

Corporate Social Responsibility (Reliance a trend setter)

Latika Gauba

Assistant Professor (Commerce) , Govt College Sector 9, Gurugram (Extension Lecturer) (India)

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ABSTRACT

CSR is not just a term. It is indeed the way of life for organisations today. The corporate being a part of society has several obligations towards the society. It takes its very existence from the society. Every resource whether it is financial, physical or material is all extracted from the society. So, it becomes the duty of the organisations to repay back to it. This paper is all about why CSR and looks into a detailed analysis of how the company RIL has been carrying out its CSR activities.

1. Introduction

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept that makes the corporate sector responsible for the society. The corporations operating within society have the obligations to contribute towards economic, social and environmental development. The term became popular in the 1960s and is now invariably the most crucial part of business organisation. The concept got its base from the fact that no organisation should exist just to earn great profits; it being a part of society gets its resources from the society hence needs to fulfil its obligations towards the society. As per the UNIDO, CSR is the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives ("Triple-Bottom-Line- Approach"), while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders.

2. CSR; The Win Win Situation

Today, it has become a necessity to give back to the society which gives the true existence to the firms. The first, the foremost and the most crucial reason for the firms to enter into CSR is "Survival". The firms not being into CSR will sooner or later find their survival at stake. The firms that are into CSR activities have good public image. These firms get great support and loyalty from the society for they are contributing towards the welfare of the society. Thus, positive social responsibility improves company's public image and relationship with consumers.

The firms with CSR initiatives are found to have satisfied employees. These employees feel happy to be associated with a firm which is doing something contributory for the society. A satisfied employee in turn stays motivated and works for the welfare of the firm. The customers associated with such firms are found to be psychologically happy. For it becomes a matter of pride to be a customer have a firm which thinks beyond increasing its revenues. It gives a positive PR. The media and news are all flooded with the good CSR activities. Companies need not spend and waste huge sums of money on expensive advertising campaigns. Instead they get free publicity and benefits from the CSR activities.

RELIANCE

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is an Indian conglomerate holding company headquartered

in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. The company was co-founded by Dhirubhai Ambani and Champaklal Damani in 1960s as Reliance Commercial Corporation. In 1965, the partnership ended and Dhirubhai continued the polyester business of the firm. It was started with the motto of "Growth is Life". This motto aptly captures the ever-evolving spirit of Reliance. The activities span hydrocarbon exploration and production, petroleum refining and marketing, petrochemicals, retail and telecommunications. With its continuous efforts and innovative ideas the company reached heights in each of these with unmatched exponential growth. The company now has attained global leadership in many of the businesses. It is one of the largest polyester yarn and fibre producers in the world. Reliance Industries Limited is a Fortune 500 company and the largest private sector corporation in India.

3. CSR Of Reliance

The CSR policy of Reliance has always aimed at improving lives all across the nation including every strata of the nation with the focus on the three core principles of Scale, Impact and Sustainability. These initiatives are aimed at promoting economic growth and more sustainable and inclusive development. Reliance has undertaken its initiatives in compliance with Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013.

1. Rural Transformation

The CSR activities of the Reliance in the rural area address the eradication of poverty from the grassroots levels. The company also targets on the biggest evils that the nation is threatened with, that is, hunger and malnutrition. The CSR activities work on two basic principles. First, it is a holistic intervention for transformation by community aspiration goals. Being grounded with some of the most marginal communities of India is the second one.

The company has since the inception of its CSR activities, reached nutrition self-sufficiency to nearly 1.5 lakhs. In the year 2015-16 itself, the company has reached about 17000 people. In year 2017-2018 CSR activities, the initiatives aimed at building drought-resilient villages. This meant ensuring water sufficiency and hence the villages can be saved from the adverse affects of the droughts. Next focus in this year was to empower women and work for their income enhancement

through women-led cooperative societies. Thirdly, fishermen producer companies were looked at.

Reliance has mentored 19 FPCs, spanning 10 states. As on 31st March 2018, the RF-mentored FPCs had 21,500 farmers associated with them. In 2017-18, in collaboration with Gujarat State Co-Operative Cotton Federation Limited, Jasdan Producer Company transacted 54,000+ quintals of groundnut that benefitted 5,700 farmers. In year 2017, Reliance Foundation extended the scope of its partnership under Rajmata Jijau Nutrition Mission of Government of Maharashtra wherein, it promoted its unique kitchen garden model and provided technical support.

2.Environment

The company realised the harm that the companies have been doing by ignoring the environment and being completely negligent to it. So, it decided to work in this area. The work involved plantation drives to water harvesting to creation of value by water security.

