

CSR TODAY

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HALF OF WORLD'S GLACIERS TO 'DISAPPEAR' WITH 1.5C OF GLOBAL WARMING

Half of the world's glaciers—frozen reservoirs holding three-quarters of the global water supply—could 'disappear' by the end of the century under 1.5C of warming, a study concludes

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health checks

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threaten Chinese and Indian
energy transitions



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Five billion people unprotected from trans fat leading to heart disease



Rajesh Tiwari
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Currently, 9 of the 16 countries with the highest estimated proportion of coronary heart disease deaths caused by trans fat intake do not have a best-practice policy.

Five billion people globally remain unprotected from harmful trans fat, a new status report from WHO has found, increasing their risk of heart disease and death.

Since WHO first called for the global elimination of industrially produced trans fat in 2018 – with an elimination target set for 2023 – population coverage of best-practice policies has increased almost six-fold. Forty-three countries have now implemented best-practice policies for tackling trans fat in food, with 2.8 billion people protected globally.

Despite substantial progress, however, this still leaves 5 billion worldwide at risk from trans fat's devastating health impacts with the global goal for its total elimination in 2023 remaining unattainable at this time.

Industrially produced trans fat (also called industrially produced trans-fatty acids) is commonly found in packaged foods, baked goods, cooking oils and spreads. Trans fat intake is responsible for up to 500 000 premature deaths from coronary heart disease each year around the world.

"Trans fat has no known benefit, and huge health risks that incur huge costs for health systems," said WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "By contrast, eliminating trans fat is cost effective and has enormous benefits for health. Put simply, trans fat is a toxic chemical that kills, and should have no place in food. It's time to get rid of it once and for all."

Currently, 9 of the 16 countries with the highest estimated proportion of coronary heart disease deaths caused by trans fat intake do not have a best-practice policy. They are Australia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Ecuador, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nepal, Pakistan and Republic of Korea.

Best-practices in trans fat elimination policies follow specific criteria established by WHO and limit industrially produced trans fat in all settings. There are two best-practice policy alternatives: 1) mandatory national limit of 2 grams of industrially produced trans fat per 100 grams of total fat in all foods; and 2) mandatory national ban on the


production or use of partially hydrogenated oils (a major source of trans fat) as an ingredient in all foods.

"Progress in eliminating trans fat is at risk of stalling, and trans fat continues to kill people," said Dr Tom Frieden, President and CEO of Resolve to Save Lives. "Every government can stop these preventable deaths by passing a best-practice policy now. The days of trans fat killing people are numbered – but governments must act to end this preventable tragedy."

While most trans fat elimination policies to date have been implemented in higher-income countries (largely in the Americas and in Europe), an increasing number of middle-income countries are implementing or adopting these policies, including Argentina, Bangladesh, India, Paraguay, Philippines and Ukraine. Best-practice policies are also being considered in Mexico, Nigeria and Sri Lanka in 2023. If passed, Nigeria would be the second and most populous country in Africa to put a best-practice trans fat elimination policy in place. No low-income countries have yet adopted a best-practice policy to eliminate trans fat.

In 2023, WHO recommends that countries focus on these four areas: adopting best-practice policy, monitoring and surveillance, healthy oil replacements and advocacy. WHO guidance has been developed to help countries make rapid advances in these areas.

WHO also encourages food manufacturers to eliminate industrially produced trans fat from their products, aligning to the commitment made by the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA). Major suppliers of oils and fats are asked to remove industrially produced trans fat from the products sold to food manufacturers globally.

The report, called Countdown to 2023 WHO Report on global trans fat elimination 2022, is an annual status report published by WHO in collaboration with Resolve to Save Lives, to track progress towards the goal of trans fat elimination in 2023. 

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CSR NEWS

Redington Foundation brings Clean Drinking Water and Renewable Energy to Tribal Communities in Kalvarayan and Jawadhu Hills

As a part of its CSR initiative, Redington Foundation, has designed and implemented CSR Projects through DHAN Foundation, to renovate and restore the water bodies, mitigate the risk of climate change through helping rural communities replace fossil fuel with biofuel and sensitize the rural populace on rainwater harvesting.

In Kalvarayan Hills, around 60 percent of families had access to safe drinking water while about 25 -30 percent did not have access to a safe water supply. Under the initiative to restore water bodies, Redington has renovated and restored six village ponds, 28 community wells and constructed six Rainwater Harvesting structures at six schools, benefitting 40 villages across Kalvarayan and Jawadhu Hills in Tamil Nadu. This has resulted in increased water inflow and rising of ground water-table in these villages, facilitating year-round access and availability of water for domestic purpose, livestock consumption and agriculture.

In both Kalvarayan and Jawadhu Hills, though more than 80% of Villages are electrified only 75% of households have electricity connection. As part of its initiative to provide renewable energy solutions, Redington has provided solar kits to 600 tribal families of Kalvarayan



hills and Jawadhu Hills, to address the issue of acute power shortage faced by the residents of the area.

At a local event in Vellimalai, attended by 1000+ villagers, Redington Foundation presented the solar kits consisting of a solar panel, LED bulbs and battery, which will be useful as a reliable source of energy and also help to improve their quality of life. Redington Foundation has partnered with DHAN Foundation, to drive such initiatives for social development in the remote villages of Tamil Nadu, with the overall aim to build awareness and encourage the

use of renewable energy for mitigating climate change risks.

“At Redington Foundation, we work as catalysts of change to drive social development in the areas of education, health, skill development, environment, empowerment of differently abled and disaster response. Our initiative for the people of Kalvarayan and Jawadhu hills, is a humble effort to make a difference in their lives, by providing them easy access to renewable energy and help them embrace sustainability as a way of life.” said Ramesh Natarajan, CEO, Redington Limited.

Karnataka Chief Minister lauds Allstate India for efforts in rainwater harvesting

Allstate India, the strategic services arm of Allstate, a Fortune 100 US insurer, and an established hub for top talent in India, was felicitated in the presence of Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai for its leadership in the Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) project driven by the NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Service Companies) GCC Karnataka chapter.

The initiative helps provide clean drinking water to local school children and surrounding communities by setting up rainwater harvesting units in select government schools.

Speaking at the NASSCOM Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Partners' Felicitation Ceremony in Bengaluru, the Chief Minister thanked GCCs (Global Capability Centres) like Allstate India for partnering on this commendable venture and encouraged more



Basavaraj Bommai, CM, Karnataka and Chetan Garga, Managing Director and Senior Vice President, Allstate India

organizations and individuals to join hands. Rainwater harvesting proves to be one of the most effective solutions especially now when global warming has made monsoon and rainfalls unpredictable and scarcer. Involvement in this project is part of Allstate India's commitment towards developing sustainable solutions to

strengthen resource conservation and mitigate climate challenges.

Piloted in 2020 with the support of a few other GCCs in Karnataka, the project successfully covered 31 schools during the first two years and 38 schools in the third year (2022). Allstate India alone has installed rainwater harvesting units in 6 such schools across Bengaluru and Pune. So far, over 27 million litres of water have been harvested with more than 24,000 students and broader communities enjoying easy access to clean water. The aim is to cross over 50 schools in 2023 and reach more than 2,675 schools over the next five years. The Forward Foundation is the implementation partner for this project.

Chetan Garga, Managing Director and Senior Vice President, Allstate India, said "Water conservation is a key step in India's climate journey. It is due to this reason that we started the rainwater harvesting project, driven by NASSCOM, in government schools in Bengaluru. The effort is also designed to inculcate resource sensitivity among school children, the torch-bearers of tomorrow, besides dealing with water stress in the concerned schools and communities around them."

"The State Government has been extremely supportive, and we have received a lot of encouragement from the Chief Minister. The opportunity size is huge with potential to cover more than 2,600 schools in Urban Bengaluru alone. We are hopeful of bringing a visible change and becoming a catalyst for creating a positive impact on the larger society," Garga added.



Chetan Garga, Managing Director and Senior Vice President, Allstate India

Acronis Cyber Foundation celebrates five years of giving back to underserved children and communities

Supporting a range of philanthropic initiatives, the Acronis Cyber Foundation Program, together with our partners, continues to bring educational opportunities and humanitarian efforts to under-resourced areas

Acronis celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Acronis Cyber Foundation Program, a set of philanthropic initiatives designed to engage with partners on community development projects and provide volunteering opportunities to team members around the world. Marking five years of monumental success and continuous growth in improving education accessibility, the Program's key focus is aimed at making education readily available to all and has evolved to include humanitarian disaster relief efforts and environmental projects.

Founded in 2018, the Program has been strongly dedicated to education by funding school construction and bringing IT skills training to communities around the globe. The Acronis Cyber Foundation Program, with collaboration from partners, has built 18 schools with five additional schools in construction progress in 22 different countries. This initiative has benefited over 5,500 students who now have access to quality education. To further support education, 12 schools have been equipped with computer classrooms to provide students with access to technology and the chance to benefit from learning in a digital

environment. In addition to building schools, the Program has engaged in educational projects with over 14,000 people taking part in Acronis IT Skills Training programs and has brought humanitarian aid to over 5,000 individuals in underserved communities. The Program also directly affects the volunteers involved, providing rare exposure to distant parts of the world and the unique experiences each culture offers with 92% of Acronis Cyber Foundation Program volunteers continuing their humanitarian efforts on a yearly basis.

"I am proud of what we achieved through the Acronis Cyber Foundation Program," said Patrick Pulvermueller, CEO, Acronis. "The Schools Initiative and IT Skills Training program provided much-needed support to those in need, opening a world of new educational and career opportunities. The success of the Acronis Cyber Foundation could not have been reached without the help of our partners. I'd like to thank them for their ongoing support and I have no doubt that our joint efforts will help contribute to a more positive and prosperous future."

Education has a solid and positive impact on people's lives, paving the way for future careers in technology, a flourishing global industry. The Acronis Cyber Foundation's IT training program in Singapore helped over 120 students complete certification training and gain valuable skills to secure employment, in partnership with Yellow Ribbon Fund. The Program recorded that over 70% of IT Skills Training graduates received employment within just one month following course completion. The IT Skills for migrants

in Switzerland program, in partnership with Integres, an organization aimed at integrating immigrants into Switzerland, helped the migrant population of Schaffhausen refine and gain critical career skills, helping over 70 students in the span of three years. "The Acronis Cyber Foundation represents the same values that encouraged me to build the school in a village in the Dominican Republic," said Sebastian Noelting, Managing Director at RNT Rausch. "We are convinced that problems such as poverty and hunger can only be solved sustainably through education. That is why education must be available to everyone all over the world. I'm glad that we have been able to partner with Acronis and are now working together towards this goal."

The success of the Acronis Cyber Foundation has been achieved thanks to the help of Acronis' service provider partners, including GoDaddy, CloudFest, RNT Rausch, Zebra Systems, Climb Channel Solutions, BusyMouse, Ubistor, and many more. The Acronis Cyber Foundation Program's official charity partner, Groundbreaker, ensures compliance and handles all construction aspects in the implementation process for school building projects.

"Acronis has been an important partner for us since the beginning and we are grateful for their commitment to providing access to quality education worldwide," said Leoni Rossberg, Co-Founder and Managing Director at Groundbreaker. "They show how relevant and impactful corporate responsibility is and we hope they can encourage even more companies in the tech sector to do the same."

Mumbai's CSMIA awarded the 'Best Sustainable Airport of the Year' by ASSOCHAM

This recognition highlights the consistent sustainability measures taken by CSMIA to create a greener and a better tomorrow

In recognition to Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport's (CSMIA) resilient efforts in contributing to make aviation sustainability a reality, the airport has been awarded the 'Best Sustainable Airport of the Year' by the Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) in its 14th International ASSOCHAM Conference & Awards for Civil Aviation.

The coveted award was presented by Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia in New Delhi.

The ASSOCHAM 'Best Sustainable Airport of the Year' award is another addition to various prestigious laurels received by CSMIA in the past.

Recently, Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) achieved the Highest-Level 4+ "Transition" of Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) program of Airport Council International (ACI), making it only the 3rd airport to achieve the esteemed certification in the Asia-Pacific region.

As part of its effective implementation of Carbon Management Plan, CSMIA initiated various path-breaking projects:

- Entirely switched to green sources for its energy consumption needs, making CSMIA one of India's 100



CEO AAHL Mr. Arun Bansal receives the award by Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia Union Minister for Civil Aviation of India



Mumbai International Airport Wins Best Sustainable Airport by ASSOCHAM

- percent sustainable airports
- Onsite Renewal Power Generation plant augmented to 4.65 MW capacity
- Installed unique Vertical axis wind turbine & solar PV system of capacity 10KWp in March 22, with 4 additional units to be installed in FY 23
- 6 EV charging station installed for encouraging EV usage at airport
- Conversion of higher Global

Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerant in AC's and Chillers to lower GWP refrigerant

- Emphasizing on the need to reduce, reuse, and recycle, CSMIA has also installed Reverse Vending Machines (RVM) to encourage passengers and the airport community to recycle Plastic bottles.
- The RVM can accept and compress 450 bottles per hour and can compress about 70% of the waste so that it can be easily transported to recyclers thus saving key resources, emissions & cost liable for transportation and logistics.
- Retrofit for EC fan at AHU at Terminal-2, CSMIA, Mumbai.
- Replacement of CO2 based fire extinguishers with non- CO2 based (ABC type) fire extinguisher to reduce the carbon emissions. 50 % replaced.
- MIAL owned 45 conventional fuel vehicles are being replaced with EVs
- Plastic waste (PET bottles)

recycling through installation of Reverse Vending Machines

- 132 numbers of stakeholder equipment/vehicles operating at airport are Electric
 - Offsite waste disposal emission reduction by reuse and channelizing waste to recycle
 - Reduction in taxi time and congestion by collaboration with AAI, Airlines and MIAL operations
 - Infrastructure runway re-carpeting, upgradation and strengthening of taxiways etc. help in landing and take-off emission reduction
- This recognition is a testament to

the efforts put forth by the airport in its endeavour to create a better & greener future for the aviation industry while providing a world class experience and comfort to all its passengers. The award does not only honour the hard work put forth by the airport, but also recognizes best-in-class services and innovations that are implemented timely. Even with various ongoing green initiatives, CSMIA does not compromise in the quality of their services and strives to achieve maximum passenger satisfaction.

Commenting on the win, a CSMIA spokesperson said, "At CSMIA,

providing excellent customer service, assuring dependable and timely airport operations, and further reducing our CO2 emissions have always been our top priority. We are glad that our efforts to protect the environment and the airport's operational excellence are being recognized by both the business community and travelers. Above all, though, this honours the exceptional work of our staff members, who toil diligently each day to guarantee that operations at the airport operate smoothly and that travelers can depend on Mumbai International Airport."

Ashok Leyland to supply 500 buses to Government of Sri Lanka

Ashok Leyland, the Indian flagship company of the Hinduja Group and India's leading commercial vehicle manufacturer will be supplying 500 buses to Sri Lankan Transport Board (SLTB). As a part of the order, the company recently delivered 75 buses to the nation on its Independence Day. The order is a part of a Line of Credit extended by Export Import Bank of India, under the Economic Assistance Scheme of Indian Government.

