

Connect

JULY 2022 | VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 3



Seema Arora
CEO
CII Foundation



The Clean Abul Fazal project aims to create a community-managed localised waste management system that will complement the efforts of the local municipality.

The excitement of being on-ground never fades! For me, this year started with a visit to our community waste management project in Okhla, New Delhi. The visit included interactions with waste workers, local RWAs, and community and local leaders to understand the ground issues and brainstorm ideas to strengthen our project.

The project addresses the issue of inefficient waste management, which negatively impacts the quality of life and health of residents and aggravates air and water pollution. The Clean Abul Fazal project aims to create a community-managed localised waste management system that will complement the efforts of the local municipality. The project covers the entire gamut of activities ranging from creating awareness, mobilising civic engagement towards efficient waste collection, management, and encouraging recycling to deliver an environmentally friendly process.

With the project interventions, waste segregation has been initiated in all 14,000 households, with 5,000 households already practising it independently in their homes. A special



Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation 03



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Waste Management 15

composting centre has been set up with a capacity of processing 500 kgs of wet waste daily. To date, 28 mt tonnes of wet waste has been diverted from the dumping ground to produce one metric tonne of organic compost, which is used in local parks.

The program is now committed to scaling the waste management initiative and replicating this community-led model in other urban areas. On reflection, one key contributing factor that led to the successful adoption of the new waste management practices is how different elements of the community have collaborated to find a solution and the strong community ownership that has been built through the journey of the project. The visit was a reminder that 'nothing about the community without the community.'

Continuing on the same principle, the work on building women's leadership at the grassroots is being taken forward through our network of over 100 woman exemplars. These community leaders are strengthened by the CII Foundation's coaching and mentoring efforts to help them hone their skills, expand coverage, and scale up their work. Towards this, through its Mentor-Mentee initiative, the women leaders were synergistically paired with the industry to enhance their skills. Further, to promote networking and cross-learnings, regional Roundtables have been launched. The first regional Roundtable took place in the western region, in Mumbai and Pune, where exemplars, representatives from the social development sector and industry shared views and ideas to empower women and accelerate India's inclusive development.

Our work on Covid-19 R&R continues. As of 25 July, the total number of COVID-19 cases was 4,39,20,451, according to the data of the Union Health Ministry¹.

Waste segregation has been initiated in all 14,000 households, with 5,000 households already practising it independently in their homes. A special composting centre has been set up with a capacity of processing 500 kgs of wet waste daily.

We still need to be on our guard. Practising Covid-appropriate behaviour and ensuring maximum coverage through vaccinations seem to be the best bet in our collective battle against Covid. The CII Foundation continued its vaccination drive and camps were held in areas such as Doraha Block, Ludhiana District, Punjab, Noida, Greater Noida, Delhi, and Hyderabad to vaccinate the eligible from underserved communities in partnership with corporates, medical bodies, NGOs and hospitals.

While much ground is being covered, the after-effects of the unexpected blow by the outbreak of Coronavirus are still evident, especially amongst the underprivileged affected by the pandemic. A multi-stakeholder effort is required to allay the damage, and the CII Foundation will continue to work with diverse stakeholders to create a more equitable India.

¹<https://www.ndtv.com/coronavirus>



DISASTER RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

Covid-19 Related Interventions



In the April-June quarter, the CII Foundation continued its efforts to provide relief and rehabilitation through its various pan-India initiatives.

The CII Foundation has been strengthening the Covid-19 vaccination project of CII by reaching out to the marginalised and underserved communities in Tier II and III cities and rural India.

Vaccination camps were held in cities like Ludhiana, Noida, Delhi and Hyderabad. The camps were held with the support of the Government, and corporates such as Apraava Energy, HDFC, CREDAI, IndusInd Bank, Canon India, and SBI, as well as local medical authorities, hospitals, and NGOs. Vaccines were administered to various age groups at the camps.

Through its efforts, the CII Foundation has vaccinated different communities across 15 States/Union Territories so far. It is continuing its vaccination drive to strengthen India's fight against Covid-19.



In other initiatives, as part of the CSR panel intervention of CII Telangana, the CII Foundation, supported by Apraava Energy, has provided 50 semi-automatic beds with mattresses to TSRTC Hospital in Tarnaka.

This hospital caters to the medical needs of about 2,000 patients daily and about 3 lakh patients annually. On 28 April, the bed facility was inaugurated



by the Minister for Transport, Mr Puvvada Ajay Kumar and Mr Sajjanar, IPS, MD, TSRTC and Mr C Shekar Reddy, Vice Chairman, CII Telangana.

In a month, roughly 80-85% of the beds are occupied, and the average patient stay is 2-3 days. Every month, 500-700 patients use the beds on average.

