

# The india drive



**Outlook**  
group



*Training women to become financially independent*

# EMPOWERING LIVES



For Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), supplying power is about empowering lives and making families self-reliant

In a free enterprise, the community is not just another stakeholder in business, but is in fact the very purpose of its existence," said Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, founder of Tata Group. Tata Power-DDL is a Public Private Partnership (joint venture) between Tata Power and the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, supplying electricity to a populace of over seven million in north Delhi. The company's CSR mother brand 'Saathi', meaning a friend and companion, along with its brand promise "With you non-stop" is now a source of perennial support and service to the community in the areas of its operation.

The CSR team, which is officially called the Social Innovation Group (SIG), is striving to improve the living conditions of the underprivileged by empowering the economically weaker and emancipating the socially underprivileged sections. "We work

towards strengthening and stimulating the financial conditions of the families that need support. We are empowering the women in the family and the unemployed, by way of vocational training. We are supporting the higher education of their children. The results have been wonderful. We are now partners in bringing about positive changes in the society. The basic tenet of Tata Group is achieving the highest standards of quality and promoting meritocracy, which adds fuel to these initiatives. With a policy to absorb the right talent into the organisation, we have also been able to give employment to many trainees," says Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL.

Community activities of the company are classified into four pillars: Unnati (women and youth empowerment), Ujjwal (affirmative action in education), Sanjeevani (health initiatives) and Club Enerji (environment conservation).

## Unnati

Beaming with confidence, Salma and Rekha pose along their own graffiti at the Vocational Training (VT) Centre at JJ Colony Indra Camp, Delhi. They are part of a Self-Help Group (SHG) working at a paper cup manufacturing unit. Rekha is now an expert machine operator and Salma manages everything from packing to taking stock of the raw materials and finished products. The paper cups from this production unit are used in various places including some of the Delhi Metro Stations and are also in high demand with traders who are teaming up with this SHG to supply the products to wholesale vendors across Delhi and neighbouring towns. The no-plastic rule in Tata Power-DDL premises has given way to paper cups in its offices, giving captive business to this SHG. What started as a simple experiment of Women Literacy Centres (WLCs) in 2010 is now a full-fledged women's movement in Delhi. The company takes a 360° approach to empower women in a holistic manner and create market linkages that have long-term benefits.

**Women Literacy Centres (WLC):** From the cluster, a woman who has studied till the school level, is selected to run the WLC from her home. Here, a six-month basic education course is carried out. Every woman trained at WLC can read, write, travel on her own, sign all documents instead of putting a thumbprint, operate her bank account and help her children in their studies. All beneficiaries are given certificates to instill a sense of pride and accomplishment.

The course uses the Computer-based Functional Literacy (CBFL) software developed by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a leading global software company, to impart literacy in Hindi language and Arithmetic, and understand basic English. All WLCs have a library and access to Hindi newspapers. Currently, there are 350 WLCs which witness an annual participation from 21,000 women from the communities. Till date, more than 1,17,000 women have been imparted functional literacy.

**ABHA:** This programme came into existence as an extension of WLC. Many beneficiaries of the WLC programme became brand ambassadors or change agents and were given the title 'ABHA' meaning 'Radiance'. These ABHAs conduct door-to-door campaigns, raising awareness in the communities about the CSR initiatives of the company such as WLC, vocational training centres, free health services through mobile dispensaries, and scholarship programme, serving as the first consumer contact points for queries.

Geeta is popularly addressed as ABHA *didī* in her community in Lal Bagh cluster. A friend for all, she educates Tata Power-DDL consumers about benefits of online



*The company takes a 360° approach to empower women in a holistic manner and create market linkages and has many Women Literacy Centres (WLCs)*



*(Above) Women are skilled in toy making and (right) women literacy centres have good attendance*





(Above) The company has partnered with vocational skills institutes for training; (right) nutritious food being served through community kitchen 'Bhojanam' at a training location



Our Social Innovation model has been recognised at the international level by the World Bank for replication in developing African Nations where electrification of urban slums is a big challenge

**GANESH SRINIVASAN**  
CEO, Tata Power-DDL

payments and the free accidental insurance to which they are entitled to on timely payment of their electricity bills. She dons the hat of a healthcare and career counsellor, guiding young ones to the VT-tutorial centres, and also helps the company identify young talent to partake in their scholarship programme. Her earning as an ABHA has helped her build her own house. She says, "I own a *pucca* house and have a friendly relationship with my community members, thanks to this programme." With an average earning of around Rs 10,000 per month, around 841 ABHAs are working in the field, setting an example for other women to follow their footsteps.

