

# CSR TODAY

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# People experiencing climate change in form of extreme heat



**Rajesh Tiwari**  
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**More than one in six people globally experienced temperatures with a strong climate change influence every day from December 2025 through February 2026. Around 2.5 billion people across 124 countries endured at least 30 days with temperatures strongly influenced by climate change.**

**T**he effects of human-caused climate change were evident across most of the globe between December 2025 and February 2026 — particularly in the form of extreme heat. The situation is alarming and compounding.

More than one in six people globally experienced temperatures with a strong climate change influence every day from December 2025 through February 2026. Around 2.5 billion people across 124 countries endured at least 30 days with temperatures strongly influenced by climate change.

Climate change was responsible for every single day of heat dangerous to human health — or “risky heat” — in 47 countries over the three-month period.

Nearly 225 million people experienced 30 or more days of risky heat added by climate change, and 81% of those affected live in Africa. The startling details have come out in new seasonal analysis from Climate Central.

The analysis, using Climate Central’s Climate Shift Index (CSI) — a system that quantifies the influence of climate change on daily temperatures — shows that human-caused warming — primarily from burning coal, oil, and methane gas — is increasing the frequency and intensity of heat around the world.

In many regions, climate change did not just contribute to warmer conditions — it fully accounted for the most dangerous heat days experienced during the period. The findings underscore how climate change is no longer a distant or future concern, but a present and measurable force shaping daily weather for billions of people.

In a press statement, Dr. Kristina Dahl, Climate Central’s Vice President for Sci-


ence, said: “This analysis makes clear that climate change is not a future problem — it is a present-day driver of extreme heat around the world. Millions of people experienced a month or more of dangerous levels of heat that were made significantly more likely by climate change.”

An unusually early Australian heat wave — made five times more likely by climate change — persisted into January and February, breaking records before giving way to intense downpours that flooded several towns. In the Arctic, Greenland recorded its warmest January, accelerating sea-ice loss. Meanwhile, a heat spell across Argentina contributed to a power outage that left more than one million people without electricity.

In many places, the combination of heat, low humidity, and strong winds created ideal fire weather conditions. Wildfires in Patagonia, fueled by climate change, claimed 23 lives, prompting Chile to declare an emergency. Similar events occurred in the U.S., Australia, and South Africa, where thousands of hectares burned. In most cases, high temperatures amplified the intensity of these fires.

Across the world, climate change manifested as a cascade of other extremes: Severe drought, record-breaking precipitation, powerful storms, and snow storms.

Kenya endured its driest season since 1981, threatening more than two million people with hunger. In Somalia and southeastern Ethiopia, drought is expected to cause crop failures and yield losses. In the U.S., drought covered over 40% of the country.

At the same time, subzero temperatures swept the U.S. and Canada, killing at least 85 people, dumping metres of snow, straining power grids, and costing billions. 

# Contents

**CSR TODAY**

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**40 | COVER STORY**  
**Climate change could lead to 500,000 'additional' malaria deaths in Africa by 2050**



**CSR EXAMPLE**

**34** Godrej Enterprises Group scales community-led water conservation across India, strengthening local water security



**CSR INITIATIVE**

**36** Singapore expands emissions registry to boost corporate carbon reporting



**CSR ISSUE**

**38** Taiwan maps sea, land options for construction waste as landfill capacity tightens



**CSR CONCERN**

**45** What chief sustainability officers fear in 2026

**AND MORE...**

**REGULARS:**

**03** Publisher's note | **05** CSR News | **28** CSR India United |

**32** News You Can Use

# CSR NEWS



## Nippon Paint India Partners with Humble Bee to Strengthen Sustainable Apiculture in India

**N**ippon Paint India, part of the NIPSEA Group and the No. 1 paint and coatings companies in the Asia Pacific region, has announced a strategic partnership with Humble Bee, a purpose-driven social enterprise working to transform India's beekeeping ecosystem through innovation and sustainable practices.

The collaboration brings together high-performance, eco-conscious coatings expertise and precision-engineered hive manufacturing to strengthen India's apiculture infrastructure from the ground up. The initiative focuses on enhancing the durability, safety, and longevity

of wooden beehives, thereby supporting healthier bee colonies and improved rural incomes.

Mark Titus, President-Decorative Coatings Business, Nippon Paint India, said, "The beehive represents productivity, interdependence, and resilience. By extending our expertise in durable and environmentally responsible coatings to this ecosystem, we are contributing beyond product performance, supporting livelihoods, strengthening biodiversity, and enabling long-term rural sustainability."

As a GreenPro-certified brand, Nippon Paint India adheres to stringent environmental benchmarks, ensuring its coatings are free from

harmful VOCs and safe for surrounding ecosystems. The low-VOC formulations provide structural protection while maintaining a bee-safe environment within the hive.

Humble Bee's beehives, manufactured at its Varanasi facility, India's first precision-engineered beehive manufacturing unit, are crafted using sustainably sourced Southern Yellow Pine. These hives are coated with Nippon Paint's low-VOC, weather-resistant formulations designed to withstand India's diverse climatic conditions.

Monika Shukla, CEO and Co-founder of Humble Bee added, "Every color on these hives tells a story, of a woman reclaiming her agency, of crops that flourish, and of biodiversity that revives."

Across tribal and rural regions, particularly among first-generation women farmers, these painted hives are being introduced to improve productivity, resilience, and livelihood stability. India continues to face a significant gap in pollination capacity, even as global honey markets increasingly demand traceable and ethically produced products. This partnership seeks to address both challenges by strengthening the foundation of sustainable apiculture at the hive level.

Field trials will be conducted over the coming months to assess bee compatibility, coating durability, and performance under varying environmental conditions, after which the initiative is expected to scale across key regions in India. As part of the collaboration, Nippon Paint and Humble Bee have also co-developed a distinctive 'Blobby' hive design, reflecting a shared commitment to innovation and community impact.



PepsiCo India team along with partners and Chief Guest at the flag-off of the EV Green Corridor

# PepsiCo India Expands Green Logistics Network with EV Green Corridor and Wider Low-Emission Fleet Transition

PepsiCo India took a significant step up in its green logistics network, bringing together three interconnected initiatives that together mark a major step forward in the company's efforts to reduce emissions across its supply chain. At the center of the announcement is the launch of a dedicated EV Green Corridor on the Kosi-Pataudi route, developed in collaboration with Kalyani Powertrain Limited. The corridor will operate with eight 32-foot single-axle Re-Powered electric container trucks, enabling approximately 4.8 lakh electric kilometres annually on the route.

The Green Corridor was inaugurated in the presence of Shri Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary, Cabinet Minister for Sugar Industry and Cane

Development in the Government of Uttar Pradesh, along with Jagrut Kotecha, CEO, PepsiCo India and South Asia, and Pankaj Sonalkar, Managing Director- Kalyani Powertrain Limited, and senior leaders from PepsiCo, logistics partners and distribution ecosystem partners.

Alongside the corridor launch, PepsiCo India has also converted more than 400 distributor-linked vehicles to electric three and four-wheelers across markets, directly reducing emissions at the last mile of delivery. In the National Capital Region, the company has deployed over 80 CNG vehicles, through its logistics partners, as part of its strategy to lower the environmental footprint of urban logistics. Taken together, the three initiatives

represent a coordinated step in PepsiCo India's efforts to advance greener logistics operations, spanning linehaul freight, urban distribution, and last-mile delivery.

Speaking on the occasion, Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary, Cabinet Minister for Sugar Industry and Cane Development, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said, "I appreciate PepsiCo India and its partners for taking this important step with the inauguration of the Green Corridor. Initiatives like these reflect how industry can grow while remaining mindful of the environment. The Government is strongly focused on promoting electric mobility and encouraging cleaner modes of transportation, and this initiative is well aligned with that vision. Such



**Ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the launch of the EV Green Corridor by PepsiCo India**



**PepsiCo India leadership with Chief Guest Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary, Cabinet Minister for Sugar Industry and Cane Development, Govt of UP**

efforts will go a long way in supporting sustainable development and further strengthening the region's industrial progress."