The first batch of buses in the project was handed over by H.E. Gopal Baglay, Hon. Indian High Commissioner, Sri Lanka to Hon. Bandula Gunawardana, Minister of Transport & Highways Affairs at Colombo on 5th of January 2023. The event was graced by other senior dignitaries including Hon. Cabinet Ministers, Hon. Members of Parliament and Mr. Umesh Gautam, CEO – Lanka Ashok Leyland.

Amandeep Singh, President – International Operations, Ashok Leyland said, "More than 5000 Ashok Leyland buses are currently in operation with SLTB and these new 32 seater buses are expected to be put into operation



in rural routes throughout the island. Ashok Leyland buses and trucks are also manufactured in Sri Lanka, and the brand "Lanka Ashok Leyland" is well known among Sri Lankans for their daily transportation requirements. Ashok Leyland is proud of its long-standing partnership with the Sri Lankan government. We also thank the Government of India for assistance towards strengthening Public Transport Infrastructure in Sri Lanka". Sri Lanka Transport Board is the state

owned single largest bus transport provider with 110 depots throughout the Sri Lankan island, and operates buses in city routes, hilly & rural routes and also long distance inter-city routes. These buses will help combat the heavily crowded public transport in the island nation, supporting mobility and accessibility in Sri Lanka. Given the diverse routes and conditions SLTB operates in, the new Ashok Leyland buses will be best suited for roads in the rural routes as well.

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi announces Rs 50 crore humanitarian project



Sri Mata Amritanandamayi announces ₹50 crore humanitarian project as part of Civil 20 India

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi (Amma) has initiated a Rs 50 crore project by the Mata Amritanandamayi Math. The activities will support the welfare of people with disabilities and pregnant women who are malnourished. Work will take place in underdeveloped districts across India, as well as in other developing nations. The Ashram will work closely with local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with the purpose of bringing about a tangible change in the lives of its beneficiaries. Amma also hopes to establish this as an udahran for efficient and effective systems, which could subsequently be adopted by other CSOs and governments all over the world.

The announcement was made as part of the Inaugural Ceremony of India's Civil 20 Working Group (C20), of which Amma serves as Chair. C20's purpose is to bring the concerns of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from around the world to the G20 Summit set to take place in New Delhi this September. The Group of 20 (G20) is the premier intergovernmental forum for the world's developed and emerging economies to address financial stability on a global basis. With India as this year's host country, the G20 theme is *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*—the whole world is one family.

Amma said: "This is an auspicious occasion. We have embarked on a mission to restore the

dwindling light of the world. This is a historic year in which India has received the opportunity to assume the presidency of the G20 nations. The Indian Government and Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi have given us the tremendous responsibility of successfully facilitating the process of Civil Society 20. May we be able to do justice to this endeavour."

A CSO is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group that is organised on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, CSOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to governments, monitor policies and encourage

political participation at the community level.

Thus, the main duties of C20 are resolving issues people face in social and economic arenas. In advance of the Summit, C20 will collaborate with hundreds of CSOs from around the world to voice primary and common concerns and to promote sustainable development with the vision of leaving no one behind. Amma expressed that practical research should be conducted, while at the same time integrating spiritual knowledge and emphasised that humankind must stop its destruction of Nature.

Amma said: "We should understand the necessity of this from the hints Nature and the universe keep sending us. Only then will we be able to fulfil the principle of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, at least to some small extent. Humankind has the wrong understanding that Nature is our obedient servant and insentient, and hence we can treat Her however we please. However, the truth is that Nature is a unified body—a single entity. If we truly want sustainable development, holding conferences and summits, awarding prizes and creating policies and laws are not enough. Humanity's attitude must change. If we can change our attitude, we can change our surroundings."

Speaking at the inauguration, Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi said that community participation is essential for the success of any project, and C20 is playing a key role in ensuring society's fundamental needs are expressed to the G20 leaders. He explained that today the world is going through increasingly challenging crises and collective actions are now necessary just to survive.

He said: "The world is busy with satisfying sensory pleasures, and at the same time, the world order is based on the fear of military power instead of the love of humanity. This has to change. There has to be a

The initiative will support the welfare of people with disabilities and pregnant women who suffer from malnutrition.

The programme will reach underdeveloped districts in India, as well as other developing nations.

The announcement was made as part of the Inauguration of India's Civil 20 (C20), an official engagement group of India's G20 leadership.

fundamental connection at the core: the way we look at ourselves, the way we look at others, the way we look at nature, Mother Earth, today. With India as host of the G20, the world is looking on us with expectation—a light to show the way forward. We are all here on this Earth. We are all children of Mother Earth. This Earth is not a resource to exploit. It is for peaceful coexistence."

He added: "Under the able leadership of Amma, I'm sure C20 will come up with practical recommendations because for Amma, her feet are always on the ground. And the G20 will benefit enormously from these recommendations to make this a happy, peaceful and harmonious world."

Members of India's C20 include Sri M, the Satsang Foundation as

Participant; Sudha Murthy, Chair, Infosys Foundation as Participant; Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini as Secretariat; and the Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari as Institutional Partner.

Many other dignitaries graced the inauguration. Union Minister Anurag Thakur said that it is hoped that the ideas emerging from the C20 working groups will solve the environmental challenges the world is facing today. Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan added that Prime Minister Modi envisions a G20 inclusive of all members of society, irrespective of whether they are women, men, young or old, and this can be achieved through C20.

In addition, Kerala's State Public Education Minister, V. Sivankutty, said that G20 is a platform where the world will join hands to face today's challenges and that CSOs are the most effective mechanism to reach all levels of society. Amitabh Kant, former CEO of NITI Aayog and India's Special Representative (Sherpa) at G20, said that since women constitute the majority of India's population, a development policy based on gender equality is a priority.

There were several others from around the world who addressed the inaugural ceremony. They included Shashi Tharoor MP, India and Former UN Under-Secretary General; Vinay P Sahasrabudhe, MP and President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations; Vijay K Nambiar, Sherpa C20 and former Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General; Marc Benioff, CEO of Salesforce and Philanthropist; T Denny Sanford, Entrepreneur, Philanthropist and recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham; AH Maftuchan, C20 Troika Member from Indonesia; Alessandra Nilo, C20 Troika member from Brazil; and Laurent Bessede, General Legal Director of the Red Cross, France.

Walmart Foundation to invest over USD 3.5 million to strengthen Farmer Producer Organizations in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal

Walmart Foundation has announced three new grants in the states of Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal with the aim to empower smallholder farmers through the Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) framework. This includes grants of USD 1.7 million to ACCESS Development Services for economic empowerment and income enhancement of farmers in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, USD 1.09 million to SRIJAN to improve the lives of small and marginal farmers and promote women as rural entrepreneurs, and USD 1.1 million to Action for Social Advancement (ASA) to enhance the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, both in Madhya Pradesh. These projects are anticipated to reach 39 FPOs and over 60,000 smallholder farmers.

"Over the years, Walmart Foundation has invested in improving and strengthening the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through our grantee partners in India. We have invested over USD 25 million towards this since 2018. With the new grants of over USD 3.5 million, we hope to significantly advance the work of ACCESS Development Services, SRIJAN, and ASA in their efforts to build and empower FPOs through training on sustainable agriculture models. This will enable FPOs to enhance rural incomes and increase market access to farmers through the power of collectivization," said Julie Gehrki, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Walmart Foundation.

Through funding from the Walmart Foundation, ACCESS Development Services will implement the program 'UDAAN- Flight Out of Poverty' aimed at enhancing the incomes of 12,000 smallholder farmers by strengthening FPOs and setting up inclusive value chains. The program will strengthen the capacity of 20 FPOs in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. As part of the program, FPOs will be trained to engage in post-harvest management and embed climate-resilient agriculture practices, support the setting up of processing units, and help facilitate access to credit, services and markets. The project also focuses on women's economic empowerment by strengthening both women-led FPOs as well as women members of all FPOs.

Over the years, Walmart Foundation has invested in improving and strengthening the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through our grantee partners in India.

"FPOs often fail to survive in the long run without continued support, and through the UDAAN program we want to establish a model of successful, sustainable FPO businesses. With support from Walmart Foundation, these FPOs will be transformed into hubs of excellence for learning and adaptation by other promoters," says Vipin Sharma, CEO, ACCESS Development Services.

With funding from Walmart Foundation, SRIJAN's program will engage with 25,000 small and marginal farmers to improve their production, institutionalize their practices, and establish market linkages in six districts of Madhya Pradesh. As part of this two-year program, SRIJAN will work with 12 FPOs across six districts of Chhindwada, Tikamgarh, Shivpuri, Anuppur, Dhar and Niwari, on enhancing productivity, aggregation of produce, and marketing of various commodities produced by them.

Prasanna Khemariya, CEO, SRIJAN, said "Through this project, we will work to fill the gaps in production, aggregation, and marketing of the commodities produced by the small and marginal farmers of rural Madhya Pradesh by collectivizing them into Farmer Producer organizations. With this, we aim towards increased incomes, empowerment, and self-reliance among the farmers, especially women."

A grant of USD 1.1 million (INR 8.93 crores) has been extended to ASA (Action for Social Advancement) and will focus on the development of seven FPOs for the

enhancement of livelihoods in the districts of Anuppur, Chhattarpur, Mandla, Shahdol, and Umaria in Madhya Pradesh. The proposed interventions of the two-year project are expected to result in the enhancement of livelihoods for 25,000 small and marginal farming families through the development of sustainable agriculture production systems and the advancement of agriculture value chains.

Mr. Ashis Mondal, Director at ASA, said, “We are delighted to be collaborating with the Walmart Foundation and other esteemed organizations on this noble endeavor and are confident that the project will have a significant positive impact on the lives of smallholder farmers as well as the regeneration of natural resources and biodiversity of the region.” In 2018, Walmart Foundation made

a commitment to invest USD 25 million over a period of five years to support smallholder farmers in India to increase their income and improve livelihoods. By extending its support with additional funding to support ACCESS Development Services, SRIJAN, and ASA, Walmart Foundation hopes to help further strengthen the FPO ecosystem and transform the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

Marico Innovation Foundation launches the first of its kind innovation playbook in response to the rising Global Plastics Challenge

The playbook comes at the end of a year-long mapping and insights exercise undertaken in collaboration with Praxis and IISC

Marico Innovation Foundation launched the first of its kind playbook that can be the key to unlocking latent opportunities to address the swelling global challenge that plastic waste presents. The report titled “Innovation in Plastic: The Potential and Possibilities”, provides actionable solutions across the plastics value chain which can aid and address the challenges of plastic waste management for India in the short, medium and long term – from collection, to sorting, to recycling and also providing viable alternates to plastics.

Marico Innovation Foundation collaborated with Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Praxis Global Alliance as knowledge partners to develop the playbook. The partners assisted in identifying the challenges created by

plastic waste at macro and commercial level as well as outlining opportunities and recommendations in the plastic waste management space while dispelling myths, especially on bioplastics. The research methodology comprised of in-depth assessment with corporate leaders, start-up ecosystem players, industry experts, and scientists.

Dr. Raghunath Mashelkar, Hon’ Emeritus Chairperson of Governing Council of Marico Innovation Foundation and Jury chair said, “This timely report succinctly captures not only the problem of plastic waste but also proposes very imaginative solutions that can not only stand to benefit our nation but the world. The report is a comprehensive playbook for both public and private sectors alike on how plastics can be reimagined and repurposed now and in the future.” The playbook also features 15 innovations that are not only first to nation but also first to world in some cases that address plastic waste with their unique and path breaking solutions. The report also lists models communities and cities that have addressed the plastic waste challenge through a host of innovative initiatives.

Speaking on the initiative, Harsh Mariwala, Founder of Marico

Innovation Foundation & Chairman of Marico Ltd said, “We understand the critical need to build an ecosystem that can help deliver innovative solutions for global problems. It is why Marico Innovation Foundation (MIF) came into existence, and has been at the forefront of India’s innovation story. Plastics was ripe for this intervention. The playbook is only the first step to help evolve an ecosystem for innovation within this sector. MIF is committed to create a long lasting and meaningful change and will be actively involved in helping innovations in this endeavour, thrive.”

Amit Chandra, Honorary Chairperson - Governing Council - Marico Innovation Foundation and Chairperson, Bain Capital India Office said, “Some of the innovations featured in the playbook are not only India-first but also world-first with their potential to solve for plastic waste management, circularity, replacing plastics with more sustainable solutions that diverse stakeholders including governments and businesses can benefit from.” He added “With the right ecosystem support these innovations hold the promise of delivering viable game changing solutions that could reframe the future for generations to come.”

GlaxoSmithKline Asia Private Limited gets Golden Peacock Award for CSR



Ms Shanu Saksena, CSR Head India receiving the Golden Peacock Award CSR from Union Minister of State Law & Justice, Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel

Makers of Sensodyne, GlaxoSmithKline Asia Private Limited, Gurugram, has been declared the winner of the coveted 'Golden Peacock Award for Corporate Social Responsibility' for 2022 for FMCG. The Golden Peacock Awards were instituted by the Institute of Directors (IOD), India in 1991 and are regarded as the benchmark of corporate excellence worldwide. The jury that bestowed the award was under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Justice M. N. Venkatachaliah, former Chief Justice of India and former Chairman, the National Human Rights Commission of India, and the National Commission for Constitution of India Reforms.

GlaxoSmithKline Asia Private Limited (GSKAPL), Gurugram was awarded the Golden Peacock Award for its endeavours in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) under the FMCG sector. GSKAPL has robust CSR initiatives which include:

- Partnership with Smile Train India – an international charity that

provides cleft-repair and comprehensive cleft care to children from underprivileged backgrounds.

- The IDA Shining Star Scholarship Program which provides scholarships to 100 meritorious BDS students from underprivileged backgrounds
- Partnership with Seva Mob to provide free primary healthcare services to underprivileged communities in Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh.
- Bringing dental care to their doorstep in Delhi NCR through "Smile on Wheels Mobile Dental Vans", in partnership with Smile Foundation.

Among the numerous reasons that make winning the Golden Peacock a tremendous achievement, some are that it's the only award that has a meticulously defined and transparent selection criteria and that winners are determined after a highly elaborate and independent assessment process. The award was formally bestowed on January 12th at the 17th International Conference

on Corporate Social Responsibility at Hotel Taj, Lands End in Mumbai.

In addition to the FMCG sector, the GPA Corporate Social Responsibility Award 2022 is presented to 17 other sectors. The GPA Secretariat received 150+ applicants for CSR and the final selection were made a 3-tier assessment process which is based on internationally recognised criteria.

Speaking about winning the Golden Peacock Award, Shanu Saksena, CSR India Head, GlaxoSmithKline Asia Private Limited said, "It's indeed a great honour to be awarded the Golden Peacock award by the Institute of Directors. At GlaxoSmithKline Asia Private Limited, we take our CSR obligations very seriously and therefore work tirelessly to improve the lives of communities we operate in. This recognition will give an additional impetus to our CSR initiatives and help bring a positive change in communities across the country. This award is a further testament to our efforts in making the world a healthier place."

