

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION – AN OVERVIEW OF CSR ROLE IN CORPORATES

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Abstract

In India, the developing nation, many developing projects has come under criticism for damaging the environment, even when they are presented as helping it. Corporations at the roots of the environmental crisis such as destruction of the ozone layer, global warming, persistent organic pollution, radioactive waste, mining, high costs of high tech, unsustainable agriculture, deforestation, overfishing. These environmental problems can only solve by initiating CSR activities. In this paper top ten companies ranked by Economic times under sustainability and CSR were taken into consideration and their contribution towards the environment and other CSR initiatives were studied.

Key words: CSR, Environment Protection,

Introduction

Environment is everything which surrounds us naturally and affects our daily lives on the earth. Everything comes under an environment, the air which we breathe every moment, the water which we use for our daily routine, plants, animals and other living things, etc around us. An environment is called healthy environment when the natural cycle goes side by side without any disturbance. Any type of disturbance in the nature's balance affects the environment totally which ruins the human lives.

Now, in the era of advance living standard of the human being, our environment is getting affected to a great extent by the means of air pollution, noise pollution, deforestation, water pollution, soil pollution, acid rain and other dangerous disasters created by the corporations through technological advancement. Hence it is necessary to make an effort to protect our natural environment to keep it safe as usual forever.

Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility in India

In the present situation, India is at a crucial stage of its economic growth and development process with programs like the “Make in India” and “Smart cities Mission” being introduced by the government, hence, many companies are utilizing the natural resource from the environment such as water, led, etc.,. For the productions, such companies must focus on the contribution towards environment protection and growth. By supporting or by protecting the environment through CSR not only benefices the environment, but also it will determine the survival of companies in the future. The environment supports the corporate in many ways likewise corporate also should provide what was taken from the environment must be given back through CSR activities.

Contributions towards the environment through their CSR policies of top 10 companies which are ranked under sustainability and CSR by Economic times are detailed below.

Tata steel Ltd

Tata steel is the world’s second most diversified steel producer with operations in 26 countries and commercial presence in over 50 countries. In India, Tata steel Ltd is one of the largest private sector integrated steel producers with a turnover of 38,000 crores. Tata steel Ltd spent 204 crores during the financial year 2016 on CSR activities. They also encourage their employees and partners in social commitment through various volunteering programs and projects guided by Tata group’s CSR advisory council.

Environmental CSR initiative: Natural capital represents all renewable and non-renewable environmental resources such as water, land, minerals, forests, biodiversity and health of the

ecosystem. Initiatives and achievement towards protecting natural capital were: Emission abatement (CO₂ emissions approximately 6% reduction of emissions intensity). Waste heat recovery system (These systems have helped significantly reduce the energy consumption). Zero effluent discharge (36% reduction of discharge in the last five years and 27% reduction in water intensity over the same period). Solid waste utilization. Biodiversity management (Butterfly park, artificial bird nesting boxes, developing local forest in dump area, integrating rain water harvesting structures in periphery for improving aquatic life, agro-biodiversity enhancement and dump reclamation using mulberry plantation)

Other CSR initiatives: The CSR activities are aligned with the company's business objective. Based on that, they prioritized into four areas such as livelihood, health, education and empowerment. Livelihood: through agricultural development, skill development and entrepreneurship; Health: through primary health care, maternal, and child health care, specialized health care and adolescent health programs; Education: through improving the quality of education for all and scholarships for meritorious students; Empowerment: through grassroots institutions such as Self Help Groups and Village Committees and youth empowerment. These interventions had a positive impact on 1.1 million lives. The ultimate of these areas draw the focus on social well-being by improving the quality of life. Nearly 5, 70,000 people were offered with primary health care services. 200 ponds were created for irrigation. Future focus is to improve the effectiveness of their spends and seek support from the Government and other sources for initiatives.

Tata Power Company

Tata Power is India's largest integrated power company with a significant international presence. Tata Power Company spent 47.2 crores during the financial year 2016 on CSR activity. The company has aligned their CSR policy to five thrust areas such as primary education with a focus on the girl child, health and drinking water, livelihood, employability, social capital and infrastructure and inclusive growth. The CSR initiatives are undertaken through the development arm Tata power community development trust across all its location.

Environmental CSR initiative: Tata Power Company initiatively started a program 'Act of Mahseer' for saving endangered species. Also the company sets up a breeding center as a part of eco-restoration, eco-development project for the lakes. The program has produced and distributed in various water bodies seeds of Mahseer in excess of 10 million in India.

Other CSR initiatives: In 2016, the company reached out to more than 250 villages/urban pockets across 7 states, benefiting over 15 lakh people also it provided 6,700 households with access to sanitation facility benefiting over 36,700 children, water securitization at thane, solar micro grid connectivity in remote villages of Pune, promoting tribal education at Odisha, improving agricultural productivity at Jharkhand.

Ultra Tech cement

UltraTech works with numerous rural and tribal communities across India. The Company's CSR activities are concentrated in 407 villages, in proximity to its 22 plants, across the country. CSR projects are carried out under the aegis of the 'Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development' which mainly focuses on the all-round development of the communities based around the plants, most of which are located in distant rural areas and tribal belts.