Highlighting PepsiCo India's collaborative approach to advancing sustainable logistics, Jagrut Kotecha, CEO, PepsiCo India & South Asia said, "At PepsiCo India, sustainability is embedded in how we operate and grow. The launch of the EV Green Corridor on the Kosi-Pataudi route, together with the electrification of our distributor fleet and CNG deployment in NCR, reflects our commitment to building a supply chain that is cleaner, more efficient, and future-ready. Through our Partnership of Progress approach, we have brought together the right partners across technology, logistics, infrastructure, and finance to make this a reality.

We believe this kind of ecosystem collaboration is what it takes to drive lasting change, not just for PepsiCo, but for the sector."

Speaking on the collaboration, Pankaj Sonalkar, Managing Director-Kalyani Powertrain Limited, "We are proud to partner with PepsiCo India in advancing sustainable freight mobility through the deployment of electric container trucks on Kosi-Pataudi Green Corridor. This initiative demonstrates how electric vehicle technology can be effectively integrated into commercial logistics operations when supported by strong ecosystem collaboration. At Kalyani Powertrain, we remain committed to developing innovative and reliable mobility solutions that enable businesses to transition toward cleaner, more efficient transportation while

supporting India's broader decarbonization goals." Speaking on the collaboration, Ashwani Singhal, Managing Director, Vayudoot Road Carriers, a Pune-based logistics company said: "Our 25+ year partnership with PepsiCo India has helped us steadily build stronger capabilities and higher operating standards across our network. Anchoring on this trust, we are proud to deploy electric container trucks on the Kosi-Pataudi Green Corridor, reaffirming our commitment to sustainable and future-ready logistics."

Speaking on the occasion, Saurabh Tiwari, Director, New Trishul Transport Services based at Kanpur, said, "With over three decades in transportation, we believe the future of logistics must balance efficiency with environmental responsibility. Our collaboration with PepsiCo on EV deployment reinforces our long-standing commitment to innovation and cleaner mobility solutions, while continuing to strengthen reliable and forward looking supply chains."

Aligned with PepsiCo India's Partnership of Progress philosophy, these initiatives have been developed through close collaboration with OEMs, logistics partners, and distributors to build solutions suited to real operating conditions.

The Kosi-Pataudi EV Green Corridor is designed as a scalable model for electric linehaul freight, with the supporting ecosystem addressing charging infrastructure, route optimization and vehicle customization. The corridor reflects PepsiCo India's intent to build solutions that can grow with the sector's needs. These initiatives sit within PepsiCo India's PepsiCo Positive (pep+) sustainability agenda, which aims to embed sustainability into the heart of the business, including its supply chain. By demonstrating that green logistics is operationally and commercially viable, PepsiCo India aims to encourage and accelerate the transition across the wider industry.



## PV Sindhu Partners with EBG Foundation to Drive Change in Child Welfare, Sports and Women's Empowerment

**B**y bringing together sports and social commitment, the EBG Foundation has announced Olympic medallist and Padma Shri awardee PV Sindhu as its official ambassador. The partnership marks a significant step in advancing the Foundation's work across child welfare, grassroots sports development, and women's economic empowerment in India. With Sindhu's global credibility and the Foundation's strong grassroots presence, this collaboration aims to deepen structured community initiatives, expand access to opportunity, and inspire collective action at scale.

As of now, the EBG Foundation is actively driving meaningful impact

across states through focused, community-led interventions that address critical social challenges at the grassroots level. With the onboarding of P. V. Sindhu, the Foundation is further strengthening its national presence and accelerating programmes designed to deliver long-term, sustainable change.

At the centre of the collaboration is a series of three flagship social initiatives. Under Children for Life, Sindhu advocates every child's right to education, healthcare, and a safe environment. The initiative has begun its implementation in the state of Telangana, laying the foundation for structured support systems that ensure financial hardship never

becomes a barrier to opportunity. Speaking about her association, PV Sindhu said, "True success is meaningful only when it uplifts others. Partnering with EBG Foundation allows me to support causes that are deeply important to me, including children's development, youth empowerment, and women's progress. I believe real change begins when opportunity reaches those who need it most."

The second initiative, Champion, focuses on identifying and nurturing grassroots sporting talent. By providing specialised coaching, quality equipment, and structured nutritional support, the programme bridges the gap between raw



potential and competitive performance. The Foundation has already enabled programmes in the state of Telangana, reinforcing its commitment to building future champions.

Building on the momentum created in December 2025 with the launch of Naari Shakti, the third pillar addresses systemic barriers that interrupt women's journeys toward independence. With structured financial assistance of ₹1,500 per month, the programme supports vocational training and income-generation pathways.



Dr Irfan Khan, CEO and Founder, EBG Group, said, "PV Sindhu represents discipline, resilience and excellence, values that align closely with our long-term vision. Our commitment is not only to grow in scale but to grow with responsibility. Through these initiatives, we are building sustainable ecosystems that empower children, nurture champions and enable women to lead with confidence and independence. Her association strengthens our focus on measurable social impact across the country."



The collaboration will be supported by three 40-second brand films featuring PV Sindhu, each centred on a core social theme. Children of Life highlights how hunger robs children of focus and future, Champion underscores the gap between talent and opportunity in grassroots sports, and Naari Shakti addresses the interruptions that limit girls' education and independence. In each film, Sindhu serves as a voice of awareness, reinforcing the Foundation's call for structured, sustained community support.

## BoB raise Rs 10,000 crore from Green Bonds

**B**ank of Baroda has successfully raised Rs10,000 crore through the issuance of Series I Long-Term Green Infrastructure Bonds, becoming the first bank in India to issue domestic Green Bonds.

The issue garnered overwhelming investor demand, receiving bids aggregating Rs 16,415 crore, over three times the base issue size of Rs 5,000 crore. The seven-year bond was placed on EBP of NSE with Base issue of Rs. 5000 crore and a Green shoe option of Rs 5000 crore.

Despite current market volatility, the BoB secured a competitive cut-off coupon of 7.10%, reflecting strong investor confidence in the Bank.

In a press statement, Dr Debadatta Chand, Managing Director & CEO, Bank of Baroda said, "The GreenInfrastructure Bond issue marks a significant milestone for Bank of Baroda and a defining moment for India's domestic ESG bond market. Raising Rs 10,000 crore with such strong demand and attractive pricing demonstrates the deep confidence investors have in the Bank and in our commitment to green and sustainable growth as part of our broader ESG journey. These funds will support India's infrastructure needs, enabling a transition towards a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future."



# WeNaturalists Mobilises 3,000 Students Nationwide, Plans Expansion to 50 Campuses for Climate Action

*Student-led program provides mentorship, real-world sustainability projects, and exposure to emerging green career pathways.*

**A**cross India's campuses, a new wave of student-led sustainability action is quietly taking shape. Through its Campus Champions Program, WeNaturalists is enabling college students to lead environmental & sustainable initiatives that are rooted in real-world impact and long-term cultural change. What began just over a year ago has

already grown into a pan-India movement, spanning more than 15 college campuses and reaching approximately 3,000 students across schools and colleges combined.

The Campus Champions Program is designed around a simple idea: students are not just participants in sustainability conversations, but leaders of them. Each Campus Champion leads a group of students

from their campus who work closely with the WeNaturalists team, receiving guidance, mentorship, resources, and access to digital tools that help translate ideas into on-ground action. The program is active across campuses in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Rajasthan, and Karnataka, reflecting its reach beyond metro cities into diverse regional contexts.

Unlike conventional eco-clubs, the initiative focuses on building continuity and ownership. Campus Champions are supported to design and execute projects that respond

to their campus context, while also gaining early exposure to sustainability-linked career pathways. For college students, the emphasis is on career exploration within the green economy, supported through one-on-one guidance, mentorship, and access to relevant networks, depending on each student's area of interest and study.

The program is currently in its second year, shifting from proof of concept to scale. Students and Campuses that have completed their first year of participation are now positioned as peer mentors for newer students and institutions entering the ecosystem. Student-created content from these campuses gets amplified via WeNaturalists' growing media ecosystem and connects participants to a wider community of over 500,000 like-minded community members on the WeNaturalists' digital platform.

Amit Banka, Founder & CEO of WeNaturalists said, "Through the

Campus Champions Program, we've seen how powerful student ownership can be when it's supported by the right structure and community. Our vision is to build sustainable cultures on campuses that don't disappear when one student graduates, but continue to grow year after year. Over the last few years, students across different states have shown that meaningful climate action can begin right where they are. As we move forward, our focus is on scale with intention, bringing campuses together, amplifying student voices, and creating documented proof of grassroots action from an early age. We believe that when students are given trust, mentorship, and a platform, they don't just participate in change, they lead it."

