

Social Report

“‘No one’, said Mahatma Gandhiji, ‘is free, until everyone, regardless of caste, and creed, is rid of not only discrimination, but also deprivation’. On this 150th Birth Anniversary of the Father of Nation, we reaffirm our pledge to inclusive growth.

As inclusive growth is our overall vision, we feel it is worthwhile to link our community engagement with the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs).

We have set expectations in line with these goals. The SDGs, are a bold universal agreement, to end poverty, every which way. Its laudable vision, is also to craft an equal, fair and secure world for people, the planet, and prosperity, by 2030. These, were adopted by 193 member states, at the UN General Assembly Summit. The SDGs, came into effect, on 1st January 2016.

The SDGs outlines 17 clear goals, all of which are universally relevant. They have also given 169 targets, specific to the different goals. Our Government, has accepted the goals, and based the structure, and focus of our nation’s social investment, on the SDG goals as well.

India has made huge strides. Poverty, in India is down to 21%, according to the Government estimates. In a highly laudatory article on India recently in the New York Times, it mentioned that “A booming economy is lifting 40 million, out of poverty and is expected to have the majority of its population in the middle-class, already equal to the entire US population, 2025”

As a point in reference, let’s take the year 1947, when we became an independent country. In 1947, life expectancy was 32 years. Today, it is nearly 69 years. Infant mortality, is down from 161, for every thousand births, to 40 now. Access to quality maternal health services, has more than tripled as have institutional deliveries, which now stand at over 80% according to the WHO Report. The overall death rate, which was at 25.5 per thousand, has fallen to 7 per thousand. So, we see a phenomenal improvement.

Even as the struggle for equality, for dignity and for raising the quality of life of, each and every person in 1.2 billion cohort is still on, every effort is being made to mitigate this issue. The Government, has done enormous work and continues to focus on poverty alleviation but we have to do more. Fortunately, social investment, is gaining traction. There is the eco system of investors, entrepreneurs, and enablers, all of whom are significantly engaged, in social impact initiatives. India, is in the midst, of a historic transformation. There is the promise, of the end to poverty by 2022. A decent roof, over every individual’s head, and a life of dignity, through sustainable livelihood.

Pursuing the SDGs, I strongly believe is, one of the ways to fast forward inclusive growth, and our social progress. In this context, I am very pleased to share with you, that in our CSR engagement, we are totally in sync with the first 8 goals. The remaining 9 goals pertain to sustainability, responsible industrialization and geopolitical issues. On sustainable development, climate change, ecosystems, among others, our Group is in line with them”

Rajashree Birla
Chairperson

Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development

On Track With SDGs

Our community engagement in our five focus areas viz. education, healthcare, sustainable livelihood, infrastructure development and social reform, have been linked with the key nine **SDGs**. A number of SDGs flow into each other and hence have been clubbed. For instance, SDG-1, which is to end poverty is an overarching goal that connects to all the other goals. Collectively our programmes aim at this very objective.

We are spread across 7 States, spanning 297 villages, reaching out to 10.24 lakh people. Over decades of unrelentingly battling with poverty, in collaboration with the District Authorities and leveraging Government Schemes, collectively we have been able to lift the burden of poverty from the shoulders of nearly 80% of the people. With Government initiatives, in full throttle, it should seem possible, to cut the poverty levels even further in the ensuing years.

The **second SDG**, is to end hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Hunger issues are inextricably linked with poverty alleviation where water and agriculture play a major part. In the villages where we work, the malnutrition rate is minimal, in the range of approximately 4% to 5%. We have set for ourselves the target to lower it to 1% to 2% in the next 2-3 years, through our projects and taking Government Schemes forward as catalysts.

Water positivity, within the fence and beyond, is one of the most important tasks before us. It includes water conservation, and water harvesting structures. Water is the lifeline for agriculture. The farm based interventions, farmer training programmes, farmer producer groups, improved agriculture techniques, and animal husbandry management, take us close to the goal, of sustainable agriculture.

