

Vol. 1 Issue 2



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NANHIKALI PROJECT

CHILD AND WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT -
WEST BENGAL

RAYMOND'S TAILOR-
MADE INITIATIVE
HELPS LIFT POOR
WOMEN'S LOT

EMPOWERMENT
ENSURES ENDURING SMILES

SDCRF CONFERENCE: 25 OCTOBER, 2013, BANGALORE



FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

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**FIGHT AGAINST
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An Initiative of
Mumbai Police

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



10, Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

14 March 2011

Dear Shri Sivanandhan,

Thank you for your letter dated 28th Feb 2011 and sending me the well done work "Fight Against Terrorism" with thoughts from multiple minds. The topics discussed will be a good reference. My best wishes for your effort. I wish you all the best for all your future missions.

Hand edited book.

श्रीमान्. अजयश्री

May God bless you.

Yours sincerely,

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Shri D Sivanandhan
No.18, Sunidhi
Gen.Bhosle Marg,
Colaba, Mumbai - 400 021

M. K. Narayanan
GOVERNOR OF WEST BENGAL



RAJ BHAWAN
KOLKATA 700 062

18 March, 2011

Dear Sivanandhan,

Thank you for sending me the compilation *Fight Against Terrorism*. I believe this initiative of yours was highly commendable and has done much to highlight the threat posed by Asymmetric Warfare and the expanding dimensions of this problem. Through your personal effort and influence, you have managed over the years, to bring together several practitioners of counter terrorism and internal security and this has greatly enlarged the volume of information available on the subject. This is a significant contribution of yours towards a better security climate in the country.

On a personal note, having been associated with you in different capacities over the years, I would like to pay a tribute to your capabilities, your honesty and integrity, and above all your dedication, to making our country a safer place to live in. I feel privileged to have been associated with you, and look forward to many more occasions to interact with you on different platforms.

Do keep in touch.

Warm Regards

Yours sincerely,

M. K. Narayanan

Shri D. Sivanandhan, IPS (Retd)
18, Sunidhi, 9th Floor
General J. Bhonsle Marg
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Mumbai 400 021

High
Praise
&
Warm
Wishes

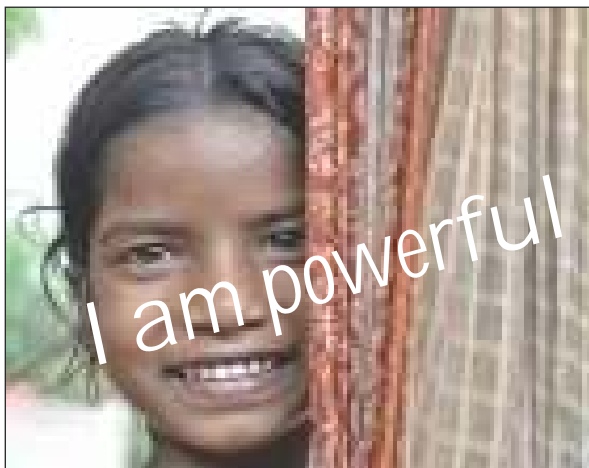


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Late Shri. R.K.Prasad
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before making decisions using the same.*

F OREWORD



Over the last several decades, it has become an accepted wisdom that improving the status of women is one of the most critical levers of international development. When women are educated and can earn and control income, a volley of good results follow: infant mortality declines, child health and nutrition improve, agricultural productivity rises, population growth slows, growth increases and poverty is eradicated.

But the challenges remain dauntingly huge with this section of society remaining largely neglected and governments remaining oblivious to the resultant ill-effects that have become visible. The Middle East, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, and India suffer from persistent gender gaps, besides entrenched gender discrimination, inaccessibility to quality education, healthcare, technology, and income. Added to this is the lack of basic rights and pervasive violence against women. All of these keep women from being fully productive members of society. All these plague nations with unending poverty, growing and undernourished population, unhealthy and non-productive citizens and a laggard economy. This definitely will become a burden to the world, not just the nations where these malaises occur.

Narrowing the gulf demands more than the interest of foreign aid and human rights communities which have carried out the task of women's empowerment in developing countries by funding projects such as schools for girls and providing microfinance for female entrepreneurs. It requires the involvement of the world's largest companies. Not only do the global private and public sectors have more money than governments and nongovernmental organizations, but they can wield significant leverage with their powerful brands and by extending promises of investment and employment.

Some companies promote initiatives focused on women as part of their corporate social-responsibility programs. But the transformative shift, both for global corporations and for women, will occur when companies understand that empowering women in developing economies will play a positive role in improving their own bottom lines.

"Because man and woman are the complement of one another, we need woman's thought in national affairs to make a safe and stable government," says social activist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. It is well understood that the majority of global advancement will occur in those countries where gender disparities are smallest and the society that has broken the shackles of conservative religious traditions and tribal customs which have work against women's rights. As multinational corporations search for growth in the developing world, they are beginning to realize that women's disempowerment causes staggering and deeply pernicious losses in productivity, economic activity, and human capital. This definitely is a good start.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kamaljit Swaroop', with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Kamaljit Swaroop
Vice Chairperson
New Media Communication Pvt. Ltd



EMPOWER WOMEN TO EMPOWER SOCIETY

A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform. - Diane Mariechild

Swami Vivekananda emphatically said, "That country and that nation which does not respect women will never become great now and nor will ever in future."

It is said that if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate an entire society. Women are central to the entire development process in family, village, province, state or the whole nation. Women maintain the linkage with traditions and culture, as they provide insight into the changing pattern of the society. History has proved that deteriorating state of society began when the state of women is deteriorated.

While India has just celebrated 66 years of independence, the true independence for every human being, especially women and children is far, far away. Unless we synchronise our efforts to empower women and educate children, who together constitute 2/3 of our population, the true progress of the country will remain only a dream.

In fact, women empowerment itself is understood in a narrow sense of the term. When designing a programme for women empowerment, the focus should be on the holistic manifestation of womanhood. The objective should be to achieve total harmony of existence between the masculine and the feminine forces of nature. It means establishing a social order on the positive principle of creative and generative forces. This social order is based on the principles of mutual respect, trust, compassion and nurturing with a purpose of unifying the forces of nature and strengthening the society.

The occurrence of such a social order is possible only when women are economically, socially, religiously and politically empowered. They are empowered with equal opportunities and enormous options to choose from. An empowered woman is a decision maker. She is a thinking being who is capable of contributing positively in whichever sphere she is in. This results in her being an active participant and in most cases, leading people towards reshaping the society, the country and the world with new thoughts and relevant ideas. She is capable of creating a world where economy expands and cycles of poverty are broken.

To make India a progressive nation and among the world's advanced economies, empowering women is the key. Corporations, being the biggest employers of people and having more money and influential powers, can create equal opportunities and offer equal pay for work. They can also create an atmosphere of healthy participation of men and women in every sphere of corporate affairs, besides having constructive rules laid down, which encourages such participations. They are also capable of designing and funding strategically thought-out CSR programmes for educating and empowering women holistically through result-oriented collaboration and influencing abilities on local administration and NGOs. This is the key to improve their profitability and the profitability of their nations.

Wishing you a happy reading.

Archana Sinha
Editor

THERE HAS BEEN A PROGRESSIVE SHIFT IN APPROACH THROUGH THE FIVE-YEAR PLANS IN TREATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AS A SUBJECT OF 'WELFARE', TO DEVELOPMENT AND FROM DEVELOPMENT TO EMPOWERMENT. THE CURRENT APPROACH NOW MOVES BEYOND EMPOWERMENT TO RECOGNISE WOMEN AS AGENTS OF SUSTAINED SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CHANGE.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH VITAL TO WOMEN'S



OVERALL EMPOWERMENT



By Rashmi Singh

For socio-economic empowerment and growth of women, education is a fundamental pillar since it opens opportunities for women and gives her a better decision making ability, self-confidence, awareness and ensures her effective participation in the community.

In order to achieve the desired goal of universal education, the Government has taken several initiatives in the form of enabling policies, legislations and interventions to promote literacy and bridge gender disparities. Resultantly, literacy rate saw a jump from a mere 12% in the year 1947, to 74.04% in 2011. The



gender gap in literacy levels is closing. However the persisting gap is still a matter of concern. As per 2011 Census, female literacy is 65.46%, vis a vis over 80% for male. Inequalities persist in women's access to higher education, health care, physical and financial resources and opportunities. These indicators are responsible for the country's low rank in Gender Inequality Index in the global rating.

Table below gives a comparative picture over the last decade (Literacy Rate in India in 2001 and 2011):

Source: Selected Educational Statistics (SES), Ministry of Human Resource

Development

The Government of India runs several schemes to promote girls education, such as residential schools for the dropout girls in educationally backward blocks through the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya scheme, distribution of free uniform and textbooks to girls up to elementary levels, various scholarships on a merit basis up to the secondary and higher secondary levels and special scholarships for all Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) girls. Besides these, the mid-day meal scheme provides free meals though there have been concerns related to the quality of these meals. The interventions

proposed in the 12th Five-Year Plan for universalizing access and retention include school and social mapping, opening more primary schools with teachers, infrastructure and teaching-learning equipment as mandated under the RTE Act, 2009, opening upper primary schools as mandated under the RTE Act, 2009, providing residential schools, special training for age appropriate admission of out-of-school children, etc.

There are also interesting learnings across the states in terms of strategies adopted for improving girls' education. The state of Bihar is a good case study with encouraging results in recent years in the enrolment levels. Literacy rate in Bihar increased by 10 percent from 2001 to 2011, and at the same time, female literacy rate increased by 17 percent from 2001 to 2011. These results can be attributed to the initiation of several new schemes and policies to improve the quality of education and increase access of girls to education. Some of these are the Mukhyamantri Balika Yojana, Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojana, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, and Sabla Scheme supported by the government of India. Under Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana, girl students of Standard IX are given a sum of Rs, 2,000/- to buy bicycles to travel to schools. This amount was increased by Rs.500/- per girl child in 2011-2012.

Census Report	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female(%)
2001	64.83	75.26	53.67
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46

Elementary Education Status		
Gender Parity Index	Primary	Upper Primary
2000-01	85.9	116.7
2010-11	49.9	83.1

Elementary Education and Gender Parity Index		
Gender Parity Index	Primary	Upper Primary
2000-01	0.82	0.75
2010-11	1.01	0.95



KERALA'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS ITS HIGH LITERACY LEVEL AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE SPHERE OF EDUCATION. THE STATE LAYS CLAIM TO THE HIGHEST LITERACY RATE IN THE COUNTRY— 90.92 PERCENT IN 2001

AS COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL RATE OF 65.38 PERCENT. LITERACY RATE FOR WOMEN IS ALSO HIGHEST IN THIS STATE. IT IS NOTABLE THAT THE STATE HAS ALSO ACHIEVED A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX COMPARABLE TO THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

Under Mukhya Mantri Balika Poshak Yojana, female students of Standard IX to XII are provided an amount of Rs. 1,000/- for uniform. In addition, other incentive based programmes are Mukhyamantri Protsahan Yojana, Gyan Jyoti, Hunar Yojana, Auzaar Yojna, Child Cabinet etc. Creation of separate toilet for girls, reservation for female teachers, female participation in Adhoc Committee for Elementary Schools, creation of Meena Manch, etc are some other measures for promoting girl child education. The Balika Cycle Yojana has impacted mobility of girls and increased the enrolment of adolescent girls in middle school and secondary schools significantly. A social change can be witnessed with girls riding bicycles in the villages of Bihar, influencing a change of the patriarchal mindset.

Yet ensuring the regular attendance of girls in school, low enrolment of girls in middle schools, preventing dropouts at the senior secondary levels is still a challenge, besides enhancing girls' participation in higher education, and technical institutes. The quality of education is still a huge challenge.

In Uttarakhand, female dropout rate has been reducing with positive outcomes from schemes such as the Mahila Samakhya, and Sakshar Bharat. ECC centers under Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan are playing an important role. Under Nanda Devi schemes, a Fixed Deposit (FD) of Rs. 5,000 rupees is made in the name of the girl child. This amount is provided to her only after she passes high school and remains unmarried till 18 years of age.

One of the hallmarks of Kerala's social development is its high literacy level and achievements in the sphere of education. The state lays claim to the highest literacy rate in the country— 90.92 percent in 2001 as compared to the national rate of 65.38 percent. Literacy rate for women is also highest in this state. It is notable that

the state has also achieved a human development index comparable to the developed countries of the world.

Delhi's Laadli Scheme has also encouraged the enrolment of the girl child, retention in senior secondary levels, and completion of school education since cash incentive is given in her name at different stages of schooling. The final instalment can be encashed when the girl is 18 years of age and has completed school education.

Girl's education cannot be seen in isolation of the socio-economic and cultural context in which they live. High-dropout rates among girls is due to many reasons such as community's apathy towards girl's education, gender discrimination, lack of proper sanitation facilities in schools, lack of female teachers, distance from home, inadequate school infrastructure, bad quality education, etc are barriers to girl child education. Early marriages for girls continue to be a serious challenge.





Ultimately, ensuring quality education for children is a task that involves not just individual families but the entire community. It is important to involve the community as a whole and ensure that the village representatives have a say in teacher recruitment, and regular monitoring.

For making women's empowerment and gender equality a reality, much more needs to be done to promote good quality education at all levels. An integrated and holistic approach is needed. There is an increasing need to go beyond a tunnel vision and develop a holistic perspective with an inter-sectoral understanding, without which no development intervention is fully successful today. For instance, while working on poverty alleviation programmes, there is need to

address this problem which needs a very close collaboration between the government and civil society organizations-an experiment tried in Delhi Mission Convergence programme, and the vital ingredients of the same could be adopted for right targeting and improving the efficiency of our delivery systems to reach out to the most needy including the homeless who are invariably left out of any mainstream programme, and services.

For bridging gaps, use of gender lens in our thinking and actions is equally significant. The recent incidents of violence against women have created a growing concern amongst women regarding their security, freedom and mobility. Utmost priority needs to be given to address issues related to the

the education sector with regard to both policy formulation and implementation, understanding the regional complexities, addressing the vulnerabilities of excluded groups, and addressing basic socio-economic and cultural barriers, to increase enrolment and retention in school, community participation in pre-planning, participation, ownership and management promoting awareness on education, regularizing and monitoring of teachers attendance, quality mid-day meals to ensure students regular attendance to school, addressing infrastructure- mainly road and transport facilities, gender friendly curriculum, separate toilet facilities for girls, availability of drinking water at schools, electricity and other educational equipments in schools, etc. have to be the focus areas.

Empowerment of women has to be approached from a holistic and macro point of view, acknowledging the cross cutting linkages between economic, social and political identity of women. There is increasing recognition that these factors are deeply intertwined and if efforts in any one dimension remains absent or weak, the outcome and momentum generated by the other components cannot be sustained, and that it is only when all these three factors are addressed simultaneously and made compatible with each other can women be truly empowered. Therefore, for the holistic empowerment of women, all ministries and departments would need to energize synergistic measures and coordinated action at different levels. Women's concerns have to be kept at the centre of public policy, developmental planning and governance, with recognition of their role as critical growth agents and as ambassadors of social change. And good quality education with removal of access barriers for girls holds a critical significance in this endeavour.

Rashmi Singh is Founder Director, Mission Convergence - Stree Shakti Programme, Delhi. She is currently the Executive Director, National Mission for Empowerment of Women/Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, Government of India. Rashmi Singh is a public servant who has created a distinguished track record for her innovative works in social development, with notable contributions in the field of women empowerment.



EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN HAS TO BE APPROACHED FROM A HOLISTIC AND MACRO POINT OF VIEW, ACKNOWLEDGING THE CROSS CUTTING LINKAGES BETWEEN ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDENTITY OF WOMEN.

understand the vulnerabilities of women related to her health, education status, the power relations in the family and community, etc. Most of the flagship schemes of the government whether it is ICDS, NRHM, SSA, JNURM, and the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) recognize the need for a multi-disciplinary approach as against a segmented approach towards development.

The other complex challenge is how to reach out to the unreached? This also calls for understanding of structural inequities and barriers to access which are perpetuated by insensitive processes and procedures which often put the onus of proving that one is poor on the poor themselves. There are strategies to

vulnerabilities of women.

Gender discrimination, gender bias, son preference, violence against women have to be viewed as social issues in which mindsets need to be changed through awareness generation and gender sensitization. There is a need of addressing these issues through a life cycle approach, and building an environment which prevents the occurrence of violence, and discrimination.

An important need of the hour is to focus on mindset change and behavioural change. This needs special training and research on modules, curriculum and training methodologies which can bring about such a change. Bottom-up and promoting democratic decentralization in

C OMMITMENT

CHILD & WOMEN'S D E V E L O P M E N T





West Bengal Scores Above National Average, Still a Long Way to Go



Roshni Sen, IAS, Secretary, Child Development and Women and Social Welfare Department Government of West Bengal, shares the various initiatives and projects that have been running successfully to improve the conditions of children and women in the state. She points out that Bengal has been scoring better than the national average in the field of Child and Women's Development but says that the state still has a long way to go in this regard.

Health, nutrition and proper medical care are the three major factors determining the healthy future of a child. West Bengal is maintaining a proper factsheet to monitor the growth of children. This also helps the Child and Women Welfare Department to identify the grey areas thus helping us to work and improve on them.

Certain loopholes have been identified and steps have been taken to mend them. The State Government is taking extra care on the hygiene of children in rural areas



and create awareness among parents about different factors such as vaccination and education. The Pulse Polio Drive is running successfully all over West Bengal. The State has shown remarkable growth in the field of child and women's development and it is in a far better place than the national average in most of the parameters but we will not rest on our laurels. I believe this is the beginning and the journey is still a long way off. The overall improvement will ultimately affect the future of millions of children and women of West Bengal.

Reduction of Child Mortality Rate

The soaring graph of child mortality rate took a nosedive in the last one year. According to the latest ground reports, child mortality rate has been reduced from 33 percent to 31 percent but we still have a long way to go to reach international standards. A special programme has been designed for children coined as 'Thousand Day' programme. This curriculum will safeguard the child as well as pregnant mothers from all possible health hazards from the time of conception till the child reaches the age of two and a half years.

The different modules of the programme will cover vaccination and will sensitize new mothers on the affirmative aspects of breastfeeding. Several child welfare projects are running in West

Bengal under the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Schemes). A recently introduced child welfare project known as ICPS (Integrated Child Protection Scheme) keeps in mind the need of those children who are in need of care and protection and safeguarding juveniles in conflict with the law. This entire scheme follows the United Nations Charter which was penned in a conference held during the late 80's on Child Rights. Later, the Government of India designed the Juvenile Justice Rules and Juvenile Justice Act. The ICPS covers different areas related to child protection and child development. It monitors child adoption and it overlooks orphan homes, open shelters for children, etc.

Another project which the government is undertaking is the cottage homes for children where special care is provided to destitute children. Food education is provided to children who come to these homes for help. There are around 90 cottage homes which are spread across different districts of West Bengal.

Well-equipped Department in all Districts Looking after Child Welfare and Monitors Child Adoption:

The Child Welfare Department has its branches spread across 19 districts of West Bengal which closely monitors issues related to child welfare. A District Child Protection Society (DCPS) is also

operational in all the districts of the state. This society is headed by a DCPO (District Child Protection Officer) who looks after issues like child health, nutrition, education and other related subjects. We are working very closely with different NGOs involved in this field.

A national level data bank has also been created to monitor adoption all over Bengal. This has helped us in arresting irregularities in the field of adoption though the illegitimate nexus related to child adoption is still prevailing in different corners of Bengal. Couples who would like to adopt a child are therefore encouraged to follow the proper route or they could contact the child adoption centres which are present in all the districts of West Bengal.

Successful Combating of Child Trafficking in West Bengal

The Government has also successfully been able to give child trafficking a big dent. We are also using a software developed by NIC aptly called, 'Track the Missing Child'. This software will be fed with huge data related to children. It will have photographs of the missing child along with the address and circulated to all the states of India. It will help the police track the trafficked child. Once the child is tracked, the information will be uploaded on the same website. A task force which was created in 2008 but had remained



defunct for some time now has been re-grouped for this purpose. We have already encrypted the standard operating procedure and this force has representatives from the Home Department, BSF and the Police. It will monitor the proper rehabilitation of trafficked children.

Kolkata Police, by conceiving a project like SNEHO has moved one step further. K.P. along with Save the Children, a social welfare organization, will create a mammoth database of children along with their photographs and address which will be fed into this website. It will help them track the missing child. In the long run, it will definitely amputate the deep rooted nexus of child trafficking from Bengal. The recent Supreme Court's directive on missing children, which clearly states that an FIR has to be lodged whenever a child goes missing is a step in the right direction in arresting this menace.