Environmental CSR initiative: on the agricultural front, about 3,659 farmers were enabled to increase their productivity through training in crop diversification, advance cropping techniques and other processes to improve yield, floriculture, integrated pest management and post-harvest technology. The initiative of crop diversification and resource management with small farmers with scattered land holdings has bettered the livelihood of 112 farmers. 40,386 animals were immunized in veterinary camps and shelter to 740 stray cows and oxen. To support the Green Energy movement, Ultra tech cement has installed 103 biogas plants at Kovaya and Jafrabad. Under the social forestry program, distributed saplings and helped tree planting on roads and wastelands. The construction of water harvesting will enable water availability during the distress period for a population of more than 12,000.

Other CSR initiatives: All projects are planned in a participatory manner, in consultation with the community. The process involves interacting with them and gauging their basic needs. UltraTech's social projects are designed with the long-term goal of creating sustainability and self-reliance. Hence, the projects focus on factors that will lead to empowerment and capacity building. Though UltraTech operates in five focus areas, its major emphasis has been on providing quality education and healthcare facilities. Importance is also given to building infrastructure, as ultimately it is the tool that fuels growth. The results of these projects will not only benefit their respective communities, but also the nation at large.

Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd

As a responsible citizen, Mahindra and Mahindra invested in the area of public health and environment.

Environmental CSR initiative: towards environment protection the CSR initiatives are Project Hariyali- increasing green cover by planting million trees every year(over 9,220,000 trees planted), watershed management(which includes water conservation , soil conservation and increasing availability of water for irrigation with the objective of increasing agricultural productivity, enhancing livelihood and increasing green cover) and also in support of the prime minister's appeal for "clean India" the Mahindra group contributed to government's "swachh bharat swachh vidhyalaya program" by constructing 4340 toilets primarily for girls in government school.

Other CSR initiatives: The major CSR programs that the company has been investing are scholarship and grants, project nanhi kali- a sponsorship program that supports the education of under privileged girls(over 100,000 girls supported through nanhi kali project), Mahindra pride school- livelihood training to youth from socially and economically disadvantaged communities, lifeline express- provides communities in remote rural areas access to health care, project wardha farmer family and krishi mitr project- supporting farmers with provision of effective farming practices, employee social option program, disaster relief and rehabilitation.

Tata motors Ltd

Tata Motors has been at the forefront of productive community engagement throughout its six decades of existence.

Environmental CSR initiative: Tata motors regularly organize awareness sessions to help educate people on the importance of various aspects of the Environment. Sessions have witnessed 12,600 participants also planted 67,000 trees on wastelands in an attempt to increase the green cover.

Other CSR initiatives: They focus on four major areas of CSR: Health, Education, Employability and Environment. Health- tackling malnutrition where health camps and programs have benefitted 1, 78,000 people; Education- through education programs 51,000 students were benefitted and the education programs focus on providing secondary school students with financial aid, audio-visual learning material and special coaching classes; Employability- training youth in automotive trades were 73,000 youths were skilled.

Tata Chemicals Ltd

Tata Chemicals Ltd key areas of intervention are divided into Blossom, Enhance, Aspire, Conserve and Nurture. To carry out this work in India they established a number of nonprofit organizations such as the Tata Chemicals Society of Rural Development (TCSRSD), Uday Foundation, Tata Chemicals Golden Jubilee Foundation, Magadi Soda Foundation and Okhai-Centre for Empowerment.

Environmental CSR initiative: Waste management: Promoting reduction, reuse and recycling of packaging and other wastes. 36 different programs for biodiversity conservation, environmental awareness and climate change were organized in 2015-16 with a focus on coastal and marine ecosystem conservation. Through save the whale shark campaign more than 498 whale sharks have been saved. Species conservation (The Company involved in the scientific study of the species to ensure its long term survival).

Other CSR initiatives: In India, some of the key initiatives include Dharti Ko Arpan—environment conservation programs, Okhai, Centre for Empowerment – that supports rural handicrafts, Unnati – farmers growth program, drinking water and sanitation, integrated

watershed management, animal husbandry and vocational skill development and also partnered with Tata Strive and facilitated setting up of the “Tata Strive Skill Development Centre” in Aligarh, to impart vocational and industrial training for the unemployed youth. Through the ‘Child Learning and Improvement Program’, a strategy was designed to support meritorious students with long-term support and engagement, also Cloud based HP Life Centre making various computer courses available for students.

ITC Ltd

The company has adopted 360 degree approach to enrich social interventions through public-private people partnership.

Environmental CSR initiative: As an environmental steward, ITC strives to lower its carbon footprint of all its operations through Greenhouse Gas Reduction programs, efforts in renewable energy, construction of green buildings and interventions to reduce specific energy and water consumption. The afforestation program generates over 100 million person-days of employment. Biodiversity program in protecting flora and fauna and other ecosystem services covers nearly 4, 000 hectares. Over 2, 25,000 hectares greened under ITC’s social and farm forestry programme. The Company’s Solid Waste Management programme “WOW - Well-being out of Waste” has provided effective solutions in several cities of South India, enjoying the support of over 5 million citizens, 5,00,000 school children, 350 corporate, more than 1,000 commercial establishments and around 200 industrial plants. This programme addresses the growing concern of post-consumer waste management.