Axis Bank Foundation reaches out to 1000+ villages, Creating sustainable livelihoods opportunities

Axis Bank Foundation (ABF) and Navin Chandra Mafatlal Sadguru Water and Development Foundation (N M Sadguru Foundation) have successfully reached out to over 1000+ villages across Gujarat and Rajasthan, to implement a sustainable livelihood project in the region. ABF and N M Sadguru Foundation focused on promotion and sustenance of livelihood among the socio-economically deprived section of the population. This was done through integrated natural resource management with emphasis on water resources development, institution development, enhancing agriculture productivity and diversifying income streams through community participation. The project has been able to reach over 80,000+ household still date.

ABF board members - S Ramadorai, Chairperson; Dhruvi Shah, Executive Trustee & CEO and the Trustees - Som Mittal, Rajesh Dahiya and Sheela Patel visited the project sites in Punsri and Chosala in Dahod and Vandeli Panchmahal district, Gujarat, to review the progress of the project. They interacted with the farmers, nursery entrepreneurs and participant households, who have benefitted from the various ABF-supported initiatives. They also met the Panchayat leaders to understand the challenges and way forward. ABF has partnered with N M Sadguru Foundation to make support the community to enhance their livelihoods. A recent impact assessment of the project revealed that –

- Women collectives have been actively participating in community development
- Check dams led to better availability of ground water - Living conditions improved due to availability of water
- Agriculture yield increased owing to use of better technology, solar-based lift irrigation and access to better irrigation facilities
- Distress migration reduced owing to better farm and non-farm income
- Non-farm income boosted due alternate livelihood practices such as vegetable cultivation

Speaking on the project, S Ramadorai, Chairperson, Axis Bank Foundation said, “It is heartening to share the significant work done by the Axis Bank Foundation, in partnership with the NM Sadguru Water and Development Foundation, in providing irrigation to the arid regions of the district of Dahod. The best part of this initiative is that we are using a bottom-up community-based approach in addressing the local challenges, so that the people impacted by the problems become the stakeholders in problem-solving. We hope to scale up this initiative in other water-stressed areas with the unwavering support of the NM Sadguru Foundation. This year we also reached the milestone of 10 years of community-centric work with sustained focus on livelihood initiatives that has positively impacted the lives of over a million families across various regions in the country. At the Axis Bank Foundation, we strongly believe that through effective convergence of capital, innovation and community engagement, we will be able to integrate the underserved communities into the economy, thereby building an inclusive and sustainable future.”

During the visit Dhruvi Shah, Executive Trustee and CEO, Axis Bank Foundation said, “Over the past decade, Axis Bank Foundation has evolved in its mission to enhance livelihoods for rural communities. We want to create not just surviving, but thriving communities. This can only be achieved by constantly listening to the community voices and civil society partners. With partners such as N M Sadguru, we hope to become collaborators of the cause with them and together bring sustainable change across individual lives, families, communities and geographies.

Adani Cement's Geoclean creates circular economy for Ambujanagar using waste management techniques

Adani Cement's waste management arm, Geoclean, enables a green economy for Ambujanagar in Gujarat by safely managing solid and liquid wastes and diverting them from landfills, leading to resource conservation.

The plant with a thermal substitution rate of 8% at Ambujanagar in Kodinar, Gujarat, has enabled the state to mitigate the challenges of plastic waste pollution by co-processing both solid and liquid waste provided by the state government, state pollution control board, and industries.

The plant assists numerous paper industries that produce significant amounts of plastic waste in Vapi as well as various chemical, pharmaceutical, and other sectors in Dahej, Ankleshwar, Surat, and Vadodara. Some of the waste streams co-processed at the plant include sorted plastic waste, trade rejects, refused derived fuel (RDF), industrial waste (sludges, liquid and solid waste), etc. In order to efficiently use waste in kiln co-processing, Geoclean is a leader in the field and has established 6 pre-processing facilities and 14 co-processing throughout India. Every year, Geoclean processes more than 13,00,000 tonnes of waste across the country. These facilities have specialised waste storage spaces, feeding setups, and state-of-the-art laboratories.

“Through our efforts on climate protection, we promote transition towards a more extensive circular economy,” said Ajay Kapur, CEO, Cement Business. “We are increasing our community outreach as a concrete step towards building a nation that runs on cleaner and greener energy. Geoclean works with stakeholders to find the most sustainable solution for their waste, diverting it from landfills and turning it into a circular resource.”

Swiggy announces free and fast, on-demand ambulance service for delivery executives and their dependents

Swiggy, India's leading on-demand convenience platform, has launched an immediate and free ambulance service for all its active delivery executives and their dependents in the case of emergencies. Swiggy has partnered with Dial4242 Ambulance Services for this industry-first initiative. Delivery executives can reach out on the toll-free number: 1800 267 4242. Sometimes, making a call might not be an option, and executives can just tap the SOS button without leaving the partner app in the case of an emergency before, during, or after a delivery.

The process will require no documentation; delivery executives only need to confirm their partner ID.

Swiggy has launched this service pan-India after piloting the service in Bangalore, Delhi, NCR, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, and Kolkata. In the test runs and the cases raised so far, the service's response time has been an average of 12 minutes. Dial4242 can dispatch different Ambulances such as BLS (Basic Life Support) ambulances, Cardiac ambulances, ALS (Advanced Life Support), Inter-state ambulances, Covid-19 ambulances, and Hearse Vans based on the severity of the case.

The service is free for all active delivery executives and their dependents (spouses and two children), who are covered under the insurance provided by Swiggy. Delivery executives can also choose to avail of the ambulance for family members not covered under their insurance at a subsidized cost.



Delivery executives can reach the ambulance service instantly by tapping the SOS button on the partner app or through a toll-free number

The current average response time is 12 minutes

Mihir Rajesh Shah, Head of Operations at Swiggy said, "Swiggy is committed to the safety of our delivery executives, and over the years, we have been investing in products and policies that prioritise their safety and well-being. Every

day, lakhs of deliveries are carried on smoothly by our delivery executives, however, emergencies have a way of coming unannounced. With the free ambulance service that is fast, on-demand, and comprehensive, Swiggy has got our executives' back, giving them safety and peace of mind and getting them help when they need it the most."

Speaking about this industry-first initiative by a platform, Jeetendra Lalwani, Co-Founder, of Dial4242 said, "We are all accustomed to seeing hundreds of delivery executives on the road on a regular basis. However, unlike countries with a reliable emergency support mechanism like 911, we lose critical time in an emergency. We are glad that Swiggy addressed this proactively for their delivery fleet and partnered with Dial4242, which has 10000+ ambulances across 500+ cities in India with varied capabilities

and on-ground support to reach the victim in a matter of minutes, saving a precious life. The nearest cashless hospital is also identified by Dial4242 for Swiggy's executives ensuring they get timely treatment. Further, Dial4242 ambulance will wait till their treatment begins. We hope this sets the precedence for more platforms to follow."

Anwarpasha Syed, a delivery executive from Pune who has availed the ambulance service said, "I contacted our Swiggy Hotline team, and the ambulance reached my accident location in under 15 mins. They took me to the hospital, which I had suggested and I got timely treatment for some major scratches on my body. This is a great service from Swiggy and I will inform all my fellow executives and friends regarding it."

Another delivery executive from Gurugram, Sanjeev Kumar shared his experience, "When I contacted the toll-free number directly, the ambulance reached in 10 mins. I am grateful to Swiggy for helping us with this prompt and free emergency service."

In 2021, Swiggy launched the Emergency Support Services (ESS) enabling the SOS button on the partner app to silently connect executives on the Swiggy hotline, ambulance, or police. All delivery executives were also given an ID card with details like emergency contact and blood group.

With the launch of this service, Swiggy has established an active emergency support mechanism to ensure delivery executives are attended to at the earliest in case of any unfortunate accident. The platform currently has over 3 Lakh delivery executives across the country. They receive benefits such as accident insurance and medical cover, personal loans, legal assistance, covid income support, income support during accident or illness recovery, bereavement leaves, period time off, and maternity cover among others.

Mahindra Logistics on-boards women e-bike riders for its last-mile deliveries



Mahindra Logistics Ltd. (MLL), one of India's leading providers of integrated logistics and mobility solutions, is committed to DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) in its workforce. MLL announced today that it has partnered with women e-bike riders for its last-mile deliveries in an effort to achieve true equality. The initiative aims to bring about a significant change in the logistics industry by empowering women and ensuring their inclusion across all functions. MLL intends to make an impact in the logistics industry by providing women with equal opportunities, even in non-traditional logistics roles, allowing them to become self-reliant.

With this objective, MLL has appointed a total of 11 women riders for last-mile delivery across Mumbai, Bangalore and Nagpur in the first phase of this initiative. To make the process more efficient, Mahindra Logistics is working actively towards a robust execution of this initiative. Furthermore, the company is providing comprehensive training to the women candidates for safely riding e-bikes, operating last-mile delivery, and soft skills.

The organization stands by safety of its women drivers by deploying vehicles integrated with GPS tracking which enables MLL to trouble-shoot any concerns of prolonged stoppage or diversion from the designated route.

Commenting on the announcement, Rampraveen Swaminathan, MD & CEO, Mahindra Logistics, said: "We are delighted to be leading the way in hiring women e-bike drivers for last-mile delivery, as part of our commitment to promoting gender diversity in the workforce. We believe that equal opportunities create a more productive and successful workplace, and we are proud to be at the forefront of progressive initiatives that are enabling the logistics industry to transform. As a part of our expansion plans, on-boarding more women drivers, fleet owners and other transporters will be a major focus for us at MLL. We remain committed to our larger RISE purpose, by actively working towards creating an environment where women can thrive and contribute their unique skills and perspectives to our organization and the society as a whole."

A WeForWater People's movement to work towards water security to make Gurugram water positive

Abhipsa foundation organized an event in Gurugram to announce their global initiative called "WeforWater". The movement aims to create and support national water projects and improve water security in India. Union Minister and MP of Gurugram Rao Inderjit Singh, graced the occasion along with Shri. Vishram Meena, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram, in the presence of more than 100 people from corporate, media, civil society and most importantly, people of Gurugram.

To avert Gurugram's unexpected water crisis, groundwater replenishment is critical. WeforWater is trying to draw attention to the importance of having water in the pipes and taps. And the event held on 11th January wanted to share the crisis details with the people of Gurugram and invite them to commit by sharing their resources and time to maintain the 11 ponds, which have been rejuvenated in the last three years by GuruJal and another 36 ponds that require interventions.

Water conservation has been the need of the hour, and through this initiative, the primary aim is to raise awareness amongst the residents of Gurugram. The city will generate and support water-related policies with the help of the local community, industry, government, and citizens.

By bringing people, politicians, and businesses together, 2023 will bring about changes in time, health, and awareness of the implications of water literacy for children and occupants. Speaking at the event, Ashish Kapur, Vice-chairman of Abhipsa Foundation, said,



"WEFORWATER aims to prevent "Day Zero" and make India water-positive by 2040, and we are specifically focusing on identifying many areas that provide the economic benefits with minimum funding and creating the greatest impact on addressing water-related concerns".

Singh said, "With the onset of the new year, I would like to encourage every individual to commit towards a water management ecosystem. We look forward to promoting the same with the help of various new projects and programmes. This mission provides the functionality of effective and safe water use which every citizen, individual, and corporates can follow for a better India."

The #WeforWaterGurgaon movement was started to use technology to influence groundwater recharge. The goal is to ensure that natural resources are well-preserved and their benefits are equitably accessible to all.

ISRO and Microsoft collaborate to support space-tech startups in India

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Microsoft signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to fuel the growth of space technology startups in India. The MoU seeks to empower space tech start-ups across the country with technology tools and platforms, go-to-market support and mentoring to help them scale and become enterprise ready.

The collaboration seeks to strengthen ISRO's vision of harnessing the market potential of the most promising space tech innovators and entrepreneurs in India. Through this tie-up, the space tech startups identified by ISRO will be onboarded onto the Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub platform, that supports startups at every stage of their journey—from idea to unicorn.

Through Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub, space-tech startup founders in India will have free access to the tech tools, and resources they need to build and run their business. This includes technical support to build and scale on Azure, best-in-class developer and productivity tools including GitHub Enterprise, Visual Studio Enterprise and Microsoft 365 and access to smart analytics with Power BI and Dynamics 365.

ISRO Chairman S Somanath said, "ISRO's collaboration with Microsoft will greatly benefit space tech startups in their analysis and processing of vast amounts of satellite data for various applications, using cutting-edge methods like AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning. The Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub is a useful platform for bringing together startups and providers of technology solutions to support the national space technology



Microsoft Founders Hub will support space tech startups with technology tools, platforms, go to market support and mentoring to help them scale and become enterprise ready

ecosystem. We are pleased to work together to assist and support entrepreneurs, to in turn benefit the Indian economy as a whole."

Anant Maheshwari, President, Microsoft India, said, "Space tech startups in India are playing a significant role in advancing the country's space capabilities with the power of technology. We are pleased to collaborate with ISRO to accelerate this transformation of what's possible in space. Through our technology tools, platforms and mentorship opportunities, we are deeply committed to empowering space tech startups in the country to drive cutting edge innovation and accelerate scientific discovery."

Beyond access to technology, Microsoft will provide mentoring support to space tech entrepreneurs in areas ranging from space engineering to cloud technologies, product and design, fundraising and sales and marketing. In addition, founders will have access to Microsoft Learn for tailored startup centric training content and programs to help them build connections with the industry and potential customers.

ITC Ltd's 'YiPPee! Better World - Trash to Treasure' program creates awareness amongst students on plastic waste management; deploys bench-desk sets made from collected recycled plastic in schools

With the aim of supporting the national commitments towards cleaner, greener and healthier tomorrow and as outlined in UN SDG goals especially SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), Sunfeast YiPPee! ITC Ltd.'s well-known Instant Noodles and Pasta brand, is creating awareness among school children on plastic waste management through its recently launched – 'YiPPee! Better World Trash-to-Treasure' program. This program is consistent with the brand's mission to instill the attitude of A Better World. Sunfeast YiPPee! is leading the campaign in partnership with an NGO partner, Way For Life.

The initiative, curated by YiPPee! is designed to bring behavioural change in 3.5 million students across 100+ cities through on-the-ground awareness programs in schools about plastic waste, its impact on the environment, and strategies to minimize, reuse, and recycle. Through this initiative students are also being encouraged to collect household plastic waste and deposit them at designated collection points in the school. The plastic waste collected will contribute towards the creation of 1000 sets of benches and desks made from recycled plastic which will be deployed in schools that are devoid of this infrastructure.

To date, over 80 recycled benches have been deployed in schools across Bengaluru and the complete deployment is planned to be completed by end of March 2023

Speaking about the initiative, Kavita Chaturvedi, Chief Operating Officer - Snacks, Noodles & Pasta,



ITC Foods Division said, "ITC is a global exemplar in sustainability with multi-dimensional initiatives for environmental stewardship and supporting large scale livelihoods. Taking inspiration from our organizational efforts to support the creation of a circular economy for post-consumer packaging waste,

Sunfeast YiPPee! has embarked on a journey to create community champions in schools to help reduce, reuse and recycle plastic waste. We are confident that YiPPee!'s Trash-to-Treasure initiative will educate and motivate school children to make a conscious effort towards creating a Better World."