This endeavour will help improve medical care facilities in Tarnaka.



Kerala Relief and Rehabilitation Work

In 2018, Kerala suffered the worst flood since the 1920s, displacing over 1.4 million people from their homes and affecting 5.4 million, according to the report, The State of Global Climate of 2018 by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

Following the emergency relief measures for flood victims, the CII and CII Foundation worked along with the Kerala State Government to enhance the government's efforts for 'Nava Keralam.'



With an aim to have an annual outreach of approximately 5 lakh people, the CII and CII Foundation undertook the renovation and construction of one school that had been declared unfit (Government Lower Primary School (GLPS), Kayanad) and six Public Health Centres (North Paravoor, Moothakunnam, Chittattukara, Puthuvyppu, Mulavukadu, and Avoly).

While the Government Lower Primary School, Kayanad was successfully reconstructed and inaugurated in January 2022, the CII Foundation is set to officially handover three Primary Health Centres (PHC Avoly, PHC Chittattukara, and PHC Mulavukadu) under three panchayats, delivering health services to nearly 1.5 lakh direct beneficiaries, as part of the Kerala Flood Rehabilitation. 65% of the work on two more health centres (PHC Puthuvyppu, Paravoor Taluk Headquarters Hospital) has been completed and the entire work is expected to be completed by March 2023.



CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

Crop Residue Management



The issue of air pollution, especially in metros and cities, is worsening year after year. Its impact is widespread and is most noticeable in the health of people residing in polluted areas. In North India, air pollution worsens during winters. This is mainly due to the burning of crop residue in the farmlands of Punjab and Haryana. Farmers, lacking knowledge of alternatives to crop residue burning and appropriate machinery and tools, burn crop residue to clear the fields quickly for the next sowing.

The CII Foundation launched its crop residue management program to offer farmers viable alternatives to crop residue burning as a pilot project in 19 villages in Punjab in 2018. Encouraged by the response - 75% of the farmland in the adopted villages became free of stubble burning in 2018, compared to 3.5% of farmland in 2017 - the program was expanded over the years. over the years.

In 2021, 226 villages in Punjab and Haryana, covering 1,99,867 acres of farmland with 40,080 farmers, were covered under this project. The efforts resulted in 84% of the farmland in the adopted villages becoming free of stubble burning.

Key Interventions under the Crop Residue Management Initiative

- Building awareness through village-level farmer meetings and door-to-door campaigns, mobile vans, wall paintings; meetings with other relevant stakeholders such as the Agriculture Department
- Creating community-shared tools and machine banks with machines such as Superseeder
- Technical training and handholding
- Local engagement and ownership
- Research and policy advocacy

Given the magnitude of the issue and the many dimensions of the interventions, the CII Foundation works with diverse stakeholders such as State Governments, agriculture universities and farmers. Recent key stakeholders include Apraava Energy, Birlasoft, SIAM, PTC Financial Services, Fidelity, GAIL, ONGC, Cummins and SBI Cards. They are helping support viability-gap funding to procure requisite farm machinery. Field partners such as GBDSGNS Foundation, Doctors for You, the Guru Nanak National College Trust, and Farmer-Cooperatives are helping build awareness and garner support for the crop residue management programme. In partnership with Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, Department of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare of Punjab and Haryana, the CII Foundation has held many technical training and awareness sessions. To boost farmer-to-farmer learning and create awareness, a network of 100 youth has been created by the CII Foundation to engage with farmers.

In 2021, 226 villages in Punjab and Haryana, covering 1,99,867 acres of farmland with 40,080 farmers, were covered in this project. The efforts resulted in 84% of the farmland in the adopted villages becoming free of stubble burning.

In the April-June quarter, while the regular activities continued, the focus was on promoting Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR), a technology of paddy cultivation, where seeds are directly sown by the machine mounted over the tractor instead of manual transplantation of seedlings.



The CII Foundation is working closely with the farmers of Punjab and Haryana to promote DSR through awareness drives and training for farmers. As part of the awareness campaign to encourage DSR, knowledge campaigns, nukkad nataks and village-level meetings were held. In Punjab, training camps were held in Palia and Ghulal, while a machine demonstration was held in Rania, District Sirsa, Haryana.

The total area covered in Punjab under DSR is 570 acres, and 70 acres in Haryana.