Other CSR initiatives: ITC’s social investments programme is spread over 26 states covering 166 districts. Primary education initiative- during 2015-16, 45,823 children were covered under this initiative comprising “Read India Plus” programme and 176 supplementary learning centers to mainstream out-of-school children into regular schools. Till June 2016, the total number of children benefitted is nearly 4, 70,000. ITC globally acknowledged e-Choupal initiative is the world’s largest rural digital infrastructure benefitting over 4 million farmers. Over 50, 000

sustainable livelihoods for rural women. Animal husbandry services for over 13,00,000 milch animals.

Shree Cement Ltd

First Indian cement company to issue a corporate sustainability report following the highest level “A+” for reporting triple bottom line performance. One of the lowest specific energy consumption among cement manufacturing companies in the country.

Environmental CSR initiative: In environmental terms, cement production is a high-impact business, using large amounts of energy and contributing 5% of global carbon dioxide emissions. Pollutants are often discharged in the cooling process and disposed of as run-off water, which affects ecosystems and human health. It will be crucial for Indian cement companies to find ways to improve energy efficiency and reduce water consumption. Only then can they achieve growth and support India’s development without harming the community. But Shree Cement practices, waste-to-wealth conversion. Beyond using biomass and waste heat to supplement conventional electric generation.

Other CSR initiatives: By reviewing Shree cement Ltd’s major activity heads are health and family welfare, education promotion, women empowerment and development programme, agriculture and land development programme, community development and environment management. For CSR initiative, there are 12 projects and beneficiaries include pregnant women and children, for old age people, non school going girls, children who enrolled in schools but not attending, village women and farmers. Shree Cement provides free health benefits to people living within a 20 km radius of its factories.

Bharat Petroleum Ltd

Bharat Petroleum had a CSR allocation of 76 crore also believes that energizing the environment and society will promote sustainable growth.

Environmental CSR initiative: Water conservation through project Boond Created/restored over 200 farm ponds, village ponds and wells with a total storing capacity of around 15 crore liters of

water, Rejuvenated nearly 35 tanks. Collected over 37 crore liters of water in Mokhada (Mokhada in Thane district of Maharashtra, which suffers from acute water shortage during summer). Promoted horticulture and agriculture. Reduced community depends on water tankers by 50%.

Other CSR initiatives: Their key ideas on CSR where quality education by strengthening primary, secondary education and empowering teachers which lead to reach about 1 lakh children. Skill development project covered 1500 women and made them to earn around 4500 per month. Health (8,939 tribes were reached directly), hygiene and rural development which includes Swachh bharaat and Swachh vidhyalaya projects.

L & T

L&T is integrating environmental protection across all its operational activities. Through optimal utilization of energy sources, eliminating waste and wastage, adopting greener processes, developing greener products, adherence to best practices and compliance with emerging international standards, ensuring that along with a robust business performance, where planet too remains in good health. The management of each business with its comprehensive policies on quality, environment, health and safety, is accountable for its environmental impact. In addition L&T is steadfast towards National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and its eight missions instituted by Government of India.

Environmental CSR initiative: L&T Constructed with the help of an NGO started an in-house “Nursery” in April 2001. Within this 2400 square feet saplings have grown from its seeds, nurtured and distributed free to various government schools, colleges, institutions for planting. Planted more than 295,000 saplings across locations and over 150,000 fully grown trees are being nurtured across major campuses. Taken up an initiative to present a tree certificate instead of a flower bouquet to the guests visiting L&T campuses. The certificate demonstrates that a tree sapling would be planted on behalf of the guest. This is in line with the Company’s objective to increase the tree cover and create natural carbon sinks in a sustainable way. The 200 check dams constructed by the L&T Public Charitable Trust in drought prone rural areas of Maharashtra.

Other CSR initiatives: Their key CSR area are water and sanitation, education(L&T is supporting over 250 schools across India and reaching out to over 2,50,000 underprivileged children besides also undertaking interventions in over 100 Balwadis and Anganwadis towards enabling better infrastructure and learning environment in schools), healthcare (Through healthcare programmes for women and children we have reached out to over half a million individuals) and skill building (vocational training programmes we have reached out to over 43,000+ youth and women from underprivileged backgrounds and have provided them with viable skills to earn a livelihood. This in turn elevates the socioeconomic status of the family).

CONCLUSION

There are no end processes in serving environment through CSR initiatives because the environment resource is the backbone of any success of the companies. If today we don't protect the environment and the available resource then we should not regret it in future. In India only 10% of initiatives were taken in terms of protection of the environment. Even though the top rated CSR company initiatives are less when compared to the utilization of the resource from the environment. If this situation continues, then survival becomes difficult for every individual. As a rapidly developing country, India and the government should get into the promotion of environmental quality for which the country is facing tremendous environmental degradation through CSR practices.

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