Mahendra Singh Dhoni launches Garuda Aerospace's first-ever digital film #KhetonKeKaptan



Agnishwar Jayaprakash and MS Dhoni

Garuda Aerospace, India's leading drone manufacturing company launches its first-ever digital brand film #KhetonKeKaptan which is aimed at encouraging youth and farmers to be captains of their respective farms.

Conceptualized by Garuda Aerospace's brand team and jointly produced with Dhoni Entertainment Private Limited, the film #KhetonKeKaptan illustrates the need of farmers in their daily lives and how Garuda drones can help farmers with pesticide spraying, surveillance, and mapping while saving water and time. Drone Loans and subsidies will also be provided to youth and farmers in addition, they will also be trained to fly drones.

Speaking on the launch of the brand film, Agnishwar Jayaprakash, Founder and CEO, Garuda Aerospace said, "Farmers are the heroes of our nation and we at Garuda Aerospace have been committed to designing drones that help farmers spray pesticides altogether and make their lives easy. Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the brand ambassador of Garuda Aerospace and former Captain of the Indian Cricket team salutes the farmers as they are the future. The brand film #KhetonKeKaptan highlights how farmers can enhance their quality of living and farming by using Garuda Kisan Drones. He urges that every farmer is the captain of their farm."

Garuda Aerospace has always looked after the farmers' needs and has introduced them to various technology solutions. The brand film is live across Garuda Aerospace's social media handles and Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Facebook handle. Garuda Aerospace India's most valuable drone start-up created history last week by becoming the first-ever drone company to get dual DGCA approvals for both Drone Manufacturing Type Certificate and RPTO. Recently Garuda Aerospace has also launched a virtual learning platform and flagged off its Drone Yathra which aims to create awareness amongst farmers in 775 districts across India using technology with drones.

Kalpataru, in association with Khushiyaan Foundation, conducts Beach Cleanup Drive at Prabhadevi Beach in Mumbai

Real estate developer Kalpataru conducted a Beach Cleanup Drive at Prabhadevi Beach in Mumbai. This flagship initiative of Kalpataru has been conceptualized in association with Khushiyaan Foundation which will consist of 12 chapters over the next few years. This was the second chapter which witnessed the participation of more than 85 volunteers and eradicated about 1300 tonnes of garbage from the beach.



This initiative has been designed to consistently clean Prabhadevi beach and restore its natural splendor. The plastic collected was sent to government authorities such as BMC for segregation and recycling. The cleaning tools and safety gear were distributed to all the volunteers.

The beaches are covered in discarded items made of plastic which often get entangled in old fishing nets or rotting fabrics, causing harm to the marine animals and posing a threat to their survival. Additionally, it increases the health hazards for humans as it leads to diseases such as Dengue and Malaria. It helps to reinstall the beauty and allure of natural surroundings.

Geo-tracking bicycles to make lives of girl students easier in rural Haryana, all thanks to Wecycle campaign



To carry forward the cause of education for female students and to enable girl children from rural areas to attend school, uninterruptedly, WeCycle, a campaign started by Jivya Lamba student of Modern School Vasant Vihar of grade 11 organized the first-of-its-kind distribution of geo-tracking bicycles free of cost, in Haryana on December 31, 2022.

A total of 50 bicycles were given away to girl students in the region. The campaign was conducted in a 3-phase manner which was started in November 2022 and culminated on 31st December, 2022. The activity was aimed to stress the issues related to the security of female students and encourage them to access education from their local schools, without any fear.

The distribution event was held at girls' government schools in Mattan in its last phase, initial two phases were conducted in Riwari Khera and Kharman villages of Jhajjar district in Haryana.



The geo-tracking devices fitted in the bicycles are provided by Bhartiya Urban Pvt Ltd, and bicycles are provided by Highway Industries Ltd and Wembley Paints and Chemicals. Jivya Lamba has also developed literature in regional language to spread awareness about Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), which has been compiled into a book by Wembley.

The idea is to begin the new year on a positive note and spread smiles

on the faces of the young girls who would benefit from this activity. WeCycle identified the issues that exist in the rural areas surrounding school education of girl children and how some parents do not find public transport safe for their children and offered a solution for the same. The geo-tracking cycles are designed to make the families of such students aware of their current location which can be tracked in real-time.

Talking about the event Jivya Lamba said, "Girls in the rural areas of our country are constantly discouraged to avail education. The reasons are many while security is the major cause why girls are not allowed to travel to educational institutes after as soon as they start with their periods. WeCycle is a step forward in the direction of free mobility for our young female students, athletes, and future-generation mothers. I am committed to making lives easy for these girls and my heart goes out to them."

Jivya Lamba, has been consistently involved in social welfare activities for underprivileged communities since July 2020. Through her social movement organization WeCycle, she is taking a step forward to raise awareness about issues that impact women in society, including women's health, security, rights, and menstrual hygiene.

It is a common trend in our nation, especially in rural areas, where education is considered a need of the male child, and girls are usually discouraged from going to school. Their security while traveling to and from school is a major cause of why this trend prevails. The event organized by WeCycle is a step forward toward providing a safe commute to girls.

Maruti Suzuki Driving School launches new brand campaign “Seekhoge Best, Toh Sab Impressed”

Empowering India with more confident drivers, Maruti Suzuki Driving School (MSDS) unveiled a new brand campaign, “Seekhoge Best, Toh Sab Impressed”, emphasizing the benefits of learning to drive from a professional institute. The campaign is curated to increase awareness about the advanced training methodology and curriculum available at MSDS. The campaign comes with a quirky message about becoming a confident driver that even your dad approves of, making you a ‘dad-certified’ driver.

The campaign underlines the core offerings of MSDS that have helped in contributing to add close to 3 million competent and confident drivers on the road, during the course of its 17-year legacy. Over the years, MSDS has developed a curriculum that makes drivers more attentive and vigilant in the face of unanticipated circumstances on the road through the application of advanced training techniques.

This new 360-degree campaign conveying all of the elements of MSDS in a catchy manner will be rolled out across multiple channels, including television commercials, OTT platforms, print ads, radio ads, out-of-home billboards, as well as, digital media. The approach of this campaign is to showcase how Maruti Suzuki Driving School enables learners to become competent and confident drivers with a scientifically-designed curriculum and expert trainers.

In the latest ‘Seekhoge Best, Toh Sab Impressed’ TV commercial, the actors Gagan Arora (Son) and Tigmanshu Dhulia (Father) are playing a typical father and son duo with a witty angle. The son is seen picking up his father in

the All New Brezza. The TVC captures how the father is observing his son’s driving skills as he crosses traffic signals, stop signs and narrow lanes effortlessly, leaving his father pleasantly surprised and impressed at the same time. During the course of the journey, Gagan pulls over at a Maruti Suzuki Driving School to indicate this is where he learnt how to drive with such finesse.

The TVC goes on to highlight the core offerings of MSDS that includes a scientific learning curriculum, training on a driving stimulator, and expert trainers for enabling learners to become competent and confident drivers. The TVC ends on a humorous note, where the father appreciates his son’s driving skills by saying, “Agar aap jaise ko sikha diya, toh badhiya hi sikhate honge”, implying as a pun that if Gagan can master driving so quickly, everyone can.

Commenting on this new campaign, Shashank Srivastava, Senior Executive Officer, Marketing and Sales, said, “We believe that people should have a holistic awareness on road safety and safe driving practices. Safety is our top priority at MSDS, and our ‘1 trainer, 1 trainee, 1 car’ model is a testament to our commitment to provide a safe environment for learning to drive. It is crucial to impart quality driving training to have safe and confident drivers on the roads. With the new brand campaign, “Seekhoge Best, Toh Sab Impressed” we aim to sensitize people about the importance of learning this crucial life skill correctly, through MSDS’s scientifically designed curriculum and expert trainers. We hope to encourage more and more people to become better drivers and make our roads safer.”

Infiniti Mall creates memorable winter holidays for little cancer survivors

Mumbai’s premier shopping, food and entertainment destination, Infiniti Mall, recently hosted young cancer survivors from Tata Memorial Pediatric Cancer Care Centre during the Christmas and New Years week. The Mall organized a fun filled day for them with a wide range of enjoyable and engaging activities.



The children had a pleasant time at Bounce, the enormous indoor action adventure park at Infiniti Mall. Alongside, children also participated in thrilling games and rides at Fun City as well as the delightful Christmas Carnival organized by Infiniti Mall.

Commenting on the occasion, Gaurav Balani, Head of Marketing - Infiniti Mall, shares “The thought of initiating engagement for cancer survivors is to create a memorable holiday for them as well as to raise public awareness of physical, social and mental well-being that create an environment to support inclusive opportunities. Infiniti Mall will continue to seek new ways and means to engage with various groups of society and contribute towards adding value to their lives.”

ON PURPOSE commits to communications capacity building for 500 NGOs with Rebuild India Fund

ON PURPOSE, a creative communications consultancy with a mission to use communications for social change in India, has signed an MoU with The Rebuild India Fund to provide communications capacity building support for 500 NGOs over the next five years on a pro-bono basis. The collaboration is focussed at achieving self-sufficiency within the organisations to be able to tell their story effectively and raise visibility for the causes they champion.

As part of the collaboration, ON PURPOSE will co-design training modules to deliver to multiple cohorts from across India on a quarterly basis. The design of these workshops will be tailored to the needs of the cohort and include areas such as Communications Planning Framework, Goal Setting and Measurement, Media and Digital Storytelling, the Power of Owned Media and How to Raise Founder visibility to generate goodwill and funds for these organisations.

The Rebuild India Fund was created to help marginalised communities overcome the negative impacts of COVID-19. It is dedicated to connecting the funding community with grassroots NGOs to empower the underserved communities to be more crisis-ready, resilient, and striding towards success, even in the face of setbacks. The Rebuild India Fund has been conceptualised

The Rebuild India Fund, founded by Dasra and Tarsadia Foundation in 2021, supports grassroots NGOs with flexible funding and capacity building.

ON PURPOSE has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Rebuild India Fund to provide pro-bono support to build communications capacity for 500 NGOs over the next five years

and is managed by Dasra, globally recognized as one of India's most trusted strategic philanthropy organizations. Dasra has a deep understanding of the Indian social sector, and has channelized more than \$300 million to social causes, touching the lives of over 100 million Indians across the country.

Deval Sanghavi, Co-founder & Partner, Dasra, said, "In the last two decades, we have supported thousands of NGO leaders to scale their programs and create a lasting impact in the communities they serve. At this juncture, we are highly motivated to develop their internal capacity for effective communication to get them noticed and recognized for their commendable work. We are confident that ON PURPOSE with its extensive experience and remarkable work in the sector we operate in, is the right partner for this mission of enhancing, calibrating and amplifying grassroots NGOs' self-sufficiency efforts."

Girish Balachandran, Founder & Managing Director ON PURPOSE, said, "As we turned five years old earlier this year, this commitment is a reiteration of our mission to use the power of communications to drive social change in India. It's why we started in the first place and our reason to exist. Partnering with The Rebuild India Fund allows us to scale our annual property, The Purpose Project (where we select a single NGO to provide pro bono communications capacity building every year), into something much bigger than we'd ever imagined, to be able to help the most vulnerable communities build resilience by supporting a vibrant group of locally led, community rooted NGOs across the country." 

Bayer launches fellowship programme, 'Medha' to empower economically weaker students

Bayer in collaboration with Bhubaneswar City Knowledge Innovation Cluster Foundation (BCKIC), an initiative by the office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India, has launched a unique fellowship programme 'Medha', exclusively for students from the economically weaker sections.

Under this fellowship, Bayer will support 125 research scholars in the field of agriculture and life sciences. The initiative will provide monthly financial assistance of Rs 20,000 and Rs 40,000 to Master's and Ph.D. students for a period of 2-3 years, respectively. In line with Bayer's commitment to bridging the education finance gap, the company has pledged Rs 100 million to support researchers in the field of Life-Sciences.

The Medha fellowship combines annual financial assistance with the opportunity of receiving mentorship under Bayer's employees as well as industry experts. The students will also get an opportunity to visit Bayer's research labs and interact with industry experts, to gain exposure and build their knowledge base.


The fellowship will be provided for two years to the master's students and three years to the Ph.D. students. The target of the fellowship is to enable the fellows to achieve their short and long-term academic and professional goals. The fellowship programme is being implemented through Bayer Foundation India.

D Narain, President, Bayer South Asia, and Global Head of Smallholder Farming said, "As India increasingly becomes a knowledge and innovation hub for the rest of the world, we are thrilled to be supporting the future of young scholars who are shaping our tomorrow through impactful research in the areas of Life Sciences. At Bayer, we are committed to supporting education, research, and innovation, and providing inclusive opportunities for all sections of society. Through 'Medha' fellowships, we are extending our support towards students from economically weaker sections and women scholars, encouraging and supporting them to play an active part in nation-building."

"India is seeing several Industries support Research and Innovation. Bayer's opportunity for researchers

and academicians is an example of an unconditional focus on development of high-quality scientific human resources. This enables the best brains to learn today and contribute tomorrow to the Nation's social impact." said Dr. Sapna Poti, Director Strategic Alliances, office of the Principal Scientific Adviser, Govt. of India.

'Medha' seeks to benefit students from lower-income families, who are facing financial constraints to fund their education. To encourage applications from women students and students with disabilities, Medha provides 60% reservation for women candidates and an additional 10% reservation for persons with disabilities (PWD). Students enrolled in 1st year Master's/Ph.D. can apply for the fellowship.

Dr. Mrutyunjay Suar, Chairman, BCKIC Foundation, added "It is imperative to work toward making education and research more accessible by removing financial barriers and providing opportunities to meritorious underprivileged students to succeed. Bayer's fellowship programme - MEDHA - is the enabler." 

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CSR INDIA UNITED

Balancehero India unveiled Digital upskilling initiative for Youth under its CSR- 'Sahayak Programme' on the National Youth Day



Balancehero India Private Limited (BHI), the wholly-owned subsidiary of Balancehero Co. Ltd. Korea, which

runs and operates "True Balance" (the RBI-authorized PPI issuing entity and emerging lending platform), unveiled new initiatives under the

"Sahayak Programme" to up-skill the youth of the country in technology and digital literacy, on the occasion of National Youth Day. Under this programme, the company, through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm, pledges to up-skill over 1,000 youth in the area of digital literacy and technology.

After conducting a special session on financial inclusion for the group, Souparno Bagchi, COO, Balancehero India, commented, "In line with the overall philosophy of "Financing the Next Billion," we at Balancehero India are always at the forefront of assisting users who are underbanked or not serviced by the traditional financial institutions. Through the launch of the "Sahayak Programme," we aim to make a real



Souparno Bagchi, COO, Balancehero India

difference in the lives of people and play our role in driving financial inclusion in the country. In this year, we aim to train and up-skill more than 1,000 young Indians, and take this reach to over five times that by 2025."

Through the "Sahayak Programme," Balancehero pledges its support to the digital upskilling of Indian youth. The company aims to empower young people all over the country with digital knowledge and also contribute to the nation's goal towards a digital India and driving financial inclusion.