Combating Child Labour, Child Marriage & Child Mortality

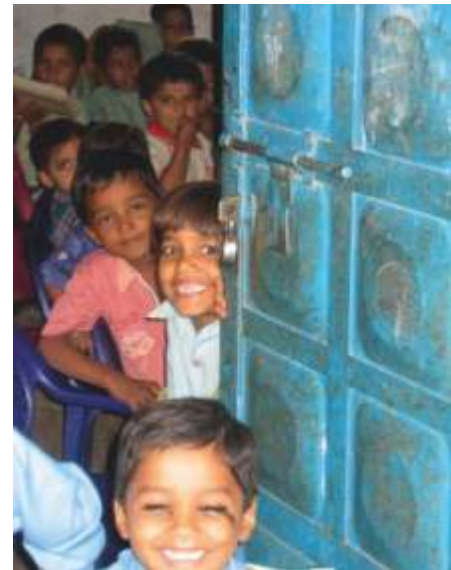
These three issues are related to each other. The crux of these three issues is the absence of economic empowerment and consequently, they have spread across a larger section of the society. To uproot them completely from the society, parents must be economically empowered. Poverty encourages child labour and child marriage. Early marriage leads to early pregnancy and early pregnancy brings forth an immature and weak child which then find it hard to survive.

Under the guidance of West Bengal

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a state of the art project - Kanyashree - has been designed. A yearly stipend of Rs 500 will be provided to millions of young girls of Bengal between 14-18 years who are enrolled in a study centre or a school or an open school or any sports academy within Bengal. This will open up a route and encourage young girls to take up education as well as sports activities. Though the amount is nominal but we believe this is just the beginning. If the girl stays unmarried till the age of 18 and is part of some training programme then she will get a consolidated amount of Rs. 25,000. This will certainly plug the emerging issues of child marriages within the society and will academically empower the women of Bengal.

A very catchy campaign has also been designed to pitch the 'Kanyashree' project in Bengal. Apart from that, we have requested the Secondary and Higher Secondary Boards to include some social issues within the curriculum thus bringing about an awakening to the entire society. We are also advertising the toll-free Child Line number 1098 and sharing it with all concerned departments and the Police.

In a very concerted and focussed manner, we are running a project against child marriage in two districts of West Bengal, Purulia and Malda, with full assistance from UNICEF. The Department of Child and Women Welfare Department, Govt. of West Bengal will be launching a Rs. 2 crore publicity campaign thus awakening people against child marriage.



This entire publicity campaign will be staged in association with the INCA Department of West Bengal using the folk arts of Bengal.

We are also promoting child welfare projects like Rashtriya Bal Karyakram. This project is running at the school level. Plans are underway to start it at the Anganwadi level. Health screening for children has been conducted in every district of Bengal helping us detect health issues amongst them. We screened 3,000 children and the study revealed that many of them need serious surgical intervention. This project is run under the supervision of the District Magistrates and we have already operated 50 children under this project in state-run hospitals. Early screening of diseases will reduce the rate of child mortality in Bengal.



P OINT OF VIEW

From a glorious past to an uncertain present, Indian women have experienced many changes in their social status through centuries. With India at the threshold of growth, a time has come to work with focussed strategies to restore the harmonious existence of women and men where each is able to contribute to the society's advancement in the most engaging and meaningful manner. Corporations, through their social programmes can bring a sea-change in the current situation. Archana Sinha explores the scope of CSR in women empowerment and its positive impact on companies' growth.



It is a matter of great concern that while India is looked upon as the next big economy to watch out for, we are still grappling with basic issues, such as equal status of women and their rights. In fact, the Gender Gap Index 2012 which measures the global and regional trends shows the achievements made by women all over the world towards equity in education are still very far from making an impact on their having a fair share in the economy or in political sphere. Yet many advanced countries are consciously working towards reducing the gap, as it has now been widely acknowledged that women empowerment also leads to growth in economy and better income generation for nations. India ranked 105 among the 135 countries that were considered in the report.

"There is also some evidence from India to suggest that women in local government roles make decisions with better outcomes for communities than men when charged with

budget decisions," says the report, as it points out, "... they also appear to be more competent representatives than men, obtaining more resources for their constituencies despite having significantly lower education and relevant labour market experience." Based on the report, the World Economic Forum has said that persistent health, education and economic participation gaps would be detrimental to India's growth.

The status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few centuries. From equal status with men in ancient times, through the low points of the medieval period, to the regaining status, because of the efforts of various reformers, the history of women's status and their role in India has been eventful, and a roller-coaster ride.

In modern India, women have held high and exalted offices including that of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AS CSR ACTIVITY CAN

AUGMENT CORPORATES' PROFITABILITY

Leader of the Opposition. Yet, Indian women in their daily lives continue to face atrocities such as female foeticide, rape, acid throwing, dowry killings, repression and even forced prostitution, apart from little access to education, good healthcare and general negligence.

According to a global poll conducted by Thomson Reuters, India is the "fourth most dangerous country" in the world for women and the worst country for women among the G20 countries. An impression such as this one certainly does not put India in a good light, especially when the country is poised for growth. Half of the country's women population lives in abject poverty, deprivation, suppression and fear, barring a few privileged women.

From A Glorious Past To An Unsatisfactory Present: A Glimpse Of History

As we have said earlier, the position of women in Indian society was not always as full of contradictions as it is today. Our ancient historical past suggest that during the Vedic Period, women were accorded a very high position. It is said that there were 32 women compilers of Rig Veda. Works by ancient Indian grammarians such as Patanjali and Katyayana suggest that women were highly educated in the early Vedic period. Rigvedic verses suggest that women married at a mature age and were probably free to select their own husbands. Scriptures such as the Rig Veda and Upanishads mention several women sages and seers, notably Gargi and Maitreyi. This was the time when the rest of the world was yet to see such a high degree of civilisation.

But since the post Vedic period, women are being treated as 'Abala'- a weak, helpless and powerless being despite the fact that they are the better half of the society. The birth of a girl child is considered as inauspicious. Indian women's position in society further deteriorated during the medieval period when Sati, child marriages and a ban on remarriage by widows became part of social life in some communities in India. The Muslim conquest of the Indian subcontinent brought purdah to Indian society. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practised. In some parts of India, the Devadasis or temple women were sexually exploited. Polygamy was widely practised especially among Hindu Kshatriya

rulers. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to the Zenana areas of the house.

The Rise of Women in 19th & 20th Century

World-wide, the first concrete assertion of rights of women came in the form of the Declaration of Sentiments in 1948, when under the leadership of Elizabeth Candy Stanton, women demanded equal rights. The concept of empowerment of women and women rights came into being in the 20th Century. The empowerment is the process by which the powerless gain control over their lives which means control over the material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. The first active step was taken by UNO for the empowerment of women by formulating special rights for them, which are called Women Rights. The UN helped define and promote women's rights through legally binding UN conventions and treaties. Many world conferences on women have been held since 1975.

However in India, it was in the 19th Century that the movement towards assertion of women's rights started gaining momentum. The 19th Century European scholars have observed that Indian women were "naturally virtuous" and played participatory role in the development of society. Reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotirao Phule, and others fought for the betterment of women. Peary Charan Sarkar, a former student of Hindu College, Calcutta, and a member of "Young Bengal", set up the first free school for girls in India in 1847 in Barasat, a suburb of Calcutta.

The British also contributed to the cause of women upliftment. Missionaries' wives such as Martha Mault and her daughter Eliza Caldwell are remembered for pioneering the education and training of girls in South India. The efforts were initially opposed as the people, unaware of the county's glorious past, resisted the idea. But the effort was soon integrated into the mainstream of life. Raja Rammohan Roy's efforts led to the abolition of Sati under Governor-General William Cavendish-Bentinck in 1829. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's crusade for improvement in the situation of widows led to the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. Many women reformers such as Pandita Ramabai also helped the cause of women.

In 1917, the first women's delegation met





IN 1917, THE FIRST WOMEN'S DELEGATION MET THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO DEMAND WOMEN'S POLITICAL RIGHTS, SUPPORTED BY THE INDIAN

the Secretary of State to demand women's political rights. They were supported by the Indian National Congress. The All India Women's Education Conference was held in Pune in 1927. In 1929, through the efforts of Mohamed Ali Jinnah, the Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed, stipulating fourteen as the minimum age of marriage for a girl. Though Mahatma Gandhi himself married at the age of thirteen, he later urged people to boycott child marriages and called upon young men to marry child widows.

Interestingly, women played an important part in India's independence struggle. Some famous freedom fighters include Bhikaji Cama, Dr. Annie Besant, Pritilata Waddedar, Sarojini Naidu, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Rajkumari Amrit

discrimination by the State (Article 15(1)), equality of opportunity (Article 16), and equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)). In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women and children (Article 15(3)), renounces practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e)), and also allows for provisions to be made by the State for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (Article 42).

Women & Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission clearly emphasises that every woman and girl is entitled to the realization of all human rights -

civil, political, economic, social and cultural - on equal terms with men, free from discrimination. Women and girls also enjoy certain human rights specifically linked to their

status as women. The world has recognized that the human rights of women and of the girl-child are "an integral and indivisible part of universal human rights." (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Para. 18). Women are guaranteed equal treatment and freedom from discrimination. Women's human rights are the subject of a specific treaty, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Recent Realisations & Efforts by Indian Government

India too has recognised the fact that keeping half of its population in the dark and unrepresented in the socio-economic affairs has served no positive purpose; rather the situation is posing a huge hindrance in its growth track. To reduce the gap and inequality among genders, the Government has envisaged the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001), which clearly states that the goal of the policy is to bring about advancement, development and empowerment of women. Towards this end, the policy is to be widely disseminated so as to encourage active participation of all



NATIONAL CONGRESS. THE ALL INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION CONFERENCE WAS HELD IN PUNE IN 1927. IN 1929, THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF MOHAMED ALI JINNAH, THE CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT ACT WAS PASSED, STIPULATING FOURTEEN AS THE MINIMUM AGE OF MARRIAGE FOR A GIRL

Kaur, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kriplani and Kasturba Gandhi. Other notable names include Muthulakshmi Reddy and Durgabai Deshmukh. The Rani of Jhansi Regiment of Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army consisted entirely of women, including Captain Lakshmi Sahgal. Sarojini Naidu, a poet and freedom fighter, was the first Indian woman to become President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the governor of a state in India.

Post Independence too, the emphasis on equality for women has been significantly underlined in the Indian Constitution. Article 14, 15, 15B, 16, 38, 39B and 44 are some important provisions in this context. The Indian Constitution has also given special rights to women along with their fundamental rights. Currently a debate is going on to give 33 percent reservation to Women in Parliament. The Constitution of India guarantees to all Indian women equality (Article 14), no

stakeholders for achieving its goals.

The Protection Against Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill passed in 2010, legally ensured a safe environment for women at work places, both in public and private sectors, whether organised or unorganized.

What Corporates Can Do

However, though constitutionally, legally and socially, laws are in place to ensure dignity and equality, things are far from satisfactory in actuality. Unequal payment, not enough women in the high-income bracket, lack of healthcare and access to quality education of choice, nutrition and safe environment are some of the problems that plague India, due to the country's cultural hangover from the medieval period.

The concept of democracy will only assume its true and dynamic meaning when legislation and politics and economic affairs are determined by both men and women equally. However, the representation of women in democratic institutions has still not achieved parity in world political, social and economic affairs. In the era of globalization, women's participation in politics is increasingly becoming an issue of interest. In the same light, true advancement of a country is achieved only when men and women are socially and economically liberated, each working in harmony for a common goal with similar level of understanding and engagement.

Mere laws will not help, unless societies and intelligentsia come together to address the issue on the ground level. Corporations, both public and private sector, being the employers can establish best practices through corporate social responsibility programmes by first establishing a healthy working environment and equal opportunity for men and women, besides equal pay. The corporate world now recognises the role that women play in enhancing its brand value and income. It is making efforts to place women in every possible area in which it functions as it is well understood that society's development without development of women is unimaginable.

Growing role of women in corporate is being seen all around. We see:

- > Women as employees
- > Women in management
- > Women as owners/shareholders
- > Women as professionals
- > Women as suppliers
- > Women as customers
- > Women as dealers
- > Women in local communities



THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY WILL ONLY ASSUME ITS TRUE AND DYNAMIC MEANING WHEN LEGISLATION AND POLITICS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS ARE DETERMINED BY BOTH MEN AND WOMEN EQUALLY. HOWEVER, THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS HAS STILL NOT ACHIEVED PARITY IN WORLD POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Corporate Social Responsibility should present scope and bring visible positive changes in issues, such as, eradication of illiteracy and poverty, and better access to education, skills development, health care and women empowerment. Corporates can play an active role in achieving National Policy of Women Empowerment by encouraging active participation of women in all walks of life in order to attain individual, organisational, and societal goals. This can be achieved by:

- > Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential
- > Encouraging the de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis in all spheres – political, economic,

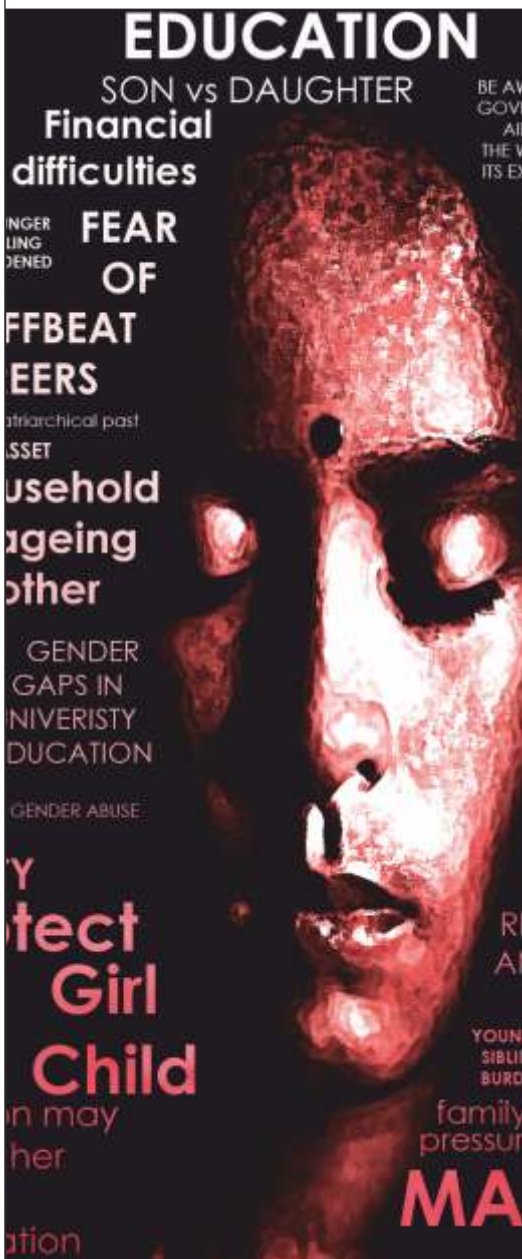
social, cultural and civil

- > Offering equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation
- > Offering equal access to healthcare, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, remuneration, occupational health and safety and social security
- > Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
- > Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women in dispensing family and social responsibilities
- > Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process
- > Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and
- > Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

The motive behind connecting CSR with women empowerment is to provide solutions to women related issues. This in turn, as said earlier, is expected to bring handsome return on investment. Companies wield enormous influence on governments and NGOs as they have larger financial resources to mobilise the efforts and put programmes on a fast-forward track. Being the largest organised sector, they play a significant role in bringing an attitudinal change in the society through their own examples of fair practices of providing competitive jobs to women and encouraging healthy working environment, where women play a participatory role in the growth of business and the nation, through their decision making powers. It would be a win-win situation for companies and Indian women.

URGENTLY REQUIRED-

SAFETY OF GIRLS AND WOMEN



The last few months have been particularly trying, with horrifying incidents of rape, molestation, harassment and abuse of women making headlines. On one end, one takes relief in the fact that the media has enabled and empowered women to report these crimes. On the other hand, it sinks deeper and deeper into the mind, the realization that this is the tip of the iceberg. That which is yet not being reported could be much more horrifying.



Meera Tenguria

As has been often stated, there are many complex social reasons for this and society must address the core issues. Having said that, society must also act NOW to ensure physical safety of girls and women. The efforts of stopping female foeticide, girl child education, women self help groups have been great steps taken in empowering women. However, if a girl or woman is not physically safe, if getting out of home itself becomes a threat, then, physically and mentally, they are fighting a battle difficult to win.

An African proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child". It is time to consider how as a society we can offer our young girls and women, the basic human dignity, of physical safety.

For our young, dynamic generation of young girls and women, to aspire and grow, they have to be able to travel without fear in local transports, go to any public space and not fear molestation or physical assault. What role does CSR have in it? I think it begins first from within - zero tolerance for sexual harassment in offices and corporates should

be more involved in the communities they operate.

Tata Tea, is doing a great job in creating awareness of the power of the women's vote. Maybe it's time women take that step more seriously. Not for Profits and NGO's must be supported in their projects on women safety. No amount of

education, or creation of jobs or schemes for women will ensure women empowerment if they cannot go into public spaces without endangering themselves. We need to campaign to take back public spaces for women and girls- that is the beginning and urgent need for women empowerment and emancipation.

The time is NOW. The society brought girl child education as an issue to the forefront. I therefore exhort those involved in CSR programs to bring safety of girls and women as an issue at the forefront. Advocate for Girls and Women's Safety. This is the basic step, without which any effort on woman empowerment will prove futile.

An entire generation of young girls from 10 years to 30 years cannot be allowed to live every day of their lives fighting for their physical safety.

It is not acceptable!

Ms Meera Tenguria, Director, Aarohan Communications, is a strategist, communications, CSR and corporate reputations consultant. With over twenty years of experience in working with Indian and multinational corporates, she has advised clients in strategies to build corporate reputation through effective external and internal relations. Her experience in Investor Relations on one hand and Community Relations on the other gives an unique insight to the push and pulls that affects a company.

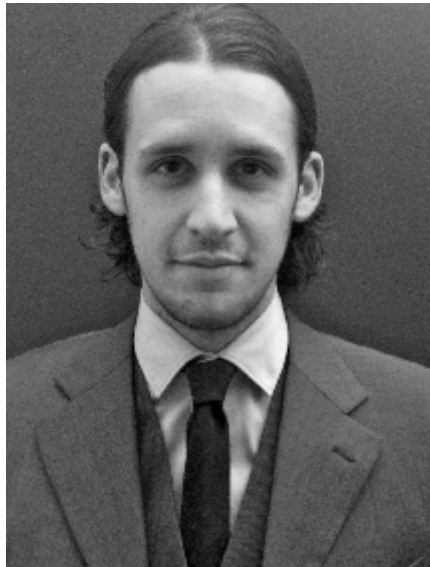
INDIA INC. BETTER PLACED TO **EMPOWER WOMEN** AT WORKPLACES

By Nicolo' Fabrizio Cristoni

As of 2013, violence against women is still a global phenomenon. Every day, all over the world, women are victims of acid attacks, rape, forced marriages, and other acts of cruelty. Regardless of their country, social status or religious faith, women are under constant threat of physical, sexual as well as emotional violence within their communities or at their workplace.

Increasingly over the past years, international organizations along with renowned activists and researchers have proven the incidence of economic losses resulting from abuses perpetrated on women. For instance, the World Health Organization has concluded in a recent report that violence against women puts an undue burden on governments' healthcare services since victims are more likely to require medical attention. Similarly, in a recent article in the Business Week, Ritu Shama, Co-Founder and President of Women Thrive Worldwide, has attempted to make a business case to end abuse against women by maintaining that it exacts a huge economic toll on crucial human resources.

As a matter of fact, violence against women is one of the greatest barriers to their economic empowerment and it often prevents them from acquiring decision-making power within their households.



In light of the fact that businesses are not exempted from bearing the human costs of violence faced by employees, colleagues, or people in the communities, it is worth exploring the role corporates can play in putting an end to abuse against women and allow them to reach their full potential.

Worldwide, an increasing number of ambitious initiatives from both the public and the private sector suggest that companies can indeed attain great results when it comes to women protection and empowerment.

In the UK, for instance, the 172 private

sector members of Opportunity Now, a Business in the Community Initiative, are working to improve the position of women in their member organisations, including benchmarking their practices and competing for awards which recognise their achievements.