Our farmer meetings aimed at knowledge sharing on farm related activities, boosting agriculture and horticulture and training programmes that profess the best-in-class agricultural practices and mechanism, have touched the lives of over 6,059 farmers.

Furthermore, farmers from Veraval and Rehla were taken for field visits to the Krishi Vigyan Kendras in Gujarat and Jharkhand to attune them to the latest cropping patterns, which they can apply to their field. Small farmers are helped through exposure to demonstration plots in waste lands where the farming inputs are minimal.

We maintain 100 biogas plants at Nagda and Rehla and sponsor plantations alongside roads, wastelands and farm boundaries in support of the green movement.

This year 26,932 animals were immunized in veterinary camps and a large number were artificially inseminated for better breed. This has raised the milk output and consequently there has been a surge in the income of the farmers. BAIF have been our project partner in the cattle breeding project. Over 7,800 cattle owners have been the beneficiaries.

The **third SDG**, pertains to ensuring, healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, at all ages. Here what we do is indeed impressive. Nearly 6 lakh people across our units, have been the beneficiaries of our projects.

In over 1,160 rural medical and awareness camps, 91,105 people were examined. Health check-ups were conducted for ailments such as malaria, diarrhoea, diabetes, hepatitis, arthritis, skin diseases, gynecological disorders and cardiac related issues. Our rural mobile medical van services complemented these efforts.

One of the major concern issues is that even where we are working more than 70% of women, including adolescent girls are anemic. In the near future, our aim is to bring it down to less than 20%, with the support of the District Authorities.

Splendid patient care is accorded at our Company's 6 hospitals located at Kharach and Veraval in Gujarat, SFD Nagda (M.P.), Rehla (Jharkhand), Harihar (Karnataka). More than 2,81,323 patients were treated.

At mega eye camps, we treated 11,538 people, performed 1,933 intraocular operations.

Dental check-up camps and health check-up camp are carried out regularly in schools at our units. These included Kharach and Veraval in Gujarat. Our teams examined 4,797 students on their dental hygiene and treatment. At the same time, they underwent eye check-ups as well.

In collaboration with the District Health Department, our mother and child healthcare project served 6,748 women (antenatal, post-natal care, mass immunization, nutrition and escort services for institutional delivery). Over 87,537 children were immunized against polio, BCG, DPT and Hepatitis-B across the Company's Units.

Our intensive motivational drive towards responsible family raising led to 713 villagers opting for planned families.

At blood donation camps, we garnered 251 donors in Ganjam (Orissa), Rishra (W.B.). Several of our company colleagues were among the donors.

Furthermore, we organised the "Swachhata Hi Seva" week at Kharach, Nagda, (SFD & Chemical) Harihar, Malanpur, Veraval, Jagdishpur and Halol. Our objective was to promote hygienic habits. Over 400 awareness programmes were conducted on sanitation. We involved villagers in constructing sanitation blocks through sweat equity. We distributed sanitation kits, dustbins and an innovative game based on the Snakes & Ladder concept. Over 44,770 people were involved.

De-Addiction and Health awareness camps, and thalassemia testing camps were held at Harihar, Vilayat, Veraval, Renukoot, Ganjam and Jagdishpur. These benefitted 4,081 people.

We organised HIV/AIDS awareness and On Spot testing at SFD Nagda, Veraval, Malanpur, Rehla and Rishra reaching out to 6,314 beneficiaries. Artificial limb placement camps at Jagdishpur and Veraval enabled 1,069 people get back on their feet.

Under the Leprosy treatment programme, we reached out to 97 patients at Jagdishpur and Rishra. At 66 camps on malnutrition, 759 children emerged under-nourished. They were treated by our units at Kharach, Vilayat, Malanpur and Veraval.

At 12 Blood group testing camps, we registered 2,025 participants. Harihar and Jagdishpur Malaria Protection Programmes enlisted 34,158 people.

Inclusive and equitable quality education, and in the larger context, promoting lifelong learning opportunities, for all is the pivot of the **fourth SDG**. HG Wells, the renowned, (early 20th Century) historian in his voluminous work "The Outline of History", wrote "Human history becomes more and more, a race between education and catastrophe".