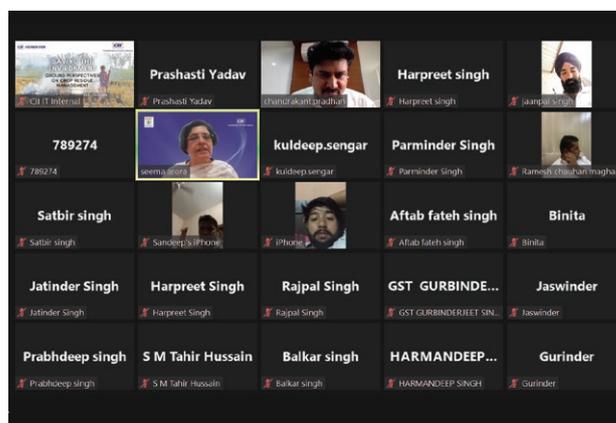
The Government is incentivising the adoption of DSR. The Punjab government has announced an incentive of INR 2500 per acre to the farmers using DSR, while the Haryana government has announced incentives of INR 4000 per acre to the farmers using DSR.



Saving the Environment: Ground Perspectives on Crop Residue Management

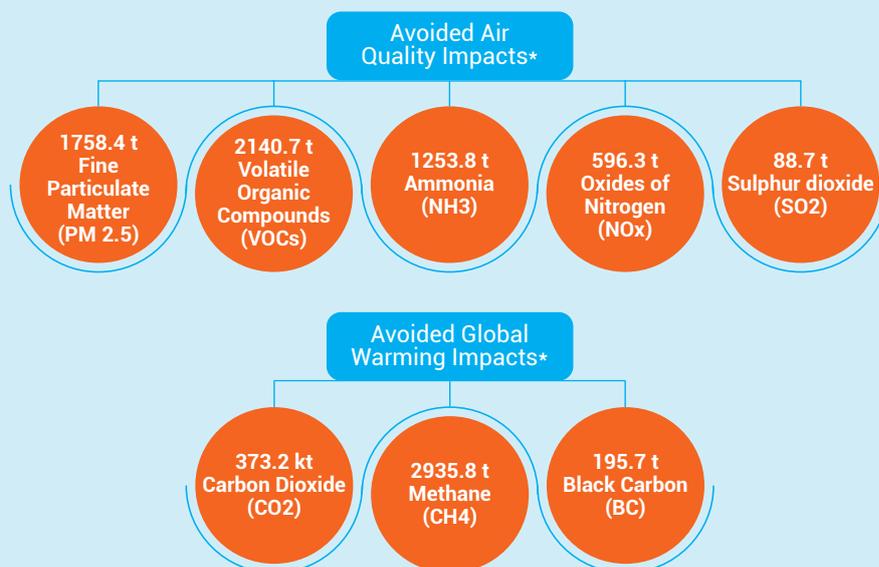
On World Environment Day on 5 June, the CII Foundation hosted a live discussion with farmers and other stakeholders on 'Saving the Environment: Ground Perspectives on Crop Residue Management' on the CII Youtube channel. This was the first live discussion. It brought together farmers from Punjab and Haryana and other stakeholders from agriculture universities to discuss issues related to the environment and how the CII Foundation's crop residue management initiative is helping save the environment.

Through the discussion, the CII Foundation sought a deeper ground-level understanding of the problem and possible solutions. Almost 375 people watched the interaction on Youtube.



Environmental Impact Across Project

- In 2021, total intervened area across **226 villages** was about 1,99,867 acres.
- Based on field data compiled with support of village volunteers **91% of the total area** is managed by adoption of sustainable practices of rice straw management.
- Intervention in 2021 led to incorporation of 83% total straw generated across 226 villages, i.e. almost **413,542 tonnes of rice straw** was avoided from being burnt.



*Source: CII-CESD analysis based on emission factors from Shrestha et al (2021)



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Woman Exemplar Program



Since its launch in 2005, the CII Woman Exemplar Award honoured grassroots women who have persisted in the wake of hurdles, debacles and setbacks and have stood out as inspiring examples for the communities they live in. In 2011, the award was brought under the aegis of the CII Foundation, and included as a part of the Woman Exemplar Program. The scope of work on gender equality and women empowerment was broadened to include coaching and mentoring.

Through the program, over 100 exemplary women have been recognised so far, creating a powerful pan-India network of women changemakers. The Exemplars are collectively reaching out to last-mile vulnerable communities each year driving social transformation for India's inclusive development.

Each year, in the quest of identifying the 03 Woman Exemplars who will be awarded in the categories of health, education, and micro-enterprise, a rigorous process is undertaken and 15 Exemplars are

selected. From these 15 finalists, 3 are selected for the Award by an eminent jury. The Award is usually given away at a national-level prestigious event, spotlighting the women and their work. Going beyond the prestigious award, the program coaches and mentors the 15 exemplars to become the best versions of themselves and serve their communities better.