In the United States, pressure is raising on Congress to approve the International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA), a legislation specifically tailored to address violence against women through the country's foreign policy. The legislation is expected to have great impact not only on U.S. corporations but also on their business partners overseas.

Specifically, once the law is passed, managers of American companies will be able to put pressure on their offices abroad to enforce a fair treatment towards female employees.

As shown in the figure below, the business community has the potential to positively impact three major areas.

Securing a safe workplace and fostering a culture of respect towards women is essential. The creation of internal policies specifically targeted to promptly prevent and respond to incidents of gender discrimination can be a crucial step towards a more diverse workforce. As an example of best practice, Coca-Cola India has developed its own guidelines, the



THERE ARE SEVERAL TOOLS THAT COMPANIES IN INDIA CAN EMPLOY TO POSITIVELY IMPACT THE ATTITUDES TO WOMEN, BOTH THOSE IN THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY. AS THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROVEN WEAK IN EFFECTIVELY IMPROVING THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, CORPORATES IN INDIA SEEM TO BE WELL PLACED TO HAVE A SCALABLE POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

“Workplace Rights Policy”, that promotes a workplace free from discrimination or physical or verbal harassment.

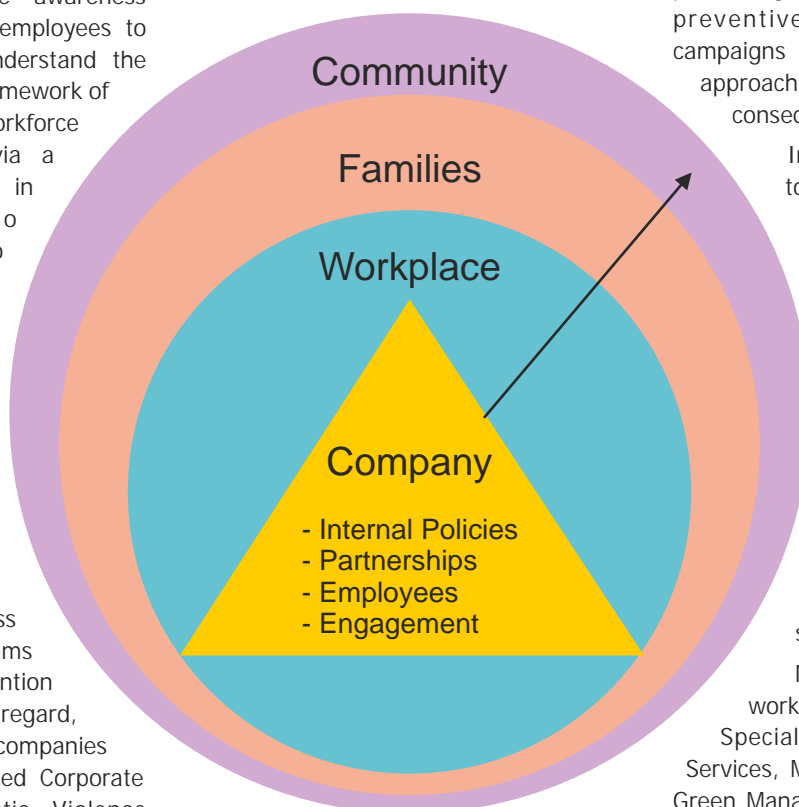
An additional essential component is to develop a comprehensive awareness training programs for all employees to ensure that they fully understand the issue as well as the legal framework of the policy. Moreover, the workforce should be empowered via a specific set of guidelines in order for them to promptly respond to incidents of violence or abuse.

Even when violence does not occur in the workplace, its effects on the business activities have major impact, especially in terms of productivity and absenteeism.

For this reason, awareness raising and training programs should also cover the prevention of domestic violence. In this regard, successful model Indian companies can look at is the UK-based Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence initiative. The CAADV unites a group of companies working collectively to train their members and share their experiences to build a base of best practise minimizing the occurrence of

domestic violence.

Another fundamental tool companies can leverage so as to comprehensively



address the issue is through the establishment of partnerships with concerned agencies (e.g., NGOs, public and healthcare organizations) to deepen

their impact on the community. From a CSR standpoint, a specific portfolio of organizations can be identified to embrace both a proactive stance and thus preventing violence to happen (e.g., preventive measures, awareness campaigns etc.) as well as a reactive approach aimed at addressing the consequences of the act of violence.

In conclusion, there are several tools that companies in India can employ to positively impact the attitudes to women, both those in their employment and in the wider community. As the role of the government has proven weak in effectively improving the empowerment of women, corporates in India seem to be well placed to have a scalable positive impact on the position of women in society.ⁱ

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IN A FAST-GROWING CONSUMER MARKET

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

IN BUSINESS AS STAKEHOLDERS VITAL





maximize positive business impacts in the workplace, marketplace and the community.

In February, UNICEF began a three-month consultation and pilot process with business to review and begin implementing the Principles using a set of due diligence tools developed by UNICEF. Participating companies are reviewing the 'Children's Rights Checklist – an impact assessment tool; the UNICEF 'Workbook - Children are Everybodys Business – a practical guide with ideas, checklists and inspiration for business action; and the Reporting Guidance to embed children in sustainability reporting. Following the pilot, UNICEF will revise and release the tools and make them publicly available.

10 PRINCIPLES on Children's Rights and Business ('the Principles')

All Business Should:

1. Meet their responsibility to respect children's rights and commit to supporting the human rights of children
2. Contribute to the elimination of child labour, including in all business activities and business relationships
3. Provide decent work for young workers, parents and caregivers
4. Ensure the protection and safety of children in all business activities and facilities
5. Ensure that products and services are safe, and seek to support children's rights through them
6. Use marketing and advertising that respect and support children's rights
7. Respect and support children's rights in relation to the environment and to land acquisition and use
8. Respect and support children's rights in security arrangements
9. Help protect children affected by emergencies
10. Reinforce community and government efforts to protect and fulfil children's rights

More information on The Principles is available at <http://www.unicef.org/csr/>

Courtesy: UNICEF

Companies interact with children on a daily basis, although often neither directly nor purposefully. Children are workers in their factories and fields, family members of their employees, and community members in the neighbourhoods where they operate. In many countries, children are increasingly recognized as a consumer group themselves, with discretionary income to spend and increased influence on family purchases. They are a market force to be reckoned with, but nonetheless need protection from inappropriate advertising and from unhealthy or unsafe products and services.

Yet, even while business and human rights discourse has evolved significantly, children have not been adequately considered by business as a key stakeholder group. Children's issues are often relegated to the use of child labour, or to corporate investments in local community initiatives that support children. The past few decades have indeed seen greater corporate commitments to cleaning up global supply chains to eradicate the use of underage workers. Yet beyond child labour considerations, companies also have the responsibility to respect and the opportunity to support children's rights through the ways in which they operate their facilities, develop and market their products, provide their services, and exert

their influence on economic and social development.

Morals aside, there is good reason for companies to pay attention. Exclusion of a holistic child rights lens within corporate human rights initiatives will create a number of risks for business, not least reputational risks from stakeholder allegations of direct or indirect violations of children's rights; legal risks from lawsuits for alleged violations; financial risks from mishandling children's rights within business operations; security risks from failing to earn the company's social license to operate; and market share risks from consumer action on lack of attention to child protection. Furthermore, apart from demands from investors and other stakeholders, governments are increasingly likely to implement policies and regulation that govern business's respect for children's rights.

Recognizing a need for explicit guidance about what it means for business to respect and support children's rights, the UN Global Compact, Save the Children and UNICEF—together with companies and other stakeholders—released a set of Ten Principles on Children's Rights and Business ('the Principles') that were released in March 2012. Building upon the UN Guiding Principles, the Principles identify a comprehensive range of actions that all business should take to prevent and address risks to children's rights and



RAYMOND'S TAILOR-MADE INITIATIVE HELPS LIFT POOR WOMEN'S LOT



When one comes to think of empowerment and education, there is just no end to what limits one can go to in finding new ways to liberate the society. Some companies have been very creative in their thinking and succeeded in giving an altogether different dimension in enriching the lives of others. Of course, these activities more or less spawned out of the need to enhance their own future prospects and expansions, but the germination of ideas are noteworthy.

Textiles major Raymond's tailoring initiative, as one of its massive countrywide CSR activity, is one such work that deserves mention. In the company's own words, the initiative has been undertaken "to acknowledge the work of unsung heroes and contributors who have been working behind the curtains all over the country to build the great success story of Raymond"

It is true that great fabrics can become style statements only if they are fashioned out by great tailors. Yet these tailoring communities are among the worst hit by inflation and modernization in the current scenario.

Tailoring prices have increased only by 3-5 percent as against the inflation of 9.5 percent. They have pathetic working conditions with no social support, lack of specialised machines for bulk tailoring as 60 percent of tailoring units only have a maximum of four units across India. There is lack of skill upgradation avenues and they face stiff competition from readymade garments in terms of quality finish and trims. It is little wonder that tailoring as a profession has been taken up by only 36 lakh people in India out of a population of 120 crore.

Keeping these factors in mind, Raymond Ltd., started its first training centre in

Patna to impart tailoring skills to underprivileged youth and tailors. The initiative took shape last year in Patna, the capital of Bihar, with a vision to impart skills to the unemployed, underprivileged youth as well as the existing tailoring community. The idea was to upgrade their current skill set and encourage employment and entrepreneurship to upgrade their product, in terms of finish and style and finally earn more revenue that has helped these people improve their status in the society. Women and modern youth are their major target audience. "We want to bring in a sense of empowerment among them by helping them grab better employment opportunities and encourage entrepreneur ventures", says Ram Bhatnagar, Senior Vice President, Emerging Business, Raymond Ltd.

The first Centre at Patna has successfully trained 250 candidates in suit,





THE RAYMOND TAILORING CENTRE AIMS TO TRAIN OVER 10,000 STUDENTS IN VARIOUS ASPECTS OF TAILORING, INCLUDING SUIT, SHIRT AND TROUSER MAKING OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THIS TRAINING HELPS THEM UPGRADE THEIR TAILORED PRODUCT QUALITY IN TERMS OF FINISH AND STYLE, EARN BETTER REVENUE AND THEREBY IMPROVE THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS.

shirt and trouser making in the first academic year. The company has already launched two more centres at Rajasthan.

“In the next five years we plan to extend this initiative to other states with 20 more such tailoring centres. The initiative aims to create a network of skilled stylist tailors across India for sharing of knowledge and ideas, while providing customers with quality tailored garments,” says Bhatnagar.

The Raymond Tailoring Centre aims to train over 10,000 students in various aspects of tailoring, including suit, shirt and trouser making over the next five years. This training helps them upgrade their tailored product quality in terms of finish and style, earn better revenue and thereby improve their social and economic status. “The idea is to ‘grow together’ and it has been our company’s endeavor to rejuvenate the fading art of tailoring and in this direction has initiated several steps.”

“The tailoring community is one of the key spokes of the textile and apparel industry. However, it is important for tailors to be abreast of styling trends and be able to implement them in the garments to suit evolving customer tastes, given constant upgradation in fashion. Special focus shall be given to encourage women to pursue our programmes, through special reservation for them.”

“We are proud to have the support of the Government of Bihar in our first step in this direction,” observed Gautam Singhania, Chairman and MD, Raymond Ltd, during

the launch of the first centre in May last year. He has been toying with the thought of opening specialised tailoring training centres for quite some time.

The company is also going to assist trained students in placements in ‘The Raymond Shops’ numbering 680, and other multi-brand outlets, besides providing them career opportunities in around 100 Raymond workshops which will be set up during this period. The trained tailors will be encouraged to set up tailoring shops and Raymond shall support them in their endeavour.

So, what was the initial response? “The drop-out rates in the first four months were really high, but with constant counselling we managed to make them see the future. The successful candidates have a lot of success stories to share,” says Bhatnagar.

According to Bhatnagar, there is a demand for skilled tailors all over India. Raymond, with an aim to expand its retail footprint across the country, has been making efforts to tap the huge potential of untapped and raw talent in small towns. “There is enough willingness to learn something new and use that knowledge to earn a livelihood; it is just that they don’t know where to go and waste a lot of time trying to learn in bits and pieces and ending up with a meagre income,” said Bhatnagar. There has already been a launch of Raymond’s exclusive stores in over 200 towns. The women and unemployed youth who came from a poor economic background have a lot to look forward to



WE MAPPED ALL TOWNS BY THE CENSUS (2001) THREE YEARS BACK AND IDENTIFIED 750 TIER - III, IV AND V TOWNS ON THE BASIS OF POPULATION AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL. BASED ON MARKET ATTRACTIVENESS, WE DECIDED TO LEVERAGE RAYMOND'S BRAND EQUITY AND ENTER THESE MARKETS WITH EXCLUSIVE STORES. CONSUMERS TODAY HAVE BECOME VERY STYLE CONSCIOUS. THOSE IN SMALLER TOWNS ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES IN THE METROS IN TERMS OF CHOICES."

SAYS BHATNAGAR

and even launch their own enterprises if they wish to as Raymond will provide financial assistance to them.

Bhatnagar further reveals, "We mapped all towns by the Census (2001) three years back and identified 750 Tier -III, IV and V towns on the basis of population and economic potential. Based on market attractiveness, we decided to leverage Raymond's brand equity and enter these markets with exclusive stores. Consumers today have become very style conscious. Those in smaller towns are no different from the ones in the metros in terms of choices."

Except for around 50 company-owned stores, the rest are franchisee-owned. Among new towns that Raymond has expanded into are Jalna, Latur, Porbander, Nanded, Bardoli and Baramati.

Another area for retail expansion has been 'Made to Measure' exclusive brand outlets rolled out a year ago. Seven of these are operational in Mumbai, in addition to 40 shop-in-shops within Raymond stores. In this format, customer measurements are taken at the store; and customised yet machine-stitched apparel is offered to the customer. These measurements are then stored in a data centre in Bangalore.

All these developments in the retail sector open out opportunities for tailoring and employment and business opportunities for millions of people. The minimum qualification for admission to the Raymond Tailoring Centre is 8th Standard pass. A student pay a fee of Rs. 2000/- each for Shirt-Making Course and Trouser-Making Course and Rs.5000/- for Suit-Making. This is to ensure that the centre attracts serious candidates who can

measure up to the high standards of its training modules. These fees are refundable once the course is successfully completed by the student.

Encouraged by the success of Raymond tailoring centre in Bihar, the company went on to open at Jaipur and Jodhpur this year.

Considering technological advancements in the sector, the Raymond Tailoring Centre module includes training candidates on the latest modern machinery and use of best tailoring practices for free. Special focus shall be given to encourage women to pursue the programs through reservation for them. The Government of Rajasthan is fully behind this unique and innovative initiative. It is also giving Raymond a built-up infrastructure to run this tailoring centre.

Raymond is not only training its students to stitch garments, but also to be the best in the profession, maintain international standards, be abreast of fashion and textile trends, fashion forecasting, soft skills and spoken English. Besides these, students are made aware about the various socio-economic issues like Health & Hygiene, Entrepreneurship, Food Habits, HIV/AIDS, Fire Safety with the help of subject-matter specialists from NGOs and other agencies.

There has been a significant and visible difference, impacting their lives for the better since the students were admitted to the training centre. Raymond has created a new horizon for women especially. Participation of women trainees in economic activities will help them overcome the poverty trap and ensure empowerment. This effort not only makes the unemployed youths employable but also enhances their confidence, self-esteem and social respect.

Success Story

Naznee Parveen



Naznee Parveen is a specially-abled 17-year girl who has proved her mettle beyond doubt. She says her life changed days after stepping into the Raymond Tailoring Center. This crucial step has been her first towards becoming a skilled tailor.

Barely able to reach the machine paddle with her legs, her confidence at using the machine and willingness to make of this opportunity has helped her overcome all obstacles along the way. She is now able to perform special operations involved in shirt-making like attaching buttons by machine and drafting patterns better than other students.

Sharing her experience at the Raymond Tailoring Circle, she says, "I have always been looked down upon. I always felt I was different and an outcast. People felt embarrassed to stand and talk to me. But today I have so many friends here; I am asked to do tasks by my teachers and I also speak in English." She has completed the shirt-making course and is well on her way to completing the trouser-making course.

Success Stories- Raymond's Tailoring Centres

Chanda Ghoshwami



Chanda had a difficult time with her husband and in-laws and was left to fend for herself. She reached the crossroads of choosing either to live or face slow death. Joining Raymond Tailoring was her choice - "I chose to live". She was determined to

show the world that she is not a weakling. Keeping her three children in mind, Chanda decided to fight her own battle. "My life was driven by my determination to be independent." The first step to being independent was her conscious decision to join the institute. She faced a lot of challenges. There were times she went without food so she can save money to travel to the institute.

"Today I am back with my husband and in-laws. I have gained respect from them. They saw That I was determined to not allow hardships bog me down, but to support and make a career for myself," she smiles.

The dedication of this student is incomparable. With tears in her eyes she says, "I wish this training center had started 10 years back. It would have given me 10 more years of life with dignity. Had I not taken the training course, I would never have been able to face the world by myself ...ye sirf mere pichle jannam ka koi punniya hoga jo hame yeha parne mila."

Mamta Chaudhury



28 year old Mamta Chaudhury is filled with tremendous willpower and claims she is already an entrepreneur. "I have achieved industrial standards of training and I am committed to start my own venture and utilize the invaluable learning," she says. Raymond catalyzed her willingness to succeed while making her confident that she will meet with success.

"Financial problems took away the best years of my life. I could not even complete my studies." She started stitching clothes and supported her family through it. She still remains the only earning member of her family. "I could not even think of saving extra money. Today I have the courage and belief to start my business and employ underprivileged women." She is getting a number of orders now, has taken a shop on lease and has started a small tailoring unit of her own.

Rashmi Rani and Rani Tewaswani

Rashmi Tewaswani, 18, and Rani Tewaswani, 17, took over the family responsibilities after their parents' demise. They have raised and nurtured their five siblings. The two sisters had no prior knowledge of tailoring before joining the Raymond Tailoring Circle. Having never worked with machines before, they were astounded to see the precision and artistry delivered fabric after fabric.

Having lost their father just a few months ago, they were left to fend for themselves. "I did not wish to live but there was no way I can choose to die either since my younger siblings depended on me," says Rashmi. "The trainers at the institute were of great support to the sisters. Being in Raymond gave Rashmi the security that, even if she has to struggle today, there's promise of a better tomorrow. She is a battle-hardened survivor of a hostile environment and adverse circumstances.

"I joined here with no knowledge of tailoring. I wanted to do



something but did not know what." Raymond came as a ray of hope and she immediately enrolled at the training centre. The machines fascinated her. "The specialized machines were alien to me, and the different machineries for stitching different parts of the same product were amazing," says Rashmi with excitement. She goes on to say, "The pattern table had grading sheets which looked more like a math copy to me." She was amazed by the varieties of scissors used for different purposes.

Rashmi's inner strength to carry on in the midst of the tragedies unfolding in her life makes her a model worthy of emulation. To make ends meet, she opened up a tuition class for small children. She believes that courage is to rise after falling over and over again.

Both girls have been successfully placed in one of Asia's best garment manufacturing factories. They are excited to having made it this far despite the hardships life had thrown at them.

Mahindra Education Trust's **KEY INITIATIVE**



Project
'Nanhi Kali'
Puts Girl Child on
Path to Progress

While India has made some progress in liberating a few women in urban pockets from age-old shackles of backwardness, the ground reality continues to remain worrisome. More than 80 percent of India's women population is yet to find liberation in the true sense. Even for the economically independent women in the boardrooms, independence has not been total, as cases of sexual harassment at workplace are rising as much as sexual discrimination in finding equal opportunities. The overall situation is alarming as with the second-largest population in the world. India generates 14 percent of the global talent pool, of which are the 5.5 million women entering India's workforce each year, all overwhelmingly driven to succeed. Yet the potential is not being fully realised as majority are unable to realise their abilities and contribute meaningfully in India's socio-political and economic growth. In fact, the vast majority of uneducated and underprivileged women, who constitute a half of India's adult population, remain a liability to the society, almost pulling the country backward. From the point of view of effective utilisation of human resource, it is a sheer wastage, which India can hardly afford.

India's corporate sector, which is still majorly male-dominated, is awakening to this reality and many of them have launched special CSR programmes to educate women and girl children, providing them skills to earn their own living and stirring in them the importance of good health, sanitation and developing leadership and decision-making skills. These efforts will go a long way in bringing women into the mainstream of India's growth. Mahindra Group of Companies' CSR arm, Mahindra Foundation, has been doing some commendable work in the area of women empowerment, skills training and girl child education apart from other innumerable social activities.