In Sendhwa block (Barwani, Madhya Pradesh), people tend to migrate annually to neighbouring states including Maharashtra and Gujarat for they were unable to cultivate more than a single crop for the area being predominant rain-fed and lack of irrigational facilities. Reliance came to rescue. It constructed a check dam after much technical assessment that helped assure irrigation of 80 hectares. Farmers can now cultivate in at least two cropping seasons annually. In year 2015, the water harvesting structures so created by the company collected 103 lakh cubic metres of rainwater and nearly 550 lakh cubic metres since inception of the system of water harvesting. Over 7 million saplings were planted in year 2017 to promote biodiversity and over 20 million since inception. Eco-consistent soil conservation resulted in bringing more than 7,000 Ha of land under sustainable agricultural practices in year 2017.

3.Education

The company realises the importance of education, that only if the people living in India are educated, they could make the nation progress and as well could do something about their own welfare and growth. Right from having its own schools to giving scholarships to meritorious students, to providing education using technologically advanced techniques, the company does all on its own.

During 2017-2018, the company worked on providing quality education to 16,000 students through 14 Reliance Foundation Schools. 713 talented students were given scholarships to pursue higher studies. Besides, 13,644 scholarships were given since its inception. Dhirubhai Ambani International School (DAIS) prepares students for the ICSE, the IGCSE and the IB Diploma examinations. The Company is working towards establishing a globally benchmarked, multi-disciplinary university in Maharashtra.

Under ESA, Reliance supports education of underprivileged children by partnering with NGOs and works at grassroots level. As an extension under this initiative, an innovation in the form of Digital Learning Van was launched in 2017. The van has reached out to more than 4,000 children from 10 government schools in Mumbai and Thane districts.

4.Health

The company has been working in the health sector. In year 2015-16 Over 5 lakh health consultations provided to patients through Reliance managed hospitals, mobile and static medical units and various health camps (over 35 lakh since inception).

During 17-18, the company gave health consultations to over 0.44 million patients which was greatly higher than 15-16 wherein only 5 lakh people were provided with the health consultations. This was done through its own run and managed hospitals, mobile and static medical units. The company has been providing medical facilities through several health camps with about 4 million already worked on since inception.

The eye care services that company has been providing catered to about 1,207 visually impaired individuals. The Programme is run under the name "Drishti Programme".

In 2015, 8,480 women were screened for anaemia, of which 3,165 women were diagnosed and received treatment for it and a total of 12283 children were screened for malnutrition and 1459 received follow up treatment for it.

5.Disaster Response

The company has always extended its support for the disaster management programmes. Be it reaching out on time, providing necessary items in time or adopting villages, the company has always shown affirmative responses.

During 2015-2016, the relief activities under disaster management covered seven districts and about 218 villages. These villages were part of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. This noble cause helped lives of 1,46,510 individuals. Good amount of relief materials were provided for the same. This initiative has been doing magical with about 2.8 lakh individuals being impacted since its inception.

In year 2017-2018, the disaster relief programme of the company supported over 10,000 individuals by working on 22 flood affected villages across the 11 districts of Assam. The company helped over 0.15 million individuals across 2 districts of Gujarat. Four worst-hit villages were adopted by the company and all the necessary assistance was provided for rehabilitation.

The company has several early warning advisories. The information which was disseminated during Ockhi cyclone in Southern India helped in saving lives of 27,000 fishermen.

6.Art Culture And Heritage

The company has shown keen interest in maintaining the art and culture of the nation. It has extended warm support to the several at promoting events. For instance, the annual concert, "Abbaji", organised by Ustad Zakir Hussain in the memory of his father, Ustad Allah Rakha Khan was fully supported by the company. Several renowned musicians who came together in the concert to paid memorable tribute to the master.

Warm support was extended to '8 Prahar'. The event was purely dedicated to Indian classical music. Pandit Jasraj graced the event with his presence in Mumbai.

7. Beautification Of Public Places

The company has been working for the maintenance and beautification of the cities. Through its urban renewal plans, it has been working on modernisation initiatives and has been making lives of people happier and easier. The ageing infrastructure is revitalised. As part of beautification of public places, protective grills on Magdalla Bridge, Hazira were installed. This was done to prevent any and every type of mishap. Parks are also revitalised and the fencing are all provided in them.

8. Campaign On Swachhata Hi Seva

Swachhata Hi Seva was launched across the country as a massive awareness and cleanliness campaign by the Reliance Foundation. To support the Government of India's Swachh Bharat Mission, the week-long campaign was organised during September-October, 2017 which aimed at mobilising the communities and enabled them to actively participate in the Swachh Bharat Mission. The campaign engaged around 1,00,000 people covering 15 States and Union Territories.

CSR is indeed the need of the hour. No company can think of escaping CSR in today's arena without being getting noticed about it. People in society are pretty much aware of every move that companies make. Especially; the CSR activities have been leaving indelible imprints on the minds of people making them quite supportive and favourable towards the company. Reliance, despite of being such a giant as always looked into the sphere of CSR and has left no stone unturned in helping the society in whatever way it could. The corporate world has a lot to learn from this mega giant and surely need to work on the CSR.

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