Measurable outcomes have already begun to emerge through these efforts. At a Mumbai college, over 100 students conducted a campus water audit that helped reduce water wastage by nearly 20

percent, translating learning into tangible infrastructure impact. Campus Champions have also led awareness initiatives such as film screenings on plastic pollution and sustainable fishing, and environmental education sessions designed for differently-abled groups in Indore, extending sustainability action beyond campus boundaries. These activities have helped build visible, on-ground change while strengthening student ownership of environmental work.

Over the next three years, WeNaturalists aims to establish active Campus Champions on at least 50 campuses across India, ensuring that sustainability efforts continue beyond individual academic years. The long-term vision is to create a recognized credential for student-led environmental action, offering documented proof of contribution while strengthening the bridge between campus energy and long-term climate action.

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# Century Ply's 'Empathy in Action' Transforms CSR Through Compassion-Led Engagement

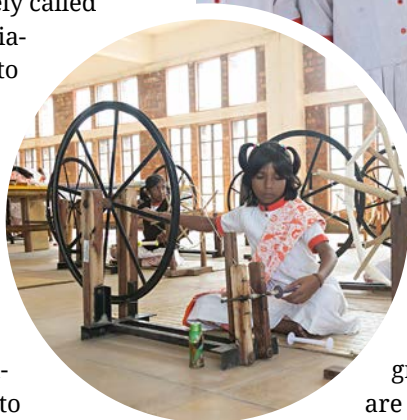
Century Plyboards (India) Ltd. today announced the successful execution of its employee-led Corporate Social Responsibility initiative titled “Empathy in Action”, reflecting the company’s deep-rooted belief that empathy is not merely a sentiment, but a decisive force for meaningful societal impact.

Guided by the leadership of Chairman Sajjan Bhajanka, CenturyPly’s CSR philosophy prioritises human dignity, compassion and sustainable empowerment, considering CSR not as a statutory obligation, but as a mindset intrinsic to business value.

“Empathy begins with recognising another’s pain and choosing not to look away,” said Bhajanka, citing the wisdom of the Dalai Lama. “At CenturyPly, we measure organisational strength not only by what we build, but by the lives we touch.”

Driven by the enthusiastic participation of nearly 80–90 volunteer employees, affectionately called Century Ninjas, the initiative turned empathy into tangible action across multiple regions in India, investing approximately INR 5 lakh in community-first engagements. The programme’s outreach focused on nurturing young aspirations, restoring dignity to vulnerable individuals, and fostering meaningful human connection through grassroots involvement.

The initiative kicked off at CenturyPly’s Head Office and extended to Joka, Kolkata, through collaboration with Adhigam Bhoomi,



where employees experienced first-hand how grassroots efforts are empowering children with entrepreneurial skills, educational support, and pathways to rural development. Interactive activities including photo booths, ice-cream counters and gift hampers infused a sense of joy and celebration, deepening employee

ownership of CSR work while connecting with the local community on a human level.

CenturyPly has also reinforced its support for Adhigam Bhoomi’s ambitious mission to empower 12 lakh schools by 2031—a vision strongly championed by Mr Bhajanka—further cementing the company’s long-term commitment to nation-building through education and enhanced opportunity.

# Mom's Belief Plans to raise over ₹100 crore to expand neurodevelopmental care centres for special children

**R**ays of Belief Ltd., the parent company of Mom's Belief, plans to raise over Rs 100 crore to expand its network of neurodevelopmental disorder (NDD) centres aimed at supporting children with developmental challenges and their families across India.

The proposed capital raise will be used to establish new intervention and therapy centres, invest in research and training initiatives, expand technology infrastructure and strengthen operations in India and the United States, the company said. The expansion comes at a time when demand for specialised developmental therapies in India is growing rapidly.

According to a report by CARE, India's developmental delays therapy market is projected to reach around Rs 612.3 crore by calendar year 2034, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.99% between 2025 and 2034.

Rays of Belief Ltd., promoted by entrepreneur Nitin Bindlish, is classified as a For-Profit Social Enterprise under the Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements (ICDR) Regulations, allowing it to raise funds through equity issuance on the main board. The company plans to deploy the funds to expand its network of neurodevelopmental disorder centres through multiple models, including company-operated learning centres, centres established in partnership with licensed professionals and collaboration centres within schools. The investment will also support the creation of Centres

for Excellence and Research (COER) aimed at advancing innovation and best practices in NDD care, as well as in-house training academies designed to address the shortage of specialised therapists in the sector. In addition, the capital will be used for technology upgrades, lease payments for existing centres in India, investments in its US subsidiary, brand awareness and outreach initiatives and potential strategic acquisitions.

India's neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD) care market was valued at approximately ₹5,246 crore as of March 2025, according to CARE. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Cerebral Palsy together account for nearly 72% of the market, representing around ₹3,815 crore. Experts say demand for intervention services is rising due to growing awareness of developmental conditions and increased diagnoses. At the same time, India continues to face a shortage of trained professionals such as developmental paediatricians, speech therapists, child psychologists and special educators.

Neurodevelopmental disorders include conditions such as ASD, ADHD, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disabilities, Learning Disabilities and Global Developmental Delays. These conditions often require long-term, multidisciplinary therapy involving behavioural, occupational, and speech interventions. Companies such as Mom's Belief focus on early intervention and family participation in therapy. Their programs typically involve personalised therapy plans

based on each child's developmental needs while training parents in behavioural management, communication techniques, and emotional support strategies.

Specialists note that while NDDs are often lifelong conditions, early intervention can significantly improve developmental outcomes and quality of life for children. In many cases, families — particularly mothers — face social stigma surrounding developmental conditions in children. Medical experts emphasise that neurodevelopmental disorders arise from a complex combination of genetic, prenatal, perinatal, and environmental factors. As a result, therapy models increasingly include counselling and training for parents to help families manage the emotional and practical challenges of raising children with developmental conditions.

Founded in 2018, Rays of Belief Ltd. says it has served more than 56,500 children through its therapy programs. As of September 30, 2025, over 2,500 children were actively enrolled in intervention programs delivered through its centres and digital platforms. The company offers services for children aged 18 months to 12 years, with specialised programs for teenagers up to 15 years, focusing on life skills and vocational readiness. Its centres provide a range of services including early intervention therapy, occupational therapy, language therapy, and family support programs. The organisation operates with a team of more than 300 therapists, supported by clinical operations and administrative staff.



# Flipkart Foundation and Pratham InfoTech Foundation Collaborate to Strengthen Digital Employability for Underserved Youth

**F**lipkart Foundation, the charitable arm of the Flipkart Group, has partnered with Pratham InfoTech Foundation to support digital literacy and employability skills among youth in Bengaluru and Mumbai. The initiative aims to bridge the digital divide by equipping young people with essential digital, soft, and employability skills, enabling improved access to sustainable livelihood opportunities in a technology-driven job market.

Under Phase III, the programme will train 2,500 youth annually across 10 community-based centres through a hybrid learning model that combines classroom instruction, access to digital equipment and structured employment linkages. The curriculum focuses on digital literacy, soft skills and job readiness to prepare participants for entry-level roles across sectors, while maintaining a strong emphasis on inclusion, with at

least 50% participation from women. Participants will receive access to shared laptops for learning and self-practice, alongside pre-placement sessions, interview grooming workshops and regular job fairs to strengthen employment outcomes.

Building on the success of the first two phases, which trained more than 6,000 youth and enabled over 3,800 placements, Phase III aims to support job placements or livelihood opportunities for at least 60% of trained participants, while strengthening career awareness, confidence and long-term employability. The initiative will also focus on upgrading digital infrastructure at community centres, recruiting and training local fellows as instructors, and implementing structured placement support to connect youth with employers.

By strengthening digital literacy and employability pathways, the Digital Employability Programme

aligns with the Government of India's Skill India Mission, which aims to equip individuals with industry-relevant skills to improve employability. This supports inclusive economic participation and long-term resilience, central to the Flipkart Foundation's vision. The programme is projected to directly support nearly 2,500 youth this year, reaching nearly 10,000 beneficiaries indirectly through their family and community members, thereby creating economic stability for thousands.