NIELIT and Microsoft collaborate to train youth in cybersecurity skills for jobs

Upholding its commitment to bridge the cybersecurity skills gap in the country, National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) and Microsoft announced a collaboration to increase access to skills for jobs through Cyber Shikshaa and Ready4Cybersecurity programs.

Aiming primarily at underserved youth, women and jobseekers from remote areas, National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) and Microsoft will deploy CyberShikshaa and Ready4Cybersecurity programs in 30 training centers of NIELIT in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns, with a special focus on Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and states in the North-East region of India. These programs would be scaled in subsequent years to integrate cybersecurity training programs in all the training centers of NIELIT.

The global cybersecurity skills gap and the lack of diversity in the workforce are among the urgent issues facing today's digital economy. Studies show that 3.4 million people are needed to fill the global cybersecurity workforce gap. The collaboration between NIELIT and Microsoft will help reduce the talent deficit for cybersecurity professionals and provide employment opportunities for 1100 underserved youth in the pilot year of deployment.

Nearly 3500 learners will undergo training and receive internship or employment opportunities for in-demand cybersecurity jobs. Besides providing grants for training, Microsoft's support will include curriculum content, certifications, and mentorship opportunities. Current program partners Data Security Council of



To deploy CyberShikshaa and Ready4Cybersecurity programs across 30 NIELIT training centers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns across India with a focus on North-East states, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

India, Tata Strive, ICT Academy and Quick Heal Foundation, will partner with NIELIT to carry out the deployment of CyberShikshaa and Ready4Cybersecurity training program. As the country's premier institution for examination and certification in the field of Information, Electronics and Communications Technology (IECT), NIELIT aims to develop skilled professionals and provide support to learners and trainers both through design and development of curriculum and acquisition of content.

Combined with 90 hours of business English curriculum, CyberShikshaa will provide more than 400 hours of cybersecurity curriculum for underserved women engineering students and will be deployed in the NIELIT in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns. Including NIELIT's Information Security curriculum, Ready4Cybersecurity is a 120-hour virtual instructor-led training program delivered by the NIELIT Centers for beginners in rural colleges and higher education institutions

to be employable for in-demand job roles in cybersecurity industry. Learners receiving industry certifications will also have access to internship opportunities through partner recruitment platforms of the Future Ready Talent Program. Both the programs will be deployed through NIELIT centres, with a focus on the Northeast States, Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh enabling access to latest technology courses for underserved youth and job seekers from remote regions.

Dr Madan Mohan Tripathi, Director General, NIELIT, said, "Recognizing the challenges owing to the lack of trained cybersecurity professionals, NIELIT is committed to training people for in-demand jobs, especially in remote regions, so that they can participate in today's digital economy. This will enable a robust pool of skilled professionals who can help protect organizations from cyber threats. NIELIT welcomes this collaboration with Microsoft, which will not only multiply the skill sets through these training programs but also provide opportunities in terms of employment to the youth of the country."

Dr Rohini Srivathsa, National Technology Officer, Microsoft India, said, "The threat landscape is becoming more sophisticated, and we need more diversity in our workforce to solve cybersecurity challenges swiftly and innovatively. Since its inception in 2018, the CyberShikshaa program has driven tremendous impact in skilling for employability of women and underserved youth – and is now expanding to reach 45,000 learners over the next three years. We are delighted to partner with NIELIT and enable greater access to skills for jobs through this collaboration."

'Samsung Innovation Campus' Program Commences AI, IoT, Big Data and Coding & Programming Courses

Samsung India has started its CSR program 'Samsung Innovation Campus' at eight campuses across the country with the aim of upskilling 3,000 less-privileged youth in future tech domains such as AI, IoT, Big Data and Coding & Programming and helping them get relevant job placements.

With this, Samsung is reiterating its commitment to being a strong partner of India and is working alongside the Government in its mission to empower the country's youth and #PoweringDigitalIndia.

ESSCI, which is a National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) approved entity, is executing the program through its nationwide network of approved training and education partners. Samsung India signed a MoU with ESSCI in September, 2022.

Courses under the 'Samsung Innovation Campus' program have started at the University of Lucknow, National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) in New Delhi and Hyderabad, Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekananda Technical University in Bhilai, SRR College of Arts & Sciences in Karimnagar, Central Tool Room & Training Center in Bhubaneswar, Sri Jayachamarajendra Polytechnic College in Bengaluru and Dr Lankapalli Bullayya College in Visakhapatnam.

"Our global citizenship initiative, Samsung Innovation Campus, is closely tied with India's development agenda. Through this initiative, we want to empower the youth and create opportunities for them in future tech domains, further boosting India's growth story and strengthening our commitment to Powering Digital India," said Partha Ghosh,



Students to be trained at centers situated in New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Karnataka

Youth to undergo classroom training and complete their hands-on capstone project work in their selected tech domains

Soft skills training and job placements to be provided to enhance their employability

Head, CSR and Communications, Samsung Southwest Asia.

Samsung Innovation Campus aims to upskill youth aged 18-25

years in future technologies and enhance their employability. These are key technology skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Students who have enrolled for the courses have undergone a pre-course assessment and are undergoing classroom training by professors at the eight institutes. The courses have been divided into small batches of 30 students on an average to ensure focused training for student individually and to provide exhaustive learning opportunities in advanced technology.

They have also been provided the right tools to understand the practical applications of each of the technologies they are working on. For instance, students undergoing the IoT course have got Galaxy Upcycling kits, which consists of a Samsung Galaxy S9 or Note 9

smartphone, an ESP32 Dev board, a micro 5p cable, 2 resistors, 1 led, 1 tactile switch, 1 breadboard, 1 jumper cable M-M, 1 USB Type-C adapter & cable, and 1 micro 5p USB adapter that enable them to get hands-on experience of how the technology works.

Youth enrolled in the program will undergo classroom training and complete their hands-on capstone project work in their selected technology areas from AI, IoT, Big Data

and Coding & Programming. The mandatory project phase for certification is devised to help students gain hands-on experience in the respective courses.

Those opting for the AI course will undergo 270 hours of theory training and complete 80 hours of project work, while those doing the IoT or the Big Data course will undergo 160 hours of training and complete 80 hours of project work. Participants opting for the Coding &

Programming course will complete 80 hours of training and participate in a 4-day Hackathon to conclude the course.

They will also be imparted soft skills training to enhance their employability and provided job placements in relevant organizations

After completing their courses, students will attend job fairs and will be supported in the process of searching for the right job for their skills.

OTPC inks MOU WITH APDCL to develop 250 MW battery energy storage system in Assam, to attract 2000 crore investment

ONGC Tripura Power Company Limited (OTPC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) at Guwahati on 11 January 2023. The MoU has been inked to develop Battery Energy Storage System Project of capacity up to 250 MW / 500 MWh in phased manner in Assam by incorporating a Joint Venture Company. An investment of Rs 2,000 Crores will be made in the state for developing the project. During construction and operation stages of the project, significant direct and indirect employment opportunities will also be generated.

Speaking on the occasion, the Hon'ble Minister of Power, Cooperation, Mines & Minerals, Indigenous & Tribal Faith and Cultural Department, Government of Assam Smt. Nandita Gorlosa said that the project will be an important milestone in fulfilling the vision of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam of making the State a leader in green energy transition.



Highlighting the benefits of the project, Managing Director of OTPC Sanil C. Namboodiripad said that the Project will help the state in improving power availability during peak load hours, improving integration of renewable energy generation with the electricity grid and enhancing grid reliability. "OTPC, a reliable energy supplier for Assam since 2014, is keen to be partner of Assam in its transition towards decarbonized energy mix. The energy storage project will bring in multiple avenues of

employment, boost to local businesses, improved utilization of green energy, carbon emission reduction and over all socio-economic development in Assam," Managing Director of APDCL Rakesh Kumar (IAS) said that they are implementing significant solar energy capacity and battery energy storage project is key for successful integration of upcoming solar power projects. He added that with this project, Assam will be pioneer in implementing of energy storage system.

Habitat for Humanity India partners with Standard Chartered Bank to rebuild the lives of 969 women with new livelihood opportunities



Housing non-profit organisation Habitat for Humanity India has partnered with Standard Chartered Bank to provide 969 women with upskilling, alternative livelihood opportunities, and assistance in establishing micro-enterprises to generate additional income. The project is known as Empowering Women and Improving Life through Livelihood Interventions.

These women are from the states of Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and Odisha. The aim of this project is to equip the women with leadership and technical skills, engage them in income generation activities and empower them to achieve strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build a better life for themselves and their families.

This initiative was accomplished by forming and strengthening 85 self-help groups (SHG) across the

three states, through which women were brought together, trained in business development, marketing, and government scheme comprehension. The SHGs were assisted in establishing their own businesses through seed funding, hand-holding, and multi-level technical training from Habitat's subject matter experts. In addition, SHGs members were encouraged to open bank accounts for their new businesses and keep financial records.

Kranti Tambe, an SHG member and a budding entrepreneur from Osmanabad district in Maharashtra, said, "I knew nothing about running an enterprise, let alone handling a dairy business. But the unity of fellow women from our self-help group, in-depth training and handholding support we received from Habitat helped me regain my confidence. I feel stronger knowing

that I am providing for my family. Nothing is impossible when women come together".

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Rajan Samuel, Managing Director, Habitat for Humanity India, said, "Since 2020, COVID-19 restrictions and the subsequent global lockdown has had a profound impact on the rural economy and quality of life of rural Indian families. Families in which a woman is the sole breadwinner went through severe financial difficulties. As women agricultural labourers earn less than their male counterparts, we felt that empowering these women through livelihood opportunities was the best way to help their families live better, healthier, and more financially stable lives. We are thankful to Standard Chartered Bank for their support."

"We firmly believe that women are the torchbearers for new India's social, economic, and environmental development. Our changemakers initiative aims to empower women so that the female workforce can bring about a paradigm shift toward economic growth. It was a pleasure to collaborate with Habitat for Humanity India in this project to provide alternative and unique livelihood opportunities for these inspiring women," said Karuna Bhatia, Head of Sustainability, India, Standard Chartered Bank.

The thematic areas for micro-enterprises were categorised into three areas namely agriculture which included vegetable cultivation of crops such as mushrooms, brinjal, tomatoes etc; agro-allied activities such as dairy, poultry, goat rearing; and home-based enterprises which involved making detergents, paper-plates, spices and dal milling.



Tamara Gondo, CEO and
co-founder of Liberty Society.
Image: Tamara Gondo

From beauty queen to social entrepreneur:

Tamara Gondo on rebuilding refugee lives and protecting the environment

The CEO of Liberty Society says workers in the fashion industry are underpaid and working in an unsafe environment. She shares how her company trains and empowers marginalised women and its aim to help reduce material waste.

After leaving everything behind, many refugees around the world struggle to survive. In Indonesia, the majority of refugees are stuck for several years before they can be resettled to other countries such as Australia, Canada or the United States. While staying in their host countries awaiting resettlement, one of the most important

things that refugees need, but often lack, is paid work. Work gives them a sense of purpose, a way to secure their dignity and to provide for their families.

One organisation that is lending a lifeline to refugees in Indonesia by providing income earning opportunities for them is Liberty Society, an Indonesian social enterprise that specialises in supplying businesses with locally-made, sustainably-sourced clothing and merchandise.

Co-founder and chief executive of Liberty Society Tamara Gondo tells Eco-Business' Raja Aiman that she became interested in social justice when she went on a mission trip in 2012 while she was in middle school, to Manado in North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

"That was when I saw a lot of inequality," said Tamara, who grew up in Jakarta and holds a bachelor's degree in communication studies from Biola University. "There was a lack of support for people in poverty."

Inspired to improve the lives of poor communities, Tamara started a non-profit called Second Chance Initiative which focused on sponsorship for children and microfinancing for households. After five years running the non-profit, Tamara, who was Miss Indonesia Jawa Timur 2019, realised that she needed a more sustainable business model. This led her to jump into social entrepreneurship and start Liberty Society in 2019.

Today Liberty Society employs 25 refugee women from Afghanistan. In Gading Serpong, a township west of Jakarta, where they work and reside, these women sew t-shirts, dresses, jackets, tote bags and pouches using sustainably-sourced materials such as bamboo, cotton, or even waste fabric. Liberty Society also goes out of its way to avoid plastic packaging and uses cassava instead.

The company produces an impact report to be transparent to busi-

nesses, which are their main clients, about the materials that they use.

Liberty Society's customers are mostly socially conscious organisations based in Indonesia and Singapore, including fashion brands that want to ethically manufacture their items.

"We cannot change the fashion industry alone. We have to work with corporate brands and consumers," said Tamara.

In 2021, Liberty Society, the United Nation's refugee agency UNHCR and Japanese retail brand Uniqlo teamed up to repurpose denim offcuts into drawstring pouches and cardholders. As part

for their work, we ask them first – would this be enough for you? So, the fair living wage aspect is something that both parties agreed on. We also provide community support for the staff. Other than employing them, we also care for their children's well-being. We do this by giving them financial workshops, by helping put their children in school through partnering organisations, and by working with organisations who give them food donations.

Tell us more about the refugee and asylum-seeking situation in Indonesia. What difficulties do these refugees face? What is the typical

Refugees are deprived of a lot of learning and growth opportunities. In that sense, it feels like their life is on hold before they get resettled.

of it its latest initiative, Tamara said the company is working with Deloitte Indonesia to turn plastic waste into upcycled products such as laptop sleeves.

In this interview, Tamara talks about the difficulties that refugees face in Indonesia, how Liberty Society looks after their well-being, and how her background in the beauty pageant world has helped her career.

A lot of organisations claim to support ethical fashion. What sets Liberty Society apart?

We are able to successfully implement our training-to-employment model in Indonesia. Most companies just hire people who can sew, but we take our time to train our employees and pace the training according to their growth. Also, instead of our staff just receiving payment

profile of a refugee woman that Liberty Society employs?

The way I would describe it is they are living in prisons without walls. They don't have an outlet for creativity, they don't have freedom of movement. Refugees are deprived of a lot of learning and growth opportunities. In that sense, it feels like their life is on hold before they get resettled. If they do go to resettlement countries, they are also often not skilled enough to compete in the job market there.

Eighty per cent of the refugees in Indonesia are from Afghanistan, about 40 per cent are children and half are of working age. We usually work with those who are refugees, not asylum seekers. They have a stamp of approval from UNHCR to be here in the country.

We vet them through our partnering organisation, which is the

Learning Centre. The refugees that we employ must be looking for work, be willing [to work], are active in the community and have good behaviour. So there is accountability there.

We partner with UNHCR, which is their livelihood partner, to give training and job opportunities for these refugees. Apart from us, in Indonesia, there are no other alternatives for them to get an opportunity like this to earn an income. They usually get digital work elsewhere. 90 per cent of the refugee community are not able to earn any type of income. They just receive donations from charities.

What benefits do you give to refugees you employ? What is the difference between refugees working at Liberty Society and those seeking employment elsewhere?

Most of them are the sole breadwinners for their families. By working with us, they have income to pay for their family's basic needs or savings for the next country [they go to]. They are able to send money back to their home country too.

Compared to other employment, I would say we give them more stability in terms of the income they are able to make. It is not a one-off project. When they engage with us, they know that we are in this for the long run.