**Over 100 CII Foundation
Woman Exemplars are
driving social change at
the grassroots level**

Components of the Program



To network, promote collaborations, cross-learnings and widen the reach for identifying the next cohort of exemplars the CII Foundation has initiated Regional Roundtables. The first Regional Roundtable was held in the western region in Mumbai and Pune on 29 June and 1 July respectively. At the first Roundtable, enthusiastic exemplars from Mumbai and Gujarat shared their awe inspiring stories of change with each other and their organizations. Also present at the Roundtable were representatives from the Development sector organizations like Yuva Parivartan, Animedh Charitable trust, Niramaya Health Foundation, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR), Samaj Vikas Sansthan and Apraava, the coporate supporting the Woman Exemplar program. The Roundtable served as an excellent platform to explore avenues for amplifying the work of the exemplars, and discussions around empowering grassroots women.

Exemplars and their organizations from over 10 years were brimming with energy to forge newer partnerships and create more exemplary grassroots women leaders!



Leadership Training & Coaching

To take their initiative to the next level, the majority of grassroots women leaders require financial capital, systematisation of their activities, institutional links, enhancement of leadership and management abilities, and continual mentorship and handholding support.

The CII Foundation, therefore coaches and mentors the woman exemplars focussing on:

- Building leadership capital of the exemplars
- Building the social capital of the exemplars through networks and collaborations leading to a country-wide exemplar community

Women's capacity building and training have a multiplier impact, as they become more capable of training and mentoring many others in their immediate environment. It urges women to build a grassroots second rung of leaders.

Mentorship

The Mentorship Program aims to connect inspiring grassroots women leaders with influential leaders from Industry and the Development Sector. The Woman Exemplars are linked to Industry stalwarts based on their capabilities and aspirations, identifying their pressure points. The Exemplars get one-on-one mentoring getting a chance to upskill. Since the launch of the mentorship initiative, 8 mentor-mentee pairs have been brought together for learning, exposure to new ideas and stimulating growth.



Dr. Lopamudra Priyadarshini

General Manager - CSR, Hindalco Industries Limited

Dr Lopamudra is a seasoned professional having over 21 years of experience in CSR, sustainability, corporate communication, decision making, business strategy and human resource Management.



Boni Basak

Program Coordinator - Towards Future

Boni's efforts for the continuation of education have reached over 2,300 young girls and women in Mahammadpur village, North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal.

Dr. Lopamudra is mentoring Boni Basak, the CII Foundation Woman Exemplar from the 2020 cohort. Boni, a handball champion, wants to ignite thousands of young minds to be self-reliant and Dr. Lopa is handholding Boni to achieve her goal.

Together, they are working on honing Boni's project management skills, to be able to deliver robust project outcomes.



Mukta Dhavale

CSR Head, Voltas Limited

Mukta brings an expertise on CSR operations, compliance, project planning and documentation with her 15 years of experience in volunteering, community engagement, CSR management and project planning.



Minakshi Birajdar

NGO Head, Ekatik Krushi Va Gramin Sansthan

Minakshi has worked with more than 5000 women on livelihood generation and vocational training. Today she runs her own NGO focussing on empowering single women through livelihood generation and financial autonomy.

Mukta aims to bridge the gap between profit and purpose by mentoring our woman exemplar, Minakshi Birajdar, who is a changemaker working with single women. Through the mentorship process, the two are working towards helping Minakshi improvise her documentation skills in order to create a stronger impact in the project area.



Shilpa Harsh

Sr. Vice President - Global Corporate Communications, CSR and D&I, HGS

Shilpa brings 23 years of experience in CSR initiatives, corporate communications, community engagement, corporate marketing, networking and branding with core strengths in driving integrated marketing campaigns across geographies.



Reeta Kaushik

Secretary, Samudaik Kalyan Evam Vikas Sansthan (SKVS)

Reeta has been working tirelessly to create educational opportunities for Dalit and Musahar communities. She has helped over 25,000 children in Kushinagar and Gorakhpur District of UP.

Shilpa's mastered expertise will help Reeta Kaushik develop her networking and communication skills. They will, together, develop a digital communication plan for Reeta's initiative, essential to scale the impact of her work on education with the Dalit and Musahar children in rural UP.



Mary Rupa Tete

Vice President, Usha Silai School

With 23 years of inventive efforts in CSR, Rupa excels in project development & implementation, rural marketing, resource mobilization, budget management, NGO due-diligence, proposal analysis/writing & documentation, networking with Government bodies & NGOs.



Chandrikaben Makwana

Program Director, Aatapi Seva Foundation

A dedicated learner, Chandrikaben's inherent talent for community mobilisation, micro enterprise development and leadership development have benefitted 11,000 people.

Rupa's guidance will enable Chandrikaben to further her efforts in strengthening the monitoring, learning and evaluation frameworks of her existing programs and create measurable impacts.