**Vocational Training (VT) Centres:** Through these centres, skill-based training is imparted to unemployed/school dropout youth, enabling them to take up jobs or work from home. Under this programme, residents of JJ clusters/resettlement colonies, unauthorised colonies and villages, SC/ST, school dropouts are covered. The company has partnered with NGOs for beneficiary identification, selection of teachers, imparting classes, conducting examinations and facilitating placements. This entire exercise is aided by the ABHA network. The courses are chosen meticulously, based on the need of the community and marketability. Various courses offered are Stitching & Tailoring, Beautician, Retail Chain, Office Assistance, Computer, Tally and Electrician Training. After the completion of the course, a National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) certification is given. Currently, 18 VT centres are functional. Since the inception of the programme, more than 21,000 people have benefited and are working in shops, firms, beauty parlours some are also operating from home.

The benefits of these initiatives have shown results in other ways too. "When we took over in 2002, we had to grapple with very high loss of electricity by way of theft and pilferage. Over one million people reside in the JJ clusters, but only 30 per cent had legal connections. Today, our consumers are part of our family. They are our beneficiaries as well as partners in our endeavour to provide uninterrupted and dependable power supply," says Mr. Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL.

**Entrepreneurship Development Programme:** Under this, Tata Power-DDL has identified and trained women from many communities. Several SHGs were formed to create a supporting network. At present, 151 SHGs are functional and have been linked with nationalised banks. These SHGs are trained to make paper cups, soft toys, jute bags, handicrafts and more. Through these small ventures, these women have started earning substantially.

Babli, a resident of C-block Jahangirpuri, is a member of a SHG. Her husband is an e-rickshaw driver with meagre earnings. To support her family, Babli enrolled for a soft toy making course. The couple work together now, as her husband helps transport the finished goods. The project has enabled Babli to earn a monthly income of Rs 20,000-24,000, making her financially independent.

Building bridges and supporting entrepreneurs in their journey, Tata Affirmative Action Programme (TAAP) gives preference to enterprises belonging to SC/ST vendors for their effective representation in its supply chain. The company gives waiver of tender fee, security deposit, relaxation in bank guarantee and company turnover under qualifying requirement criteria in General Conditions of Contract (GCC) to such enterprises.

This entire throbbing social innovation framework has also led to the birth of two live enterprises: Project Bhojanam and Dhaaga. These are a successful culmination of an entrepreneurship programme leading to partnership with company and the result is profit sharing with the participating SHG.

**Bhojanam:** Given the vast expanse of area under Tata Power-DDL's operation, there was a requirement for low-cost, healthy and hygienic meals for the staff and beneficiaries attending the training facility at Gulabi Bagh location. Project Bhojanam or the community kitchen initiative turned out to be a win-win situation. It met the in-house requirement and proved to be a way to empower women. It provided an



“Meri Paathshala are Special Training Centres (STCs) in Delhi schools, run in collaboration with the Department of Education, Government of Delhi”



(Left) Children at a school with their new books, (above) a woman at a paper cup making unit and a mother with her child in a school

alternative to local tiffin services, restaurants and existing external vendors and monetarily benefited the SHG formed for this purpose.

“I had never gone out to work. Feeding the family with nutritious food was the only thing I knew ever since I got married and came to Delhi with my husband. Now, we are feeding hundreds of people daily. It gives us both satisfaction and financial support,” says Gita, coordinator of Durga SHG which runs the initiative. After catering to the in-house needs, orders have now started pouring in from nearby institutions and establishments for catering.