One issue that Liberty Society looks at is the mental wellbeing of the refugee women you employ. What are some of the issues these women face? How does Liberty Society help?

We had one single mother with two children, whose husband was killed by the Taliban. She struggled with depression because she kept thinking about how to raise her two children without any income. She was 40, came to our centre as a trainee and has been with us for almost one year and a half. Now



Refugee women handling fabrics at Liberty Society. Liberty Society provides upskilling opportunities for refugee women through training and employment. Image: Tamara Gondo

she can focus on being productive and that has improved her mental health. She told us that instead of “time using her”, she is making good use of time now. Her children come along with her to the centre. They have a safe space to learn and play where she can watch over them. We have seen how she has become a lot more cheerful.

We also do community activities once a month for them to mingle and build trust with one another. It adds to the social capital that they have. We don't force them to work from nine to five – if they feel like they can work more, they are rewarded based on that.

How can Liberty Society influence consumer behaviour and persuade your customers to shop more sustainably?

There are two ways. First is telling the story about the product. In all our products, we tell people who makes the product, what is the impact of the product, and the stories behind the product. So, it is very clear. Hopefully this inspires people to be more generous and mindful of their purchases.

Second is through our marketing efforts both online and offline. For example, we held an exhibition

for 28 days in a prestigious mall in Jakarta to showcase our products and the different green brands and artisans that partner with us. During the exhibition we educated consumers about conscious consumerism. They can then purchase those items directly at a e-commerce site. We made it easier for our customers to be exposed to greener products at a price that is affordable for them too.

What do you think are some of the most pressing issues in the fashion industry?

Workers are underpaid and working in an unsafe environment. There are a lot of factories here where the workers are not paid enough for them to sustain their daily lives. Secondly, when the fashion industry produces collections, it generates so much waste. What we really want to do is to change the behaviour to use upcycled or recycled materials. The next step we want to do is to engage brands to use cotton recycled from unused clothes.

You were Miss Indonesia Jawa Timur 2019. Has your background in the pageant world been a boon or bane for your career in sustainable fashion?

It [being in the beauty pageant] was before I started the business, so it became a launching platform for me to start my business. It provided me with good connections to the influencers and the media, and helped me connect with companies who want to stay relevant with millennials and Gen Z. 🌱

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/from-beauty-queen-to-social-entrepreneur-tamara-gondo-on-rebuilding-refugee-lives-and-protecting-the-environment/>)

HALF OF WORLD'S GLACIERS TO 'DISAPPEAR' WITH 1.5C OF GLOBAL WARMING

Half of the world's glaciers—frozen reservoirs holding three-quarters of the global water supply—could 'disappear' by the end of the century under 1.5C of warming, a study concludes. Daisy Dunne of Carbon Brief elaborates.

Human-caused climate change is already causing widespread glacier decline, with the rate of loss accelerating in the last two decades.

Image: US Geological Survey, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.



Even if the world is successful in meeting its most ambitious climate goal of 1.5C, glaciers could lose a quarter of their total mass by 2100 – raising global sea levels by 90mm.

The world is not currently on track for 1.5C. The research finds that country promises made at the COP26 climate summit in 2021, which could lead to 2.7C of warming, would cause “the near-complete deglaciation of entire regions” including central Europe, western North America and New Zealand.

If global warming reaches 4C, 83 per cent of the world’s glaciers could disappear, the study adds.

As well as providing most of the world’s freshwater, glaciers support unique ecosystems and are considered sacred in many parts of the world. The research, published in *Science*, is the first to examine the likely fate of all 215,000 of the world’s glaciers using high-resolution modelling.

Speaking to Carbon Brief, a leading glaciologist not involved in the study described the “sobering” findings as “the most comprehensive and rigorous analysis of future glacier trends to date”.

DISAPPEARING DEITIES

Glaciers are slow-moving rivers of ice which play a key role in supplying freshwater to nearly every world region.

For many communities, from the Peruvian Andes to the Nepalese Himalayas, glaciers are also considered the home and physical manifestations of the gods – holding significance far beyond material value.

Human-caused climate change is already causing widespread glacier decline, with the rate of loss accelerating in the last two decades.

The new research uses advanced models to project changes to all of Earth's 215,000 glaciers from 2015 to 2100 under a wide range of scenarios – from a future where global warming is successfully kept at 1.5C to a world where temperatures hit 4C. The results say that, if warming is kept to 1.5C, 49 per cent of glaciers could disappear entirely by 2100 – with “at least half” of such losses occurring before 2050. Glaciers are also projected to lose a quarter of their mass, causing sea levels to rise by 90mm.

At 4C, 83 per cent of glaciers could be lost. At this level of warming, glaciers are projected to lose 41 per cent of their mass, raising sea levels by 154mm.

Study lead author Dr David Rounce, an assistant professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, tells Carbon Brief:

“A key finding was that the mass loss was linearly related to temperature increases and thus any reduction in the temperature increase will considerably reduce glacier mass loss and its contribution to sea level rise.”

CHARTING CHANGE

The charts below, from the study, illustrate projected change to (from top to bottom) total glacier mass, area, the number of glaciers remaining (per cent), sea level rise from glacier melt (in mm of sea level rise equivalent) and area-averaged mass

“
Significant loss of glaciers means that we are not only witnessing a change in landscape or a loss of natural resources, it means that we are actively complicit in robbing the future from our children. What are mountain peoples without the mountains as we know them?

DR PASANG SHERPA,
Anthropologist, University of
British Columbia

change rate from 2015 to 2100, under a range of temperature scenarios (illustrated with coloured lines).

These temperature scenarios are derived from “shared socioeconomic pathways” for how global society, demographics and economics might change later this century. (See Carbon Brief’s in-depth explainer on SSPs.) The projections are grouped based on average global temperature increases by the end of the 21st century, compared with pre-industrial levels.

The chart illustrates how the percentage of the world’s glaciers

remaining on Earth is likely to decline rapidly this century under any temperature scenario, but is expected to become far more severe by the second half of the century under 3-4C of warming when compared to 1.5-2C.

The map below, also taken from the study, illustrates which glacier regions will experience the highest amounts of mass loss and contribute the most to sea level rise from 2015 to 2100.

On the map, discs illustrate mass loss at 2100 under various temperature scenarios (1.5C-4C), while the number represents the glacier’s contribution to sea level rise (in mm) under a 2C scenario.

The map illustrates that Alaska will be the single-largest contributor to global sea level rise from glaciers by the end of the century.

Collectively, Alaska, the Greenland Periphery, Antarctica and north and south Arctic Canada will account for 60-65 per cent of sea level rise from glaciers by 2100, the study adds.

The research notes that, in the High Mountains of Asia – a region supplying water to at least 800 million people, the timing of maximum glacier mass loss is likely to vary, peaking in south-east Asia around 2025-30, central Asia around 2035-55 and south-west Asia around 2050-75.

‘SOBERING’

The projections for glacier melt and resultant sea level rise this century are considerably higher than previous estimates, the authors note.

For example, they note that their projections for glacier mass loss under low- and high-emission scenarios are 4-8 per cent greater than previous estimates.

Rounce tells Carbon Brief that this is likely due to several factors, including the team making use of a 2021 study that detailed the acceleration in glacier mass loss observed globally over the last two decades.

“A key finding was that the mass loss was linearly related to temperature increases and thus any reduction in the temperature increase will considerably reduce glacier mass loss and its contribution to sea level rise.”

This study provided high-resolution data on how every glacier in the world is already being affected by climate change, Rounce explains:

“By calibrating our model with this data, we have a much more complete and detailed picture of the present-day glacier mass change compared to previous models that used regional data or in-situ measurements from a limited number of glaciers.”

In addition, the models used by the team also considered many small-scale physical processes that can worsen or slow the rate of glacier ice loss.

This includes, for example, the presence of debris on top of glaciers, which the research found can lessen glacier mass loss in the short term in some cases, but has little effect overall by 2100.

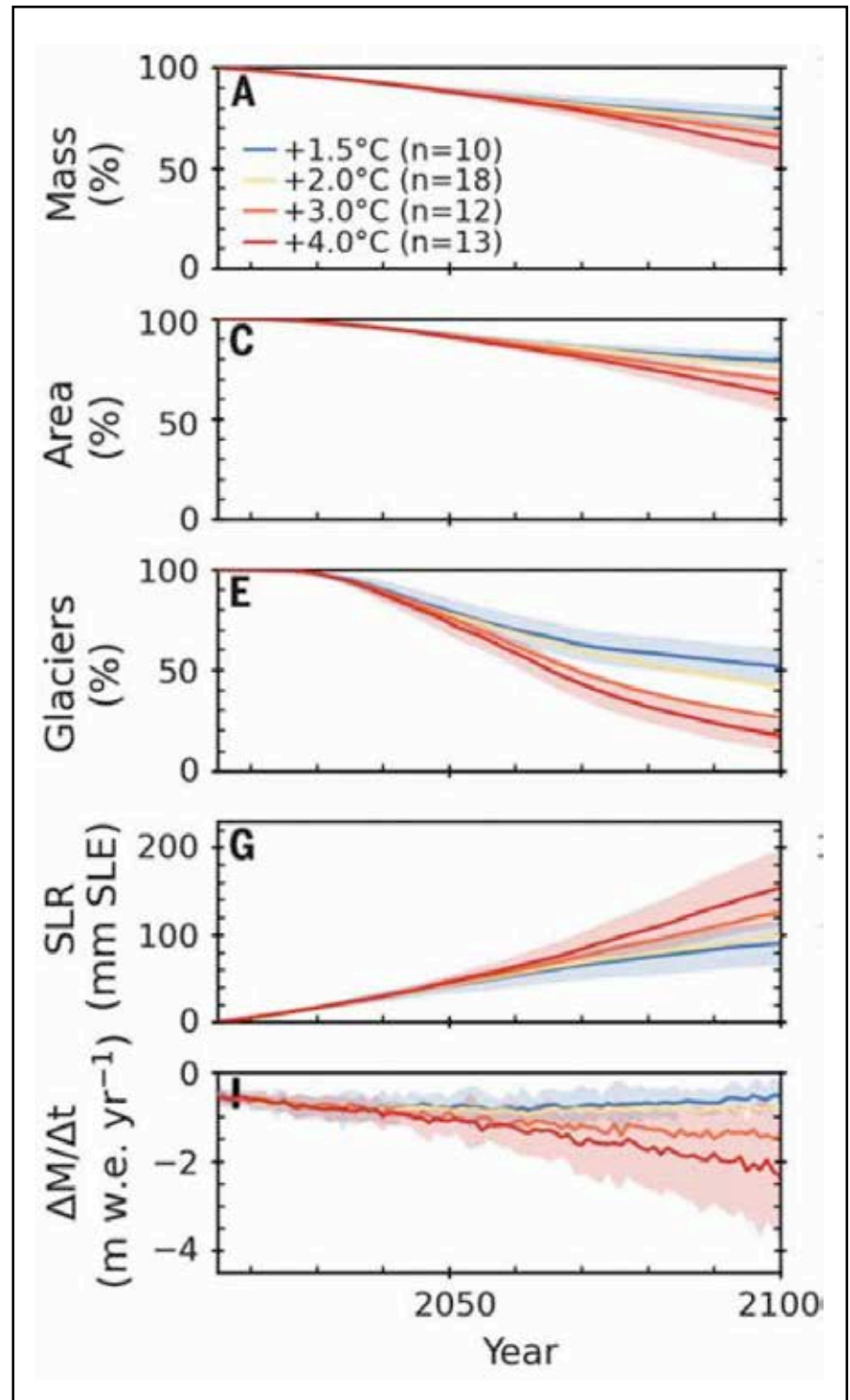
In a comment piece accompanying the new research, Prof Guðfinna Aðalgeirsdóttir, a researcher at the University of Iceland and Dr Timothy James, a researcher at Queen's University in Canada, commend the level of detail included in the study. They write:

“By providing model results in the context of policy-relevant end-of-century mean global temperature increases, the authors directly attribute regional mass loss, sea level contributions, and the number of lost glaciers to the consequences of meeting and failing to meet the Paris Agreement's 1.5-2C temperature limit, and they tell a tragic tale.”

Prof Jonathan Bamber, a leading glaciologist at the University of Bristol who was not involved in the research, also noted the advancements in the methods used by the study. He tells Carbon Brief:

“This is the most comprehensive and rigorous analysis of future glacier trends to date.

“There are some sobering statistics, such as half of all glaciers will have disappeared by 2100 even at 1.5C. Based on current national

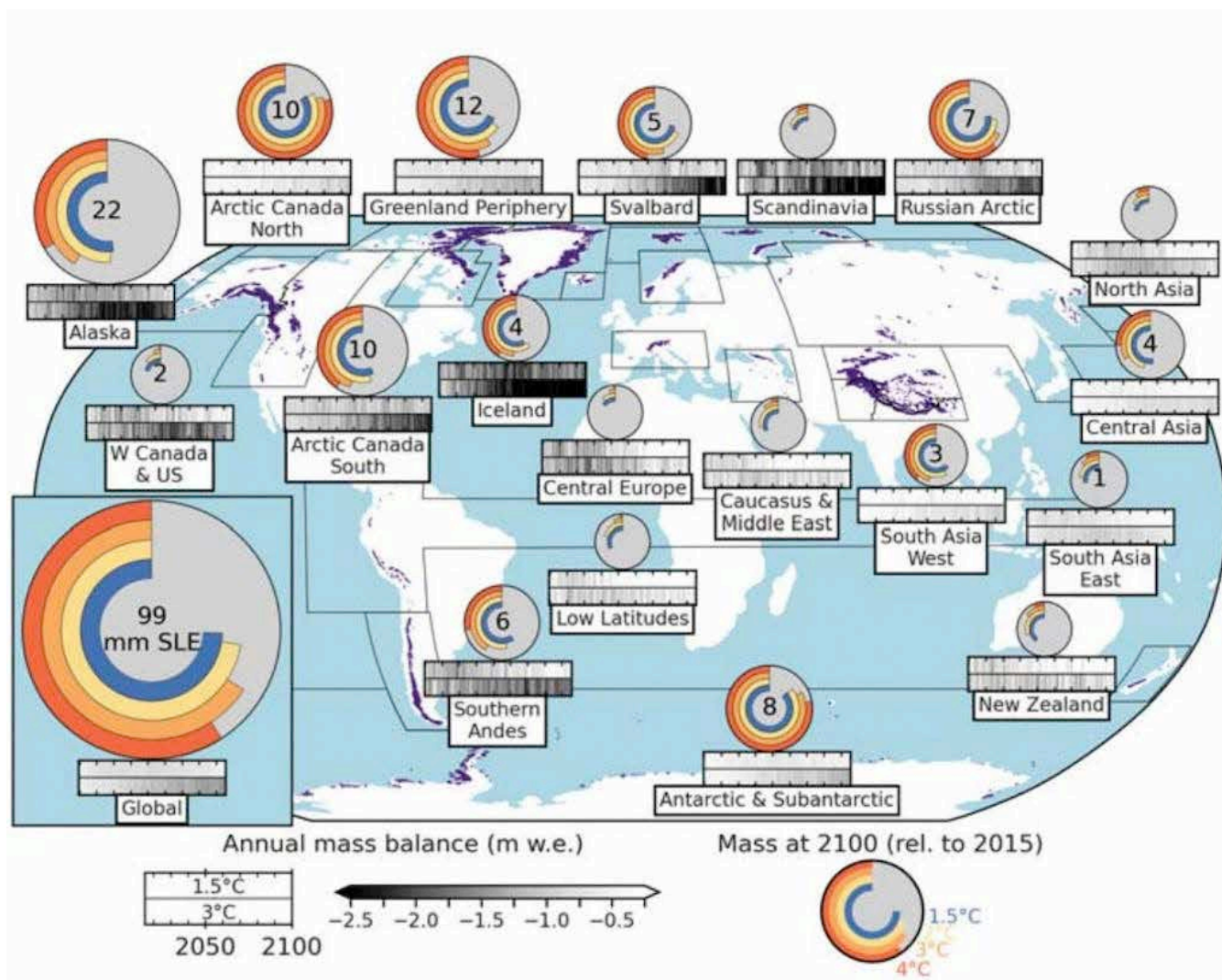


Projected change to (from top to bottom) total glacier mass, area, the number of glaciers remaining (per cent), sea level rise from glacier melt (in mm of sea level rise equivalent) and area-averaged mass change rate from 2015 to 2100, under a range of temperature scenarios (illustrated with coloured lines). Credit: Rounce et al. (2022)

climate pledges, the situation will be a lot worse with serious implications for communities that rely on glacial runoff for water resources.”