Dr. Ruchi Sinha

Assistant Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Dr. Ruchi has over 25 years of experience in social work & criminal justice system in India. She specialises in human rights, policing, crime & development, violence against women, criminal justice policy, social work in criminal justice system, trafficking, child rights, child protection and juvenile justice.



Pushpa Devi

Director of Vanaagana

Through her association with Vanaagana and several other grassroots organisations, Pushpa in her 29 years of career span has enabled 13,944 Dalit, Muslim and Adivasi women to build agency and walk out of domestic abuse.

Ruchi will mentor the CII Foundation Woman Exemplar Pushpa Devi, an earnest advocate of women's rights. Pushpa's work in the area will be enhanced as a result of the mentorship process, which will improve her legal knowledge and facilitate the growth of local legal aid.



Dr. Kailash Brijwasi

Founder and Executive Director, Jatan Sansthan

Dr Brijwasi has 32 years of work experience in diverse areas of education, life skills and gender. With a keen interest in women's issues, he established JatanSansthan where he has designed and implemented projects on gender, education and health rights in Rajasthan, India.



Bharti

District Coordinator, Breakthrough

Working in Karnal and Panipat districts of Haryana, Bharti has directly worked in 52 schools across 50 villages, directly impacting 10,400 children. The 480 youth leaders trained by her have impacted 25,000 individuals in their areas.

Dr Brijwasi's mentorship in development of Project Management and leadership skills will help Bharti reinforce her resolve to support many like her.



Sushma Shende

Programme Director, Child health and Nutrition Society for Nutrition Education & Health Action (SNEHA)

Sushma's 25 years of experience includes creating and managing large-scale public health projects in tribal, rural, & urban settings. Prior to SNEHA, Sushma worked in BAIF and managed their Tribal Health program in Gujarat.



Durga Kharadi

Village level worker, CORO India

Durga's work with tribal populations in Rajasthan's Mordongri region includes awareness generation on tribal and forest rights leading to filing of 1,034 individual patrikas (petitions) and better opportunities for 6,420 children.

Sushma will guide Durga on implementing large scale programs in rural and urban areas. She will help Durga in developing robust project plans and deliverables essential for a stellar impact.



Anagha Waingankar

Associate Programme Director, Mental & Child Health Program Society for Nutrition Education & Health Action (SNEHA)

Anagha has 17 years of experience in implementing Public Health programs for grassroots organisations such as Committed Communities for Development and SNEHA, in sectors like HIV/AIDS, Immunization & Child Nutrition.



Mahananda Chavhan

Field Coordinator, CORO India
Founder, Kamdhenu

Mahananda uses innovative approaches to provide better health and safety for women across Osmanabad. She has worked with over 4,000 women to improve the social, financial, and legal standing of women in Maharashtra.

Anagha's mentorship will help Mahananda develop interpersonal skills and enhance her skills to make concrete proposals before donors and grant managers.

Masterclass

The masterclasses aim to enhance the skills of the CII Foundation Woman Exemplars. They bring together experts from the industry and the development sector to share their insights around various themes and topics with the exemplars to enhance their skills and also fuel their fire which makes them exemplary leaders. This year, the Masterclasses were held starting April.

The first masterclass was led by Ms Anagha Mahajani, General Manager - Program Research and Monitoring, Ambuja Cement Foundation who held the Skills Session on Proposal Writing & Documentation. The Exemplars gained valuable insights from her on the specifics of proposal writing, its strategies, and the need for documentation.



CII FOUNDATION WOMAN EXEMPLAR PROGRAM
MASTER Class
12th April 2022, 03:00 - 4:30 PM

Skill Session on Proposal Writing & Documentation:

- Proposal Writing Formats & Details/ प्रस्ताव लिखना
- Strategies for Proposal Submission/ प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत करने की योजनाएँ
- Documentation/ दस्तावेज़ीकरण

Ms. Anagha Mahajani
General Manager - Program Research and Monitoring, Ambuja Cement Foundation

The second masterclass was on Branding & Packaging. The experts on Branding were Ms Arya Raj and Mr Mirza Aqdas Beg from Kudumbashree National Resource Organisation who unraveled the Panchsstras- Five Cardinal Principles of Branding and Packaging and conducted a visual thinking session motivating many of the Woman Exemplars to develop a strategy for building their own brand.



CII FOUNDATION WOMAN EXEMPLAR PROGRAM
MASTER Class
13th June 2022, 3:00 - 5:00 PM
SKILL SESSION ON BRANDING

Mr Mirza Aqdas Beg
State Project Coordinator - Uttar Pradesh & Haryana, Enterprises domain, Kudumbashree National Resource Organisation

Ms Arya Raj
Thematic Anchor for Capacity Building - Enterprises domain, Kudumbashree National Resource Organisation

By interactively participating, asking questions, and learning the fundamentals, Exemplars from all across the country were brought together on a virtual platform through the series of masterclasses.

