

# SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL INSIGHTS

CSR | ESG | SUSTAINABILITY

## **IN THIS EDITION:**

---

### **KEY NEWS ON CSR, ESG & SUSTAINABILITY**

**Align Sustainability In India's Growing Economy**

**Govt permits planting of trees on degraded land parcels for credits**

### **BEST PRACTICE**

**Project Navya: CSR Project by Apollo Tyres Limited**

### **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

**An article by Brig Rajiv Williams, YSM (Veteran)**

**Advisor and Consultant CSR & Sustainability,**

**Former Group Head CSR, Jindal Stainless Limited**

### **UPCOMING**

**Workshop on Environmental Projects: Success Toolkit**

### **ABOUT NATIONAL CSR NETWORK**

---



**Ms. Meena Raghunathan**

Editor, Sustainable Social Insights

Former Executive Director,  
GMR Varalakshmi Foundation



**Ms. Prerna Gupta**

Compiler & Designer,  
Sustainable Social Insights

Assistant Director,  
National CSR Network



# KEY NEWS ON CSR, ESG & SUSTAINABILITY

## REGENERATIVE APPROACH VITAL TO ALIGN SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIA'S GROWING ECONOMY

About 91 per cent of Indian businesses have set targets to reach net zero, however, the 2030 deadline the country has set for itself seems unrealistic...

## GOVT PERMITS PLANTING OF TREES ON DEGRADED LAND PARCELS FOR CREDITS

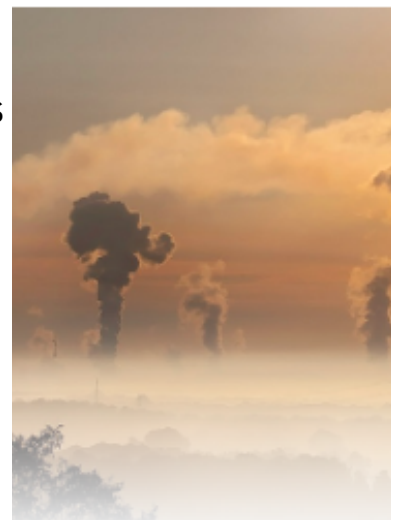
A Green Credit is a unit of incentive awarded for carrying out actions that have a positive environmental impact. It works like a reward point for activities such as tree planting, water conservation, sustainable agriculture, or pollution reduction....

## ELECTRONIC WASTE: THE UN WARNS OF RAPID GROWTH

As the production of electronic waste (WEEE) continues to grow, in its annual report, the Global E-waste Monitor 2024, published on March 20, the UN calls for effective management on a global scale. A look back at this issue through seven key data....

## REDUCTION IN GHG EMISSIONS

The record 4.8% drop in France's greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 is part of a general trend that concerns a majority of European countries, thanks in particular to the reduction in the footprint of the energy sector. energy and industry.....



## THE RISE OF SUSTAINABLE AND ECO-FRIENDLY BUILDINGS IN BANGALORE

As awareness of sustainability and ecological conservation grows, there is a rising demand for eco-friendly buildings in Bangalore.

Bangalore, often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India, stands out as a vibrant city characterized by its booming infrastructure and thriving IT hubs. The influx of multinational companies and the city's dynamic economy has spurred the growth of its real estate market. In recent years, there has been a.....

# INNOVATIVE CSR PROJECT- PROJECT NAVYA



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Apollo Tyres Ltd. (ATL) believes in the approach of triple bottom line (People, Planet, Profit). ATL has developed a CSR framework that identifies its key stakeholders - Customer, Employees, Supply Chain Partners, and Community. The CSR initiatives are delivered through Apollo Tyres Foundation (ATF).

ATF has initiated various projects around manufacturing locations Limda (Gujarat), Perembra and Kalamassery (Kerala), Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and Pune (Maharashtra). The core strategy is to strengthen communities to sustain themselves through livelihood initiatives. With that vision, a thorough market research with needs assessment of the community is undertaken before every project.

This led to the development of a women centric project enabling them to become self-sufficient. The project Navya invests in women by providing skill development training to create livelihood sources. It is implemented in the state of Gujarat (particularly in Waghodiya Block), Kerala (rubber tappers wives in Kottyam) and Maharashtra (Shirur Block, Pune).