Puja Trisal, Director, Flipkart Foundation, said, "At Flipkart Foundation, we see our work as a crucial investment in India's future. By investing in the country's youth, we are contributing to a more resilient and future-ready workforce that can drive inclusive growth. Through our collaboration with Pratham InfoTech Foundation, we are focused on equipping youth

from underserved communities with practical skills, confidence, and exposure to employment opportunities across the modern economy. By strengthening digital literacy and employability pathways, this initiative aims to support young people, especially women, in building sustainable livelihoods and driving long-term economic resilience within their communities.”

Prem Yadav, Co-Founder and CEO, Pratham InfoTech Foundation, said, “This partnership with the Flipkart Foundation is more than skilling – it is about unlocking potential. By combining digital access, employability skills, and strong industry linkages, we are enabling young people, especially women, to build sustainable futures and move confidently towards meaningful employment.”

Over the years, the Flipkart Foundation has worked across multiple states, including Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, to support underserved communities through interventions in livelihoods, environment and community development, ensuring scalable and sustainable impact.

## World Bank, Government of India Sign Agreement to Improve Air Quality in Uttar Pradesh State

The World Bank, the Government of India and Government of Uttar Pradesh (UP) today signed an agreement to support the Government of UP's Clean Air Plan which focuses on integrated solutions to improve the state's air quality and create job opportunities for youth and women.

The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Clean Air Management Program (\$299.66 million) will focus on clean air transition across key sectors like transport, agriculture and industry with clean air benefits spilling over to other states. Almost 200 new air quality monitors will be installed with data received from the U.P. Pollution Control Board.

The agreement was signed by Juhi Mukherjee, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic

Affairs, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Government of India; B. Chandrakala, CEO, Clean Air Management Authority and Secretary of Forest, Environment and Climate Change on behalf of the Government of Uttar Pradesh; and Paul Procee, Acting Country Director, India on behalf of the World Bank.

“Uttar Pradesh is on course to become a \$1 trillion economy because we believe that economic growth, productivity, and ecological balance go hand in hand. Through the Uttar Pradesh Clean Air Management Program, our pursuit of prosperity will be measured not by GDP alone, but by clean skies, healthier and more productive citizens, and a flourishing environment that sustains our people and our planet,”

said Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

“The program will leverage almost \$150 million in private capital in the transport and MSME sectors,” said Paul Procee, Acting Country Director, World Bank India. “By investing in electric buses and 3-wheelers, and emissions monitoring systems and cleaner technologies in industries, the program will help to improve firm productivity and growth, as well as provide greater access to jobs to young men and women in the state.”

The program will also help 3.9 million households gain access to clean cooking. More than 700 brick kilns will transition to resource-efficient technology. Farmers will adopt efficient fertilizer use to improve crop productivity in the state.

The Uttar Pradesh program is part of the World Bank's Regional Air Quality Management Program in the Indo-Gangetic Plains and Himalayan Foothills (IGP-HF), a global air pollution hotspot. It has a maturity of 10 years including a grace period of two years and will receive support from the multi-donor Energy Sector Management Assessment Program.

**By investing in electric buses and 3-wheelers, and emissions monitoring systems and cleaner technologies in industries, the program will help to improve firm productivity and growth, as well as provide greater access to jobs to young men and women in the state.**



## Colgate-Palmolive partners with Haryana Government to advance Oral Health Education for 57 Lakh School Children

Colgate-Palmolive (India) Limited has announced a significant collaboration with the Government of Haryana to expand its flagship initiative, Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® (BSBF). This partnership aims to provide essential oral health education to 57 lakh school children throughout the state. The BSBF program currently reaches over 10 million children annually across various Indian states.

Impacting the school children in Haryana via BSBF carries significant public health and educational value. The BSBF initiative is one of the longest-running and most expansive oral health education programs in the world, and its impact on children in Indian states like Haryana addresses both immediate health needs and long-term well-being.

"Ensuring the health and well-being of our children is central to our vision for Haryana's future. Through this collaboration with Colgate, we aim to strengthen awareness and

embed preventive oral hygiene practices among students across the state, supporting their overall development and confidence." said Shri Nayab Singh Saini Ji, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana.

The statewide rollout embeds structured oral health education directly within Haryana's public & private school system, reinforcing preventive care during the formative years when lifelong habits are shaped. By integrating this awareness into established educational infrastructure, the collaboration aims to create sustained, large-scale behavioural change.

"This partnership represents a systemic shift from awareness to large-scale action for 57 lakh children. By embedding Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® into Haryana's educational framework, we are making preventive care a non-negotiable part of a child's development. This is about more than hygiene; it is about building a sustainable culture of

health that begins in the classroom and lasts a lifetime. said, Ms. Prabha Narasimhan, MD & CEO, Colgate-Palmolive (India) Limited.

Designed as a comprehensive preventive health initiative, the programme will feature:

- **Structured In-Person Learning:** Trained facilitators will conduct engaging, age-appropriate sessions across schools.
  - **Comprehensive Curriculum:** The programme promotes proper brushing techniques (twice daily), emphasizes timely toothbrush replacement, raises awareness about tobacco prevention, and highlights nutrition practices that support oral hygiene.
  - **Oral Health Boards:** To transform oral hygiene from a lesson into a lifelong habit, every school will feature a dedicated Oral Health Board, serving as a daily visual anchor for children to build strong, healthy habits. This permanent installation ensures that the importance of preventive oral care remains front-and-center in every student's learning environment.
  - **Teacher Training modules:** School teachers will be trained on teeth anatomy and essential oral health practices, enabling them to reinforce preventive messages within classrooms. This ensures that oral health awareness continues to be integrated into everyday learning, extending its impact to future batches of students.
  - **Take-Home Dental Kits and Brushing Calendars:** To bridge the gap between school and home, students will receive Take-Home Dental Kits and Brushing Calendars. These tools make daily routines fun and encourage parents to participate, transforming oral hygiene into a consistent family ritual.
- "Preventive health education, when delivered consistently and embedded early, creates powerful ripple effects beyond the classroom.

Children become ambassadors of healthy habits within their families and communities. This collaboration reinforces our dedication to fostering lasting behavioural change.", said Ms. Shilpashree Muniswamappa, Director – ESG & Communications,

Colgate-Palmolive (India) Limited. A Legacy of Global and National Impact Colgate's Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® (BSBF) program has achieved remarkable scale, benefiting over 195 million children across India and more than 2 billion

children and their families globally since its inception. This success is driven by robust public-private partnerships across multiple Indian states, including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Kerala, Assam, Puducherry, and Goa.

## NeoGrowth Deepens Community Impact through its Flagship CSR Initiative 'NeoShakti'

**N**eoGrowth, a leading fintech NBFC, significantly deepened its community engagement in FY'26 through NeoShakti, its flagship CSR initiative focused on advancing women's economic and personal empowerment. Now in its second year, the initiative has made a shift towards more active, on-ground, and sustained engagement, with a stronger focus on long-term and outcome-oriented interventions.

NeoShakti is focused on two core pillars: livelihood & community development and employment-linked skill development, implemented in partnership with Goonj and Times Employ India Foundation. Together, these initiatives addressed both immediate livelihood needs and long term employability, enabling women to build resilience, strengthen job ready skills, and contribute meaningfully to their families and communities, while also deepening employee participation across NeoGrowth's CSR efforts.

Through this platform, NeoGrowth aligns its CSR initiatives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), particularly SDG 5 - Gender Equality and SDG 8- Decent Work & Economic Growth, contributing to inclusive and sustainable development.

Under the livelihood and community development pillar implemented with Goonj, 110 tonnes of urban surplus were collected through awareness drives. Of this, 36,000 kilograms were processed by 33 women beneficiaries into 72,596 utility products. This circular upcycling effort enabled income generation while contributing to the conservation of approximately 360 million litres of water and the avoidance of approximately 46,800 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions.

Alongside livelihood creation, women-led community development activities supported local infrastructure improvements such as canals, kitchen gardens, and water pathways, enhancing access to essential resources. These interventions positively impacted 1,500 families, who also received family kits comprising clothing essentials, hygiene and sanitary items, utensils, footwear, toys, and repurposed products tailored to the local context.

