

PRAJ FOUNDATION

For a company working in the realm of Clean Technologies like bioethanol and water & wastewater management systems, sustainable development was the obvious choice for our CSR agenda. We formed the 'Praj Foundation' (PF), the CSR arm of Praj Industries Limited in 2004. We are holistically committed to improving the quality of life of our employees, their families, local communities and stakeholders.

Our agenda is to focus on Environment, Health-care, Education, Art and Capacity Building of the Underprivileged sections of society. Primarily undertaking activities in Pune district, Praj Foundation operates either through executing projects themselves or supports projects matching its ideological framework that have been implemented by other reputed agencies.

Charity begins at home

No CSR initiative can be successfully implemented unless the employees are sensitized, empowered and taken into confidence. A series of lectures were organized specifically for our employees, on topics like global warming, Pune's traffic problems, solid waste management, solar energy, etc.

The Sustainability Initiative Group (SIG) was formed within Praj, to come up with innovations related to a sustainable lifestyle and formulate a roadmap for implementation. The SIG has been responsible for initiatives like energy conservation; celebrating festivals like Holi and Ganesh Chaturthi which damage the environment extensively, in an eco-friendly way; bus services for employees; greening around the manufacturing facility, etc

The Green Family competition was launched to widen the arena of participation and extend it to the employees' families too. The competition sought the active involvement of the employees and their family members in specific measurable and quantifiable activities aimed at reducing global warming.

Community and social initiatives

It's not just our work in the biofuel arena but our belief that since we are part of society, we have a responsibility towards



its ecological environment and the state in which we leave it for generations to come, that forms the foundation of our community activities.

Reducing global warming

For creating awareness on mitigating climate change, an essay competition on 'My contribution in reducing global warming' was organized for school children in Pune and surrounding areas in 2007. It was heartening to see the participation of 11500 students from 107 schools.

Environment awareness and conservation programmes

As part of our environment awareness and conservation programme at the Girls Sainiki School near Pune, daily canteen waste is converted into vermicompost in the school premises. The idea is to practically demonstrate to the students the 'sustainability cycle'. The compost generated is used for growing vegetables and finally, these organically grown vegetables are back in the kitchen for cooking. This activity also helps promote the concept of organic farming to the parents of the students.

We have instituted the 'Praj Foundation Green Scholarships and Awards' to provide greater encouragement to the green movement, help it take deeper roots and synergise these concepts into the students' daily lives.

Solar lanterns have been provided to an off grid village of Dhanagar, where families stay on a hill top. Today, each household has sufficient light for elders to do household chores while the children



are able to study without straining their eyes. The utility of solar lanterns and its effect on families, are also being periodically documented.



Biodegradable Waste Management

The Decentralised Biodegradable Waste Management project is implemented in association with INORA through nine satellite centers located in different parts of the city of Pune. The programme includes regular awareness programmes and technical advice on setting up composting units individually or in a community. To provide logistical support, a team has been set up to operate as 'Waste management Service providers' in three wards of the city.



- A Community Composting Model has been established at a Housing Society in Pune, to demonstrate composting of garden waste and effectively utilizing it for growing vegetables.
- An informative booklet on methods and process of composting has been published.
- A film depicting case studies of successful composting projects was produced.
- 'Garden from Waste' competition is organized annually.

One of the components of solid waste is bio medical waste which needs special attention due to its hazardous nature. We therefore, donated a bio-medical disposal van to the Pune Municipal Corporation to strengthen its infrastructure for handling biomedical waste.



Biodiversity

The Praj Silver Jubilee Bio Diversity Park was established on two acres of land allotted by the Pune Municipal Corporation on BOT basis, near Pashan lake. 250 seedlings of 25 native tree species were planted in the Bio Diversity Park by Praj employees and their families.



Sacred Grove is a forest preserved on religious grounds. These are also ecologically significant patches. Most of the sacred groves are in a degraded condition. The project is implemented in partnership with BAIF & OIKOS and intended to pilot test strategies for the restoration of the scared grove at Tamhini in Mulshi Taluk and Kalamvihira in Jawhar Taluk to come up with replicable and scalable models.



Preventive Health Care

Our health awareness sessions cover topics like:

- Anemia
- Digestive system
- Nutrition

A project for preventive health care for women and children is being facilitated in three villages in Mulshi Taluka of Pune district in association with Rachana Society for Social Reconstruction. Beneficiaries are being trained in techniques of vermicomposting to produce organic vegetables. Interventions such as use of iron vessels and improving overall nutrition to tackle anemia, are being promoted.



Self-reliance, Education and Vocational Training

Any work at the grass root level is incomplete if you can't build capacity. With exactly this objective, the Industrial Training Institutes (it is, Government of India Undertaking) have been

imparting vocational training throughout the country and Praj has undertaken mentorship of an ITI at Velhe, near Pune under the government scheme of upgrading ITI through industries.

Many children of school-going age in the migrated families working on construction sites, are not enrolled in schools. The main impediments are language barriers, responsibilities of siblings, household chores and lack of interest and awareness about the importance of education, among parents. We have initiated Supportive Education Programmes in association with Palakniti Pariwar with the objective of ensuring maximum enrolment of children in formal schools.

There are also many adolescent girls in this community, who have either dropped out of school or have never been to school so far. We realized what they needed most is Life Skills Education and thus, developed a curriculum covering various topics like health, basic literacy, communication skills, etc.

There is a strong need to train the rural youth in appropriate rural technologies so that they can start their own enterprises. Vigyan Ashram, Pabal, has been imparting training in various areas like engineering, energy, environment, agriculture-animal husbandry, home science and basic health. Therefore, a semi-commercial food processing and testing facility, was created for imparting training with requisite hygienic conditions and safety standards. Technical and financial assistance was provided to establish this facility. The facility is being used for training students and SHG groups, as well as for production of fruit and vegetable processed products.