**Dhaaga:** This venture is a chain of stores where the women showcase and celebrate their craftsmanship. This gives them access to mainstream marketplace to beneficially trade and brand their work. The first such store in Delhi, near M2K Mall in Rohini, has a special display and sells jute bags, soft toys, apparel, bangles, paper cups made by the SHG. The earnings from the sales are distributed among the women.

The Dhaaga initiative began in 2017 by Tata Power, the parent company, at Kamshet village of Pune district. What started off as a SHG and modern garment-making unit is now a women-led movement and covers 16 locations across Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

### Ujjwal

**Meri Paathshala:** Colourful graffitis, hi-tech teaching aids, special books corner and state-of-the-art infrastructure awaits an out-of-school child who joins the ‘Meri Paathshala’ programme. These are Special Training Centres (STCs) in schools of Delhi run by the company in collaboration with the Department of Education, Government of Delhi. The centres, based on the Gyan Lok model under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, are a means to mainstream the child’s education with special care and support under trained hands. Till date, 156 students have moved to mainstream schooling.

In the first phase, Tata Power-DDL is supporting 400 out-of-school children, in the age group of 6-14 years studying in classes I-VIII. In the academic year 2019-20, they have been enrolled in 10 STCs set up at seven Delhi government schools in many areas of north Delhi.

The company also provides digital learning equipment enabled by Tata Class Edge and training to STC teachers for digital classrooms. The company also provides necessary items to the children like school uniforms, stationery, notebooks, school bags, water bottles, lunch box, shoes. An instructor, Pinky, has seen the positive impact made by this



*Industrious Social Innovation Group (SIG) Team with Mr. Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL (in blue suit)*



*Mobile health vans go to all clusters where sanitation and hygiene are at risk, and there are regular health check-ups*

programme. “The aesthetics of a classroom play an important role, they add ease while working with the children,” she says.

**Scholarship Programme:** This programme is attached to the Delhi government schools and aims to empower students from marginalised, SC/ST communities and make them employable. The scholars are supported with fee reimbursement, reference books, schoolbags and other stationery materials. An annual and customised personality development, interpersonal skills, career counselling and competency testing of the students is held to choose a deserving one. Not just schooling, the programme gives deserving ones access to skill-based training and supplementary funds. This ensures employability in the competitive job market and boosts confidence.

Jyoti is an officer with the accounts department of Tata Power-DDL. A bright commerce graduate and an aspiring Chartered Accountant (CA), she became part of scholarship programme when she was in class IX. This programme fulfilled all her education needs till she passed out from the prestigious Daulat Ram College of Delhi University. While working with the company, she is pursuing her post graduation and on course to clear CA papers. She plans to buy an apartment for her family and is confident that her association with the company is now permanent. Her life’s mission is to give it back to her community through the employee volunteering programme.

The company offers financial support to the students pursuing ITI, Diploma, Engineering and other degree courses including full fee reimbursement. Shubham is an intern doctor at the Maulana Azad Medical College in Delhi. He credits his successful completion of the MBBS course with good marks to the support provided by Tata Power-DDL’s scholarship programme. “I would not have been able to buy expensive books if I was not reimbursed for my course fee and other expenses. The support to my education began during my secondary school exam and is continuing till date. If there are more companies like Tata Power-DDL, I am sure no talented child in India would be deprived of their destined career,” he says.

### Sanjeevani

This healthcare programme caters to the one million population living in the JJ clusters, as they lack sanitation and have unhygienic living conditions.

**Mobile Dispensaries:** The company started mobile dispensary vans for residents of JJ clusters, resettlement colonies, unauthorised colonies and villages. Four mobile dispensaries visit the clusters on a routine basis every week. Each van consists of a doctor, a pharmacist and a woman counsellor. Free consultation and medication are provided. ABHA volunteers assist in coordinating the visit of these



Children showcase their efforts to save Nature at Urja Mela

vans. Till date, the facility has benefited four lakh people. Safiya Bano, who was previously working as a dedicated ABHA in Keshavpuram district for the past three years, is currently working as an attendant at a mobile dispensary. Her earning is Rs 9,000 per month. Safiya aims to pursue a course in nursing and is preparing for admission. She is confident that with support from Tata Power-DDL, she would one day be a trained paramedical staff, practicing at a good hospital.