Covid-19 response: Restoring Livelihoods in Alipurduar, West Bengal

Akta Jojo, a 48-year-old woman from Hantapara Tea Garden of Alipurduar District, West Bengal was hit gravely by the pandemic. "I never thought a virus could reach us; it was only limited to urban areas." She was forced to shut down her shop and had no alternative livelihood opportunity. This was not only her story but that of many like her who lived in the tea gardens and relied on informal sources of livelihood.

Millions across the world have been affected by Covid-19. A massive global disaster, the pandemic brought about a devastating effect on the livelihoods of many, and communities living in West Bengal's Alipurduar District were no exception. Several tea estates went out of business, wreaking hardship on the lives of tribals who relied on them. The closure due to the pandemic posed some serious challenges for Alipurduar - school dropouts, child trafficking, child labour, extreme poverty and hunger and starvation deaths, to name a few.

The CII Foundation undertook the restoration of livelihoods and launched a project in Alipurduar with the support of PRISM and the Oak Foundation.

The initiative focuses on assisting communities in becoming economically self-sufficient, allowing them to earn in the long run while also assisting them in improving their quality of life through improved health and education possibilities. It is empowering women



by providing training in organic farming, goat rearing, food processing, stitching & tailoring, and tour operations.

Nita Dhar and Sushary Tirkey, CII Foundation Woman Exemplars, are working with PRISM to encourage women to start small businesses based on sustainable agricultural goods, founding the Barnali Women's Self Help Group, which now has 136 members.

So far, the project has helped several women

- 500 beneficiaries from 20 Villages have completed the 1st Phase of **Organic Farming** training. Women who are tea garden workers and had never engaged in kitchen gardening initiated kitchen gardening. It is improving nutritional outcomes and provides alternate livelihood opportunities to women.
- **Vacation centres** have been constructed to provide livelihood opportunities to the Barnali Women's SHG. The women have raised Rs 2,20,000 through rentals and sale of organically farmed produce.
- 30 beneficiaries have been trained in the first phase of **Tour Guide Orientation**. It is a 7-month long course, which will enable the women to develop their skill sets as tour guides and capitalise on the local tourism areas.
- 23 women have been trained in the **Food Processing** trade. It aims to equip the women with the required equipment and training to produce their food items which have nutritious value and can be stored for long periods.

- 10 women have been provided **sewing machines**, enabling them to earn a livelihood of Rs 500 - Rs 1,000 per week. The project aims at creating avenues to generate more local demand in the region (of school dresses, masks, etc.) for them to sustain themselves through this economic activity.

- 67 **Green Scout Camps** have been formed in the region with 2,000 members and 14 Vigyan Clubs in clusters. 132 underprivileged children were enrolled as Child Scientists for the District Level Children's Science Congress. 9 children were selected for the State Level Children's Science Congress and 2 got selected for the National Level Children's Science Congress.

Green Scouts Camps offers a participatory learning experience to the Green Scouts, educating them about nature, public health and environment.

Many like Akta Jojo have benefitted from the initiative. Akta, who was trained in the Organic Farming trade under the project says "Organic Farming has been a blessing for me. It not only has supported the income of my family but has helped me survive the pandemic. I wish I had leveraged this skill set long back." She is now growing multiple vegetables and is selling natural farm products from her shop, earning her a profit of Rs 950 - Rs 1,000 every 15 days.

So far, the numerous interventions in this ongoing initiative have benefitted around 800 people in the project location.



Amplifying The Stories

Continuing the efforts to amplify the work of the CII Foundation Woman Exemplars through journals on Special Days, three journals were disseminated in this quarter which documented the work of an Exemplar and solicited support for her.

For the World Health Day on 7 April, Vanlalruati's work in transforming the lives of 20,000 people living with HIV in Mizoram was covered in the journal.

World Technology Day's journal on 11 May highlighted Rupali Shinde's determined steps to bring change, along with her Digital Didis, training more than 5,000 women to use digital transactions in their micro-enterprises.

On World Day Against Child Labour on 12 June, Meera Yadav's efforts in building and strengthening the network for education, child protection and child safety in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh were underlined.



Dear All,

Greetings on World Day Against Child Labour!

"Unaware of what is in their best interest, children are most susceptible to face exploitation. That's why it is necessary that child rights reaches every child."

Says Meera Yadav, CII Foundation Women Exemplar who has dedicated 25 years of her life to working against child labour and fighting for child rights.