CSR Mandate explored Mahindra's Nanhi Kali and Pride School Projects, besides Mahindra & Mahindra's Samridhi programme for farmers in India, which is giving skills-training in using farm equipments and heavy earth-moving equipments to women, who, according to reports, constitute 43 percent of the rural workforce in India. The training is designed to give a managerial edge to women, so that women in rural India can take over the rein of managing farm activities independently.

Ms. Sheetal Mehta,
Trustee & Executive
Director, KCMET (K. C.
Mahindra Educational
Trust) & Chief, CSR,
Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd,
In-charge of Nanhi Kali
and Pride school Project,
shares details of the
various initiatives of the
Trust in an interview with
CSR Mandate. Excerpts.

Please share with us KC Mahindra Educational Trust's flagship programmes, Project Nanhi Kali and other vocational courses that Mahindra has initiated for women and girl children.

Let us start with Project Nanhi Kali. It supports the education of the disadvantaged girl child and has been the flagship programme of the K. C. Mahindra Education Trust since 1996. Today it has become one of the most well-known programmes, supported by individuals and corporates worldwide.

The Nanhi Kali sponsorship provides underprivileged girls with academic support to attend schools and study various subjects. In addition, the girls are provided with material support including uniforms, school bags, shoes, socks and stationery which allow them to attend school with dignity. By the end of the financial year 2012-13, as many as 7,414 individuals and corporates donated Rs. 22.65 crores to the Nanhi Kali project, enabling it to support the

education of 78,338 underprivileged girls across nine states of the country. The largest donor is the Mahindra Group, which supports the education of 29,702 Nanhi Kalis. This initiative has had a significant





TO FOCUS AND TARGET MAHINDRA'S INITIATIVES BETTER, THE COUNCIL IDENTIFIED THREE FOCUS AREAS WHERE THE GROUP COULD MAKE THE MAXIMUM IMPACT; EDUCATION, WHICH MAHINDRA HAS SUPPORTED FOR LONG, AND HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT, WHERE ITS BUSINESSES ALREADY HAD CLEAR UNDERLYING STRENGTHS. IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT EVERY COMPANY IN THE MAHINDRA GROUP WILL ALLOCATE 1.0 PERCENT OF POST-TAX PROFITS TO THEIR CSR PROGRAMMES, OF WHICH 0.5 PERCENT WILL BE ALLOCATED TO EDUCATION, THEREBY SQUARELY PUTTING THE NANHI KALI PROGRAMME UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



impact in terms of increase in learning outcomes by 10 percent and curtailing the dropout of girls from school to less than 10 percent.

Do you also track the progress of these children over the years? What difference did you find in those girls who were educated under the Nanhi Kali programme?

The most important component of the project, the Academic Support consists of an extra class before or after school hours where mathematics, science and language are taught with the use of workbooks based on concept learning, problem solving and repeated practice. The classes are conducted by community activists, who are graduates trained from within the community. Academic Resource Coordinators, (qualified B.Ed or M.Ed teaching professionals) routinely work with the community activists to train and assess improvement in learning levels. Nanhi Kalis are introduced to concepts such as the library hour to inculcate reading habits, as well as expression through stories, songs, poetry, drama, music, games, artwork, craft, reading and writing. The intention is to promote joyful learning and to unlock

their imagination to express themselves as freely as possible. Discussing, describing, asking and debating are encouraged through activities. A Child Tracking Matrix, used to chart each child's learning levels, tracks the child's monthly progress, and directs the academic coordinator to concentrate on the areas which require improvement. In addition, the academic coordinator regularly visits the family of the Nanhi Kali, to discuss attendance and performance concerns.

Impact of Project Nanhi Kali includes:

- 1) Providing educational support, both academic and material, to 78,338 girls till date, of which approximately 50 percent of the beneficiaries live in tribal and rural areas, and nearly 7,000 in difficult-to-reach dacoit-infested areas. The nine states in which the programme is implemented are Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.
- 2) Dropout rates of girls, which at the national level is almost 30 percent for Primary and 70 per cent for Secondary School, has successfully been curtailed to less than 10 percent within the Nanhi Kali programme area.
- 3) Increased learning outcomes: Ranging



BY RAPIDLY SCALING THE NUMBER OF GIRLS UNDER NANHI KALI'S SUPPORT AND QUICKLY EXCEEDING ALL INITIAL TARGETS, THE FOUNDATION PROVED ESPECIALLY INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME. TODAY, THE NAANDI FOUNDATION ALONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERING ACADEMIC AND MATERIAL SUPPORT TO NEARLY 71,000 GIRLS.



up to 20 percent in both tribal and urban slums.

4) For the last few years, the Chhattisgarh State Board examination for Grade V has seen Nanhi Kalis securing top ranks beating not only the boys from their school but also children from more affluent schools.

Nanhi Kali has gained strength with each passing year. Tell us the secret behind the success story.

Integration, Integration, Integration, this is how I look at the reason behind the overwhelming success of the Nanhi Kali programme.

Today, for any company that has reached a certain plateau of success, CSR is a priority. As the company grows, so do the number and scale of its CSR initiatives. But oftentimes, these initiatives are simply not integrated into the workforce. They are run by isolated teams with limited engagement and support from both the management and employees.

In 2005, when I took over charge of Mahindra's CSR team, one of the first things we looked at was to make a case for a consolidated and coordinated approach towards running the Group's CSR initiatives. The management, in response, threw its weight behind the approach, setting up a CSR Council that brought under its purview the entire gamut of Mahindra's CSR programmes and activities. The

Council comprised not only CSR figureheads and representatives, but leaders of the group's various business units. To lead the Council, the President of Mahindra's Human Resources came on board. These structural changes sent a clear signal to everyone at Mahindra that every business, every team and every employee had a stake in the success of the company's CSR initiatives.

To focus and target Mahindra's initiatives better, the Council identified three focus areas where the Group could make the maximum impact; Education, which Mahindra has supported for long, and Health and Environment, where its businesses already had clear underlying strengths. It has been decided that every company in the Mahindra group will allocate 1.0 percent of post-tax profits to their CSR programmes, of which 0.5 percent will be allocated to Education, thereby squarely putting the Nanhi Kali programme under the spotlight. But the Council was also careful to not mistake integration and focus for rigidity. It allowed individual companies to use the remaining 0.5 percent of their profits on any of the other focus areas, while it monitored their implementation and impact.

The second most important factor was to set an example by leading from the front. If there is one factor that binds all companies that are successful in their CSR initiatives, it is that they all have their top management



AROUND THIS TIME THAT THE TRUST MET AND PARTNERED WITH THE NAANDI FOUNDATION, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION BASED IN HYDERABAD. THE NAANDI FOUNDATION HAD ALREADY DEVELOPED A PROVEN MODEL OF SUPPORTING GIRL CHILD EDUCATION, AND WAS OPERATING AT A SCALE ACROSS ANDHRA PRADESH AND MADHYA PRADESH. THE PARTNERSHIP PROVED SO EFFECTIVE THAT ONLY A YEAR LATER, THE FOUNDATION WAS BROUGHT ON BOARD AS A JOINT MANAGING PARTNER. BY RAPIDLY SCALING THE NUMBER OF GIRLS UNDER NANHI KALI'S SUPPORT AND QUICKLY EXCEEDING ALL INITIAL TARGETS, THE FOUNDATION PROVED ESPECIALLY INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME



rallying at the front to ensure employee participation at the highest levels. Mahindra, however, took it further. The Group's leaders, including Mr. Anand Mahindra himself, invested their personal credibility, time and effort to ensure not just employee participation, but also that of the company's partners, competitors and the wider community. In fact, as we have mentioned earlier, Nanhi Kali was born out of personal commitment of Mr. Mahindra towards the cause of Girl Child Education.

In addition, the group's leaders invested significant portions of their time to shape and direct the group's CSR strategy, monitor implementation, and measure impact.

Reaching Out to Maximize Impact was the third most important contributing factor in the success story. When Mr. Mahindra ventured to found Nanhi Kali, he was clear he did not want the programme to be limited by his or his group's ability to support it. He wanted to engage as many supporters and donors as possible. This enabled the team to reach out to an array of supporters, starting with the group's employees to non-profit partners to other individual and corporate donors.

Their efforts seemed to have paid off rather well. Today, of the 75,000 girls that Nanhi Kali programme supports, more than 1/3rd are supported by employees of the Mahindra Group. And the remaining 2/3 through the support of over 8,000 individual and corporate donors, counting some of the biggest names in the Industry, including HDFC, HPCL, and Johnson & Johnson.

Interestingly, Nanhi Kali's success also convinced some of Mahindra's fiercest competitors to partner on this venture. Capgemini, a competitor of Tech Mahindra, has nearly eight of its international offices supporting the

programme. In fact, Capgemini's support covers nearly 10,000 of our girls.

What other factors contributed to the onward success journey?

The fact that the Mahindra Group put together considerable resources of its own and its credibility behind the programme convinced a large number of partners to not just join but also to progressively ramp up their investments. Finding the Right Implementation Partner was an important initiative that paid off well for the programme.

In the early 2000s, when the KC Mahindra Education Trust was scouting for implementation partners for Nanhi Kali, its key challenge was in finding an organization that had the scale and reach to support tens of thousands of girls across the country. Most organizations the Trust found operated in two or three schools at the most.

It was around this time that the Trust met and partnered with the Naandi Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Hyderabad. The Naandi Foundation had already developed a proven model of supporting Girl Child Education, and was operating at a scale across Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The partnership proved so effective that only a year later, the Foundation was brought on board as a joint managing partner.

By rapidly scaling the number of girls under Nanhi Kali's support and quickly exceeding all initial targets, the Foundation proved especially integral to the success of the programme. Today, the Naandi Foundation alone is responsible for delivering academic and material support to nearly 71,000 girls.

For Mahindra, the partnership with the Naandi Foundation has also borne fruit elsewhere. It has now expanded beyond



APPROXIMATELY 500 SCHOLARSHIPS ARE GIVEN EVERY YEAR TO STUDENTS WHO UNDERGO A THREE YEAR COURSE. IN THE FY 2012-13, 550 STUDENTS WERE AWARDED THE MAITS LEADING TO A DISBURSEMENT OF RS. 91.43 LACS. TILL DATE, MAITS HAS BEEN AWARDED TO 6354 STUDENTS



Nanhi Kali to several other CSR initiatives of the Mahindra Group.

In summary, the success of the Nanhi Kali programme is a combination of several dominating factors. It's clear that an organization-wide focus on a particular cause can harness the collective energy and resources of a much larger number of people than is possible through individual teams or groups. Choosing a right partner is especially vital in scaling and sustaining the programme. Finally, leaders who provide both strategic support and creative imagination will ultimately prove decisive in rallying the entire organization and the wider community in to supporting the cause.

Tell us about educational scholarship programmes for socially and economically underprivileged students. Until now, how many students have been awarded these scholarships?

Grants and scholarships form an important aspect of educational programmes as most of these children drop out of schools and skill training programmes due to poverty and inability to fund their studies. The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust offers the following four scholarship and grants programmes.

MAHINDRA ALL INDIA TALENT SCHOLARSHIPS:

Instituted in 1995, Mahindra All India Talent Scholarship (MAITS) are awarded

to students from lower socio economic strata to enable them to pursue a job-oriented diploma course at a recognized Government Polytechnic in India. Approximately 500 scholarships are given every year to students who undergo a three year course. In the FY 2012-13, 550 students were awarded the MAITS leading to a disbursement of Rs. 91.43 Lacs. Till date, MAITS has been awarded to 6354 students.

K. C. MAHINDRA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES ABROAD:

The K C Mahindra Scholarship for Post Graduate Studies Abroad is an interest free loan scholarship which is awarded to deserving graduates interested in pursuing their postgraduate studies overseas. This scholarship has been awarded since 1956. In 2013, 50 students were awarded this interest free loan scholarship. These were given to students who were doing their postgraduation in a wide range of subjects like Computer Science & Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering Chemical Engineering, Economics and Law and have received admission in renowned universities like Harvard Business School, Yale, Stanford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon, London School of Economics etc. Further, the K C Mahindra Fellows Fund of Rs 24 lakh was awarded to the top 3 candidates (a maximum scholarship of Rs. 8 lakh each). The total number of scholarships given till date is 1123.

K.C.MAHINDRA UWC SCHOLARSHIPS:

86 students have benefited from the K C Mahindra UWC Scholarship so far, thus enabling them to study at the United World College, and in particular, the Mahindra United World College. KCMET



has disbursed a total of Rs. 655.31 lakh in the form of these scholarships. During FY2012-13, 12 students were given scholarships amounting to a disbursement of Rs. 69.31 lakh.

MAHINDRA SEARCH FOR TALENT SCHOLARSHIP:

This scholarship which rewards excellence in academics has been set up in 35 institutions in India. In addition, students who receive the Mahindra Search for Talent Scholarship in the consecutive year receive the Honours Scholarship award which includes a cash prize of Rs. 5000/- and a citation from the Trust.

How do you help under-privileged women gain self-reliance and independence?

Since its inception in 1953, the K. C. Mahindra Education Trust has been guided by the belief that the route to addressing many of India's social problems is through education and training, particularly, of the girl child. Poor parents have difficulty in freeing their children from household chores and income generation activities in order to attend school. India has one of the largest numbers of out of school children at eight million, the majority of which are girls. Poverty is a double-edged sword for girls as they are twice excluded because of both gender and economic conditions. There are 35 percent females compared

to 18 percent males who have received no education in economically poor societies. The dichotomy is that investing in girls' education would result in lower infant and maternal mortality rates, improved nutrition of children, lower fertility rates and improved economic productivity. Every year of schooling completed by a girl is a step towards poverty alleviation. The World Bank has acknowledged that "there is no investment more effective for achieving development goals than educating girls." The alleviation of poverty is, therefore, essential for under privileged women to gain self reliance and independence. Project Nanhi Kali aims to do this by building a literate and educated Indian female population from those trapped in the cycle of poverty and dependence.

The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust aims to promote such changes in a sustainable way with the aim of helping whole communities 'Rise for Good'. Project Nanhi Kali not only works with the girl child but those within the community to help create a gradual shift in culture towards female education. Great effort is made to sensitize the parents and the wider community to the issue of education of the girl child which is particularly important in cases where many Nanhi Kalis are first generation learners. Case studies show the success of this in which

families of Nanhi Kali's often have younger siblings go through the programme as well.

Mahindra's Trust runs another school called Pride. Do tell us a little about that school.

Mahindra Pride Schools: The vocational courses take place in the Mahindra Pride Schools through which one-of-a-kind livelihood training programmes continue to take forward the vision to completely transform youth from socially disadvantaged communities by training and placing them in high growth service sector careers. The last financial year witnessed the setting up of the 5th Mahindra Pride School in Srinagar in October 2012, where the first batch of students braved extreme weather and socio-political unrest to complete their training and are now ready to be placed. The students receive intensive training at the five Mahindra Pride Schools in Pune, Chennai, Patna, Chandigarh and Srinagar. Areas of training included Hospitality Craft, Information Technology-Enabled Services (ITES – for BPOs and KPOs) and Customer Relationship Management, along with training in spoken English, Computer Applications and Life-skills. The total number of Mahindra Pride School



THE NANHI KALI PROJECT IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR THE SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED GIRL CHILD. HOWEVER, BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS CAN ATTEND THE ACADEMIC SUPPORT CLASSES CONDUCTED UNDER THE PROGRAMME. IN THESE CLASSES, EMPHASIS IS LAID ON CLARIFYING THE CONCEPTS OF MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND LANGUAGE.

students trained till date is 7,300. Post training, the Mahindra Pride School students have been recruited by food chains such as McDonald's, Pizza Hut, KFC and Café Coffee Day, 5-star hotels such as Hotel Le Meridien, Department Stores such as Westside, Mom & Me and BPOs & KPOs such as Bajaj Allianz, Syntel, HCL, TCS, Dell, Cognizant, Tech Mahindra and Mphasis. There has been 100 percent placement of students in lucrative jobs and a consistent increase in average salary per batch. The average salary is currently over Rs. 10,000 per month.

How does the Foundation visualize the status of women 10 years from now? How do you feel India can achieve it? Where is the problem now? Any suggestion for policy-makers? Do you see any PPP model

to achieve justice, equality and dignity for women as the way forward?

The socio-economic composition of children who drop out of school in India suggests that education deprivation occurs most among rural, urban poor and tribal children. The situation of girls is worse than boys as the everyday signal conveyed to girls is that they have a "weak" mind, unsuitable for the rigours of these subjects. The Nanhi Kali Project is specifically designed for the socially and economically disadvantaged girl child. However, both boys and girls can attend the Academic Support Classes conducted under the programme. In these classes, emphasis is laid on clarifying the concepts of mathematics, science and language. The Nanhi Kali programme is implemented in some of the most deprived, remote, backward and difficult regions of the country where literacy levels, especially female literacy, are low e.g., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Chhatisgarh.

The Nanhi Kali Project is being implemented in nine different states in India. It provides 10 years of quality education to girl children from marginalized sections of society living in the urban poor, remote rural and tribal areas of the country. It includes children from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minority and migrant communities. In this manner, the project promotes both equity and plurality.

Project Nanhi Kali focuses on partnership with multiple stakeholders rather than duplicating intervention of others or building a quasi parallel system. KCMET and Naandi Foundation work in conjunction with the government and NGOs in areas where literacy levels are normally low. The Nanhi Kali academic support classes are held in the government schools, thereby eliminating

the need to invest in physical infrastructure for classrooms, black boards, furniture etc. The cost of the academic support, i.e. cost of the educators (community activists etc) and the material cost is covered by the funds raised from individuals, institutions and corporate houses who donate to sponsor the education of underprivileged girl children. It costs as little as Rs. 2,400 (less than US \$ 60) per year to sponsor a girl studying in Grade 1 to 5 and Rs. 3,600 (U.S. \$ 90) for a girl child studying in Grade 6 to 10, thereby enabling participation of a much larger population of donors. Thus, on one hand the project is funded in a sustainable way, while on the other hand, is both scalable and replicable in other states and communities through new partnerships with both governments and non-government organisations.

The goal of Project Nanhi Kali is to educate 500,000 underprivileged girls. By harnessing existing partnerships and forging new strategic partnerships, the project aims to expand out to communities and areas it is currently not operational in. Also, through corporate tie-ups and employee payroll giving programmes, the project aims to mobilize larger donor contributions to support the project's expansion plans.



A MOVEMENT OF THE WOMEN, BY THE WOMEN & FOR THE WOMEN

Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is an organization that believes in empowering its members and their families right at the grassroots level. Says Elaben, the Founder of SEWA, "The success of SEWA provides ample proof that women can and do build strong vital organizations around issues that are relevant to them, find viable solutions out of their own experiences and in the process, change our society and environment in a healthy, respectful, non-violent and sustainable way."



SEWA: Empowering Entrepreneurs at the



SEWA believes in primacy of community ownership and knowledge. Women are trained in skills necessary to competently administer their own social enterprises according to local needs and regional characteristics.



Very Grassroots of Society

A befitting example of widespread social impact on health, education, housing, community building and citizen leadership at the lowest level of our society of India's economic growth is clearly evident on the lives and livelihoods of 1.73 million SEWA members and their families in 14 states across India. Direct protection, revival, promotion and financing of thousands of livelihoods of women every year across India and the neighbouring countries through women's own social enterprise - from trade, saving, insurance, solar energy to childcare - is remarkable. Numbers are still growing in traditional livelihoods as artisan skills are attuned to modern computer or design technology.

SEWA has completed 40 years of organising in 2012. Several milestones have been achieved. However, there are some new challenges as well. The members' daughters and daughters-in-law also attend meetings and training programs organized by SEWA, taking an interest in the work of their mothers. Sometimes these female relatives play a role in encouraging members to participate in SEWA's innovative programs. However, these adolescents face huge challenges such as lack of resources, education, financial backing, etc. which deprives them of opportunities. Thus SEWA has also begun programs specifically related to their development like capacity building, literacy, organizing, livelihood skills along with use of latest

technology, among others. Also, the current young membership in SEWA is on the rise making it important to have programmes specifically for the youth.

SEWA Sisters

SEWA sisters work in the informal sector of the economy and do not have a fixed employer-employee relationship. SEWA's main goal is to organize them for full employment and self-reliance. Full employment means livelihoods whereby workers obtain livelihood security, income security and food security. By self-reliance we mean women should be self-reliant, individually and collectively, economically and in terms of decision making ability. SEWA follows an integrated approach which comprises (a) Organizing for collective strength, (b) Capacity Building to stand firm in a competitive market, (c) Capital Formation for risk mitigation & fight poverty, (d) Social Security to enhance well-being & productivity.

