

The Aditya Birla Group: Cutting Edge CSR Practices

For more than six decades, we in the Aditya Birla Group have been and continue to be involved in meaningful welfare driven initiatives that distinctively impact the quality of life of the weaker sections of society – the poorest living in hundreds of villages that are in the hinterland of our country. It all goes back to the time of Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla, the patriarch of the Birla family. He was greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation. Between them, they shared a special bond. Mr. G. D. Birla felt that his wealth was to be used to assist every endeavour of Gandhiji. In fact, he financed the entire freedom movement led by Gandhiji.

In Gandhiji he found a leader who only thought of the needs of others and not of himself. At Gandhiji's request he gave Rs.200,000/- for the Harijans and soon began to lead the Harijan Sevak Sangh. He also gave Rs. 70,000/- for the Aligarh Muslim University. In the 1940s at the behest of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, he contributed Rs.25 lakhs to establish the Birla Vishwakarma Mahavidyalaya Engineering College in Baroda. He gave wholeheartedly because he believed in the power of education. Mr. G. D. Birla subscribed to the trusteeship concept of management which was espoused by Gandhiji.

While carrying forward this philosophy, Mr. Aditya Birla, our Group's legendary leader wove in the concept of 'sustainable livelihood'. This transcended cheque-book philanthropy. In his view, it was unwise to keep on giving endlessly. Instead, he felt that, channelling resources to ensure that people had the wherewithal to make ends meet would be more productive. So we set up vocational and other training centres for the underprivileged. Taking these practices forward, Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla, our Group's iconic Chairman has institutionalized CSR processes at our Group.

Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla, has raised the bar very high. In his view, we must give our Social Projects, the same kind of importance, that we give to our business projects. So, just as for companies we have a business vision, for our social projects we have evolved a Social Vision. He has mandated it to be a part of the business vision. In a nutshell, our social vision epitomizes inclusive growth, and dignifying the lives of the underprivileged.

Our engagement with the underprivileged is channelized through the Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, with Mrs. Rajashree Birla, the Chairperson, providing the vision and the direction. The Centre is anchored by Dr. Pragnya Ram, Group Executive President, Corporate Communications & CSR, and



“As we voyage into a sensational future, we must find it within ourselves to look beyond ourselves. It is the responsibility of every generation to leave behind a safer, superior, more enlightened world than the one that they inherit.

When future generations look back upon us, they must credit us for being an organisation that actually foresaw the future and helped give the world a better tomorrow.

As they say, giving is true having. The teachings of the Buddha tell us that thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and yet the life of that candle will not be shortened.

I believe that we truly practice compassionate capitalism. Service to society is at the very heart of our value system. We attempt to reach out with a sense of purpose to those with distressed lives. We endeavour to find prosthetics for amputated souls, show them a future that they never believed existed for them.”

Mr. KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA

admirably supported by a 250 strong, committed CSR colleagues. The engagement of the leadership team at each of our Companies gives us the edge.

We work in 5,000 villages and urban slums, largely in India and elsewhere in Brazil, Korea, Thailand, Egypt, Indonesia and the Philippines. Our focus areas are – Education, Healthcare, sustainable livelihood, women empowerment projects, infrastructure and espousing social reform. To give you an example – in Odisha we touch tens of thousands of lives across hundreds of villages. Our village infrastructure development has made a difference to 5,00,000 lives. Our healthcare projects have helped 3,30,000 people. We promote self-health governance across 1 lakh households, fostering mother and child care projects to reduce maternal and infant mortality rate. Through a project for differently-abled children, we reach out to 400 children. Over 98,667 children get healthier food through provision of midday meals. Our coaching centres in Odisha train over 1,200 students every year. This is just one state. Our activities are all over the nation.

Three stories of hope

We would like to walk you through three stories of hope. First, 'Feisty Fashion' – where women from the villages of Bengaluru master their destiny, second, our partnership with CII and thirdly, our model villages.

Feisty Fashion

Endurance, commitment and strength. These make a woman. There aren't enough battles in the world to deter her if she is determined.

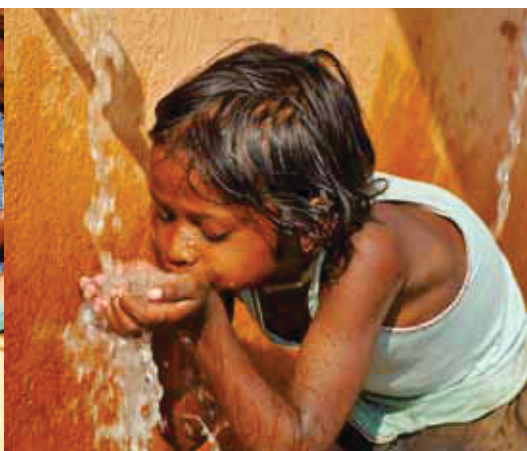
Aditya Birla Group's Madura Fashion and Lifestyle's factories are woven by the fabric of a woman's spirit. With a splendid group of women working determinedly towards making our and their own future beautiful, Madura has become a monument of pride for the Aditya Birla Group.