‘MOUNTAIN PEOPLE WITHOUT MOUNTAINS’

As well as impacting water supplies, the loss of glaciers will also have



Mass loss in 2100 under 1.5C-4C (shown in discs) and contribution to sea level rise under 2C (in numbers) for glacier regions across the world.

Credit: Rounce et al. (2022)

profound existential impacts for Indigenous communities living in mountainous areas, says Prof Elizabeth Allison, chair of ecology, spirituality and religion at the California Institute of Integral Studies, who was also not involved in the study. She tells Carbon Brief:

“Throughout the world, glaciated mountains are sacred to people living nearby. [The findings] suggest that communities in mountain regions will undergo profound and unprecedented social, cultural and spiritual change as mountain-dwelling gods and their blessings are perceived to depart from these icy domains.

“When the locus around which societies are oriented disappears,

individual and collective psychological disruption and societal breakdown often follows. Adaptation and mitigation planning must include responses to address such psychosocial disruptions.”

The loss of cultural and religious identity from climate change is one aspect of “loss and damage” – a term used to describe how warming is already having an impact on communities around the world, particularly the most vulnerable.

Calls for developed countries to pay for loss and damage from climate change dominated discussions at the last UN climate summit COP27, held in Egypt in 2022. (Read Carbon Brief’s in-depth explainer on loss and damage.) Dr Pasang Sherpa, an Indig-

enous anthropologist from Pharak in the Nepalese Himalayas based at the University of British Columbia, adds that the new research “has found what [Indigenous people] have long feared”. She tells Carbon Brief:

“Significant loss of glaciers means that we are not only witnessing a change in landscape or a loss of natural resources, it means that we are actively complicit in robbing the future from our children. What are mountain peoples without the mountains as we know them?”

This story was published with permission from Carbon Brief.

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/half-of-worlds-glaciers-to-disappear-with-15c-of-global-warming/>)

Kyndryl India and IIT Tirupati Collaborate to Advance AI-enabled 3D Printing for Manufacturing Sector

Partnership will foster smart manufacturing research

Kyndryl, a leader in IT infrastructure services provider, and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Tirupati, one of the premier technology institutions in India, inked a deal to advance research, share knowledge, promote innovation and drive breakthrough developments in AI-enabled 3D printing technology. The collaboration will focus on quickly developing cost-effective 3D prototypes for complex products in manufacturing.

The evolution of 3D technology has become increasingly vital in the development and manufacturing of product prototypes that are then used to troubleshoot design issues before mass production. As digital transformation increases, the demand for skills and capabilities in smart manufacturing is increasing.

The collaboration will combine IIT Tirupati's domain knowledge in 3D printing with Kyndryl's global expertise in Artificial Intelligence (AI), enabling the co-creation of Machine Learning (ML) models that will allow for near real-time identification of potential defects



during 3D printing. Gaining this knowledge in advance could help identify significant savings in cost, time, and waste generation, as well as contribute to new product development by predicting performance in real-world manufacturing environments.

"This partnership will enable IIT Tirupati students and faculty to collaborate with Kyndryl's best-in-class professionals on the frontiers of implementing AI to solve industry challenges," said Prof. K.N. Satyanarayana, Director, IIT Tirupati. "The co-creation in the digital manufacturing segment with Kyndryl can quickly provide cost-effective solutions to the manufacturing industry and provide better exposure to our students."

"India's National Manufacturing Policy aims to raise the manufacturing sector's GDP share to 25%

by 2025. To accomplish that goal, research advancements and skills development will play an important role in deploying AI in innovative ways to make smart manufacturing technology more accessible and efficient," said Lingraju Sawkar, President, Kyndryl India. "This collaboration will harness Kyndryl's Data and AI expertise to help IIT Tirupati create a meaningful learning experience for students and serve as a scalable model of how industry and academia can co-create to help industries.

The two organizations have already begun joint research and will be launching a series of thought leadership conclaves and innovation challenges to advance new ideas across industry and academia that aligns with the National Innovation and Start-up Policy -2019 (NISP-2019). 



**Pernod Ricard India leads
an industry-first initiative –
#OneForOurPlanet to reduce
environmental impact across
its value chain; removes
permanent mono-cartons from
its packaging**

Accelerating its global commitment towards a sustainable future, the company aims to entirely remove permanent mono-cartons from its packaging by June 2023

Pernod Ricard India (PRI), a global leader in the wine and spirits industry, launched an industry first initiative - #OneForOurPlanet, as it continues its journey towards the removal of permanent mono-cartons from its packaging. With this landmark sustainability initiative, the company is removing 100% permanent mono-cartons from its packaging by June 2023, in a phased manner.

#OneForOurPlanet reiterates the company's commitment to reduce the environmental impact of packaging across each step of its value chain, from grain to glass. It also aims to nudge today's purpose-driven consumers to make eco-conscious purchase decisions. Advancing towards a greener tomorrow, with this initiative, Pernod Ricard India strives to generate a holistic impact by reducing carbon emissions every year by 7310 Tonnes, saving 2.5 lakh trees, and reducing waste-to-land fill by 18745 tons. With this initiative, the company aims to reduce cumulative packaging emissions by over 75,000 Tonnes by 2030.

Talking about the initiative, Ranjeet Oak, Chief Commercial Officer, Pernod Ricard India, said, "At Pernod Ricard India, we are driven to make a difference to the planet. Expanding our sustainability agenda to create greater impact, this initiative is directed at reducing our carbon footprint across each step of the value chain – from grain to glass. This initiative also brings to light changing consumer sentiments around eco-conscious purchase patterns to drive adoption of the initia-

tive across markets. We envision this initiative to become a larger movement and our stakeholders to turn into advocates by practicing and propagating eco-conscious consumption. We are happy to see some of our industry peers already joining the crusade."

Further, Kartik Mohindra, Chief Marketing Officer, Pernod Ricard India, added "The world has entered a new era of sustainability and we are catering to consumers who are becoming increasingly eco-conscious. They are seeking brands and products that bolster a sustainable impact on the environment and planet at large. As a responsible corporate citizen present in India for over 25 years, sustainability is key to Pernod Ricard India's operations and our new campaign #OneForOurPlanet is a testament to our commitment. Through this campaign we aim to inspire consumers to not only make eco-conscious purchase decisions but also champion this cause and help us evangelize this into a larger movement. We are humbly proud of this initiative and also urge our industry peers and partners to unbox their 'spirits' and join this initiative that's another one for our planet."

To ensure adoption of this major environment and industry-first initiative, Pernod Ricard India is steering a conscious consumption movement by sensitizing and educating its customers and consumers. The company will also continue to team with local communities, NGOs, industry peers and customers to pave way for a truly circular economy. For the seamless transition through this journey, the company has also introduced recycled and

recyclable neck tags, in several states, that redirect consumers to a micro-site solely created around the initiative #OneForOurPlanet.

Leading change in the industry, #OneForOurPlanet is a significant step in achieving the company's commitment towards zero-waste-to-landfill contribution. This milestone initiative is in line with the company's ambitious sustainable packaging strategy, which supports a circular economy and aims to protect and nurture the environment. With a commitment to minimizing waste at every step, the company aims to produce and distribute its products in ways that optimize and help preserve natural resources, reduce carbon footprint, and create water positivity. 100% of its packaging will be recyclable, compostable, or reusable by 2025. The company is investing in technology to maximize the reuse of glass bottles while ensuring quality, with an ambition of using 40% recycled-glass content by 2025. With such programmes, Pernod Ricard India aims to reduce its overall carbon footprint by 50% by 2030. The company has also engaged in water stewardship initiatives through a Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Recharge approach.

#OneForOurPlanet is aligned to Pernod Ricard's Global 2030 Sustainability and Responsibility roadmap -- 'Good Times from a Good Place'. The four pillars of its roadmap, which include Nurturing Terroir, Valuing People, Circular Making, and Responsible Hosting, address all aspects of its business with clear objectives in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 



Biswarani Chakma of Badal Para village in the Rangamati Hill District of Bangladesh can now collect water from a nearby tap in just 10 minutes, thanks to a 'solar power for water' project that local women implemented last year. Image: Rafiqul Montu

SOLAR POWER BRINGS WATER TO THE HILLS OF BANGLADESH

The women-led initiative in a remote tribal area shows the way ahead for climate adaptation, states **Rafiqul Montu**

Until recently, the womenfolk of Bangladesh's Rangamati hill district would spend most of their day collecting water from a valley and carrying it up and across treacherous mountain paths. Then, a landslide in 2017

changed the local water channel and worsened the water shortage to such an extent that people started leaving the village. But last year, the villagers implemented a project that transformed everyone's lives.

"Even just a year ago, we had to spend ages to collect just a pitcher of water. During the dry season we were able to collect drinking and cooking water with difficulty, but had no water for bathing. But now that crisis is over," says Biswarani Chakma, 35, a resident of Badal Para village in Jurachhari upazila (sub-district) of Rangamati Hill District in Bangladesh. Chakma now collects

water from a nearby tap, in just 10 minutes. And is then free to focus on other household chores and get some free time for herself.

It all started when the Rangamati Hill District Council decided to help the remote area deal with the worsening effects of the climate crisis. Bangladesh ranks seventh among countries at risk of climate change in the Global Climate Risk Index 2021 published by the non-profit environmental think tank Germanwatch based in Berlin, Germany. Water shortage, already dire in the country's hilly regions, is getting worse due to the climate crisis.

Jurachhari residents were asked to decide upon a project that would best serve their needs. The women were unanimous in identifying water shortage as their number one problem. Thus began the planning and implementation of the initiative that has now transformed their lives.

Women's leadership

Jurachhari is a tribal-dominated sub-district that lies 12 km from the district headquarters, but its water crisis had gone unaddressed for years. In 2017, a large regional forest area was destroyed by a landslide, which also blocked a channel of water that flowed down the hill and provided for downstream villagers' needs.

The elderly residents of Badal Para village of this sub-district said that the residents of several villages had been suffering due to the stoppage of the natural water flow in the hills. Forests were withering as water streams dried up. After the 2017 landslide, people started migrating away. As many as 18 of the 22 families in Bilaichhari's Tikuniya Tripura neighborhood have moved due to water shortage.

Once the villagers had identified water as their biggest problem, planning for the "safe water through solar power" project started. The residents of five villages held a meeting, where they formed a Climate Resilience Committee. Women took up the key functional positions including general secretary and treasurer, while an elderly male resident became the president.

The main consideration was to extract water at a low cost. Instead of waiting for electricity supply, the villagers went for modular solar power. The Rangamati Hill District Council provided financial support, and X and X also came forward, but the works were all undertaken by the villagers themselves.

Badal Para village of Jurachhari was chosen as the site for installing

the key infrastructure, where resident Niranjan Chakma donated 10 decimals of land (one acre equals 100 decimals), worth Rs 500,000 taka (about USD5,000). Here, a 5220-watt solar panel and a 3 horse power water pump were installed. Water pipes were laid 400 feet deep to pump fresh groundwater, using solar power, for storage in a 5000-litre water tank. Pipes were also laid to take water from this tank to taps in other villages.

Villagers volunteered their time and labour for installing and maintaining the water tanks, taps, water lines, solar panels, etc., overseen by the Climate Resilience Committee. A women's fund was set up for the maintenance – beneficiary families deposit 30 taka per month into this fund.

Families now collect clean water from community taps in their own villages. In villages where water supply is not yet available, the women fetch water from Badal Para, which is much closer to their homes than the earlier source had been.

Some 73 families are benefiting from this project.

Simultaneously, villagers' committees have been formed to preserve and maintain the forests and mountain springs.

The villagers' involvement makes sure the project meets their needs and gives them a stake in its success.

Jharna Chakma, General Secretary of Climate Resilience Committee said, 'We implement the safe water supply project through the collective unity of five villagers through the Climate Resilience Committee. Here, women's opinions had more priority. At present water line connection has been provided to government primary schools and community clinics. There has been a change in the quality of life of the local people by getting water easily.'

"There was excellent coordination of local leadership in this project. Women's decisions were given

priority. Although these committees were formed regardless of [gender], they were led by women. This is the novelty of the project," says Prasenjit Chakma, Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP-Bangladesh said, which supported the project, along with USAID and Danida.

A different life

"Our forefathers suffered, and then we suffered. But now, I can fetch water easily and there's plenty of it," says Shefalika Chakma, 40, of Choumuhani village, who had witnessed water shortage since she was a child.

Deepayan Chakma, 41, who runs a shop in Chowmuhani Bazar in Jurachhari, no longer has to leave his shop unattended or closed to collect water. "The water tap is right in front of my shop," he smiles.

And students of Shuknachhari Government Primary School no longer need to collect impure water from the ringwell. Now the school gets clean water from the project.

Recognition for women's initiative

The success of the initiative has gained worldwide recognition. The project received the Local Adaptation Champions Award from the international organisation Global Center on Adaptation in the Inclusive Leadership category.

"The active participation of the local community and their decision-making power has made this project a success, said Arunendu Tripura, Public Relations Officer of Rangamati Hill District Parishad, which steered the project, after receiving the award at COP27 in Sharm-al-Sheikh. "Being free from political influence is another reason for the success of this project. This success will show us the way to solve many more problems." 📌

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/solar-power-brings-water-to-the-hills-of-bangladesh/>)

New technologies offer nature more accurate health checks

New monitoring techniques could help meet the goals of a COP15 nature pact being negotiated this month, as the IUCN's Red List of threatened species highlights a 'barrage of threats.'

In the rivers of the Peruvian Amazon, manatees wallow in the murky water, making them very hard to spot. If you're lucky, says British ecologist Kat Bruce, you might see their nostrils poking out above the surface.

A few years ago, she joined conservationists from green group WWF who were travelling a 1,000-km (621-mile) stretch of river to study manatees and other species.