SEWA believes in primacy of community ownership and knowledge. Women are trained in skills necessary to competently administer their own social enterprises according to local needs and regional characteristics. By organizing themselves in 130 cooperatives and 15 federations/associations, the members develop alternative sources of livelihoods to build livelihood security for their families which ensures food, nutrition, health & education. SEWA organizes these women



SEWA BELIEVES IN THE PRIMACY OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE. THUS IN SEWA'S STRATEGY, WORKERS DO NOT REMAIN WORKERS BUT BECOME OWNERS AND MANAGERS OF THEIR TRADES, ENTERPRISES AND ORGANIZATIONS.

workers through the strategy of struggle and development. The struggle is against many constraints and limitations imposed on them by the society and the economy, while development activities strengthen women's bargaining power and offer them new alternatives. Practically, the strategy is carried out through the joint action of union and cooperatives.

In the last four decades, the organized membership of SEWA has increased to 1.73 million from a mere 1,070 in 1972.

SEWA believes in the primacy of local ownership and knowledge. Thus in SEWA's strategy, workers do not remain workers but become owners and managers of their trades, enterprises and organizations. Each form of organization promoted by SEWA and its members have the following characteristics.

They exist for the benefit of the self-employed women members.

- > They are owned by self-employed women
- > They are managed by them
- > They are democratically run
- > They aim towards self-reliance, both financially and managerially

As such, spearhead teams are formed to lead each of these forms of organizations. Spearhead teams are comprised of local organizers who take charge of all of SEWA's activities. The spearhead team's members are in the proportion of 80 percent leaders and 20 percent SEWA





SEWA SPREAD ITS WINGS FROM THE VILLAGES TO THE GLOBAL LEVEL. IT IS OPERATIONAL IN 14 STATES OF INDIA AND IN OTHER SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES LIKE SRI LANKA, NEPAL, BHUTAN, BANGLADESH, PAKISTAN, AND AFGHANISTAN. SEWA HAS ALSO REACHED KYRGYZSTAN, GHANA, MALI AND BURKINA FASO IN AFRICA. ALL THIS MAKES SEWA A GLOBAL MOVEMENT.

organizers. The team leaders (aagewans) are selected on the criteria of their long experience in working with SEWA. Spearhead team members, or 'barefoot managers' undergo intensive training in administration, financial management and the technical aspects of their trade.

40 Years of Organizing

SEWA completed 40 years on 12 April 2012. Over the 40 years, it has organized a number of members and their capacities have been developed but it also faced many challenges in the entire process. SEWA also became known as the Green Organization. It spread its wings from the villages to the global level. It is operational in 14 states of India and in other South Asian countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. SEWA has also reached Kyrgyzstan, Ghana, Mali and Burkina Faso in Africa. All this makes SEWA a global movement. It is a movement to organize the poor women workers from the informal sector of the economy across the world.

Over the years, the younger generation have become members of the organization. The organization needs to understand the likes and aspirations of the younger generation of SEWA members. The main aim would be building the skills of the new generation in the traditional as well as the newer areas of livelihood so

that they can be self-reliant. This will be done by skills development and use of latest technology.

Replication And Scaling Up

SEWA began organizing from Gujarat. it now has a presence in 14 other states. Similarly, the SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre initiated in Gujarat is being replicated in Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Bihar and in the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan.

SEWA Bank began as an urban co-operative bank and is currently seeking permission to expand into the rural areas.

RUDI was piloted in one district of Gujarat and is currently operational in 12 districts of Gujarat and in Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, and Rajasthan.

SEWA also worked in the countries of Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. These countries now have their own local federation viz. Bagay- E – Khazana Federation in Afghanistan for the war-affected widows and Sri Lanka SEWA Women Development Association for the conflict-affected women. Upscaling the micro finance activities and operation of 7 branches of Shree Swashrayee Mahila SEWA Co-operative Bank.

Member's Own Economic Organization

SEWA is a family of member-owned economic organizations that provide livelihood security, reduces vulnerability and lead to economic empowerment. SEWA's members are organized into a union (with rural and urban branches), 130 cooperatives, 181 rural producer groups, 15 state-level federations/ associations, seven social service organizations (including health, housing, credit and childcare), five capacity development and research centres, and one national federation. As part of its rural livelihood security programmes, SEWA has organized 250,000 artisans; 3,000 weavers; 150,000 salt farmers and 9,000 farmers into alternative economic structures.

SEWA's experience shows that when women have the capacity to anticipate risks and use their resources, they are well equipped to deal with the realities effectively and can gradually climb out of poverty. SEWA believes that the economic power cannot only be left in the hands of those who have capital or to governments; but workers must also conceive, build and expand their own economic strength by establishing their own economic institutions. SEWA experience has been that the empowerment of poor women

In the words of Gauriben and Puriben, master craftswomen and the shareholders of STFC, "you all would have seen, managed and built several companies but we bring to you our story which is our real life experience of building a company of the rural poor women, by the women themselves and for the women. The life of my family hangs by the thread with which I embroider."

Parvatiben Poonambhai Solanki says, "For more than 15 years, I could not afford to have a door in my hut. But, when I started working with the Gitanjali Cooperative making stationery, I got a regular income which enabled me to take a loan and have a door in my home. That was the first night I could sleep. I felt so happy."

Nabuben Butabhai Koli from Ajitgadh village in Surendranagar district is a farmer by occupation. She produces about 80 kg cumin every season. She says, "Now I find no need to go to the market to sell my products. I am also not worried about price fluctuations. Through RUDI I can sell my produce at my door step. The price that I receive is an average of the market price over the last three days. I get spot payment rather than having to wait weeks or months before the proceeds actually start flowing in. Also, with the RUDI procurement team using an electronic weighing scale, I am assured of proper weight of my produce. Now, the small quantity that I produce is not a hindrance for sale or receiving a fair price."

workers in the informal sector through self-governance is a slow process that leads to building of strong value based democratically functioning organizations which then help in sustainability and further upscaling.

Given below are a few examples.

STFC: A company set up, owned and managed by 15,000 artisans, which turned handicraft into a commercial venture accessing national and global markets with annual turnover of Rs. 3.5 crore. Each artisan shareholder earns an income of Rs. 5,000/month

> SEWA Women's Co-operative Bank: 86651 shareholders with Rs. 5.7 crore of share capital. 4.25 lakh account holders with deposit of 112.6 crore, availed credit of Rs. 52 crore in 2011.

> RUDI Company: Mainstreaming Agri-business through direct procurement and marketing under 'RUDI' brand with a turnover of Rs. 4 crore in 2011 thereby strengthening local economy.

> Nirman Construction Workers Company: Turns masonry and related skills to access better markets and livelihood opportunities; benefitting 1,400 workers with regular income.

> Gitanjali Waste Pickers

Cooperative: Collective of waste pickers resulted in sustainable income for 400 women with decent livelihood by manufacturing and marketing of paper products.

> SEWA Rachaita Co-operative: Upgraded skills and potential of construction workers through improved processes, technology, market lead to regular skill work with increased income of Rs 100/day with turnover of Rs 67.19 lakh.

> Weavers Groups - 3,000 members engaged in weaving enabled an income of Rs 4,000/ month.

> Salt Farming - Organized 8,000 salt farmers who are earning a revenue of Rs 3,000/- with an annual turnover of 75,000 MT salt amounting to Rs 1.65 crores

On the basis of SEWA's experience in building business organisations of the poor, we have learned that:

> There is a need for partnership from the private sector for transfer of systems and processes and sharing of risks.

There is no framework or a transition path that enables the informal sector workers to form their own business organisation and enter into the mainstream.

Credit: SEWA

D-LINK INDIA: PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN ICT INDUSTRY

D-Link's Corporate Social Responsibility Program

D-Link Academy aims to improve socioeconomic conditions in communities across India by increasing access to education and career opportunities, supporting the development of an educated ICT workforce, and promoting the growth of the ICT industry.

In support of the Human Resource Ministry, D-Link Academy aims to help bridge the digital divide by extending learning opportunities to students in developing countries and those with disabilities. D-Link Academy also empowers women by supporting their professional development and encouraging gender equality within the ICT industry.

Objective:

- > To create a network of accredited Participatory Development Trainers to support training under various government and non-government programs.
- > To undertake training and capacity building activities for state governments, Government of India, donor agencies, civil society organizations and corporates.
- > To strengthen civil society organizations, especially NGOs through Organizational Development Training as well as linking them with government and other donor funded programs.
- > To create and strengthen community-based organizations through training and capacity building of PRIs, youth/women



groups, etc.

- > To collaborate with government and private development training institutions to provide quality outreach training while at the same time help improve the overall training quality of these institutions.
- > To develop training modules and training programs addressing specific requirements.

Owing to the growing need, D-Link Academy along with alliance partner Sardar Patel Institute of Technology (SPIT), Mumbai, will

provide an institutional framework to this network as well as ensuring effective coordination and management of the network.

D-Link Academy along with SPIT will form an alliance of development/participatory process trainers, under UNICEF collaboration to provide benefit to 35 districts across Maharashtra.

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D L F F O U N D A T I O N

MAKING THE MOST OF CSR INITIATIVES IN TACKLING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES



By Lt. Gen Rajender Singh (Retd)

In the modern day corporate world, companies seek to address the burgeoning profitability versus sustainability issues by formulating action plans that are complementary to the social and economical environment. The attempt is to create harmony between growth and sustainability with a keen eye on overall wellbeing. DLF Limited, one of the major corporates in India has also

realized its responsibility and created DLF Foundation in 2008 to specifically cater to the growing economic, social, environmental, health and education issues of rural India. The altruist feeling and compassion for humanity led to the creation of this Foundation.

Issues Plaguing India

Even though more than six decades have passed since India has gained its

independence, there exist a number of social concerns which are the need of the hour. Some of the critical and growth-debilitating issues include women empowerment, poverty eradication, effective and affordable mass education, infrastructure creation, employment opportunities and gender equality. It is essential for our economy to work towards gender equality as one of its top priority as it has been established beyond doubt that



an empowered women force can add significant momentum to not just economic prosperity but also overall social improvement. A range of path-breaking movements in the past have taken place which has led to significant improvement in women's empowerment and their causes. While a lot of work has already been done in this area, a lot still needs to be done. The tribulations faced by our country's womenfolk in the form of a huge gap between urban and rural dwellers need to be addressed. In addition to this, another area where significant efforts need to be put in is vocational training for the rural youth. Vocational training will not only help in empowering the youth but will also create livelihood opportunities for the rural population which will also help in reducing the constant shift of people towards the cities and metros.

Needs and Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR largely entails an ethical business performance which undertakes commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources. DLF Foundation has identified and assessed the need-based areas in and

around Gurgaon and devised a well-planned strategy to overcome issues like poor health, sanitation, literacy rate, unemployment, etc. The huge population which is below poverty line is deprived and needs to be equipped with capacity building, training and specific skill sets that would not only create an avenue for a continued source of income, but also enable them to be independent and earn their livelihood by supporting their families. After evaluating the various means and resources and existing gaps, DLF Foundation put its energies towards sustainable development responsible activities for the benefit of the society.

Showing a True Commitment

DLF Foundation has invested all its

efforts to produce an overall positive impact on society. It made a modest beginning five years back and has managed to align the ethical priorities of their business with social commitments. Assisting the government in the emancipation of the underprivileged, DLF Foundation has started a lot of initiatives to aid the needy and promoted healthcare, education and other pursuits for the marginalized sections of the population.

These welfare activities include educational support through scholarships and improved learning inputs, health programs and medical camps, vocational training and capacity building, collaborating with skill development



you educate a woman, you educate a family. Imparting education to a woman has a ripple effect within the family and in turn towards a larger society. Investing in girls' education yields higher dividends in the longer run.

Women's education not only helps in liberating them financially but also helps in creating men-women equality in the society. The added benefit of promoting education for women, particularly in the rural belt, is that it will help in creating more economic prosperity for families.

It is important to believe that we must train girls and women as a matter of urgency in fields such as mathematics, science, and technology. These fields desperately need skilled talent and form the basis of a global knowledge economy; yet women avoid them because of the pernicious notion that they aren't "women's work." We need to look towards pioneering women like Xerox's CEO Ursula Burns and Yahoo's CEO Marissa Mayer,

who are confident, independent and are flourishing in the world of business and technology, to seek inspiration and to replicate their success stories in our country.

DLF Foundation is proud to associate itself with various educational institutions to identify and nurture talent and help in carving out a brilliant destiny for each one of the adoptees. DLF Foundation provides scholarships to the academically progressive but financially deprived children who have an excellent future ahead of them but just need a little monetary aid. Time and again it has come to the aid of needy kids and provides scholarships at three stages namely school, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The scholarship programme is christened as 'The Raghavendra Scholarship Programme' which supports meritorious students hailing from underprivileged families.

DLF Foundation has also established 30 rural schools in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh

centres, improving access to health with focus on curative and preventive aspects, and lessening the burgeoning gender gap.

Empowering the Gifted & Talented Children: Talent Nurturing Programme

Education in today's time is the most integral means of empowering humanity with knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate in the social and economic development of a country. It is a famous adage- that when you educate a man, you educate an individual but when



and Punjab in partnership with Bharti Foundation. These schools are situated in remote areas which educate 12,000 children every year with a focus on the girl child. These schools aim to significantly change the way education is imparted with the help of trained faculty and information technology.

Skilling India: Initiative on Skill Upsgradation

The major flagship initiatives of DLF Foundation include Skill Development which plays an integral role in the unorganized employment sector. The rising need of skilled workers has coerced the Indian government to make a provision and allocate budgets to support various institutions including National Skill Development Corporation to impart skills training. In the wake of the recent Union Budget 2013-14 and the Economic Survey, the Government has allocated Rs. 1,000 crore for the skill development for the youth. As a part of the agenda, the National Skill Development Corporation has decided to train five crore people in the current plan. The government has also set a target to skill approximately 500 million people by 2022. Assisting the government and NSDC in their noble initiative, DLF Foundation in collaboration



DLF FOUNDATION IN COLLABORATION WITH SEVERAL PARTNERS HAS SET UP DLF LIFE SKILL CENTRES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IT IMPARTS SKILLS IN THE FIELDS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS AND SALES, CONSTRUCTION, IT, RETAIL, MARKETING, HOSPITALITY AND ELECTRONICS.

DLF FOUNDATION IS EXPANDING ITS ROOTS ALL ACROSS INDIA AND HAS TOUCHED THE STATES OF UTTAR PRADESH, KARNATAKA, PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN, CHENNAI, MAHARASHTRA, GUJARAT, HYDERABAD, MADHYA PRADESH AND DELHI REGION.

with several partners has set up DLF LIFE Skill Centres across the country. It imparts skills in the fields of Customer Relations and Sales, Construction, IT, Retail, Marketing, Hospitality and Electronics. DLF Foundation is expanding its roots all across India and has touched the states of Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chennai, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Hyderabad, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi region.

Since its inception, DLF Foundation has collaborated with major skill development players like Laurus Edutech, Don Bosco, Empower Pragati to provide employment linked training under its 'Skill a Million' programme. The programme aspires to provide sustainable benefits for workers in the informal sector by offering them a platform to build new skills which help in generating employment or at least technical skills which are in demand in the unorganized job market. The training given is designed in such a way that it understands the psyche of the workers and helps them build their soft skills apart from the specific skill set which is taught. DLF Foundation specifically caters to the bottom end of the pyramid by providing them technical education at a very nominal and affordable cost. Consequently, DLF Foundation also assists

students in getting a job by providing placement opportunities.

Effectiveness of a community-based responsive programme: Cluster Village Development

The second initiative undertaken by DLF Foundation largely addresses the masses from the hinterlands of India as 70 percent of our population resides in rural India. The cluster village development programme strives to improve the living

initiative, has taken initiatives to bridge this gap. DLF Foundation's integrated health programmes reach out to 16 villages that ensure access to quality, affordable community health services, with an emphasis on child survival and maternal health. Street cleaning drives and sanitation programmes are coordinated with other environmental health activities, with a special focus on the needs of women and girls. The preventive and promotive healthcare programme largely focuses on hygiene, nutrition, family planning, maternal and child health.

commissioned in every targeted village. To this effect, the Foundation has also hired local women and provided them proper training for teaching primary school children. The rural learning centers and mobile library programme cover close to 2,500 children every year and the slum schools cater to 1,500 of children living in the slums by providing them free education. Our overarching aim is to bridge the infrastructural gap as well as the gaps in class-appropriate learning level of students.

Creating Social Value

Apart from the flagship initiatives, DLF Foundation also provides free meals everyday to over 300 disabled persons at the India Gate Lawns in New Delhi as a part of the Aapki Rasoi Programme initiated by Delhi Government's 'Hunger Free Delhi' campaign.

DLF Foundation, in its short journey of five years, has won a lot of laurels. These appreciations have only helped in adding to the determination to do more and thus today the Foundation has strong aspirations to scale up faster to assist in the holistic development of the environment and the people living in the environment. Our beginnings are modest but our commitments are high.

Lt Gen Rajender Singh, PVSM, SM, VSM, is an alumni of National Defence College and Defence Services Staff College. He has held many prestigious national and international assignments and was awarded Param Vishisht Seva Medal (Country's highest distinguished service award) in 2009. He is also a recipient of Sena Medal, Vishisht Seva Medal and Chief of Army Staff's Commendation for acts of bravery and distinguished services earlier in his career. He also has vast experience in the field of UN Peacekeeping. Lt Gen Rajender Singh retired from the Army in December 2008 after having served as the Director General of Infantry. Currently he has joined the corporate world and has taken over as the CEO of DLF Foundation - a major philanthropic corporate foundation in the country.



conditions of the dwellers in these villages. DLF Foundation has touched the lives of people of 16 villages by providing basic education, primary health facilities, sustainable environment solutions and creation of infrastructure in an integrated manner.

DLF Foundation has constructed primary health care centres in these villages which are manned by doctors with super specialty as per health profile of the villages. Today, women's health in general, and particularly in the rural areas of the country, is a matter of grave concern. The number of primary health centres and advanced medical facilities has not been able to keep pace with the rate of population growth in most parts of the hinterland in India. In most cases, basic medical facilities have also been found wanting. DLF, as a part of its CSR

Putting it All Together and more...

Just like the area of health, the Foundation's next major area of concern is the moral upbringing and education of youth, which not only moulds the character of an individual but also consequently contributes to betterment and building of a better society. The curriculum of good education should enable the growth and development of a child in multiple dimensions at the cognitive, social, emotional, physical and ethical level. To encourage good reading habits and promulgate literacy, rural learning excellence centers, slum schools and rural mobile libraries are



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EDUCATION EMPOWERS, ENABLES & HELPS IN MOULDING MINDS

Pratham's Co-Founder & Chairman-CEO, Dr. Madhav Chavan



Pratham Education Foundation has initiated a pioneering activity by taking education to the underprivileged. These initiatives range from adult literacy to child education in the slums. In a free-wheeling chat with CSR Mandate, Pratham's Co-Founder & Chairman-CEO, Dr. Madhav Chavan, discusses the education scenario in the country and also the purpose for the existence of Pratham. A WISE Prize for Education awardee and champion of human rights and women's rights, Chavan also shares the several mass-scale innovations the organization is undertaking to educate the underprivileged. Excerpts.

RTE is the most important decision taken by the Government in recent years but it has been tardy in its implementation. What more policy initiatives do we need to bring education to every child in the country?

RTE is inadequate in bringing education to children. It is entirely focused on inputs and not learning outcome.



Several provisions need to be reviewed, given the realities in India. For example, it is not sensitive to the fact that nearly 70 percent of urban children in elementary schools are enrolled in private education. Distances in urban areas are relatively long, real estate is costly, local migration is frequent.

The age grade system of enrollment has to be redefined. Multi grade and multi level classrooms are a growing reality in smaller villages as these villages shrink in size. Even in schools with large enrollment, children of the same age are at vastly different levels of learning ability. While Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) is a good concept if implemented properly, it also constitutes a huge cultural shift which cannot happen overnight. Hence we need to move towards CCE in stages.

What do you suggest can be done to reduce the incidence of school dropouts?