## 2.0 PROJECT NAVYA

The Navya project is aligned to SDG 3 'Promote Gender Equality and Women Empowerment' and intends to improve the situation of Women and maps the challenges that could potentially sabotage the efforts. The project strategically provides rural women, income generating opportunities at their doorsteps and sensitizes them on gender rights to address the problems related to discrimination.

It addresses the limitations of rural women who are not allowed to go out of the village to earn livelihood. The project brings the women in the community together through Self-Help Groups, wherein they could share their desire to contribute to the family income financially. This gave them hope to be self-dependent by starting income generation activities from their homes.

The training includes vocational skills such as apparel making, jewellery designing, nursing, beautician, housekeeping, soap and detergent making, making home cleaning agents, cotton waste products for industries, forklift operation, etc. The project further link skilled & certified women with the market and service sector for



employment. It continues to support the women on an ongoing basis through refresher training programme and market linkages, with a clear call to action to improve the quality of life of rural women.



### 3.0 STEPS IN THE PROJECT

The project commenced in the year 2013 from Limda and in the year 2014-15 it was expanded to Vazhoor panchayat in Kerala. The project was designed in phase wise approach.

#### Objective:

- To create livelihood opportunities for women and farmers in the selected villages
- To develop entrepreneurship capabilities of underprivileged women
- To enhance the knowledge of the farmer community by providing them with modern agricultural techniques

- To enhance the knowledge of community in cattle rearing and livestock management

#### Approach:

- Stakeholder-led approach (Women, Farmers, Community at large)
- Participatory & inclusive approach (Community participation through SHG and farmer group formation)
- Alignment with National and International development agenda

#### Strategic Activities :

- Identification and prioritization of stakeholders
- Self Help Group Formation
- Promoting Savings
- Grading of SHGs
- Capacity building trainings related to SHG functioning.
- Income generation trainings
- Market linkage
- Developing micro enterprise



#### 4.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Apollo Tyres has defined clear monitoring plan for the entire project as part of the CSR framework.

- **Field Visits:** The local project team visits the field project on weekly basis and ensures that all the deliverables are met as per the plan. The team individually meets the stakeholders to know that they have received the benefits of the project or not.
- **Monthly meeting with the implementing agency:** As part of the monitoring process, there is a monthly meeting with the implementing agency. The implementing agency presents key achievements and utilisation of funds for that month.
- **Six-monthly meeting with implementing agency:** The head office team along with the local team meets the implementing agency to under take the six-monthly review of the project, where course corrections are suggested to the agency and gaps are identified to be incorporated.
- **Audits:** This is conducted once in a year or sometimes twice, depending upon the findings.

- **Mid-line assessment:** After completion of three years of any project, a mid-line assessment is carried out. This provides an understating on the outcomes achieved against the milestones identified in the baseline survey.
- **Impact assessment:** After completion of the five years of any project, an impact assessment is conducted by thirdparty to map the impact of the initiatives carried out in that duration.
- **Social Return of the Investment Study (SROI):** For projects that are being implemented beyond 10 years, SROI Study is conducted on all activities undertaken in the project.

#### 5.0 OUTCOME AND IMPACT

##### Key Findings from Impact assessment:

In the year FY 22 impact assessment was conducted for the Navya livelihood initiative. The key findings of the impact assessment:

- Nearly **70% of trained women** are involved in income generation activities and **earn over INR 5000 a month.**
- Nearly **80%** of the beneficiaries believed that they **participate in decision making matters.**

### Key Findings from Social Return of the Investment Study (SROI):

- **SROI value is 1.51**, indicating a positive impact relative to its investment, thus highlighting the project's effectiveness. This means that for every unit invested, the programme generates a social impact well beyond the investment.
- Over **88% of SHG's were able to obtain the loan at an interest rate of 7% or less** which is significantly lower than the market rate or general rates offered by banks which range from 9.65% to 26%.
- Beneficiaries were able to avail benefits **valuing approximately INR 2,71,30,408** from livelihood related schemes promoted by the Government.

**THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN SUCH THAT WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY REACHED OUT TO 22,507 RURAL WOMEN AS OF DEC'23 FROM GUJARAT, MAHARASHTRA, KERALA, AND TAMIL NADU.**

### Key Highlights of Navya Project in FY'23:

- Hemlataben Vankar and Anandi Lalubhai Parmar, who are SHG leaders from our SHG groups got

selected for an interaction with Honourable PM, Narendar Modi in Nari Shakti Vandana Abhiyan Event at Vadodara.