Being located in Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Meera's parents were worried about her future amidst the rampant child trafficking in the city. It prompted them to send 3 year old Meera to their relative's family in Varanasi (UP). Little did they know that her childhood was still not secure. Though Meera was allowed to pursue her education, it came at the cost of doing numerous house chores and other labour. Slowly the discrimination and mistrust grew into physical violence and abuse. Under these circumstances, all Meera wanted was to get away from her wretched life and marriage seemed like the only way out. At the young age of 17, she married a man who was separated from his first wife and worked as a daily wage earner. Unfortunately, Meera's desperate urge to come out of the cycle of violence pushed her into another dreadful cycle of poverty and oppression. Within 3 months of her marriage, she was pregnant. When her husband's family was unable to provide basic nutrition during her pregnancy, Meera's determination to be financially independent began and only grew stronger once her child was born. Meera fought against social conventions and stepped out of her house to teach in a small private school and attain financial stability.

Every day on her way to school, Meera saw children from the nearby slums engaged in rag-picking. Speaking to some of them, she realized that dropping out of school was common and these children were exposed to major health risks. Coming from her own lived experience of facing child neglect, the situation motivated her to start teaching children from the nearby slums. This was Meera's foray into the world of child rights, where she reached out to 700 children directly for classes. Meera knew that these children were most susceptible to being trafficked and easily pulled into abuse and poverty. She shares,

Meera worked relentlessly with these children, their parents, and the stakeholders like local NGOs and Government institutions to provide them with safe spaces and access to scholarships for better education.

It was Meera's doggedness and understanding of the social fabric of the city that slowly led to measurable changes. Aware of the fact that the Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi was a prime site for child beggars, violence, and trafficking, Meera made multiple visits to the ghats to create awareness of child rights among the local community. She sensitised the local police through sessions and one-to-one meetings. Finally, one day to her surprise, the child help desk at the Ghat Police Station in Varanasi called her to assist in reuniting 40 trafficked children with their families. This has been Meera's favourite achievement so far, something she wears on her sleeve even now.

Woman exemplars like Meera have created safe spaces for thousands of children who are victims of child labour, drug addiction, child marriage and child trafficking.

Meera transformed into a champion of change against child labour, impacting 18,000 lives through awareness generation on child rights across Varanasi.

As Meera speaks of bringing child rights to every child, she aspires to open a learning centre where she can have a library, toys, and basic learning kits. The learning centre will act as a bridge and connect vulnerable children to scholarships, Government aid, and safe spaces.

To help Meera live her dream of 'No child should be left behind' please reach out to us, and support Meera with donations and collaborations to develop a model learning center in Uttar Pradesh. Contact:

Call for Nominations for the CII Foundation Woman Exemplar Award 2023



NOMINATIONS OPEN!

INVITING NOMINATIONS OF WOMEN LEADERS FROM THE GRASSROOTS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE FIELDS OF:

EDUCATION, HEALTH & MICRO-ENTERPRISES



WOMAN EXEMPLAR PROGRAM

APPLY BY 15 AUGUST, 2022

To know more contact sukriti.tolani@cii.in



WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Clean Abul Fazal



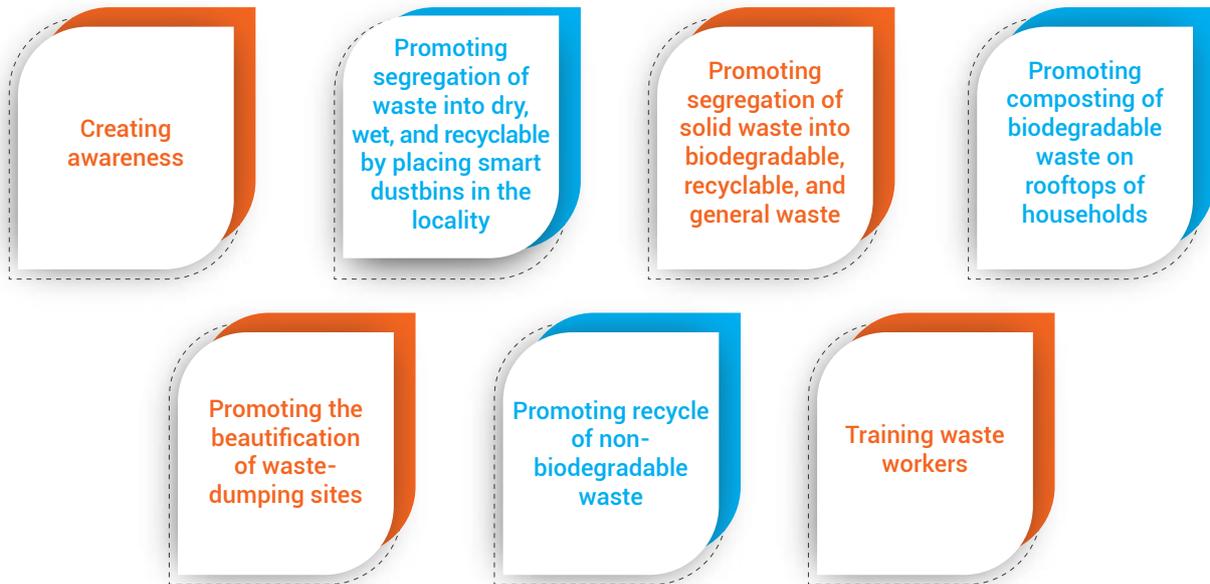
Inefficient waste management, especially in urban slum clusters, is a growing problem in India. As the density of population increases in cities and metros, the volume of waste generated daily rises rapidly. In many areas, the civic amenities and facilities cannot keep pace in terms of collection and disposal. Compounding the problem is the lack of awareness amongst residents about segregating waste, the 3 R's of reduce, re-use and recycle, and appropriate methods of waste disposal. Consequently, piles of waste line roadsides and the dump yards are overflowing with waste.