Our proactive initiatives to foster education in the villages have yielded encouraging results. We would like to particularly mention our enrolment campaign titled "Shala Praveshotsav". This was popularized in Kharach-Nagda, Harihar, Veraval, Halol and Rehla. The campaign was successful. It not only got students in schools but

also stemmed the dropout rate. Under its aegis we distributed education material including notebooks, school bags and uniforms to over 21,253 children. We leveraged the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. We align very well with the Kasturba Balika Vidyalayas at SFD & Chemical-Nagda, Malanpur, Rehla, Ganjam and Halol, encouraging girls to pursue education. Through the talent search programmes, we recognized 1,059 bright students, giving them scholarships.

Over 3,115 students from the hinterland attended the computer literacy programmes conducted by us.

We would like to make a particular mention of specialised coaching and counselling classes across 3 of our plants through the Gyanarjan project. It covered 439 high school students at Harihar, Halol and Rishra.

Furthermore, Grasim organised an exposure tour for students at Vilayat with a batch of 325 active participants. At a Knowledge enhancement programme at Veraval, 7,364 students participated actively.

Facilities such as transport and other support processes in terms of infrastructure development, sanitation and safe drinking water facility benefit yet another 21,854 children.

Women empowerment and gender equality, is the focus of the **fifth SDG**. We already have 122 self-help groups comprising of 3229 women. We are working to broaden the base, and provide the last mile linkage. Most of the SHGs have been linked with economic centres. Women are engaged in a number of economic activities such as tailoring, masala making, creating traditional pieces for celebrations.

The **sixth, seventh and eighth SDGs**, can be bunched together, as they are interlinked. These SDGs call for, water and sanitation, reliable, sustainable and modern energy and decent work and economic growth.

Towards providing accessibility to safe drinking water, we have installed 5 Reverse Osmosis plants at Kharach, Vilayat and Renukoot covering 7,357 villagers.

At Nagda, Harihar, Vilayat, Renukoot, Halol and Karwar, pipelines and bore wells provide access to water, benefiting 28,974 villagers.

Additionally, 2,474 individual toilets and sanitation facilities were set-up at schools at various locations. In the villages that we operate in, 44 villages have been declared ODF.

In the context of work, imparting vocational training, skills training, coupled with our farm based programmes and SHGs, meet with these goals. The activities include computer training, heavy vehicle driving and bag making etc. More than 3,418 people have been trained

At Indo Gulf, Jagdishpur, Aditya Birla Insulators - Halol, Jaya Shree Textiles - Rishra, Staple Fibre Division - Nagda and Ganjam Industrial Training Centre, 1,195 students are trained annually to become electricians, fitters, mechanics and welders. Successful students are absorbed in the industries around this location and beyond

Water Conservation & Harvesting

Teams from Veraval, Halol, Nagda, Ganjam and Rehla have carried out water conservation and water harvesting projects in collaboration with the district authorities and Gram Panchayats.

SDG-9 Build resilient infrastructure

Towards better infrastructure, we are engaged in the connecting/repairing of roads, community halls and assets, rest places, installation of solar lights, construction of water tanks and installation of piped water supply. These activities have aided 73,959 people.

Finally, on model villages

Of the 297 villages that we work in, we have zeroed in on 51 villages for a transformative process that raises them to become model villages. So far in a 7 year timeframe, we have been able to morph 22 villages into model villages.

Our CSR spends

For the year 2018-19, our CSR spend was ₹ 363.8 million (2.13% of our net profit for the last 3 years) vis-à-vis ₹ 317.84 million in the preceding year. In addition, we mobilised over ₹ 290 million through Government Schemes.

In sum

With all of us working so wholeheartedly, and the Government also fully committed, to inclusive growth, transparency and good governance, we can hope for a holistic transformation of our country. Very soon, in the next 5 years, India will be an even more resplendent nation. By then the word poverty will be struck off the lexicon and no mention of it will be made in relation to India.

Our Board of Directors, our Management and our colleagues across the Company are committed to inclusive growth.