The term 'drop-out' is often misunderstood. Dropout rate is computed based on percentage of children who complete, say, five years of schooling within those many years. Even children who move in and out of the system or repeat grades contribute to this dropout rate in spite of having never really dropped out of the school system. The 'all pass' policy will certainly help in retaining all the children in school and better provision of upper primary schools will improve the transition from primary to upper primary (6 to 8) but we also need to understand that a child who feels left out of classroom transactions is not encouraged to attend school. So creating a learning environment in which all children attain

basic learning goals is critically important. School attendance in many states is well under 80 percent, in spite of free uniforms, text books and mid day meals.

Clearly, such material enticements are not sufficient to bring the marginalized kids to school. In states such as Bihar and West Bengal, massive numbers, that is more than 50 percent of government school children go to private tutors. Very often private tutoring may be happening during school hours, thanks to the failure of the school. These are realities that cannot be changed just by banning private tutoring. New innovative solutions need to be found.

Hence more than the dropout rates, it is important to pay attention to the attendance rate of children who are already enrolled.



DEFINITION OF CSR, AS PER MY UNDERSTANDING, DOES NOT INCLUDE RUNNING OF SCHOOLS. HOWEVER, IT IS TRUE THAT CORPORATE INDIA MUST TAKE KEEN INTEREST IN EDUCATION. DELIVERY OF EDUCATION IS JUST ONE PART BUT WHAT IS ALSO VERY NECESSARY IS DEVELOPING SYSTEMS OF ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULUM BUILDING. CORPORATE AND BUSINESSES HAVE KNOWHOW OF INDUSTRIES, CLIENTS, BUSINESS ETC WHICH CAN BE USED IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR.

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme is supposed to be an incentive for children to attend schools. How do NGOs like Pratham effectively implement such schemes to prevent tragedies like the Bihar incident?

Pratham does not implement the mid day meal scheme and I do not think it's an incentive for children to attend school either. At least there is no clear evidence to prove that. Also this scheme should be implemented as a nutrition scheme and not an education one. Safe implementation, however, is only possible with local supervision. For example – instead of putting the onus entirely on the school and the teachers, members of the local panchayat should also take responsibility. They must start by taking turns to eat in the school.

Don't you think there is need for more NGOs like Pratham to take over primary education across the country with the help of the private sector and the state since state-run schools fall short of the standards?

Taking over is not the solution. It would be wrong to think that private players can take over and that would improve quality of education. However, effective public-private partnerships are possible with innovations in government and finance. Curricular and structural reforms such as decentralization are required to improve quality of education.

The Government has made it mandatory for corporates to do CSR activities. Should not more and more corporates come into education from the primary level onwards to build a better India?

Definition of CSR, as per my understanding, does not include running of schools. However, it is true that Corporate India must take keen interest in education. Delivery of education is just one part but what is also very necessary is developing systems of assessment and curriculum building. Corporate and businesses have knowhow of industries, clients, business etc which can be used in the education sector.

Which are the programs implemented by Pratham that has taken on a pan-India movement?

Starting with the flagship program, Read India that aims to improve and sustain improvement of children's learning levels by developing methodology that focuses on teaching-learning outcomes.

The ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) center's activities carry out the largest non-governmental household survey across the country to test learning levels of children in rural India as well as conduct research in this sphere.

The Pratham Open School for Education (POES) program that helps dropout girls complete their secondary school examination started in 2012, and has spread across seven states in India.

The Pratham Institute for Literacy, Education and Vocational Training works across the country to provide employability skills to youths who are eager to learn but are often forced to leave their education midway to cater to family and financial needs.

What is the role played by Pratham in women empowerment?

Education is empowering and enabling. Wherever we work, we feel it will help young women in their development. Historically, especially in urban areas, Pratham has had a large number of women volunteers who came from difficult circumstances. Over the years,



CORPORATES SHOULD WORK ON INNOVATION, EXPERIMENTATION AND RESEARCH ON EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE.

INNOVATION COUNCIL HAS SUGGESTED THAT THERE CAN BE RADICAL AND INCREMENTAL EDUCATION AND BOTH ARE NEEDED. WE DO NOT REALLY KNOW HOW TO USE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING IN OUR CONTENT.

many of them have grown to leadership positions. They make great role models for others. They also influence other young women to step out of their home and do big things.

Case in point is POSE - Annually more than 4,000 girls are making an attempt

to complete their secondary schooling in spite of dropping out 3-4 years ago. Once they go through the open school program, they want to do more with their lives with the newfound experience and confidence. We expect that programs like these and our women's entrepreneurship program will create more such role models.

In your years of experience as a senior educationist, what would be your advice to corporates who want to devote their CSR work by providing basic education to underprivileged children of society?

Corporates should work on innovation, experimentation and research on education for the future. Innovation Council has suggested that there can be radical and incremental education and both are needed. We do not really know how to use Information Technology for learning in our content. Currently, we are using borrowed content whereas creating Indian content is necessary. Addressing local problems of language,

economy, culture by integrating them and finding solutions locally, is the need of the hour and corporate should help achieve that.

After being involved in this noble field for many years, what are some of the experiences, challenges you have encountered?

Experience: We need to do good work and support it with evidence. If there is evidence, people notice that and come forward to help. It's important for you to set up an agenda with a focus that leads to results or at least good learning.

Challenges: We face challenges while collaborating with the government and sometimes even with corporates. Scale work can be done with the government but sustained partnerships are difficult. With corporates, many want to go by the beaten path of doing work in their backyards. There is a need to redefine CSR. While a company may have plants in one location, it sells its goods across the country. This is how they should also look at their role in the education sector.

FOCUS ON EDUCATION & HEALTHCARE

Putting a Lasting SMILE on Faces of Women & Girl Children

Discrimination against women and girl children is seen on all levels of their existence. Since the year 2002, Smile Foundation, along with several corporate houses, is working to eliminate inequality and injustice within the Indian society relentlessly. The organisation has until now helped 150,000 women and girl-children discover and live a life of dignity apart from facilitating education for poor children. Santanu Mishra, Co-Founder & Executive Trustee Smile Foundation talks to CSR Mandate about the organisation's journey over the years and the challenges it has faced in dealing with the problems concerning women and girl-children. Excerpts.

The problem of discrimination of women and girl children is a humongous one in India, where culture plays an important role. How is Smile Foundation helping in overcoming these problems existing in almost all spheres?

There are several clear indicators of the fact that Indian women continue to be discriminated against – the sex ratio is skewed against them; maternal mortality is the second highest in the world; more than 40 percent of women are illiterate; and crimes against women are rising in all respects.

It is a paradox of modern India that while many women wield power and hold positions at topmost levels, large sections of women are still among the most underprivileged. Some of the areas that remain an issue of concern in case of underprivileged women are health, sanitation, education, employment and social status. Health and education of women and girls are two main issues that loom large and continue to plague their development. While poverty, early marriage, malnutrition, lack of hygienic menstrual practices and lack of healthcare during pregnancy are some of the major

health related issues; records state that the average Indian female has only 1.2 years of schooling; and more than 50 percent of girls drop out of school by the time they are in middle school.

In the given scenario, the only way to bring about sustainable development of underprivileged women and girls in the country is to empower them with education and good health. Accordingly, a simultaneous approach is the need of the hour.

Smile Foundation, since its inception has been supporting child education



SMILE FOUNDATION, SINCE ITS INCEPTION, HAS BEEN SUPPORTING CHILD EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS INITIATED AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL. SOCIETAL, CULTURAL, PARENTAL PRESSURE AND GENDER BASED ATTITUDES; BEHAVIOUR AND PRACTICES ALWAYS COME IN BETWEEN THE GIRL CHILD AND HER EMPOWERMENT.

Foundation came up with a programme named 'Swabhiman' or 'Self-Respect'.

Tell us about your programme Swabhimaan; how do you reach out to underprivileged women and girls and make them independent? We would especially like to know about the areas in which you work to help women and girl children, such as:

- > Educational Support
- > Providing Reproductive Health and Child Health Services

Swabhiman programme works under '4 S Model'. The '4 S Model' is an acronym for four novel approaches, namely Seeking Healthcare as a Behaviour, Support for Education, Supporters in Men through Male Involvement, and Sustaining the Change in Communities. The programme enables women and adolescent girls, who belong to lower socio-economic strata, to lead a life of dignity through realisation of their self-esteem and inner potential.

One of the key interventions of Swabhiman is that it promotes positive health, create awareness created through

interventions initiated at the grassroots level. Societal, cultural, parental pressure and gender based attitudes; behaviour and practices always come in between the girl child and her empowerment.

Further, girls are pushed into marriage at a premature age and pregnancies/ motherhood subsequently also appeared to be more common than an exception. Growing instances of child abuse, incest, sexual harassment, domestic violence, etc. also come out as significant issues that needed to be addressed. Also women

(girl-child) are found clearly lacking in negotiation skills; not knowing how to handle such situations, they find themselves completely defenceless. Women (particularly girl child) have always been a passive object of such experiences rather than being alert and assertive.

It was thus increasingly felt that issues and concerns of girl child/women need to be diligently addressed.

To address these challenges through a simple yet effective approach, Smile



INDUCING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE LIES AT THE CORE OF SWABHIMAN.

THEREFORE, MASS AWARENESS MEDIUMS SUCH AS STREET PLAYS, ROLE PLAYS, MIME ACTS, ETC. ARE WIDELY USED TO ENSURE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON ISSUES CONCERNING WOMEN AND GIRL CHILD EMPOWERMENT.

various group activities like meetings and counselling sessions as well as house-to-house visits. The focus is on addressing critical issues, such as consequences of early marriage and early pregnancy, benefits of early registration of pregnancy and institutional delivery, significance of proper ante-natal and post-natal care, having healthy and economical food and nutritional supplements, importance of breast feeding, etc. This well-structured intensive intervention helps in reduction of infant and child mortality as well as maternal mortality.

Counselling and group meetings result in higher demand for health services which are met through a fully equipped mobile hospital. The mobile hospital makes Reproductive & Child Health Services accessible to target beneficiaries at their doorstep. As a strategy, liaisoning and networking with the government, charitable and private hospitals are established for referral, supply of medicines, vaccines and contraceptives.

How do you ensure sustainability of the programme through:

- > Male Involvement & Attitudinal and Behavioural Change
- > Imparting Life Skill Education
- > Networking and Convergence Support
- > Sensitization of Privileged Women and Youth

Male involvement towards creating an enabling environment for women is a distinct feature of Swabhiman. In this regard, exclusive counselling sessions are held with men to encourage them to be more participative towards the issues concerning Maternal and Child Health.

Swabhiman has successfully demonstrated that men take responsibility for their sexual and

reproductive behaviour as well as their social and family roles. On similar lines, mothers-in-law who represent the power centre in such families are sensitised to support their daughters-in-law.

Adolescent girls are an important target group under Swabhiman. Accordingly, young girls from within the community are selected as change agents and given intensive training on issues like Gender and Reproductive Health, Rights and Legal provisions, Life Skills Education including Negotiation Skills and Decision Making, etc. Change Agents form a cadre of peer educators within the community who in turn create a cascading effect by equipping community women in their journey towards empowerment. Change Agents and Peer Educators are instrumental in creating behavioural change that stays within the community for long.

Inducing positive behavioural change lies at the core of Swabhiman. Therefore, mass awareness mediums such as street plays, role plays, mime acts, etc. are widely used to ensure active involvement of the community members on issues concerning women and girl child empowerment. This intervention compliments the efforts of Change Agents and plays a pivotal role in promoting gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community.

What are the unique problems in different regions that you have identified? How do you deal with those problems?

Under Swabhiman, we organise various focussed campaigns on critical issues of women empowerment on a continued basis from time to time, such as:

> "Beti bhi apni hai", a girl child campaign that aims at creating acceptance of girl child within the society and her significance in ensuring the continuity of humankind. The objective is to condemn discriminatory practices like female foeticide.

> Safety and awareness campaigns are held with the objective of sensitising the privileged as well as underprivileged to create a safe and secure environment.

> As part of advocacy campaigns, institutions, corporate, colleges and schools are sensitised on championing the cause of the girl child.

Apart from these, there are other unique



initiatives through which we have started identifying the problems in the areas Smile Foundation is working in. It would also be helpful if you give us information about some of the latest initiatives taken up by Smile Foundation in educating girl children and making women independent.

Smile Foundation took its work to the villages of Ahmedapur, Bublakhedi, Bawarikheda, Chainpura and Padarkheri near Vijaipur in Guna district (M.P) with support from GAIL. Little was then realized that the mothers would so zealously come forward asking to accommodate for their education needs in the project

– originally meant for child education, healthcare and integrated community development! These rural mothers of Guna district in Madhya Pradesh, who have never been to school, insisted on learning to read and write after sending their children to Mission Education Project Centres. During the regular parent-teacher meetings, the mothers kept saying that they wanted to study. Most of them are daily wage earners.

Vijaypur has started Adult Education Centres in the village of Chainpura. To start with, we identified the women and girls from the village who wanted to study. We zeroed in on 25 girls and women who were interested in learning to read and write. We consulted them to fix the time and place for study and appointed a lady teacher from the same village. The Adult Education Center started on February 8, 2013. We have provided study material to them also and are proud to say that the center is running well with all the participants learning sincerely.

Another such initiative which we are running in Barmer district of Rajasthan is 'Padharo Mahari Lado'. This is an endeavour to make the society a friendlier place for our girl child. Today, when a girl child is born in a village, the whole community celebrates by beating Thali, giving them gifts, distributing sweets in the whole village. This symbolism is now becoming a custom. We have numerous such inspiring stories from across the country.

Since CSR Mandate deals with social responsibilities of Indian corporations, we would in particular want to know how you involve Corporates in your programme. What role do they play in furthering your programmes, in terms of funding, strategising, offering help through active manpower etc? Do mention some of the corporates you are working with and the area of work.

Development is very complex, serious and a long term subject. Sustained efforts bring lasting changes in the lives of the needy. Now philanthropy is transforming into strategic partnership as meaningful CSR is a necessity in changing times. Corporates now take CSR very seriously and works towards it earnestly. At times, since funders are from the corporate sector, they lack proper understanding on the development sector. Companies work in almost perfect models while in the social development areas, input are not always equal to the output. The subjective processes and outputs need to be taken into consideration to fully understand and appreciate the results. But now more and more national and international corporates are coming forward with their ideas or are supporting our ongoing programmes. They not only know what exactly they want but are also perfectly professional in terms of their CSR activities. They work in a completely responsible manner, keeping an account of the money spent and the progress done in terms of development. Corporates now understand that beyond capital charity they need to form a meaningful engagement with the stakeholders. They know that good and responsible CSR



DEVELOPMENT IS VERY COMPLEX, SERIOUS AND A LONG TERM SUBJECT. SUSTAINED EFFORTS BRING LASTING CHANGES IN THE LIVES OF THE NEEDY. NOW PHILANTHROPY IS TRANSFORMING INTO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AS MEANINGFUL CSR IS A NECESSITY IN CHANGING TIMES.

practices not only establish them as credible enterprises but also give them business benefits such as, cost saving, increasing revenues, gaining good human capital and reputation. At present, Smile Foundation is working with Cairn, BAE systems, REC, Opera Software, Siemens, Herbalife to name a few. Sometimes celebrities are involved in charity work and donation.

How does that help in garnering support and furthering your work, apart from individual funding? Do give us some idea on celebrity involvement.

When a popular and respected celebrity joins a cause in various forms, the cause gets proper visibility and it reaches out to a large audience. We have seen the impact whenever a relevant and credible celebrity joins the cause in sensitizing the society. However a development organization needs to be credible with the real good work and the positive impact that it creates. At present we are running a campaign 'Choone Do Aasman', which is supported by celebrities, to send 5,000 children to school. The next phase of campaign will involve corporates and institutions too.

Which are the locations where you have your programmes? Is it a national programme or do you conduct them in certain regions only? How do you propose to take it on a more expansive level in future?

Smile Foundation is a national level development organisation working on the issues of women empowerment, education, healthcare, livelihood, and advocacy since 2002. Currently, it is making a difference to the lives of underprivileged children, youth and women through 158 development projects across 25 states of India, which include projects around Delhi and NCR region, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Haryana and some north-eastern states. Smile Foundation believes that women have to be at the centre of affairs as they hold the key to long-lasting change. As for the future, we are concentrating on intensifying our programmes on all the levels enumerated above.

TESTIMONIAL:



18 year old Jyoti, a Self Help Volunteer (SHV) from Shri Ram JJ defining her role as an SHV

I have been associated with Swabhiman for 5 years now. I was in 8th Standard when I started coming to these meetings. I have learnt a lot from here. As SHVs, we go to the community to create awareness about family planning and orient women on issues like domestic violence etc. The way we work is by telling our immediate friends and community. This information spreads as each person encourages one more person to attend meetings, trainings and counseling sessions. One important aspect to note is also that as people move to cities from villages, they struggle to deal with the fast-paced life in the cities, yet at the same time, they try to grasp and adjust to the new life and environment. And, we observe that when such people are given trainings, their mindset change for the better. However, the biggest challenges are social norms, family traditions and pressure from the in-laws on matters like the number of children, right age of marriage etc. For example I feel that a girl should get married only after she is successful in her career, is financially independent and is around 25-26 years old. But, it is extremely hard to convince parents or the uneducated girls about the importance of the right age of marriage.

It is always a challenge trying to break the ice at the initial stages of these programmes. It becomes easier as we spend time with these people and talk to them. They eventually start to open up and show interest in what we are saying. Another hurdle we face is that people taunt us thinking we are too young to talk about these matters. But I hope that gradually this will also disappear as people are becoming more positive and their outlook broader.

I feel that the centre should conduct more counseling and training sessions for men. This is because men play a very pivotal role in decision-making about family planning as ignorance about these issues leads to hardships later on.

Becoming a Better Person with Swabhiman

"There were so many things that I did not know prior to joining Swabhiman. Apart from the trainings we got on reproductive health care, anemia, etc, we have actually gained life skills out of it. Although it was pure knowledge, I feel it was more like a personality development camp because I gained so much confidence talking to new people. Now I don't hesitate at all, I just go and talk to them. My parents have also been very open-minded about it and I think that's why they even supported me to join the training sessions at Smile."



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towards resilient risk reduction...

SDCRF

CONFERENCE & AWARDS EVENT: 25 OCT 2013, BANGALORE

A Roadmap for Sustainable Development & Collective Responsibility on Anvil

In a unique initiative, Sustainable Development and Collective Responsibility Forum (SDCRF) is organizing a major event in Bangalore on 25 October 2013, bringing together around 100 corporates and as many NGOs to strategise the way ahead for 'Sustainable Development' and drive home the notion of 'Collective Responsibility.'

During the brainstorming sessions of the day-long SDCRF Conference event, representatives of all entities who are stakeholders in sustainable development will come face to face to discuss and debate to draw up a strategy roadmap for collective responsibility.

They are expected to recommend and initiate action to build more lucrative and long term sustainable models through the Forum, which is the 'First-Ever Integrated Networking Platform' for all the stakeholders of sustainable social development.

The event, which is being held at The Atria Hotel, in India's famed Silicon City, will be a common platform for all the stakeholders of society, economic development activity and Climate Change. The participants in the

Conference include thought leaders, philanthropists, social leaders, NGOs, VOs, social entrepreneurs, Funding Agencies, Governments and Media.

SDCRF is a strategic discussion forum of members to drive Sustainable Development strategies involving grass root level organisations and corporate entities. This is an integrated platform for all the entities and stake holders of Sustainable Development. The forum is promoted and nurtured by the members from the corporate and social groups.

SDCRF is supported by Solar Energy Society of India, Centre for Sustainable Development, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) besides the corporate majors such as Britannia Industries, JSW, WIPRO, ITC, TEGUTECH, BOSCH,

International Development Group (IDG), Narayana Health, Barclays, Trees for Free, Indus Health Plus, Everything About Water and others.

New Media, India's largest bilateral trade and community magazine publishing house and CSR Mandate, the group's magazine dedicated to promoting and highlighting CSR activities across the country, are exclusive Media Partners of SDCRF initiative.

Sustainable Development & Collective Responsibility

CSR, Diversity, Inclusion and Leadership are the pillars of SDCRF in its Mission of promoting 'Sustainable Development', a term coined by the Brundtland Commission and which has over the years become the most quoted definition of development that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

The issue of 'Collective Responsibility' assumes significance as the business practices known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability mature and converge with the responsibilities of Corporate Entities, governments and citizens, the term



Supporting Associations



Knowledge Partner



Strategic Leadership Partner



Water Partner



Naandi Community Water Services



Supporting Members



Carbon Footprint Partner



Media Partners



Technology Partner



“Collective Responsibility” is beginning to take shape.