To improve waste management in Abul Fazal in Okhla, New Delhi, the CII Foundation launched a project, supported by PTC India Private Ltd. and PTC Financial Services Ltd., in June 2021. Abul Fazal is a bustling locality with about 60,000 residents, most of whom belong to the economically weaker section of society. Around 8 tonnes of waste is generated daily, but only about 40% is collected from households by waste workers. While there are 200 waste workers and a waste management process in place, there was scope for creating a more efficient system.

The CII Foundation Clean Abul Fazal project aims to create a community-managed localised waste management system that would complement the efforts of the municipality in making Abul Fazal a clean and green area. The residents of Abul Fazal, who had experienced the commitment and dedication of the CII Foundation during Covid-19 when it distributed relief material in the area, were eager to participate to clean Abul Fazal.

The project aims to create a community-managed localised waste management system that would complement the efforts of the municipality in making Abul Fazal a clean and green area.

A baseline study with door-to-door visits revealed areas for improvement, and basis the findings of the study, key interventions were planned around.



In the April-June quarter, the CII Foundation continued to work closely with the Residents Welfare Associations, women, youth volunteers and religious institutions towards creating a robust and efficient waste management system.

Meetings were held regularly with the core committee members, residents, waste workers and volunteers to further strengthen awareness-building activities and fine-tune the activities for greater impact. Issues raised by waste workers and others were discussed, such as storage of wet waste at dumpsites, and appropriate solutions found. Meetings with volunteers were held to bolster activities around creating awareness through interactions with the residents and wall art, which is eye-catching and informative.

School-based activities were undertaken to create awareness about the 3 R's of reduce, re-use and recycle amongst children and promote the re-use of material. Activities with children from the Muqaddas Girls Public School and Smart Kids Public School were conducted where the children were taught to re-use paper to make paper bags, piggy banks and wall hangings.

Door-to-door home visits were undertaken to create awareness about best practices on waste management, with demonstrations on segregation processes to encourage the residents to segregate waste at the household level.



A cleanliness drive was organised on May 22 with the support of SAAF and Okhla Community Forum. Over 200 people participated in this drive, which started from the Okhla Vihar Metro Station to the Alshifa dumpyard. They cleaned the streets, drains and the dumpyard. About 25% of the area of the dump yard was made free of waste.

As part of this drive, a tree plantation exercise was undertaken. At the end of the drive, community members and waste workers who were champion waste workers were publicly recognised and received certificates of appreciation. The project has successfully raised awareness about efficient waste management and the community's role in the process. Waste collection and segregation has been initiated in 14,000 households, with 5,000 households segregating waste at home on their own, and the rest segregating waste with the help of waste workers.

Home composting is also picking up, with many families having completed the first cycle of composting. They are using the manure from the compost in their plants.

To further boost composting of wet waste, the CII Foundation, had set up a **waste composting facility**,



The pace of work is picking up in the project with a focus on intensifying efforts in areas of work already undertaken, and new activities planned ahead.



Online Certificate Training Program: Creating Diversity Champions and Leaders at Workplace

Envisaging to equip companies to further their disability inclusion agenda leading to a strong industry-led inclusive ecosystem, the CII-India Business & Disability Network (IBDN) is bringing a one-of-a-kind course to build a cadre of diversity champions to take on and lead diversity agenda at the workplace.



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Business Unit heads crossing over into human performance management

Diversity and Inclusion practitioners

Small and medium businesses with talent management oversight

Students interested in Diversity and inclusion careers

Timeline

Session Duration - 10 hours

Course Length - 5 Days

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