Complementing these efforts, NeoGrowth also advanced its livelihood-linked skill development agenda under NeoShakti through structured training programmes implemented in partnership with Times Employ India Foundation. During FY'26, 170 women beneficiaries underwent training, taking the total number of women trained under NeoShakti to over 300 in the last two years, across Retail and Business Correspondent & Business Facilitator roles. The programmes covered counselling, classroom training, assessments, certification, and placement readiness support, aligned with industry-relevant curriculum.

To strengthen learning outcomes, the skilling programmes incorporated hands on industry exposure and expert led sessions, enabling participants to gain practical insights into workplace operations, customer engagement, financial processes, fraud awareness, digital tools, and professional readiness. These engagements helped bridge the gap between training and employment, strengthening confidence and job preparedness. The year's skill development activities concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony held on 5th February 2026 in Mumbai, marking the successful completion of the programme and the transition of participants from training to livelihood opportunities, with 80% percent of participants securing placements following course completion.

CSR at NeoGrowth extends beyond structured projects and is reflected in the way employees actively engage with and contribute to these initiatives. During FY'26, employees collectively participated in volunteering activities across multiple non-profit organisations, engaging with NGOs beyond the Company's core CSR partnerships. These engagements reflect NeoGrowth's effort to encourage sustained community involvement among its teams.

Commenting on the initiative, Arun Nayyar, MD and CEO, NeoGrowth, said, "FY'26 marked a year of deeper engagement for NeoShakti. By integrating livelihood creation, skill development, and employee participation, we are focused on creating holistic outcomes that support long-term resilience, inclusion, and opportunity."

# MYNUSCo Expands from Automotive to Everyday Living

**M**YNUSCo, the Bengaluru-based biomaterials enterprise that transforms agricultural waste into high-performance materials, has scaled beyond automotive applications into consumer markets. This post-COVID strategic shift marks a turning point for the company founded in 2015 by Mahadev Chikkanna and Shruthi Ujjani Ramesh, positioning it to scale its environmental impact significantly.

The company spent its first five years in R&D mode, developing proprietary biocomposite technologies without external funding. The breakthrough came in 2019 with a contract from a global automotive OEM to supply biocomposites for car interiors. However, the pandemic forced a complete strategy rethink.

"COVID-19 disrupted supply chains globally and clarified our path - we needed materials that touch everyday life, not just automotive interiors," says Mahadev Chikkanna, Co-Founder, MYNUSCo.

That realization sparked eha.eco, a consumer brand offering sustainable lifestyle products, including planters, homeware, and gifting. Recent launches include Loopac.eco for circular packaging and 3s.eco for carbon-negative construction solutions. MYNUSCo started as a biomaterials company but has evolved into a one-stop, end-to-end biomaterials and circularity adoption platform - from sourcing crop waste to supplying ready-to-use finished products. It is one of its kind, not just in India but globally.

MYNUSCo's biocomposites are made from bamboo waste, rice husk, straw, coir, and other agricultural by-products that would otherwise be burned. These materials are categorized as BioDur for durable goods and BioPur for compostable



Mahadev and Shruthi Ujjani Ramesh

applications. Every material is backed by an ISO-verified Life Cycle Assessment system, providing transparent carbon accounting from source to finished product. MYNUSCo's work has prevented over 2,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - equivalent to taking roughly 1,400 cars off the road for a year.

Globally, 45% of carbon emissions stem from material production - plastics, cement, steel. Yet, most climate action focuses on energy transition. MYNUSCo addresses this gap with cost-competitive, scalable alternatives requiring no major tooling changes.

"Industries and consumers shouldn't have to choose between sustainability and performance," Mahadev Chikkanna explains. "We're giving them a verified path to circularity that fits existing norms."

With more than half of its staff being women across different levels, the company has its biocomposites manufacturing base in Mysuru and collaborates with partner molding units across India to convert these biomaterials into finished products. This partnership-driven model supports existing manufacturing ecosystems to transition to sustainable

materials while accelerating scale and impact.

"Sustainability must include social equity," says Shruthi Ujjani Ramesh, Co-Founder, MYNUSCo. "We're committed to creating shared success across our entire value chain, not just for the company and shareholders. What was once perceived as challenging has now become one of our key strengths."

Looking ahead, MYNUSCo plans expansion into new product categories. The company's impact has accelerated dramatically - carbon reductions that took a year to achieve five years ago now happen in under a month. This momentum is expected to continue as MYNUSCo develops new materials, products, and markets. With stricter sustainability regulations and growing consumer awareness, the company aims to become the preferred partner for brands seeking verified low-carbon alternatives.

For a company that started with curiosity about climate change, MYNUSCo has evolved into one of India's credible circular economy platforms - proving that sustainability can move from lab experiments to everyday impact.



## Swaraj Tractors Wins Golden Peacock Award for CSR Excellence

**S**waraj Tractors, part of the Mahindra Group has been honoured with the prestigious Golden Peacock Award for its sustained commitment to strengthening rural communities and enabling inclusive growth across India's villages.

The award has been conferred for Swaraj's flagship Integrated Village Development initiative — a holistic, community-led programme designed to enable sustainable rural transformation. Built on detailed village-level assessments and close engagement with local stakeholders, the initiative aligns development priorities with the real needs of rural households.

Through an integrated and participatory model, the programme enhances access to quality education, improves water security, promotes environmental stewardship and enables income generation through skill development and

entrepreneurship. A strong emphasis on capacity building equips women, youth and farmers with the capabilities and confidence to lead development within their own communities.

Over the past three years, the initiative has driven measurable socio-economic impact across more than 30 villages in Punjab and Haryana by strengthening local institutions, fostering community ownership, and enabling convergence with government programs.

Key interventions include the renovation of over 15 village ponds and the construction of 23 rooftop rainwater harvesting structures in government schools, supporting water conservation and ecological restoration. The program has improved learning outcomes for more than 5,000 students across 30+ government schools through need-based infrastructure support and targeted educational interventions, while empowering over 6,000 women

through institutional strengthening and enhanced access to government schemes. In parallel, it has skilled more than 2,000 women and persons with disabilities, enhancing employability and livelihood opportunities.

Speaking on the recognition, Gaganjot Singh, CEO, Swaraj Division, M&M Ltd. said: "At Swaraj we are committed to enabling progress in the communities we serve. Guided by Group Mahindra's purpose of Driving Positive Change we work alongside rural households to create opportunities that are inclusive, sustainable and community led. This recognition reaffirms our belief that empowered communities are the foundation of lasting rural transformation."

The Golden Peacock Awards are among the most respected global recognitions for excellence in organisational practices and impact, and Swaraj's selection followed a rigorous multi-stage evaluation process.



# Sightsavers India and Roche Launch Diabetic Retinopathy Clinic in Bhopal

**S**ightsavers India, in partnership with Roche, has launched a dedicated Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) Clinic in Bhopal under the Amrita Drishti – Urban Eye Health Programme. This initiative aims to enhance early detection and management of retinal conditions among underserved urban populations in Madhya Pradesh, with a special focus on women, children and the elderly within marginalised communities.

Diabetic retinopathy remains a significant cause of avoidable blindness. As diabetes prevalence increases, many patients remain unaware of retinal damage until vision loss becomes severe. Early screening and timely referral are essential to reducing long-term complications.

The initiative establishes a dedicated DR clinic at Jai Prakash District



**Mr RN Mohanty, CEO, Sightsavers India**

Hospital, Bhopal, supported by the installation of a fundus camera to enable early and accurate retinal screening. Patients diagnosed with diabetes are referred for screening

at this facility, and those requiring further diagnosis or treatment are directed to Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal, ensuring a streamlined pathway from primary screening to tertiary care.

In addition, Sightsavers India will strengthen referral systems, provide technical support, conduct outreach and awareness activities, and collaborate closely with government stakeholders to ensure sustainability within the urban health system.

The launch event was attended by Dr. Anshul Upadhyay - SPO, NPCBVI Madhya Pradesh; Dr. Vivek Som - Vitreoretinal Surgeon, Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal; Dr. Manish Khichi, Lead – Market Access, Roche Products; Ms. Tasha Mahanta, State Programme Lead – Bhopal, Sightsavers India; and Mr. Mayur



Verma, Deputy Manager – DSTG, Sightsavers India, among others.

Dr Monika Puri, Chief Commercial Officer at Roche, said:

“Diabetic retinopathy is a silent threat that can steal vision even before symptoms appear. Through Amrita Drishti – a dedicated retina clinic at JP Hospital, Bhopal, we aim to ensure timely screening, early diagnosis, and access to treatment for every person living with retinal diseases. Protecting sight is not a

luxury, it is essential to living with dignity and independence.”

RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India, added:

“This initiative under our Amrita Drishti – Urban Eye Health Programme is designed to strengthen and complement the government’s efforts to address non-communicable diseases and prevent avoidable blindness. We are working closely with public health institutions to enhance screening

systems, build clinical capacity, and establish clear referral pathways for timely treatment. We sincerely thank Roche for partnering with us to advance equitable and accessible retinal care for underserved communities.”

Through this collaboration, Sightsavers India and Roche reaffirm their shared commitment to reducing preventable blindness and expanding access to quality retinal care for vulnerable populations.

## SAVE Group’s CSR Initiative “Save the Roshni 2.0” Continues in Gaya with Advanced Eye Check-up Camps and Free Cataract Surgeries

**S**AVE Group has launched its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, “Save the Roshni 2.0,” with the objective of providing quality eye care services to people in need. Under this initiative, 4 advanced eye check-up camps are being organized in Gaya, Bihar, along with free cataract surgeries for 100 individuals.

So far, advanced eye check-up camps have been successfully conducted at Fatehpur, Kariyadpur, and Chakand Bazaar (Gaya). A total of 238 beneficiaries participated in these camps. Following the screenings, 275 spectacles were distributed to those in need, and 40 cataract surgeries have already been successfully performed.

This initiative reflects SAVE Group’s commitment to strengthening access to eye care services in rural and semi-urban areas, ensuring that economically weaker

sections of society receive timely diagnosis and treatment. Speaking on the occasion, Ajay Kumar Sinha, Director and Co-Founder of SAVE Group, said: “Save the Roshni 2.0 is an important part of our CSR vision. Our purpose is not limited to providing financial services, but also to creating a meaningful positive impact in the lives of people in need. By restoring vision, we aim to bring new hope and self-reliance to individuals and their families.”

The remaining camps under this initiative will also be conducted in other parts of Gaya district, ensuring maximum outreach and impact. SAVE Group plans to further expand the initiative to benefit more people and support community well-being on a larger scale.

SAVE Group strongly believes that true progress in society is only possible when essential needs like healthcare and awareness are given top priority.

# BMW India Foundation supports traditional Indian artisans' journey to sustainable livelihoods

**B**MW India Foundation is advancing its commitment to inclusive and sustainable development by supporting and upskilling traditional artisans across India. Guided by the vision to preserve the authenticity of indigenous art forms while connecting artists to contemporary resources and markets, the Foundation's initiatives aim to enable sustainable livelihoods and enhance upward social mobility for artisan communities.

Launched in 2025, the artisan empowerment programme addresses long-standing challenges faced by traditional artists, including limited access to structured skilling, contemporary design exposure, and organised market platforms. Through partnerships with experienced implementation organisations, BMW India Foundation is creating pathways that allow artisans to strengthen their craft, respond to evolving consumer demand, and build resilient income streams.

Hardeep Singh Brar, President & CEO, BMW Group India said, "At BMW India Foundation, we deeply respect the incredible craftsmanship and rich traditions of India's artisans. For us, this is not just about preserving beautiful art forms, it's about supporting the talented people who bring them to life. Many of these artisans face real challenges, from limited access to new skills to difficulty reaching bigger marketplaces. We want to help change that by giving





them the tools, training, scope for experimentation and opportunities they need to grow and sustain their livelihoods. Programs like Project Chitravan and Project Phulkari are very close to our hearts. They allow artisans to stay connected to their roots while exploring new ideas and designs that appeal to modern customers.”

In central India, BMW India Foundation has partnered with the Craft and Community Development Foundation (CCDF) to implement Project Chitravan, supporting tribal artisans from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra practising indigenous art forms such as Gond, Warli, Bhil, Baiga, Sohrai, and Kohvar. Artists are selected based on craftsmanship, creative potential, and economic need, and are provided structured mentorship and contemporary design inputs to help them evolve creatively while retaining the authenticity of traditional narratives and techniques. Around 40 tribal artisans across central India are currently being nurtured under this initiative.

In Punjab, BMW India Foundation has joined hands with the Delhi Crafts Council to strengthen and modernise the traditional craft of Phulkari embroidery. The initiative focuses on skill enhancement, revival of authentic techniques, and adoption of sustainable practices such as natural dyes and responsible material usage. Artisans collaborate with textile designers to co-create contemporary product lines, including stoles, apparel accents, home décor items, and accessories, improving product relevance and market access. Training in digital literacy and market readiness further enables artisans to engage with buyers and participate confidently in emerging market platforms. Around 30 artisans in Punjab are currently being supported under this initiative.

# CSR initiative brings hope for 108 patients as AlfAccurate Advisors partner with Arham Yuva Seva Group for “Arham Dialysis Sahay”



**Rajesh Kothari, Founder & Managing Director, AlfAccurate Advisors, engaging with a beneficiary during the Arham Dialysis Sahay, an AYSG CSR initiative**

**A**lfAccurate Advisors Pvt. Ltd., with Arham Yuva Seva Group (AYSG), have partnered for the CSR initiative “Arham Dialysis Sahay,” aimed at supporting underprivileged individuals battling chronic kidney disease by ensuring access to life-saving dialysis treatment.

Dialysis is not a one-time procedure but a recurring medical necessity that places significant financial and emotional strain on families, particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds. Recognizing this challenge, the initiative provides

holistic support designed to ease both medical and lifestyle burdens faced by patients.

Under this program, ₹20 lakh worth of assistance has been extended, benefiting 108 dialysis patients. Financial aid was distributed through verified cheque support, enabling beneficiaries to continue treatment at medical centres of their choice. In addition to treatment sponsorship, essential grocery kits containing staple food items were provided to help families manage daily nutritional needs amid rising healthcare expenses.

To promote long-term health monitoring, blood pressure measurement devices were also distributed, empowering patients to track their health independently. Trolley bags were included to help beneficiaries conveniently carry essential supplies and medical equipment.

Chronic kidney disease is a growing healthcare concern in India, with many patients forced to discontinue treatment due to financial limitations. The costs for these treatments run upto ₹1.5 lakh per year. Arham Dialysis Sahay aims to bridge this gap by combining financial assistance with compassionate community support.

AlfAccurate Advisors’ participation reflects a commitment to responsible corporate citizenship, while AYSG - a nationwide non-profit with over 1,500 volunteers inspired by Param Namramuni Gurudev - ensured effective implementation through beneficiary verification, logistics coordination, and on-ground execution.

“Our CSR philosophy focuses on creating sustainable impact by supporting healthcare access and easing the burden on families facing long term medical challenges. We sincerely thank Arham Yuva Seva Group for their noble initiative,” said Mr. Rajesh Kothari, Founder & Managing Director, AlfAccurate Advisors, one of the leading Investment Management firms in India.

The initiative highlights how collaborative CSR efforts can create meaningful, sustainable impact by supporting vulnerable communities with dignity, care, and continuity of treatment.

# Fleetguard Filters Conferred the Best CSR Corporate Award by MCCIA

**F**leetguard Filters Private Limited (FFPL), a leading manufacturer of filtration solutions for on- and off-highway applications, was honoured with the Corporate Social Responsibility Award (Instituted in memory of Mr B. G. Deshmukh, IAS) by the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) at the recently held award function.

This prestigious recognition from an established association such as MCCIA underscores FFPL's continued dedication to creating meaningful social impact through its CSR vision, delivered through focused programs that enhance education, environmental sustainability, healthcare, and rural development.

The award was presented by the Chief Guest, Mr Vikas Pansare (IAS), Managing Director, Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation and Mr Sanjay Kirloskar, Chairman and Managing Director -Kirloskar Brothers Ltd, President MCCIA, to Mr Niranjan Kirloskar, Managing Director, Fleetguard Filters Private Limited, and Ms Priyanka Chavan, Assistant Manager – CSR.