Our Vision

“ To actively contribute to the social and economic development of the underserved communities, lifting the burden of poverty and helping bring in inclusive growth. In so doing, build a better, sustainable way of life for the weaker sections of society and raise the country's Human Development Index. ”

Mrs. RAJASHREE BIRLA





The Madura factories are made up of over 8000 such powerful women. Their beginnings are from three different Indian states but their destination is the same. They haven't had the luxury of proper education or a supportive family. Yet, they have decided to fend for themselves and face hardships with a fighting spirit, thanks to the caring and giving environment within the walls of the factories.



Most projects are started for profit and later layered with a CSR initiative. But empowering these women with the basics of a job, a basic education, a lovely crèche for their kids and freedom was never a deliberate 'initiative'. Aditya Birla Group's Madura F&L began with the motive of making every one of these women strong enough to overcome the difficulties thrust upon them. It is a unique



ongoing project that creates a mix of profit with the spirit of its women.

Working in the factory may be their job, but these women don't start their work from here. They rise before the sun, finish all their household chores, face the various challenges of their family lives and then, with their head held high, travel several miles, by one of the company's 20 buses to and fro, with their little ones in tow. There is a mesmerising zeal and pride in every one of these women. They aren't just out there to earn a living. They are out in the world to prove their worth. It is this pride that brings out the kind of commitment towards their work that isn't a common sight elsewhere.

Madura F&L, a second home to many of these women, spares no effort to make them feel confident, encouraged and empowered. It tries to instil a sense of security in them; adding more meaning to their lives through extensive training in tailoring, then mentoring them and getting them to a regular job. Why else would Ratnamma choose to walk 10 kilometres every day to reach work during a four day transport strike? Not just her, hundreds of women walked as much as 15 kilometres to reach work.

Gowri faces a string of difficulties within the walls of her home but she is never late to work or without a smile full of promise and hope. She participates in Namma Dina(Our Day), a day that celebrates the workforce through entertainment and awards. It is these little things that make her feel loved and keep her going. The caring environment stretches well beyond the factory floor. On reaching home Jyoti would be separated from her kids by her in-laws. But with the confidence that Madura gave her, she contacted the authorities and put an end to this injustice. "I want my children to have parental care and I know Madura is walking with me in this endeavour", she smiles.

These women find their sense of belonging and appreciation from the hard work that they put in the factory, driving them to outdo their own capabilities. The factory too draws its strength from these fighters. The designs come to life by their undying spirit.

Sustainable livelihoods: Aditya Birla Group and CII, working in tandem

A splendid example of an excellent partnership in the PPP Model is our engagement with CII, Delhi. This sustainable livelihood project has been funded by the European Union and the Aditya Birla Group with the British Council and City & Guilds, UK, being the delivery partners. In this project, our objective has been **to replicate livelihood models, leading to employability, and employment of 11,000 marginalised youth** in Sirsa in Haryana and Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh. These are back of the beyond areas where employment opportunities barely exist. With CII as the lead partner, training in skill development in auto service and maintenance, agriculture, trade, hospitality and tourism sectors were offered.



Our project also envisaged the development of a **delivery mechanism for soft skills including English, and capacity building of 60 teachers, at both these locations for soft skills training.** The course content designed in line with industry requirements and extensive practical training, is given to the students to make them job ready from day



one. Guest lecturers from the industry help the students understand the corporate world better and prepare them for their jobs. So far, 3,016 students have been successfully trained and placed.

Additionally, we worked with CII to create the template and ecosystem for setting up Sector Skill Councils. These include, Automotive Skills Development Council, Healthcare Sector Skill Council, Logistics, Life Sciences & Pharma and Beauty & Wellness. As you may perhaps be aware, having seen the project, now the Ministry of Labour and Employment have set up sector mentor councils for various industries. This step will go a long way in developing well targeted, vocational training programmes.

A year ago, we have launched Project Kaushalya – a Skills Training Centre in yet another collaboration with CII. Our intent is to equip the rural youth with requisite skills that are in sync with the needs of industry and also spawn self-employment opportunities. So far we have trained and certified 1,036 youngsters in trades such as handling and repair of electrical equipment, auto service technicians,

retailing, data entry operators, tailoring, and salon care. Towards this, we have set up 4 training centres at Rishra and Barasat in Kolkata, Jagdishpur in Lucknow and Anekal in Tamil Nadu. Our endeavours have already given a new meaning to the lives of 687 youngsters.