- G20 summit exhibition held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat saw inspiring women entrepreneurs from our SHGs showcasing products like jute bag, Khakra, Honey, Bathing soaps and dhoop sticks and cones etc.
- Ms. Hemlataben Vankar, one of the entrepreneurs and recipient of Navya Programme got selected as the best SHG representative and best entrepreneur from District Rural Development Agency, Gujarat for participation at National Level Food, Nutrition, Health & WASH workshop organized by Ministry of Rural Development, GOI.





## 6.0 SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT STRATEGY

Under Programme Navya, the organisation has involved local women as Community Resource Person (CRP). Their major role is to increase women outreach and monitor the ongoing programme. Due to local connect, CRPs have greater acceptance in the community. Additionally, the programme has also introduced the concept of Village Development Committee (VDC). VDC plays an important role in the project monitoring. Monthly meetings are organised and based on suggestions changes are incorporated.

This method has enabled the organisation to increase its capacity multi-fold as the beneficiaries are getting trained to cascade the programme further. This supports the bandwidth at the grassroot level.

**Exit Strategy** - All projects have a defined exit plan. The goals of the projects are designed to enhance the capacity of the stakeholders and help them to achieve self-sufficiency.

The organisation has already implemented exit strategy in 53 villages out of 96 villages of Baroda location. Here organisation only provides technical support if any training is required. Local CRPs regularly

monitor these villages by conducting monthly meetings and they also identify if any new training requirement has emerged in these villages. Today the SHG and income generation units in these villages are self-sustained.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

The programme has developed the capacity of the women by providing them right based trainings and legal awareness. Today in communities, women have identified the local issues and directly approached the Panchayat and other government machinery to resolve the issue. For instance, at Baroda location women came together to abolish the illegal production of alcohol in their community.

Women are not only resolving social issues but also sensitising community members on various government schemes and environmental issues. This initiative has not only developed the capacity of the women, but also ensures that women work as catalysts in the community. As the group belongs to local community there is a strong connect, and hence the awareness message is more receptive.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO VIEW THE AV ON NAVYA PROGRAMME AND RUBBER TAPPERS

.....



# SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

By Brig Rajiv Williams, YSM (Veteran)  
 Advisor and Consultant CSR & Sustainability  
 Member Advisory Board Subcinctus Consulting, Australia  
 Former Group Head CSR, Jindal Stainless Limited



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable agriculture is a way of mitigating various problems faced by people through sustainable business process and farming practices. It must be remembered that agriculture has an enormous environmental footprint and directly impacts climate change, water scarcity and water pollution, land degradation, deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions and so on.

Hence the importance to understand that sustainable agriculture consists of environmental friendly processes and practices, which allow production of crops and livestock without damage to human capital and must prevent adverse effects on soil, water and biodiversity. Hence there's a need to adopt climate resilient technologies, like crop rotation, multiple cropping, agroforestry, besides technology-linked payment infrastructure.

## 2.0 SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

A need assessment is essential before implementation of 'Sustainable Agriculture' in a given situation and geography. The baseline survey on land holding, soil testing, cropping patterns,

markets, resource management, availability of water and other resources besides availability of capital are essential for development of a plan. The outcome of such a survey will result in building the entire architecture around sustainable farming. Simple practices linked to technology are essential in addressing problems faced by farmers, through timely interventions like procurement of seeds, soil nutrition and timely sowing during the small window available for the Rabi and Kharif crops. The other challenges are access to finance for timely seed and nutrients procurement as also the need to build digital platforms for financial transactions. Lab reports based on soil testing give adequate clarity on the nutrition gaps and need to be made available to the farmer – a challenge which can be addressed through partnerships. Training of farmers, adoption of new agriculture practices, price actualization and linking farmers directly with buyers are some of the other aspects which merit attention. Efforts also need to be made towards addressing the issue of logistical nightmares as experienced by farmers during Covid, as also labour problems for cutting the ready-to-harvest crops.

Adequate payment systems through IT platforms should be developed to mitigate emergency situations relating to availability of finance.