Commenting on the award, Niranjan Kirloskar, Managing Director, FFPL, said, "For us, Corporate Social Responsibility is not just a process but an integral part of our DNA. We believe in giving back to the society that has made us what we are, and at the same time, it is also our endeavour to improve the lives of all our stakeholders, including Clients, Partners, employees, and fellow citizens." Fleetguard Filters Conferred the Best CSR Corporate Award by MCCIA

Fleetguard Filters' continued commitment to community welfare



**From left - Prashant Girbhane - Director General, MCCIA, Sanjay Kirloskar, Chairman and Managing Director - Kirloskar Brothers Ltd, President MCCIA, Mr Vikas Pansare (IAS), Managing Director, Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation**

and sustainable development initiatives is acknowledged by Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture

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# Aadhar Housing Finance backs Sheroes Hangout Café renovation and Skill Development initiative

Under its CSR initiative Aadhar Kishori Kalyan, Aadhar Housing Finance Limited is committed towards supporting the skill development program for the acid attack survivors partnering with the Chhanv Foundation. As a part of this initiative AHFL has enabled the renovation and upgrade of the Sheroes Hangout Cafe in Noida, that is operated by these survivors. The improved infrastructure strengthens the cafe as a safe, functional, and all-weather workspace, playing a key role in supporting livelihood continuity for those associated with the cafe.

The renovated Sheroes Hangout Cafe in Noida was inaugurated in the presence of Mr. Rishi Anand, MD and CEO of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited, and Mr. Alok Dixit, Founder of the Chhanv Foundation. Their presence reflects the collaborative approach between the two organizations in supporting infrastructure

improvements that empower acid attack survivors.

Mr. Rishi Anand, MD and CEO at Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. said, “This initiative reflects our belief that economic participation and dignity at work are central to rehabilitation.



By supporting structured training for acid attack survivors and improving the Sheroes Hangout Cafe workspace in Noida, we aim to contribute to pathways that help these women build independence and stability.”

Expressing gratitude for the support, Mr. Alok Dixit, Founder,

Chhanv Foundation, said, “Working closely with survivors of acid attacks, we have understood that skills, education, and sustainable livelihoods are at the core of effective empowerment. The continued support received from Aadhar Housing has enabled us to provide more effective opportunities to the wider group of survivors.”

Under this initiative 50 women across Noida, Kolkata, and Pune were trained for vocational skills and livelihood pathways that contribute to economic independence and social reintegration. Participants receive training in computer literacy, language skills, personality development, and job readiness, along with vocational exposure in areas such as handicrafts and bakery operations. The initiative also creates work opportunities for women who have completed medical rehabilitation, enabling them to engage in meaningful employment aligned with their skills.

# Hyundai 'Art for hope' Awards INR 2.3 Crore in Grants to 200 Artists across 5 Seasons



Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the philanthropic arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), inaugurated Season 5 of its flagship initiative Art for hope at Travancore Palace, New Delhi. The program felicitated 50 grant-winning artists and collectives from 22 states and union territories with a consolidated grant corpus of Rs 60 lakh. With this edition, cumulative grants under Art for hope have now crossed INR 2.3 crore benefitting 200 artists across the length and breadth of the country. HMIF has further benefited 25,000+ artists through its various art-led interventions nationwide.

Commenting on the significance of Art for hope - Season 5, Lee Seong-ho,

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to India said, "What makes Art for hope particularly meaningful is its focus on supporting individual artists whose work engages with important social and environmental themes. It clearly reflects Hyundai Motor India's commitment to supporting creativity, communities and cultural development. The Embassy of the Republic of Korea highly values these efforts and has followed this program with great interest."

Speaking at the inaugural event of Art for hope - Season 5, Tarun Garg, Managing Director & CEO - HMIL said, "Anchored in Hyundai's global vision of Progress for Humanity, Art for hope advances HMIF's approach to Creating Shared Value. With this

program, we invest in social change-makers, support emerging and under-represented artists, preserve the rich Indian heritage and enable creativity that moves communities forward. Season 5 marks a milestone with cumulative grants crossing INR 2.3 crores, directly benefitting 200 artists and touching lives of 25,000+ art practitioners. By supporting outstanding artists and art collectives every year, we transform ideas into impact for Bharat and for the future we share."

## Key Highlights: Art for hope - Season 5

- Total 50 grant winners: 10 art collectives and 40 individual artists including 5 persons with disabilities
- Applications received from nearly 800 artists across 22 Indian states and union territories spanning Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Telangana, Assam, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka and more
- Vivid showcase of India's diverse creative spectrum covering rural collectives, tribal storytellers, urban innovators and digital creators – sparking dialogue, inclusion and social awareness



# CSR INDIA UNITED

## SBI Foundation and CBM India Project Restores Sight to Thousands: 3,000 Cataract Surgeries Supported Across Howrah, West Bengal



The SBIF Eye Care project, a collaborative initiative between SBI Foundation and CBM India, has achieved a significant milestone in its mission to combat avoidable blindness among marginalized communities. The project has successfully supported 3,000 cataract surgeries, screened over 40,000 people for eye

conditions, distributed 400 spectacles free of charge, and reached over 3 lakh people through community outreach and awareness initiatives across 12 blocks in the Howrah district of West Bengal.

Launched in March 2024, the program was designed to address a critical public health need in one of West Bengal's most densely populated

districts. Cataracts remain a leading cause of blindness worldwide, and in Howrah, limited access to eye health services, low awareness about symptoms and treatment, and insufficient follow-up care and rehabilitation have created an urgent need for intervention.

At its core, the SBIF Eye Care project focuses on delivering free cataract surgeries to people from low-income groups and marginalized communities, including persons with disabilities. To achieve this, multiple points of access to eye care were created, including door-to-door screenings, awareness drives, and CBM India's network of inclusive vision centers for diagnosis and counselling. Patients identified through these channels were then referred to the empaneled hospital for surgery and follow-up care.

Speaking about the project impact, Sony Thomas, Executive Director, CBM India Trust, said, "Cataracts remain one of the leading causes of preventable blindness in India and the world, yet the surgery to treat this condition is straightforward and highly effective. For many people, however, factors such as geography, income, misconceptions about vision loss, or other considerations mean they never receive it. Through this partnership with SBI Foundation, we were able to change that in Howrah by identifying people who required cataract surgery and ensuring they underwent the procedure. The results of this project speak for themselves."

The impact of the initiative is reflected in the experiences of its beneficiaries. Ms. Brinda, a 65-year-old homemaker, said: "The surgery gave me my old life back. I want to hold my grandson's hand and walk him to school every day." Mr. Ganesh, a 60-year-old farmer, shared: "I can see the world clearly now. I can work in my fields, read, and live without

depending on others. I feel young again.” The family of Mr. Banshi, a 62-year-old farmer who underwent cataract surgery through the project, shared, “We are glad that he is more confident now, and does not feel low anymore. He has

got his second sight and is very happy.” The SBIF Eye Care project demonstrates how partnerships between civil society and the corporate sector can complement and strengthen government efforts to address preventable blindness. The

model developed in the Howrah district—combining community-level outreach linked to diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up—offers a replicable framework for supporting inclusive eye care delivery across India

## Adani Foundation at ACC Chanda Flags off Mobile Health Care Unit to Improve Rural Healthcare Access

**A**CC, part of the diversified Adani Portfolio and the fastest-growing building materials and solutions company, along with the Adani Foundation, has strengthened last-mile healthcare delivery by flagging off a Mobile Health Care Unit (MHCU) in Chanda.

The MHCU has been launched to provide primary healthcare services at the village level across all 18 operational villages in the region, ensuring improved access to basic medical support, preventive care, and timely treatment for community members.

The flagging-off ceremony was attended by the Chief Plant Manager (CPM), Chanda, along with the Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat members, and the CSR team. Addressing the gathering, the CPM highlighted the importance of accessible healthcare facilities at the village level and emphasized how the MHCU will help residents receive essential medical care closer to their homes.

Community representatives expressed their satisfaction with the initiative and appreciated ACC’s sustained efforts across multiple developmental sectors,



particularly healthcare. The MHCU initiative reinforces ACC and the Adani Foundation’s commitment

to inclusive growth by improving health outcomes and overall well-being in rural communities.



## BC Jindal Foundation Transforms Government Schools in Rural Odisha Under Project 'Unnayan'

**B**C Jindal Foundation, the CSR wing of India's leading business conglomerate, the BC Jindal Group, has strengthened the quality of education across 13 government schools located in 9 villages of Kaniha block. Through its flagship initiative, Project Unnayan, the Foundation has directly benefited 1,676 students and indirectly impacted the lives of 40,000 people across 29 villages of Angul District by upgrading infrastructure and integrating modern technology. The CSR wing, as part of this social impact initiative, Project Unnayan, is empowering rural government schools, which remain the primary providers of education for rural and tribal children.