Furthermore through **Project ANYA**, which is our initiative towards the economic empowerment of women, we have set-up 17 production centres. These are located at Jagdishpur in Uttar Pradesh, Veraval in Gujarat and Rishra in Kolkata. Under its auspices we have trained 717 rural women in Apparel and Jute products manufacturing. The Apparel manufacturing unit at Jagdishpur is now a self-sustaining centre. It caters to the local community. The jute bag centre at Rishra services our MORE retail stores.

At the Aditya Birla Rural Technology Park, the Birla Shaktiman Vocational Training Centre, the Birla White Vikas Training Centre for Applicators, the Rajashree Birla Talent Development Centre and over 20 other vocational



training centres across geographies, we accord training in sustainable livelihood projects to nearly 70,000 youngsters. We collaborative extensively with NGOs for the training.





Our Model Villages: Absolutely replicable

A word on our **model villages** – this is a project that is absolutely replicable and much recommended to all of you. As mentioned earlier, we work in 5,000 villages globally. We have earmarked 300 villages for transformation into model villages. Making of a model village entails ensuring self-reliance in all aspects viz. education, healthcare and family welfare, infrastructure, agriculture and watershed management and working towards sustainable livelihood patterns. Fundamentally ensuring that their development reaches a stage wherein village committees take over the complete responsibility and our teams become dispensable.

Up until now, in a 7-year timeframe, we have been able to transform 99 villages into model villages across India (in the districts of Ujjain and Neemuch in Madhya Pradesh;

Sonbadra in Uttar Pradesh; Gulbarga in Karnataka; Bharuch, Junagadh and Amreli in Gujarat; Ariyallur in Tamil Nadu, to cite a few), through our Group Companies – Hindalco, Grasim, UltraTech, Aditya Birla Nuvo, Aditya Birla Chemicals and Essel Mining, among others. This is indeed a good strike rate. In these villages 70% of the population now live above the poverty line, vis-à-vis 90% living below the poverty line before the project commenced.

In conclusion, when we see the changing face of villages from abject poverty to meeting the necessities of life, from dependency to freedom, from backwardness to progress – in more ways than one, it is an indescribable experience. There is a palpable difference. Tens of thousands of villagers now seem self-assured, confident and happy at being able to move towards a sustainable livelihood. There is new found dignity among them as they celebrate a new life. And this is our greatest reward.





The Aditya Birla Group: A Premium Global Corporation

A US \$41 billion (₹ 2,50,000 crores) corporation, the Aditya Birla Group is in the League of Fortune 500. Anchored by an extraordinary force of over 120,000 employees, belonging to 42 nationalities. The Group has topped the Nielsen's Corporate Image Monitor 2014-15 and emerged as the Number 1 corporate, the 'Best in Class', for the third consecutive year. Over 50 per cent of our revenues flow from our overseas operations in 36 countries.

- From being in every second can in the world, to shaping automobiles
- From building your homes to the highways that get you there
- From inks, dyes, plastics to every 5th tyre in the world
- From securing futures to empowering over 6 million dreams
- From connecting the world to enabling over a billion conversations a day
- From styling your wardrobe every three seconds, to bringing you the world of fashion

We are a big part of your life, because we know every small moment, is big for you!

Globally, we are:

- A metals powerhouse, among the world's most cost-efficient aluminium and copper producers. Hindalco-Novelis is the largest aluminium rolling company. It is one of the 3 biggest producers of primary aluminium in Asia, with the largest single location copper smelter
- No.1 in viscose staple fibre
- No.1 in carbon black
- The 4th largest producer of insulators
- The 5th largest producer of acrylic fibre
- Among the top 10 cement producers globally
- Among the best energy efficient fertilizer plants
- The largest Indian MNC with manufacturing operations in the USA, wherein 95% of the workforce comprises of Americans

In India:

- A top fashion (branded apparel) and lifestyle player
- The 2nd largest player in viscose filament yarn

- The largest in the chlor-alkali sector
- Among the top 3 mobile telephony companies
- A leading player in life insurance and asset management
- Among the top 2 super-market chains in the retail business

Beyond business we

- Reach out to 7.5 million people in 5,000 villages annually in India through the Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, spearheaded by Mrs. Rajashree Birla
- Focus on: health-care, education, sustainable livelihood, infrastructure and espousing social reform
- Run 42 schools which provide quality education to 45,000 children. Of these 18,000 students belong to the underprivileged segment. Merit Scholarships are given to an additional 12,000 children from the interiors.
- Our 18 hospitals tend to more than a million villagers
- Ongoing education, healthcare and sustainable livelihood projects in Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Egypt, Korea and Brazil, lift thousands of people out of poverty.
- Set up the Aditya Birla India Centre at the London Business School

Transcending the conventional barriers of business because we believe it is our duty to facilitate inclusive growth, and we care.



ADITYA BIRLA GROUP

Big in Your Life

www.adityabirla.com