activities of *trustea* towards stakeholder engagement, trainings and support will ensure that the critical stakeholders which are the 'entities' (STGs, estates and BLFs) understand the meaning and the purpose of the code. They will be able to appreciate its importance and will have access to the certification process. This also means that IPs and the CBs, who are responsible to support entities will also understand the code.

Apart from the industry stakeholders, *trustea* activities will also be able to ensure the awareness about the importance of sustainably sourced tea, among the ultimate users, that is the consumers of tea.

3 Outcomes of *trustea*

Intended Outcomes:

The outputs of the *trustea* activities are expected to result in the sustainability outcomes, which include:

1. Increased commitment towards sustainable practices
2. Improved natural environment
3. Better society and social practices
4. Improved economic conditions

1. **Commitment towards sustainable practices**

As per the TOC, it is assumed that the efforts of *trustea* and certifications should be able to ensure that the certified entities have required commitment, reflected through policies and process, towards sustainability. The entities should have formal Board approved policies towards sustainable practices and mechanisms to ensure those practices.

2. **Environmental outcomes**

It is expected that the *trustea* code and the various outputs therein will ensure that certified entities have resilient climate practices and good natural capital management practices. These environmental outcomes will be reflected in water conservation and soil conservation practices,

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responsible and efficient waste management system, pollution management practices, responsible use of chemical fertilizers among other things.

3. Societal outcomes

On the societal outcomes, it is expected that the certified entities will be acting in a socially responsible manner reflected in their higher level of compliance with rules and regulations, them providing safer working environment to their staff and labour and making efforts towards empowering youth and women.

4. Economic outcomes

The economic outcomes expected are that the certified entities will be able to maximise their productivity and will be able to operate viably. The code will ensure that not just the entities, but growers and staff associated with the entities are able to earn fair wages and can afford decent living with humane living conditions. The *trustea* efforts will ensure that the tea industry is able to make sustainably and responsibly produced tea available to consumers.

Unintended outcomes

Definition: Due to the scope and scale of the trustea program, it is expected that there would be certain unintended outcomes during the implementation. The identification of foreseeable unintended outcomes has been carried out during the design of the TOC and included in the TOC. However, the same can only be evaluated and other unintended outcomes identified, as the program implementation progresses and M& E evaluations are carried out with analysis of the results.

Such outcomes could be both positive as well as negative

Identification:
For unintended outcomes, trustea will adopt the Most Significant Change (MSC) approach for identification of the same as in most cases it is not possible to monitor this with indicators.
This exercise will be part of the M&E activities once in every two years after the implementation of the M&E program.

Reporting: The evaluation of these and the corrective actions, any, for the negative unintended outcomes will be a part of the M&E report to the stakeholders. Based on the feedback and discussions an action plan, including any necessary changes to the TOC, will be formulated if the negative unintended outcomes are found to be significant in nature.

Unintended positive outcomes:

	Activity	Intended outcome	Unintended likely positive outcome
1.	Training of women on what constitutes workplace sexual harassment and rights of redressal at the workplace as per the legal provisions of the **Sexual Harassment**	A safe workplace with women employees fully aware of rights and redressal on sexual harassment and management fulfillment of accountability	Reduction of sexual harassment and violence against women in the domestic space due to the knowledge imparted at the workplace on awareness, redressal methodology and overall empowerment.

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	of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. (POSH Act)		
2.	Enforcement of prohibition on employment of children below 14 years of age in tea gardens	Legal compliance and protection of children below 12 years of age.	Increase in literacy level and school attendance improvement as children below 12 will not have to drop out of school due to pressure from parents
3.	Training of small tea growers on sustainable agricultural practices in tea	Tea farming to be done in a sustainable way	The farmer adopts sustainable farming in all his agricultural activities other than tea.
4	Reduction of application of synthetic agrochemicals	Improvement of soil quality	Development of local entrepreneurs in the field of organic fertilisers and pest control formulations.
5.	Payment of legally mandated wages by verified factories and gardens.	Protection of workers' rights in verified entities	Neighbouring unverified entities are forced to pay higher wages to ensure the availability of labour.

Unintended Negative Impact:

1. Deforestation - which causes limited expansion of the tea garden resulting in restricted income sources and affecting overall profitability.
2. Enforcing legally approved chemicals for tea - resulting in increasing costs for the producer.
3. Restricting child labour - leads to a reduction in household income.
4. Restriction on overtime work - reduces income for the workers.

Unintended outcomes will also be measured during monitoring and evaluation exercises.

4   Impact of *trustea*

Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Impacts

trustea envisages the following impact of its sustainability code resulting from the various outcomes as discussed above.

1. **Sector/ Landscape Governance – *Establishment of a mechanism to ensure sustainable tea production***
   trustea's overall efforts through the pathway of activity, outputs and outcomes are likely to result in a robust, credible and self-financing verification scheme for the Indian domestic tea market. It will be driven by a combination of market demand and ownership of the tea industry stakeholders who will continue to own, manage and review the code.

2. **Business Practices –** *Better and sustainable business practices*
The code and the certification will lead to buyers being able to source responsibly and sustainably produced tea. The producers on the other hand will be continuously striving for improvement in sustainability practices for their product lines.

3. **Field Level –** *Better quality of life and livelihood for the stakeholders*
The code and certification process will lead to improved livelihoods and living conditions for tea growers, higher productivity and access to services. The code will ensure better working conditions, fair wages and better occupational health and safety.

Assumptions

The TOC is based on assumptions that every activity carried out will lead to certain outputs. Achievement of these outputs will ultimately help in achieving the outcomes. The outcomes will eventually result in high level impacts and therefore achievement of the sustainability goal.

Thus, entire TOC is based on this framework of assumptions. This underscores the importance of testing these assumptions independently, objectively and rigorously. This is the key role of Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Log framework has been prepared along with this TOC, which provides a detailed list of objective indicators along with assumptions for each level of activity, output, outcome and impact. The M&E function will measure the results using these indicators and test these assumptions and provide recommendations periodically for improvement and course corrections.

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trustea believes that its cause toward sustainable tea industry will be supported by advocacy within the industry, as well as with the government and regulatory bodies. These can lead to policies that can support, accessibility to the Code to producers and traders, and ensure a strong market for certified tea.

The effectiveness of the ToC will also be supported by *trustea's* sound governance, strong management and operational processes, usage of technology and financially viable operations. Technology will help in ensuring a sound and credible code management and verification system. *trustea's* technology platform will also help in tracing the verified tea through the value chain right up to its origin.

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