**Water Purifiers:** For the residents of JJ clusters, exposure to contaminated water is associated with several waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, typhoid etc. Tata Power-DDL designed and developed Skid Mounted RO Purification Unit with a capacity of 500 Litre per Hour (LPH). This plant helps remove high TDS, fluorides and other contaminations and provides safe drinking water. Each household is allowed to draw 300 litres of pure water per month by refilling a prepaid card for Rs 30. The money goes to the SHG, which manages the water purifier unit and ensures its smooth functioning. This initiative has been a boon for over 3.4 lakh people on a daily basis at government schools, DMRC stations and in JJ clusters.

### Club Enerji

With the increasing pressure on natural resources, sensitising young minds to protect nature, preserve energy and to work towards reducing the impact of climate change is the need of the hour. Club Enerji does exactly this. Students from classes VI-XII are trained to become young heroes to combat the ill effects of climate change. A bilingual energy conservation booklet containing energy and resource conservation, climate change and electrical safety tips is distributed to every student and a yearly event, Urja Mela, is organised to recognise children for their contribution towards innovation in energy conservation.

Going a step ahead for adults, in an endeavour to make Delhi Green, mega plantation drives under the aegis of 'Harit Ek Pehal' are undertaken at regular intervals in which saplings are planted at various schools, parks, police stations, CRPF's Bawana campus.

While the road is long, the zeal is endless. "Passion is in the DNA of every member of the Tata family. Our record of more than 50,000 volunteering hours is an inspiration among the Tata Group companies," says Mr. Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL. ♦

## ROAD TO EMPOWERMENT

**What is the target with which your social intervention programmes are designed? Are there any bottlenecks in these endeavours?** We are working towards bringing about holistic development of the communities we cater to. We are in the process of building a modern cluster where health, education and other basic needs like safe drinking water are within everyone's reach. We work with a partner ecosystem where experts and organisations come on board to execute the objectives and touch a large number of beneficiaries. In terms of bottlenecks, funds or resources are rarely constraints, but ensuring that the impact is happening on ground consistently, needs constant innovation and continuous monitoring by our team – which does it with a real belief about doing good for our community.

**What is the driving force for the Social Innovation Group to execute such a vast and well managed community work?** Right from the beginning, Tata Group has worked with the belief that social innovation is integral for business and contribution to the community. There is a specific energy that comes from contributing to these initiatives that we can feel among our team. A fair bit of teamwork goes into ensuring that the right things are executed in the right way and at the right time. We have nurtured this system with our stakeholders as well, but what really drives it is inner belief.

**Was it tough in the beginning to reach out to the stakeholders and build rapport with the consumers?** Yes, certainly. The network was in a dilapidated state. There was a lack of

trust but there was no way to move ahead without the cooperation and partnership of the consumers. We cater to a large section of the population in Delhi. Almost a million people live in the 200 odd JJ clusters, which fall in our area in Delhi-NCR. The turnaround was when we managed to start working with the families in these clusters on basic areas like education, health facilities, vocational training. Eventually, these beneficiaries became our change agents. We must say, our experience is proof that good CSR and an empowered and happy customer is the way for a good future.

**Besides the core team, how do the rest of the people in the company contribute to these initiatives?** This is a virtuous circle that works for everyone here in the company. Good work is done on ground, the community appreciates and benefits from that work, and in return fuels it with energy to work more enthusiastically. Each member of the Tata Power-DDL family contributes in a small or big way. Within the Tata Group, we have the highest average of voluntary hours contributed by each staff member and we take pride in it.

**Do you have any message for peers from your experience with these endeavours?** The journey of social innovation has been a fulfilling one for the company, beneficiaries and our employees. It has helped us reach out to our consumer and the community in many ways. It has helped build confidence and trust in the whole relationship. This should be among the top three agendas for any leadership. Social and economic inequality in the society must be bridged globally. ♦



**GANESH SRINIVASAN**  
CEO, Tata Power-DDL

“At TATA Power-DDL, sustainability and lasting development have been a cornerstone of the work done by the company”