"You basically can't survey them apart from by going to communities and asking if they've seen any manatees recently," said Bruce, who in 2014 set up a monitoring company called NatureMetrics.

But the aim of this trip was not a rare sighting. Instead, the team were taking water samples.

NatureMetrics pushes the water through a filter to collect traces of



As countries negotiate a global pact to halt and reverse nature loss at the COP15 summit in Montreal this month, researchers and companies like NatureMetrics hope their new technologies can help track progress on protecting biodiversity more accurately than ever before.

Image: UNDP Climate, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

DNA, which are analysed in a lab to understand which species are active in the area - both in the water and on nearby land.

In Peru, they found 675 vertebrate species - from manatees and river dolphins to night monkeys living high in the trees.

As countries negotiate a global pact to halt and reverse nature loss at the COP15 summit in Montreal this month, researchers and companies like NatureMetrics hope their new technologies can help track progress on protecting biodiversity more accurately than ever before.

They are in a race against time, as up to one million of Earth's estimated eight million plant, insect and animal species are at risk of extinction, many within decades, according to a 2019 international scientific report.

On Friday, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released an update to its "Red List" of endangered species, flagging a "barrage of threats" affecting marine wildlife, including illegal fishing, pollution and climate change.

While success in curbing global warming can be measured in terms

of reductions in planet-heating greenhouse gas emissions, understanding what advances in biodiversity protection mean for governments and companies tends to be more complex.

“You can’t actually measure ecosystem health just by monitoring what you can see,” said NatureMetrics CEO Katie Critchlow.

Using environmental DNA, or “eDNA”, NatureMetrics says it can gather more biodiversity data far faster than traditional surveys, including the presence of IUCN Red List species.

This can be tracked by small DNA filters. Water from an ecosystem is pushed by a syringe through the small discs, which are then sent to specialist labs in Britain and Canada, much like DNA tests to find out people’s ancestry.

NatureMetrics, which has grown to more than 140 employees, serves NGOs and companies that are either looking to monitor progress in restoring a degraded ecosystem or measure whether development projects like mining are causing harm.

“All of a sudden, now you can know whether things are getting better or not - and that’s just not been possible before,” said Critchlow. “We feel that this is quite revolutionary.”

‘Zombie forests’

The eDNA method is just one of a number of innovative new techniques, said Karl Burkart, co-founder and deputy director of US-based non-profit One Earth, which is working to scale up biodiversity mapping technologies.

“In the next three to five years, we’re going to have a lot of breakthroughs in direct observation measuring,” he said.

For example, tiny cameras have been trained with artificial intelligence to collect and interpret what they capture in the field, such as

“
Monitoring changes to the composition of those forests helps us to inject specific actions to save what is most unique, or what is different in one forest from another.

GREG ASNER
Director, ASU Centre for Global
Discovery and Conservation Science

detecting humans and different animal species.

TrailGuard AI, created by the NGO Resolve and chipmaker Intel, is developing this technology to create an alert system against animal poachers in Africa.

Another approach is acoustic sensors, which can monitor sounds from species like birds and even insects, and is an “incredibly effective” way of determining the overall health of an ecosystem, Burkart said.

Some forests may look good from satellite images, for example - but inside, their biodiversity can be severely degraded, a phenomenon known as “zombie forests”, he explained. “It looks good from space, and inside it’s deathly silent,” he said. Burkart added that a “mesh” of these techniques together with remote sensing technology, deployed on planes and satellites, can provide a fuller picture of an ecosystem and how its complex parts interact.

Brand risk

One leader in remote sensing technologies is Arizona State University (ASU), whose scientists have created a method called “spectranomics” whereby images taken from the air can show the complexity of species.

Used across the Andes and Amazon regions, advanced sensors

can detect the unique chemical signatures of tree species based on how they interact with sunlight and illustrate the results in colourful maps.

Greg Asner, director of ASU’s Centre for Global Discovery and Conservation Science, said the approach - which he co-developed - can help improve protection of tropical forests beyond broad strategic plans.

“Monitoring changes to the composition of those forests helps us to inject specific actions to save what is most unique, or what is different in one forest from another,” he said.

As these solutions begin to make their way from scientific papers to equipment used on the frontlines of the natural world, Burkart said investors are taking biodiversity more seriously - and could help expand the techniques for use by businesses.

According to a 2020 report from the World Economic Forum, more than half of the world’s total GDP is dependent on nature and its services, meaning that nature loss poses a significant risk to global economic health.

Increasingly, companies do not want to be seen to be harming nature, Burkart added, and are under pressure to disclose the risks their operations pose to - and face from - nature.

“Investors ... are not going to want to hold companies that aren’t able to be scrutinised,” he said. “I think there’s a societal, public risk of brands being left out of the push to save nature.”

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(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/new-technologies-offer-nature-more-accurate-health-checks/>)



Even in a scenario where the pace of emissions reduction is twice as fast until 2030 and then up to five times as fast until 2050, two fifths of companies will miss their own targets, according to a 2022 report by Accenture.
Image: Chris LeBoutillier/Unsplash.

Nearly all companies will miss net-zero targets by 2030, unless emissions reduction rates double: report

Accelerating energy price hikes and supply insecurity are pushing carbon commitments out of reach, even as more companies are setting decarbonisation goals, data shows, write **Samantha Ho**

A growing number of the world's largest companies are setting net zero targets, but nearly all of them could fail to meet these commitments unless they double their emissions reduction rates, according to consulting firm Accenture.

Just over one-third (34 per cent) of Accenture's list of the world's top 2,000 largest public and private companies had publicly stated net-zero targets to date, but 93 per cent of them could miss their decarbonisation targets based on current socio-economic trends, Accenture said in a report.

The report, Accelerating Global Companies toward Net Zero by 2050, found that accelerating energy price inflation, supply insecurity and labour shortages are making emissions reduction targets harder to achieve.

"Only 7 per cent of companies are on track to achieve their net-zero targets for Scope 1 and 2 emissions at the observed rates of change. Moving targets to 2050 increases that share just slightly to a mere eight per cent," Accenture said.

Even in an accelerated scenario – where the pace of emissions reduction is twice as fast until 2030 and then up to five times as fast until 2050 – two fifths of companies will miss their own targets, it said. 22 per cent will fail to hit net-zero by 2050.

Still, the data showed that setting targets works in lowering emissions, which more and more companies are doing.

To date, more than one third of companies on Accenture's list have net-zero commitments, up 7 percentage points from a year ago. Eighty-four per cent of companies

surveyed plan to increase investments in sustainability initiatives by the end of 2022, compared to 80 per cent a year ago.

Additionally, new worldwide renewable energy investment in the first six months of 2022 had amounted to US\$226 billion, the highest rise ever recorded for the first half of the year and an indication that demand for clean energy is strong. "The companies with net-zero targets cut emissions more than those without. Those with more sophisticated targets and measures

data with the same importance as financial and operational business information, integrating it into everyday decision-making, Accenture said.

"To move at the speed and scale required by science and economics, it will be critical for businesses to develop multiple 'carbon intelligence' capabilities at the same time," said Mauricio Bermudez-Neubauer, global lead for carbon strategy and intelligence at Accenture.


This includes integrating carbon, energy and other sustainability

The report, Accelerating Global Companies toward Net Zero by 2050, found that accelerating energy price inflation, supply insecurity and labour shortages are making emissions reduction targets harder to achieve.

in place are cutting emissions even faster," the report said.

A record number of companies had committed to setting science-based targets in June and September 2022, bringing the total up to 237 companies as of October.

Leading companies also treat their carbon, energy and emissions

data and insights into financial and operational business information to help drive everyday decision-making, he said. 

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/nearly-all-companies-will-miss-net-zero-targets-by-2030-unless-emissions-reduction-rates-double-report/>)



China and India are the largest hydropower producers in Asia, but the former dwarfs the latter. In 2021, China generated around 1,300 terawatt hours of electricity from hydropower and India one-tenth of that. Image: sandeepachetan, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

SHRINKING GLACIERS THREATEN CHINESE AND INDIAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS

The worsening condition of the Parlung No. 4 glacier is causing concern over water supply, flood risk and the viability of hydropower, a key part of both countries' plans to become carbon neutral, writes **Alok Gupta**, thethirdpole.net

As glaciers shrink and monsoon rainfall becomes more unpredictable due to climate change, uncertainty around the viability of hydropower projects in the Hindu Kush Himalayas is increasing.

A recent study on the state of a glacier on the southeastern Tibetan Plateau raises questions about the region's long-term water supply and the risk of flooding from more meltwater run-off, with implications for the many dams planned in the Yarlung Tsangpo-Brahmaputra river basin.

The Hindu Kush Himalayan region is warming at almost double the global average rate: 0.32 degrees Celsius per decade versus 0.16C. The study, published in September, found that in the past 20 years this warming has intensified at the Parlung No. 4 glacier, a medium-sized glacier that can be used as a benchmark to track changes in snow and rainfall patterns, and the subsequent shrinking of glaciers, in the area.

Temperatures at Parlung No. 4 have shot up by 0.39C per decade since 1990. "It's snowing less and raining more instead here," says Achille Jouberton, one of the lead authors of the study, which was conducted by a team of European and Chinese researchers.

Jouberton tells The Third Pole that between 1975 and 2019, the glacier's snout, or terminus, retreated by about half a kilometre. On average, the glacier shrank by 0.32 metres water equivalent a year over this

period, the researchers found. Since 2000, snowfall during the monsoon at the glacier has declined by 26 per cent. "The study uses data from the glacier's surface that is more accurate than the satellite data sets used by many studies. Surface data explains the phenomenon that is shrinking these glaciers and its most likely impact on the Yarlung Tsangpo River in China and Brahmaputra in India," Jouberton says.

Impact on hydropower

Rivers originating from Hindu Kush Himalayan glaciers are a significant source of water and energy in 10 countries, including China, India, Pakistan and Nepal. Hydropower generated from these rivers is an important part of many countries' ambitions to become carbon neutral.

The Tibetan Plateau's glaciers feed a major, 2,880km, river system. The Yarlung Tsangpo, which originates here, runs from this high elevation, with a heavy load of fertile soil, through India as the Brahmaputra and then into Bangladesh as the Jamuna. China and India are the largest hydropower producers in Asia, but the former dwarfs the latter. In 2021, China generated around 1,300 terawatt hours of electricity from hydropower and India one-tenth of that.

Both countries plan to become carbon neutral – China by 2060 and India by 2070. Even though hydropower's low-carbon credentials have been called into question, it is still a substantial component of both countries' renewable energy mixes.

According to a model developed by China's National Development and Reform Commission, to achieve carbon neutrality the country's electricity production will double to 14,800 terawatt hours by 2050, of which 14 per cent will be generated from hydropower. India, meanwhile, has the largest hydropower pipeline in the world. By 2032, it plans to grow its current 52 gigawatts of hydropower capacity by nearly 200 per cent with the addition of projects with a combined capacity of 91GW.

Thus, for both countries, harnessing the energy of the Yarlung Tsangpo-Brahmaputra is very important. This started to ramp up in 2010, with the construction of the 7.9 billion yuan (USD 1.2 billion), 510 MW Zangmu hydroelectric power station, which became operational in 2015.

China approved three more hydropower projects: Dagou (640 MW), Jiacha (320 MW) and Jiexu (560 MW), under the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015). In 2020, the government announced plans to build up to 60GW of hydropower capacity on the Yarlung Tsangpo.

Currents of discord

China damming the upper reaches of the Yarlung Tsangpo has triggered a response in downstream India. India fears that water availability could be affected in its northeastern states; Zangmu, one of the world's highest hydropower stations, will be dwarfed once the construction of Dagou is complete.

In May, India announced plans to build the country's second-largest dam with a storage capacity of 10 billion cubic metres of water at Yingkiong. Water minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said the proposed dam aims to regulate possible water shortages in the dry season and flooding in the monsoon months.

This dam is one of 170 proposed or under construction on the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries for irrigation and hydropower projects. In Arunachal Pradesh alone, hydropower projects with a capacity of 1,115 MW are in operation, with projects of 2,000 MW capacity under construction as of October 2021. One of these proposed dams, Etalin, will be the largest in India if built; campaigners have urged the government to reject clearance for the project, pointing out it will be built in an ecologically fragile and seismically active region.

The rapid construction of dams continues despite researchers sounding warnings over melting glaciers on the Tibetan Plateau triggering earthquakes, avalanches, landslides and floods.

Climate change has already wreaked havoc on people's lives and hydropower plants in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, points out Li Dongfeng, one of the lead authors of a study published in June on the vulnerability of hydropower projects here.

The paper cites devastating floods in India's northern Uttarakhand state in 2013 that killed over 6,000 people and damaged at least 10 hydropower projects. In 2021, an avalanche caused a flood in Chamoli district of the same state, damaging two hydropower projects and resulting in more than 200 dead or missing persons.

"When it comes to hydropower projects, a lot needs to change in High Mountain Asia to deal with the catastrophic disasters caused by the rising temperatures," Li

When it comes to hydropower projects, a lot needs to change in High Mountain Asia to deal with the catastrophic disasters caused by the rising temperatures.

LI DONGFENG
Researcher, National University
of Singapore

says. He recommends changing the design of hydropower projects so they can deal with the extremes of cloudbursts and droughts, as well as preserving forests and grasslands which act as natural buffers. Cooperation between countries is also vital, Li says.

Glaciers and regional politics

However, collaboration between India and China on the Brahmaputra remains limited. Hydrological data sharing from China only covers the monsoon period from May to October, and it stopped in 2017 reportedly due to problems with the hydrological station. Data sharing only resumed in 2018, weeks before a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The mistrust between the two countries over the river can be gauged from an incident in 2017, when the Brahmaputra turned black and many fish and aquatic animals died. The incident prompted Indian politicians to blame Chinese infrastructure projects upstream for causing pollution.

Using a series of satellite images, analysis by Chintan Sheth, a research fellow at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, and Anirban Datta-Roy, a doctoral

student at the time, now a senior programme manager at the Foundation for Ecological Security, both in India, found that earthquakes on the Tibetan Plateau had led to landslides that filled the river with sediment, which flowed downstream and blackened the water.

"Incidents like these expose the lack of data, study and cooperation on the transboundary Brahmaputra River," says Anamika Barua, a professor at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, in India's Assam state.

"It also underlines the dichotomy that exists between researchers and policymakers of both countries," she says.

Diplomacy and dialogue

A substantial body of research by leading Chinese and Indian researchers constantly warns about the consequences of melting glaciers on the Tibetan Plateau, "but there are not enough studies about melting glaciers' long- and short-term impact on the Brahmaputra River", says Barua.

While diplomatic negotiations between the two countries are trying to break the stalemate, Barua says Brahmaputra Dialogue is another option – a multilateral initiative between India, China, Bangladesh and Bhutan that ran from 2013 to 2019, bringing bureaucrats, scientists, communities and non-profit organisations together.

"It's time to continue the dialogue, or begin Brahmaputra Dialogue 2.0, to resolve transboundary river issues to achieve the common goal of becoming carbon neutral and prevent imminent catastrophic disasters in the region," says Barua. ■

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(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/shrinking-glaciers-threaten-chinese-and-indian-energy-transitions/>)

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