Sustainable Development is all about Society's future that one must care about. Everyone knows about irrational consumption patterns that are leading to climate changes and driving the human race towards 'not so favourable' living conditions. The forum is for all those who strive to accomplish those activities that matter a lot to very place one leaves behind for his or her next generation. It is 'collective responsibility' that will bring in changes to these terrible conditions.

SDCRF initiative is a move towards bringing on the change factor to facilitate social organisations that are directly connected to the roots of these issues and empower them to make that impact for sustainable development.

SDCRF brings on board corporate entities who have an inbuilt integrated system of Corporate Social Responsibility as a policy and practice, companies who have imbibed diversity in the culture, companies who care about inclusions in

hiring, and all those who promote leadership. SDCRF also brings together those institutions, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Voluntary Organisations who strive to make an impact at the grass root levels to facilitate the end beneficiaries and needy, besides those institutions that are directly involved in saving the world. These entities work towards water conservation, sanitations, waste management, climate change and many such aspects that determine the future of the world.

The prospective participants of the Conference include:

- > CEOs and Presidents of companies,
- > Directors and Heads of CSR activities,
- > Heads of Corporate Communication,
- > Heads of Diversity and Inclusion teams,
- > Heads of Human Resources,
- > Heads of Corporate Women Initiatives,
- > Heads of Strategy and Planning,
- > Heads of Sustainable Development Teams,
- > NGOs

- > Voluntary Organizations
- > International Funding Agencies
- > Government
- > Institutions and Research Centers
- > Consulting Organizations

The conference organizers are expecting the Media to provide an in-depth coverage of the various initiatives in Sustainability Projects, Diversity and Inclusion Case Studies, CSR programs, Funding Programs, Development programs & Social Activities.

Please contact Mr. Girish Krishnan, Strategic Alliance Head – CSR Mandate, New Media Communications Pvt Ltd. for all further details and similar activities in other parts of India and overseas.

Email: girish@newmediacomm.com or pkg.blr@gmail.com
Mobile: 09742735307.
www.newmediacomm.com

For more details on SDCRF, contact Sangram Navaka at 09448118232 or email him at sangram@sdcrrf.org . www.sdcrrf.org

A WOMAN BEHIND THE TRACTOR'S WHEEL?

MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA HAS BEEN MAKING EFFORTS IN BRINGING WOMEN INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF FARMING ACTIVITIES SUCH AS TRACTOR DRIVING AND SHOP FLOOR MANAGEMENT THAT WERE UNTIL NOW, RESTRICTED TO MALES.

M a h i n d r a M a k e s i t a R e a l i t y





WE ARE CREATING NEW WOMEN POWER IN FARMING, IT LEAVES THE MAN OF THE HOUSE FREE TO MANAGE SOME OTHER BUSINESS OR LOOK FOR WORK IN BIGGER TOWNS OR CITIES."

The programme has been quite successful according to **Sanjeev Goyle**, Senior Vice-President, Farm Equipment Sector and Applitrac Business Unit, Mahindra & Mahindra.

Steering into a new direction in the fields

Acknowledging the potential of women, Mahindra and Mahindra's farm equipment manufacturing and marketing company has embarked on a programme of training women in the skills of driving tractors and shop floor management to market these vehicles under its Samriddhi programme.

The programme has been quite successful according to Sanjeev Goyle, Senior Vice-President, Farm Equipment Sector and Applitrac Business Unit, Mahindra & Mahindra. "We are creating new women power in farming," says Goyle, adding, "It leaves the man of the house free to manage some other business or look for work in bigger towns or cities."

After the initially bewildering idea of seeing a woman behind the wheel of a bulky machine, the rural community saw the opportunity and Mahindra & Mahindra guided its members through the idea by launching the initiative. "We wanted women from villages to come out of their huts and also ensure that there are enough drivers in the market," said Goyle.

According to Mahindra & Mahindra, 43 percent of women are working in the country's agricultural sector and a large number of them also own lands. Learning to drive a tractor helps these women

achieve heavy tasks with ease. In fact, this initiative has empowered the women in Tamil Nadu greatly. It was felt that if a woman could drive a tractor, she could as well take charge of the few acres of agricultural land her family owned using the machine to plough and ready the soil before the monsoons, and later use it to harvest the produce and even transport it to the market. This would leave the head of the family free to manage other businesses, or look for work outside their domain areas of habitation.

M&M started the tractor driving training programme for women three years ago in Rasipuram, Tamil Nadu. Since then, it has trained over 2,100 women. In fact, at times, these women drivers are called by a number of farmers to operate their tractors. Their skill has allowed them to earn an additional income for the family. The training include a three-four day class at regular intervals to teach them how to operate a tractor, maintain and use it in the field or even drive it on the road, in addition to helping them get a licence.

After the training, V. Somasundaram, Area Manager, Sales and Customer Operations, Mahindra & Mahindra, questioned the trainees when engine oil should be changed. 'Every 250 km', was the prompt reply from M. Rajana, 22, who has passed the tenth standard. The gear oil should be changed every 1,000 hours, she informed with confidence.

The programme is being conducted in



other districts of Tamil Nadu. Girls in their late teens and early 20s are learning to operate tractors. A second year English- literature student at the Government College, Harur, is among the 14 women being trained by Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) to become tractor drivers - an occupation considered to be

economic compulsions. There is a huge shortage of drivers and those available demand a fat salary or compensation, informs Ushamani, who owns five acres of land. "A driver charges around Rs. 45,000 a month. I can save this money if I drive the tractor myself. My expenditure remains restricted to buying

Besides using the tractors for cultivation, women in villages now use tractors to ferry rice, manure and other farm equipments to and from the local market. For some women it is more of a necessity to know how to operate the tractor, explains Somasundaram.

To make tractors women-friendly, M&M has also made ergonomic changes to their vehicles, providing power-steering for better manoeuvrability. A light-touch clutch and gear-shifts placed on the side, rather than the middle (making access easier for women in saris), and easy hydraulics, are some of the new features, said Goyle. With more women keen on this idea, M&M is expecting to bring more ergonomic changes to its tractors. The company is also working to introduce light but sturdy-snap into place implements like ploughs diggers and rotators that can easily be hitched to the tractor. Also on the anvil are tweaks like reducing the height between the seat and the hydraulic lever, and introducing smaller machines (between 15 and 18 horsepower to the regular 45 horsepower).

A direct result of this empowerment is that women are being taken much more seriously by their families. They are now able to take their own decisions



“A DRIVER CHARGES AROUND RS 45,000 A MONTH. I CAN SAVE THIS MONEY IF I DRIVE THE TRACTOR MYSELF. MY EXPENDITURE REMAINS RESTRICTED TO BUYING DIESEL, WHICH IS AROUND RS 5,000,” SHE ADDS.
“IT IS EASY TO OPERATE THE TRACTOR. WE JUST NEED TO GET OUR BASICS RIGHT,” SAID AMBIKA.

a male bastion. On the adjacent field, two more tractors are seen circling the ground. Driving them are K. Lakshmi a mother of two, and G. Ambika, 24.

"I want to own a car one day. That's why I am learning to drive a tractor, to make it easy to drive a car," says Anjali. On the other hand, others like Lakshmi and Ambika says that becoming a tractor driver has helped them overcome

diesel, which is around Rs. 5,000," she adds. "It is easy to operate the tractor. We just need to get our basics right," said Ambika. "I was wasting my time sitting at home. My husband (who works in an electronics shop) suggested I learn to drive a tractor, as it would help us plough our land, while he can still hold on to his job. I thought it was a good idea," she said.



regarding their fields, which crops to grow and implements to buy, and how to pace and monitor the farming. The training has indeed allowed them to be more important contributors to the family income - sometimes the sole breadwinner - which brings its own advantages. Many women are now contemplating buying their own tractors. Initially the men of the village were sceptical when M&M approached them to spread the word about tractor training programme. With the womenfolk turning to cultivation, they have found their incomes doubling and that translates into prosperity for the entire village.

Handling Tough Tasks at Shop Floor

According to Goyle, "The importance of empowering women goes beyond giving them a means to sustenance and income as it is fundamental to building the fabric of society. A successful woman who is a

productive member of society is more likely to create a strong community sense both within her home and her society."

He adds, "Empowering women is an essential aspect in transforming the lives as women as they are very likely to invest their income back into their families, focusing on health and education. Thus, creating employment opportunities is the first step in ensuring social sustainability. Women empowerment should not only include women having a source of income and sustenance, but should extend to include an understanding of basic rights, equip women with skills (vocational or literate) and some form of education and support to help them function in their societies."

Working on these principles, Mahindra Swaraj has been driving gender diversity at the workplace through various initiatives. "In recent years, we have been able to increase the number of women employees on the shop floor. In fact, in recent batches of fresh diploma engineers, we have been able to recruit a sizeable number of women; it is not that

women employees are being pampered with cushy tasks. They equally contribute to the so called "hard core" areas like Heavy Machine Shop, Light Machine Shop, Paint Shop, testing and inspection of new components, and are also part of project teams that set up entire assembly lines. Women employees are treated at par with male colleagues," says Goyle.

They make it equally competitive for women through challenging assignments and roles where gender has little or limited role and there is greater focus on team work. It has a lot to do with the different set of skills that women bring to the table. The way women approach a problem can be different, bringing in a diverse perspective, which can provide better solution to the organization. With coordinating and helping supervisors and co-workers, the life of the female workforce has changed in a holistic way. They have become independent, confident, knowledgeable, empowered to take decisions and live a satisfied life knowing they have learned and grown in ways exceeding their expectations.



MANJULA LODHA

A LADY WITH A PASSION FOR CARING AND SHARING

Passion for social work runs in the Lodha family. Manjula Lodha, wife of builder tycoon and politician, Mangal Prabhat Lodha, has been actively involved in running Lodha Foundation, which is dedicated to helping various social causes. Manjula Lodha's enthusiasm for sharing and caring is infectious. In an interview with Satya Swaroop, Managing Editor, New Media, an ever-smiling Mrs. Lodha shares her thoughts from running schools for the underprivileged kids to programs for supporting widows and financial support and healthcare schemes for the poor children. Excerpts.

Lodha Foundation has been involved in various social projects, such as providing education for poor children. Tell us about the organization and its activities.

Our aim is to create career opportunities through education for the poor. And that's what has been the key focus of the foundation. Recently, we started a scholarship program to help those students who are unable to pay for their education. We have announced scholarships to 1,000 students. This includes schools that are run by the BMC. We have also tied up with mobile schools to help educate children of construction workers. Though the education imparted is of primary level, it has helped us prepare their young minds for further education. It has been an eye opener for parents who now want their kids to study and have a better life.

We have three schools in Nalasopara and Dombivli where around 4,200 poor

“

MY HUSBAND HAS GREAT PASSION FOR SOCIAL WORK. WHILE WE WERE CONSTRUCTION BUILDINGS IN NALASOPARA, MY BROTHER-IN-LAW DIED. WE DECIDED TO CONVERT ONE OF THE BUILDINGS INTO A SCHOOL IN HIS MEMORY. THIS FIRST SCHOOL EMOTIONALLY CHARGED US TO OPEN MORE SCHOOLS IN DOMBIVLI AND THANE.

students are taught at a very nominal fee. What makes it different is our teaching system, which is not limited to books but extends to the field of dance, music, karate and other activities. These aside,

we are also trying to educate them according to the changing times; so computer education is also introduced within the same fee structure. If you watch our students during the annual day function, it would be hard to believe that they come from such deprived backgrounds. We have recently opened a high school following the pattern of education in Thane with a nominal fee structure. The idea is to facilitate students to study and help them in whatever manner we can.

What was the inspiration behind opening the school in Nalasopara?

My husband has great passion for social work. While we were construction buildings in Nalasopara, my brother-in-law died. We decided to convert one of the buildings into a school in his memory. This first school emotionally charged us to open more schools in Dombivli and Thane.

What has been your role in the development of such a concept?



I have never restricted myself to being a mere housewife. Right from the beginning, I was always with Mr Lodha, helping him with the business. We would leave home together at 8 in the morning and return by 12 or 2 am in the night. This was the routine we followed. If any family wants to grow, both husband and wife should respect and support each other's work.

In fact, thanks to my husband's decision to leave Rajasthan that I was able to complete my schooling, and eventually, my graduation from Sofia College. Today, I can credit him for lighting the fire of seeking more knowledge in me. I took to reading books and newspapers as he would insist on discussing current affairs with me on a regular basis.

Was it also a period of struggle for both of you?

Yes it was. In fact, starting life in Mumbai is never a mean task. We both come from well-to-do families but the Mumbai shift left us with nothing. Right

from cooking and cleaning to running the house on a shoe-string budget, life was tough; but it was a learning process. Looking back at it all today, I think it has taught us the best lessons of life.

Were you as interested in social causes as your husband?

After working with social organizations like Oswal Mitra Mandal and Rajasthani Mahila Mandal, I decided to start something on my own. My entire family, including my children, insisted that I do things for free. My father taught me to work for social causes during my childhood days. He used to say that when you have one rupee, you should give or help at least 10 paise for a social cause, much like the ritual one follows in a temple. I guess working for a social cause was a ritual that began during my childhood.

What was your reaction when Mr Lodha decided to contest the election?

“

TODAY, WE RUN SEVERAL MEDICAL VANS FOR THE ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY. DOCTORS FROM MAYA HOSPITAL HAVE ENROLLED TO HELP US IN THIS ENDEAVOUR. IF THE CASE IS MORE CRITICAL, WE HAVE ASSOCIATED NAIR HOSPITAL FOR FURTHER HELP.

I never knew the ABCD of politics, but when I got married my father-in-law was already a political figure in Rajasthan. So it was something I was initiated into early on after my marriage. When my husband decided to contest the election, I was part ready. I have always known his passion for politics, and this was all about living that





passion. The first time he told me that he was going to contest the election, my first question to him was: How will you do so when the kids of the building do not even know you? Those were stressful times but Mr Lodha was confident. He lost his first election by a mere 1,800 votes and that too against a senior leader like V.L. Desai. But he took it in his stride, and so did I.

Talking about stress, Lodha Foundation is also active in the field of healthcare...

It was again a different kind of work which was started with the Almighty's help. The inspiration for this was of course my husband's lifestyle and stress. Today, we run several medical vans for the economically weaker sections of the society. Doctors from Maya Hospital have enrolled to help us in this endeavour. If a case is of a critical nature, we refer it to Nair Hospital as we have associated with them for such eventuality. And we take care of the medical bills apart from providing the patients other financial assistance.

We have recently tied up with Jay Alert Group for eye operations, which are performed at a nominal fee.

How are you able to sustain your various social and welfare initiatives?

Charity begins at home, so I approached my sisters, cousins and other contacts to pool in a small amount of their resources for this work. But then you cannot work all alone. We now we have a good team to help us tap new resources and like-minded people who would like to be part of our efforts.

Four years ago, we launched a new project to help widows. Under this project, we prepare packets of grains for those women having no bread winner in the family. So far around 350 widows have benefited from this project.

We have started a bus service called 'Yatra Darshan'. This service is operational six days a week. This service was started for Jains and non-Jains who visit Ganpati temples between Shahpur and Dahanu. Another route has also been opened for this trip, that is from



FOUR YEARS AGO, WE LAUNCHED A NEW PROJECT TO HELP WIDOWS. UNDER THIS PROJECT, WE PREPARE PACKETS OF GRAINS FOR THOSE WOMEN HAVING NO BREAD WINNER IN THE FAMILY. SO FAR AROUND 350 WIDOWS HAVE BENEFITED FROM THIS PROJECT.

Bhayander to Dahanu. Around 50 people have been using this service on a daily basis for the past five years. We are also constructing a big temple near Bhayander called Lodha Dham, on Bhayander-Ahmedabad highway, with living quarters for the priests, a big library where you can get access to more than five lakh books. It would double up as an institute for those seeking to study religion. The temple will be inaugurated shortly.

We are now talking about 50 percent reservation for women. Do you think this will make a positive impact in the society?

I think it is a great step towards bringing transparency in work. There is growing unrest between couples and this friction has been the main reason for many divorces. This perhaps would help restore the equilibrium, which is needed in today's society.

Are you satisfied with the role your children are playing in the family

business?

Both my sons are taking their responsibilities very seriously. They are hard-working young men who dream of doing something big. Now they are trying to make one of the tallest buildings in Mumbai. By the grace of the Lord, the project is taking a positive route. And with proper support from the Government, I am positive that this will be one of the biggest projects of our time.

What's next for the Lodha Group?

Our one and only primary focus right now is to dedicate ourselves to the construction business.

What are the qualities you most admire in your husband?

His passion. I am also from a construction background as my father was also a builder, but, Mr Lodha has been different from other conventional builders. He is the man of great determination and does every new project – no matter how small or big – with amazing enthusiasm. The second most important thing is that he is a caring husband and a great exponent of gender equality. In the initial years when we had only one car, he would leave it at home and take a taxi to work just so that I could travel in the car comfortably. His respect and care of me has not changed. His values are impeccable. Looking at him, I think the zeal to do good begins at home, at least in our case it has.

THRIVENI MINES JOY & PROSPERITY TO GIVE BACK TO SOCIETY

'Business Flourishes when Community Prospers'
-B Prabhakaran, MD, Thriveni Earth Movers Private Limited





Amidst the furore and unrest that presently surrounds India's mining industry, Thriveni Earth Movers Private Ltd, presents a refreshing sight of community development and prospering villages, around their iron ore mines and operational areas in Keonjhar district of Odisha. Archana Sinha brings a comprehensive report on the developmental initiatives undertaken by the company to improve the villagers' lot over the last decade.



Chirpy children are being picked up and dropped by well-maintained and shining school vans, running on good roads while elderly villagers are getting good, standard medical treatment in Unchabali Village near the Unchabali iron ore mines in Odisha.

This is just a glimpse of what is yet to come: the villagers around the Balada, Berbil Joda and other areas move in their newly-owned Lands Rovers, while some others talk happily about their children's plans of higher education in Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and other cities of India. Some of them proudly proclaim that they

own more than three trucks and are living a wealthy lifestyle that match city businessmen. Yet another set of villagers talk proudly about their recently acquired properties and general well-being.

Overall, it is a pleasant surprise to see some of the remote villages in the Keonjhar District of Odisha, with all these modern facilities, not looking in any way disconnected from the main towns. Prosperity and satisfaction are writ large on their faces and they happily credit all this to Thriveni Earth Movers, who has been doing massive development work in at least seven mines and villages around

them. The villagers' happiness is reflected in every word they utter about Thriveni's efforts at road development, afforestation, education, health and hygiene, and upgradation of essential infrastructure, which also includes laying of pipelines for bringing potable water to homes, sanitation and even the company adopting an old age home.

It is not surprising, as Thriveni Earth Movers, a mine developer and operator (MDO) company, which has emerged as one of the largest mining companies in India with footprints across Southeast Asia and Africa, has been working along



“OVER THE YEARS, WE HAVE ADOPTED VILLAGES AROUND OUR MINING OPERATIONS CONTRIBUTING SUBSTANTIALLY TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT. MEDICAL CARE, DRINKING WATERS, ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING ARE SOME OF THE KEY AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THESE VILLAGES.

with the local community development initiatives to bring all-round prosperity to people around the iron ore and manganese mines in Odisha.

Iron ore mining has played a crucial role in Odisha's growth, as much as it has supported development efforts all over India. Odisha contributes almost 1/3 of India's GDP via MCDR (Mineral Conservation and Development Rules) minerals and mining is one of the important sources of livelihood in Odisha, apart from agriculture and fishing. The state earns substantial amount of foreign exchange for the country through mining. However, currently with Justice MB Shah, yet to give his final report on best practices in mining, it is good to see that Thriveni Earth Movers have done some noticeably good community developmental work in the area in which it operates.

Col. Vikram K Mehta, GM, CSR, Thriveni Earth Movers says, “Our consistent growth over the years is the result of our endeavour to incorporate the best mining

practices and technology and work with people. While Thriveni's strength lies in specialized mining processes involving exploration, mine planning and execution, production and mineral processing, our strong backup support in the form of consultancy services, quality control, skills development, environment and health services and CSR add value to our operations, and make our business sustainable over the years. Our philosophy has always been 'People First'. Our Chairman Balasubramanian and MD B. Prabhakaran has always believed that we must give back to society, and business has to go beyond economics. With that premise, we have always begun our CSR work in mining areas much before our operations start.”