### **3.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Sustainable farming involves addressing multiple issues simultaneously and making resources available to farmers on time. Some of these resources include nutrients like “Nitrates, Phosphates, Potassium”, availability of energy, water etc and systematic procurements and payment systems. In modern agriculture, energy is used in on-farm mechanization, food processing, storage and transportation processes are linked to food pricing and therefore resource management is critical in sustainable agriculture.

Social Factors are equally important while addressing sustainable farming with efforts being made to decrease environmental degradation and improving rural economic development especially within small farming communities. This too is determined by allowing unrestricted markets to determine food production and making the poorest farmers part of the growth process, for which policy frameworks have to be developed for the benefit of this segment of society. It must also be appreciated that there are a large number of women farmers, who have limited access to all processes shared above.

### **4.0 ESG FRAMEWORK**

The economic factors of costs, such as environmental problems are not covered in traditional farming accounting systems, which need to be addressed holistically. Sustainable agriculture has three major dimensions: social, environmental and economic factors. While the social aspect relates to conditions in which societies exist and the reason of such traditionally farming communities moving towards new sustainable practices that will create better societies and conditions. The second factor is the environment and the third is the economic factor. Solutions to the three factors need to be found for sustainable agriculture to be a part of the economic growth story.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

Progressive sustainable agriculture needs good policies woven around good governance structures with an exogenous outlook. Some examples are the EU ‘Farm to Fork’ program which caters to various emergency situations, and their Green Deal strategy are demonstrative of better balance of nature, food systems and biodiversity. The focus should be on a decentralized system of governance, encouraging small farmers towards cooperative federalism.

India’s promotion of “Sustainable Agriculture Practices’ (SAPs) through policymakers, administrators, philanthropists, and others, is a step in

the right direction and lends toward a vital alternative to conventional, input-intensive agriculture. The approach for SAPs is greater awareness and last mile

connect with farmers in location by providing them the wherewithal to make farming a vibrant socio-cultural-economic activity.

.....

## LIVE VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS: SUCCESS TOOLKIT

#### Trends; Challenges & Opportunities

This workshop aims to enhance capacity in **understanding and implementing sustainable practices**, aligning with the **key environmental considerations** discussed in **COP 28**. Focused on the Indian context, the module emphasizes **practical strategies for fostering sustainability**, and **environmental protection while improving livelihoods**.

09-10-11 APR'24 | TUE- THURS | 3:00 - 5:30 PM IST

#### Speakers:



Mr. P Sreenivasa Raju  
Vice President- Sustainability,  
Orient Cement



Dr. Suhas Wani  
International Consultant,  
Asian Development Bank, Manila,  
IFAD, Rome, FAO-RAP, Bangkok



Ms. Anagha Mahajani  
Vice President,  
Ambuja Cement Foundation



Ms. Myriam Shankar  
Managing Trustee,  
The Anonymous Indian Charitable Trust



Mr. Sandeep Shrivastava  
Chief Sustainability Officer,  
Indorama Corporation

Register At:



For any Question & Query, write at:  
[prerna.gupta@nationalcsrnetwork.in](mailto:prerna.gupta@nationalcsrnetwork.in)



# **WE INVITE READERS TO SHARE BOOK REVIEWS**

Share your insights, If you've read a book that resonates with CSR and development. Your concise reviews (under 500 words) can be featured in our next issue.

Ensure your submissions reach us before 15th April'24 for consideration in the next edition.

*Let your thoughts be part  
of our upcoming issue.*

*Submit Your Reviews Now!*

---

Send your book reviews at:  
[prerna.gupta@nationalcsrnetwork.in](mailto:prerna.gupta@nationalcsrnetwork.in)

---

# NATIONAL CSR NETWORK



Section 8 Company



Industry led & managed organisation governed by a strong Advisory Council



Intercative platform for CSR Stakeholders



Insights & Solutions to address pain points





## OUR AAA APPROACH


**ADVISORY:** Strategy, Need Assessment, Baseline Survey, Reporting

**ALLIANCE:** Corporates, NGOs, Academia & Government

**ASSESSMENT:** Impact & SROI

For suggestions and feedback, Connect with us :

 [info@nationalcsrnetwork.in](mailto:info@nationalcsrnetwork.in)  <https://www.linkedin.com/in/national-csr-network-9247b3101>

 +91 9211111068