Col. Mehta goes on to elaborate: “Over the years, we have adopted villages around our mining operations contributing substantially to their development. Medical care, drinking waters, roads and infrastructure, education and vocational



training are some of the key areas of development in these villages. It starts from facilitating peripheral development of infrastructure, roads, sanitation and providing potable water. Thereafter, we move on to build medical infrastructure with all the necessary amenities, including a team of qualified doctors. We also procure state-of-the-art ambulances to evacuate people to the nearest cities in case of emergency and critical medical needs of the villages. Once that is done, we collaborate with local schools and colleges and support them through funding and building infrastructure for people to study. We also have our own nursery school in Gauli, where our mining project is established. Vocational and Skills training is another area where we invest our energies and resources to build

farming program in some of the most backward regions of the country, supporting an Old Age Home and running a skills development centre for the under privileged youth. Two 'Self Help Groups' initiated with Thriveni's support with the aim of encouraging entrepreneurship at the grass root level have been highly successful.

The culture of being socially responsible runs top down and has become part and parcel of each employee in the company. According to the MD, Mr. B. Prabhakaran, "every business has two dimensional responsibilities – one towards its share holders and the other towards the environment in which it flourishes. Just as a farmer invest his energy and money not only for the benefit of the fruit bearing trees in his orchard but also towards

water harvesting and recycling of water.

An Overview of Thriveni's CSR Activities

Peripheral and Infrastructural Development: Development of Infrastructure is critical to any business and plays an important role in offering a certain quality of life to the people in a region. Since entering the mining business in Joda, in 2004, Thriveni has steadily been improving road communications in the area. This was important to transport raw materials to the commercial centres as well as



SINCE 2004 WHEN THRIVENI ENTERED INTO THE MINING BUSINESS IN JODA, IT HAS STEADILY BEEN IMPROVING ROAD COMMUNICATIONS IN THE AREA. THIS WAS IMPORTANT TO TRANSPORT RAW MATERIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL CENTRES AS WELL AS MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE. THE BHADRASAI-GUALI ROAD WAS ONE OF THE INITIAL DEVELOPMENTAL WORKS THAT THE COMPANY TOOK OVER.



a society with productive and efficient workforce. CSR has been the strength of the company from the beginning. Our belief that inclusive growth is the only way forward has not only paid rich dividends to us but also to our clients, who over the years have shown steadfast faith in our abilities."

In fact, Thriveni has gone beyond their areas of business interest over the years and has widened the fields of CSR activities in neighbouring areas also. The company supports a large number of organizations involved in community development, which include community

nurturing the entire eco system so also every businessman need to invest his energy and money not only for profit but also towards society in particular, and the environment at large."

Environment protection is yet another area where the company is focusing on. Dedicated to minimizing the impact of mining on our environment, the company has installed monitoring stations, which measures impact on forests, water bodies and air quality, guiding the company to work towards afforestation and preserving nature through adopting other greening techniques, such as rain

movement of people. The Bhadrasai-Guali road was one of the initial developmental works that the company took over. Repairing and marking NH215 was next on the agenda and that has given good results in terms of improving connectivity in the state. Besides these, Thriveni has been involved in laying roads in the interior areas enabling tribals and villagers to reap the benefits of economic development. Two bridges on the river Sona at K-13 and Malda villages built by



Thriveni have brought inaccessible villages closer to the more developed areas.

Availability of safe drinking water was a major problem in the area and water-borne diseases were a constant threat. Thriveni started a project to provide potable water to the villages around its area of operations which included bringing pipelines for regular water supply to village homes.

Electrification of some villages Like Balda Panchayat were also taken up by the company. "This is an ongoing project," says Col. Mehta, adding, "these days the villagers also ask for support and that is a good thing. We press our services wherever required. Thriveni is also engaged in helping educational institutes in the region improve their facilities. It has contributed significantly to the Joda College for its new women's hostel. Work on Library cum Reading Room for the CS College and class rooms for Women's College, both at Champua, has started. It is helping the administration of Champua town in constructing facilities for public convenience and organizing garbage clearance in the market area.

Quality Healthcare

Thriveni has made a significant contribution in bringing medical facilities to the doorsteps of the tribal population of

THE COMPANY IS OPERATING A NURSERY SCHOOL IN THE GUALI AREA THAT IS NURTURING 60 CHILDREN AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL COMPLETELY FREE OF COST. IT HAS MADE HUGE CONTRIBUTION TO SEWA FOUNDATION FOR RUNNING A SCHOOL AND REHABILITATION CENTRE IN THE REMOTE AREA OF KEONJHAR. IT REGULARLY CONTRIBUTES TO INSTITUTES IN THE REGION. IT IS ALSO PROVIDING MID-DAY MEALS TO THE UNDERPRIVILEGED STUDENTS STUDYING IN DIG DARSHAN SIKSHYA KENDRA, KAMARJODA.

Keonjhar. It operates four clinics in Uchhaballi, Jurudihi, Murgabeda and Guali, each managed by fully qualified doctors, medical staff and ambulances. In areas where one hardly finds any operational primary healthcare, free access to the poor in the region has earned great deal of admiration to the company. In addition, Thriveni has a record of reacting promptly during medical emergencies. In 2009, prompt action by Thriveni saved scores of lives during the outbreak of cholera in Guali as well as an outbreak of gastroenteritis in

Bhadrasahi Panchayat last year. Sending a relief team to Uttarakhand this year was among their latest initiatives.

The company also organizes medical camps on a regular basis in areas where it does not have a permanent clinic. One such camp which concluded recently was dedicated towards Detection of Breast Cancer and Diabetes. A special team of volunteers camped in various parts of Joda block with a vehicle-mounted mammography machine under the project "Roko Cancer".

Acknowledging the efforts, the Sarpanch of Balada says, "Before the facilities came in, we were left to god's mercies to fend off many diseases. We would do jadh phoonk and did not know any cure for malaria and jaundice or malnutrition. The dispensary and medical camps have raised our awareness on the prevention and treatment of these diseases."

Opening Avenues for Education

Education is the foremost means of bringing a positive and long lasting change in a community. In order to achieve the objective of helping the tribal population develop and reap the benefits of progress, Thriveni set itself on the path of providing them with the means and facilities for gaining knowledge. The company is operating a nursery school in the Guali area that is nurturing 60 children at the primary level completely free of cost. It has made huge contribution to SEWA Foundation for running a school and Rehabilitation Centre in the remote area of Keonjhar. It regularly contributes to institutes in the region. It is also providing mid-day meals to the underprivileged students studying in Dig Darshan Sikshya Kendra, Kamarjoda.

The company is also extending a helping hand to social activist and Padmasree Awardee Smt. Tulasi Munda by setting up a school in Orissa's mining area- Adivasi Vikas Samiti School. The company contributes more than Rs. 3 lakh per month to the school. Thriveni has also just completed the construction of a new building for the school.



Thriveni Educational & Rural Welfare Society

This was formed primarily for the purpose of providing quality education facility to the children in the rural and tribal areas of Keonjhar District.

Thriveni Industrial Security Academy (TISA)

Industrial mining has now become mechanized with less dependence on human labour. But the security aspect of mines and industries in general has become an important issue, with terrorism and extremism on the rise. Lack of employment opportunities and negligible penetration of education has impacted a growing resentment against the state and country. So, the youth is easily influenced by the Maoists and their activities.

Seeing the need, Thriveni Earth Movers has taken upon itself the responsibility to train the youth in industrial security training by establishing Thriveni Industrial Security Academy (TISA) in Sep 2010. The course duration is for 45 days. The trainees are given free lodging and boarding and are given Rs 1,500/- per month as stipend. The company intends employing 1,000 such youths from the tribal area. The Academy has trained 600 young men till date. A majority of them are working in different facilities of the company while others have joined the paramilitary forces and other industries drawing decent salaries.

Thriveni Nursery School

A nursery school has been opened in the village Kendudih where 60 children from nearby villages attend. The children are provided free books, uniforms, school bags and mid-day meals. Two teachers have been appointed to take care of the education of these children.

Old Age Home: ANANDASHRAM

The company is sponsoring an Old Age Home run by an NGO IDA in Padampur in Keonjhar district. This home houses 25-30 inmates. Most of them came from extreme destitute background, and were left to die on the streets. Now all of them have found a reason to live, co-exist and work in areas that interest them, such as farming, animal husbandry, basket making, singing, kirtan and other activities. Thriveni is also upgrading the infrastructure and setting up medical facilities.

Operator Training Institute

In its endeavor to empower the youth of the region to gain meaningful employment, Thriveni is venturing into establishing institutes for skill development. After successfully launching TISA, it has now laid the foundation for an Operator Training Institute which imparts training on the operation of heavy machinery used in mines.

Says a company spokesperson, "We are

not just providing end to end solutions for mining iron ore and manganese in the area, but have consistently risen and adhered to the highest standards of excellence both in our core business area of mining and community development. We help raise the standard of the people and fulfill their dreams by collaborating with local NGOs. It is a win-win situation for them as well as for us, as they come back with skills and knowledge to contribute to the business and go back richer in their experiences and wages. They are also able to have higher education, find good jobs for themselves armed with confidence and efficient delivery of skills and achieve a better lifestyle."

So what does the new Companies Bill mean to Thriveni? Col Mehta says, "I cannot comment if this is good or bad, but I can say that companies who want their business to flourish will have to look at inclusive growth and take the local community into confidence. This has been a proven fact and many well-known industrialists have been doing it since the last 100 years or so.

Since its inception, Thriveni has been spending 2.5 percent of its profit in CSR activities. This has gone a long way in earning us goodwill and reach excellence in business operations. It is time to maximise economic growth through the growth of people you are working with. There cannot be a disconnect between business and welfare."

'ANNAMRITA', A 'MANNA' FROM ISKCON FOR HUNGRY CHILDREN



Here is an inspiring story of how 'Annamrita', an initiative of ISKCON Food Relief Foundation has been feeding more than 1.2 million poor and underprivileged children across the country every day. Read the following account of how it all started in ISKCON Foundation's own words.

How did we begin?

Annamrita is not just a social organization; it is a concept, an ideology and a change agent. The organization was founded with the simple vision of achieving a nourished, hunger-free India, where poor kids would no longer have to sacrifice on education and development and take up menial jobs to augment their family earnings.

The beginning of ISKCON Food Relief Foundation (Annamrita) is a story of compassion. One day in Mayapur, a village near Kolkata, Srila Prabhupada, Founder Acharya of ISKCON, looked out of his room window and saw a group of children

fighting with street dogs over scraps of food. From this heart-breaking incident was born a determination that dictated that no one within a radius of ten miles of our centre should go hungry.

Srila Prabhupada did not just preach what he believed in; he brought his beliefs to life. He never hesitated to cook for people who turned up at the centres thus setting the right example for years to come—an example that hinted at service, dedication to a cause and nobility of virtue and one that is imbibed at Annamrita.

This became a full-fledged mission in 2004 when 900 children in Mumbai were served meals. And there has been no looking back since. Today, ISKCON Food Relief Foundation feeds 1.2 million children in 20 locations in 8 states of India everyday, adhering to the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene with a menu comprising of Usal Rice, Pulav, Bhel, Sambar Rice, Amti Rice, Usal Khichdi, Sprouted Lentils Khichdi, Mung Dal Khichdi, Sweet Rice, Halva, Chapati Bhaji and Puri Bhaji.

Annamrita stands on the basic principle of feeding needy children in aided and non-aided schools with nutritious and hearty meals. This is, and shall always remain, the Annamrita story and way of life.

The mission is successful due to a dedicated team comprising of passionate trustees and advisors, a committed and persevering group of missionaries, and a highly competent and motivated employees.



THE ISKCON FOOD RELIEF FOUNDATION HAS DONE A WONDERFUL JOB. THEIR QUALITY IS VERY GOOD, THEIR TIMINGS ARE VERY GOOD. THEY ARE THERE ON THE DOT! OUR EXPERIENCE WITH ISKCON HAS BEEN MARVELOUS. THEY ARE DEDICATED AND THEY DO NOT PROMISE ANYTHING THAT THEY FEEL THEY CANNOT DO.”
SMT. SHEILA DIXIT, CHIEF MINISTER, NEW DELHI

Awards

Annamrita has received several awards, few of which are:

- > Lifebuoy National Health Award,
- > D.Y. Patil Annual Achiever's Award
- > Best Partner Award by Indian Development Foundation,
- > Vocational Excellence Award by Rotary Club
- > Appreciation Award by Agarwal Associates.

Impact

“The ISKCON Food Relief Foundation has done a wonderful job. Their quality is very good, their timings are very good. They are there on the dot! Our experience with ISKCON has been marvelous. They are dedicated and they do not promise anything that they feel they cannot do.” Ms. Sheila Dixit, Chief Minister, Delhi

“In our school, most of the students are underprivileged. These children stay in the surrounding slums. ISKCON Food Relief Foundation's midday meal program is a blessing to these children.”

Mr. Aijaz Ahemed, Principal, Municipal Corporation School, Shrinivas Puri, Delhi

“ISKCON Food Relief Foundation is providing balanced food to the underprivileged children. They provide a variety of meals each day, by which there is improvement in the physical and mental growth of these children.” Dr. Tripta Gupta, Medical Director, B.T. Hospital, Delhi

“One of the most beautiful things for the heart is to see little children... their smiles...tears of gratitude... to receive their lunch. We take it for granted, but for them they live for that lunch...Just see how a little bit of care and concern from our part can do for a person's entire life.” H.H. Radhanath Swami, Author of “The Journey Home”, Spiritual Community Leader

Dr. Radhakrishna Das, Managing Programme Director- ISKCON Food Relief Foundation “Our vision is to liberate underprivileged children from the vicious cycle of poverty and illiteracy by providing them nutritious tasty meals.”

“Most of the children Annamrita feeds



MOST OF THE CHILDREN ANNAMRITA FEEDS COME FROM THE ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTION. THEIR PARENTS PREFER TO SEND THEM TO PICK POCKETS AND OTHER SUCH MENIAL JOBS, RATHER THAN TO SCHOOL. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THESE SAME CHILDREN NOW ARE ATTRACTED TO COME TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY ONLY BECAUSE THEY GET A WARM HEARTY MEAL.



Dr. Radhakrishna Das, Managing Programme Director- ISKCON Food Relief Foundation

come from the economically weaker section of society. Their parents prefer to send them to pick pockets and other such menial jobs, rather than to school. Research shows that these same children now are attracted to come to school every day only because they get a warm hearty meal. Since they are coming to school – they are getting educated. By way of education, they are becoming responsible citizens of a better tomorrow. In the broader perspective - this is a boon to the society. It is safe to say this project is not just about feeding, but also about educating..."

"I would like to say that we all are children of God irrespective of whether we are rich or poor. The underprivileged children of our society are also the children of that same God. Therefore if we love God,

we should express that love by loving these children as well."

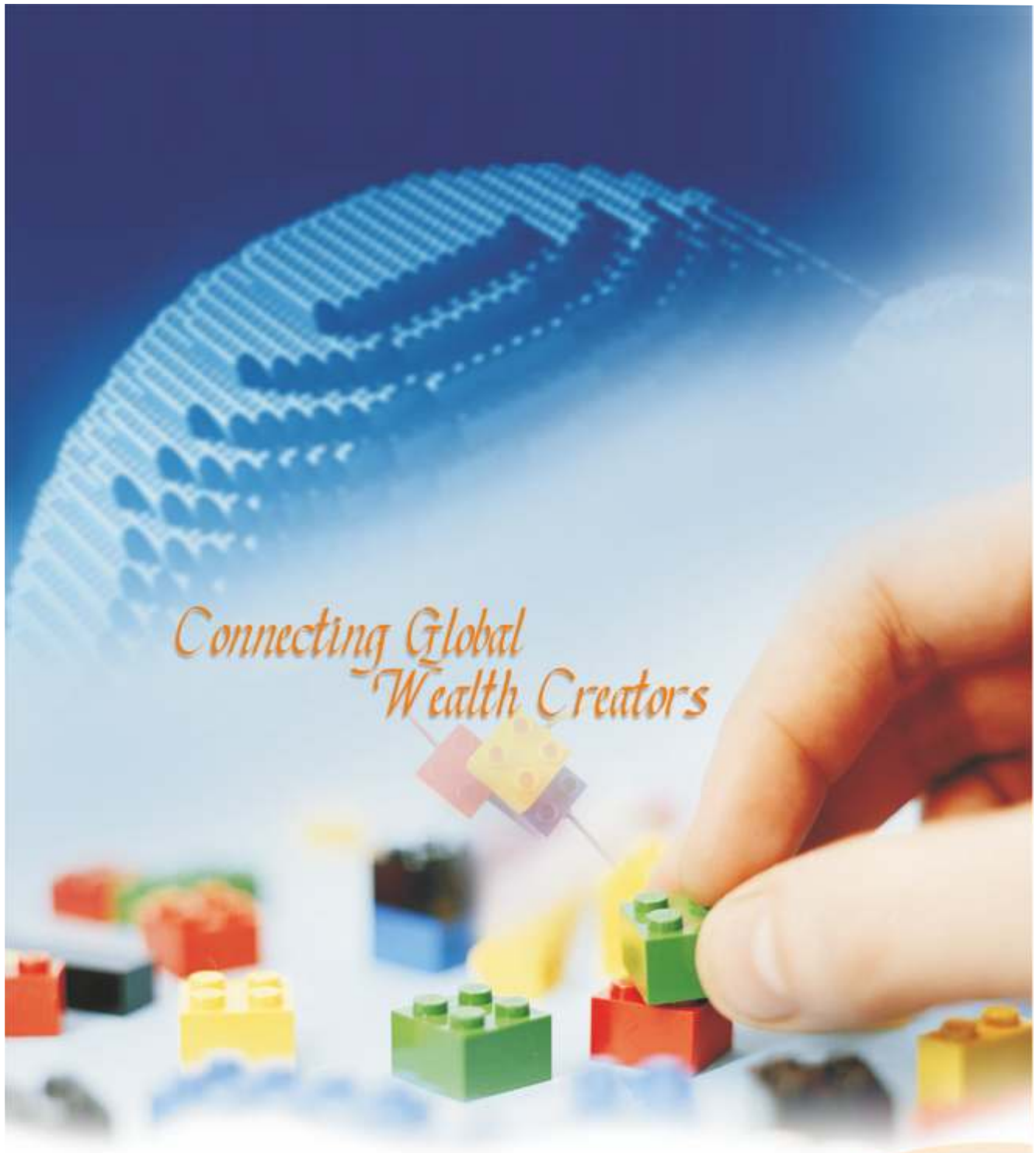
Support

Annamrita spends Rs. 900 annually to bring a smile on the face of a hungry child. Today, over 12 lakh school students are provided nutritious meals and Annamrita aim to take this number higher and reach out to as many children as possible.

For more information on how to help Annamrita, Visit: www.annamrita.org
Email: rupali@annamrita.org

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INDIAN SUSTAINABILITY CONGRESS 2013 MEET IN BANGALORE ON 4 & 5 DEC

Indian Sustainability Congress 2013 (ISC2013), an annual event, is scheduled to be held on 4 and 5 December in Bangalore, focussing on the issues of thought leadership, recognition and rewards for achievers, products and technology demonstrations, trade fair, vendor development, collaboration and networking opportunities.

Towards this, ISC 2013 intends to engage with the Government of India, Government of Karnataka, international organisations, research institutions and associations working towards growth of Sustainable Technologies and Products. Various Indian and International Enterprises working in building the Sustainable Technologies and Products will exhibit and demonstrate their expertise in the area of Sustainability.

Following are the themes on which discussions will take place.

- > Sustainability for Future Generation
- > Using sustainability to drive business innovation and growth
- > Government Schemes and Opportunities for Sustainable Technology & Product Development
- > Investment opportunities and challenges in Sustainable Technologies & Products
- > Opportunities and challenges in Technology Transfer and Licensing
- > Sustainable Technologies and Products Last Mile Implementation



> CSR Spend

The purpose of the ISC 2013 is to exchange emerging ideas and explore technologies towards protecting the environment and optimizing natural resources so as to achieve sustainable development and societal benefits through the generations. The Congress will provide a common platform for engineers, researchers, innovators, practitioners, investors to interact and collaborate to achieve overall sustainability from a systems perspective, using engineering & technological innovations.

The potential participants of the ISC include CEOs, Presidents and Directors of corporate companies, policy makers in governments, investors and fund managers of sustainability projects, heads of government departments, heads of Sustainability Development projects.

During the two full days of Conference and discussions by global thought leaders and international speakers and subject matter experts, opportunities to build businesses will be explored in the areas of Urban Transport, Green Growth, Climate Change, Social Engineering, Energy and Water.

For more information,

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