The BC Jindal Group, led by Shyam Sunder Jindal, Promoter BC Jindal

Group, through its foundation's initiative, has created inclusive learning spaces and opportunities that enable children to build sustainable career pathways. BC Jindal Foundation has been working consistently over the past three years to create sustainable educational ecosystems in peripheral villages surrounding its operational areas. Project Unnayan has positively impacted 1,676 children studying in 13 government schools and two anganwadi centres children from 29 villages of Angul District. The initiative has focused on strengthening school infrastructure through the renovation of 25 classrooms, including BALA painting, installation of 320 sets of desks and benches, and construction of boundary walls and school gates in government schools to enhance safety.

In addition, the project has established smart classrooms, computer laboratories, mini science centres, and libraries to promote experiential learning and recreation across the beneficiary schools.

Beyond academic infrastructure, the Foundation has also prioritised student health and hygiene by ensuring access to safe drinking water through the installation of water purifier with chiller, construction of modern kitchen facilities for mid-day meal preparation and storage, development of handwash platform, improvement of sanitation facilities, and installation of sanitary pad incinerators in upper primary schools.

Under this initiative, the CSR wing has also renovated and revitalized Anganwadi centres located in Derang and Kaniha Gram Panchayats. The

intervention included improvement of existing classrooms infrastructure, provision of educational learning equipment, child-friendly furniture and construction of a new kitchen along with sanitation facilities.

In addition to this, the BC Jindal Group has constructed a multi-story High School building featuring vocational classrooms at Government High School, Pabitra Mohan in Kaniha block. The classrooms are equipped with modern smart LED screens, furniture & fixtures, a fire extinguisher and educational BaLA (Building as Learning Aid) paintings.

On August 27, 2025, the Honourable Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated the Pabitra Mohan High School building and formally opened it for the schoolchildren. He interacted with the children and appreciated the BC Jindal Foundation's efforts toward improving the quality of education.

“Our social impact initiatives are strategically designed to create value

for all participants and stakeholders. Project Unnayan is one such unique program that focuses on reviving and upgrading the infrastructure of existing government schools in the region. Through this initiative, we will continue to address challenges like high student absenteeism, inadequate school infrastructure, and focus on driving a foundational and long-term impact,” said a BC Jindal Group spokesperson.

The project Unnayan is working toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of Quality Education (SDG-4), Gender Equality (SDG-5), and Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG-6) by ensuring comprehensive school infrastructure development programs.

“At the BC Jindal Group, we have leveraged our multi-layered corporate expertise to ensure project excellence. Our civil engineering team conducted regular site audits to ensure construction quality and material standards for these government

schools. Simultaneously, the group's senior management and internal finance and audit teams provided strategic oversight on KPIs and budget allocation, ensuring maximum impact,” added the spokesperson.

The BC Jindal Group has planned a total investment of Rs 40 crore for various CSR projects across India during FY26. Through this, the foundation plans to focus on improving healthcare, skill development, animal welfare, and nutrition by expanding its ongoing initiatives and introducing new projects under its CSR program. The BC Jindal Group plans to intensify its CSR operations in the states of Delhi, West Bengal, Haryana, and Maharashtra, among others.

Founded in 1952 by Shri BC Jindal, the BC Jindal Group, led by Shyam Sunder Jindal, Promoter, BC Jindal Group, is one of India's leading conglomerates and is engaged in a diverse portfolio of businesses that includes packaging films, energy & steel products.

## RBL Bank distributes 300 bicycles to girl students in Raipur under its CSR Initiative UMEED

**R**BL Bank, one of India's leading private sector banks, through its CSR initiative - UMEED, has distributed 300 bicycles and school kits to girl students from underprivileged communities. The initiative addresses one of the significant challenges contributing to school dropouts among girl students - the long distance between their homes and school.

The bicycle donation drive was held at Shri Balaji Vidya Mandir, Raipur, in the presence of Laxmi Verma, Rajya Sabha MP Chhattisgarh;

Nandan Jain, Vice President - BJP; Satish Thourani, State President Chhattisgarh Chamber of Commerce; Nikesh Bardia, Treasurer Chhattisgarh Chamber of Commerce; G. Swamy, Chairman, Balaji Vidya Mandir and senior dignitaries from RBL Bank.

The UMEED initiative aims to offer a practical and sustainable solution by providing underprivileged girls with access to reliable transportation. These bicycles will

empower them to commute to school efficiently while promoting an energy-conscious and environmentally friendly approach.

R. Subramaniakumar, MD & CEO, RBL Bank said, “At RBL Bank, we believe that education is the cornerstone of a bright future. Through our CSR initiative, UMEED, we strive to address critical barriers that prevent children from accessing quality education. By providing bicycles and school kits, we aim to empower young girls to overcome obstacles and pursue their dreams. This initiative underscores our commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable society, where every child has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.”

RBL Bank's UMEED initiative has been a beacon of hope for marginalised communities across the country. With a focus on enabling education and fostering opportunities, the Bank continues to lead impactful outreach programs that bring meaningful change.



## Smile Train India and Birth Defects Research Foundation Launch Birth Anomalies Network of India

Smile Train India and the Birth Defects Research Foundation announced the launch of BIND – Birth Anomalies Network of India, a first-of-its-kind national forum aimed at closing critical gaps in prevention, early detection, treatment, and long-term care for children born with birth anomalies.

In India, birth anomalies affect an estimated 600,000 newborns annually and contribute significantly to infant mortality, lifelong disabilities, and financial and emotional strain on families. As deaths from infectious causes decline in India, congenital anomalies account for a growing proportion of child mortality but often receive insufficient attention.

BIND seeks to align stakeholders across government, healthcare, research institutions, and civil society to strengthen surveillance and data systems, promote preventive

measures, expand awareness of anomaly scans and newborn screening, improve timely access to quality treatment, and drive evidence-informed policymaking in a coordinated way. At the core of the initiative is the proposed National Birth Anomalies Registry, which aims to generate authentic data, identify preventable risk factors, and guide equitable resource allocation.

Speaking at the launch, Mamta Carroll, Vice President and Regional Director, Asia, Smile Train, said, “Birth anomalies have remained under-recognised in public discourse for far too long. BIND aims to create a unified platform that brings together clinicians, researchers, caregivers, policymakers and civil society around a shared national purpose. BIND is launched with an ambitious vision to create a more enabling and inclusive

environment where every child born with a birth anomaly has timely access to timely information, quality treatment, rehabilitation, and long-term support, and every family is empowered with the care and dignity they deserve.”

Dr. Anita Kar, Director, Birth Defects Research Foundation, Pune, highlighted the research gap, stating, “India lacks robust nationwide data on the true burden, causes, and long-term outcomes of birth anomalies. Without strong surveillance and registry systems, policies remain fragmented and reactive. Children with congenital conditions require integrated, multidisciplinary care, from early diagnosis to safe and sustained comprehensive care supported by sustained public investment and evidence-based planning.”

The launch of this initiative on March 2, 2026, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, was attended by healthcare leaders, researchers, civil society organisations, affected individuals and families to advance a coordinated national agenda. A white-paper outlining the roadmap for a proposed National Birth Anomalies Task Force and recommendations was released at the event.

### About Smile Train India:

Smile Train empowers local medical professionals with training, funding, and resources to provide free cleft surgery and comprehensive cleft care to children globally. We advance a sustainable solution and scalable global health model for cleft treatment, drastically improving children’s lives, including their ability to eat, breathe, speak, and ultimately thrive. Since 2000, Smile Train India has supported more than 750,000 free cleft surgeries across India, through a network of 130+ partner hospitals. To learn more about how Smile Train’s sustainable approach in India, please visit [smiletrainindia.org](http://smiletrainindia.org)

# DreamXec Launches Platform to Make Student Research Funding Accessible Across India

Targets ₹5,000 Crore Student Innovation impact out of the 5 Lakh crore+ opportunity

**D**reamXec has unveiled an innovative platform to expand student research funding across India. DreamXec is India's first dedicated student research and innovation crowdfunding platform – [www.dreamxec.com](http://www.dreamxec.com), built to democratize access to funding for the country's 43.3 million higher education students.

In thousands of colleges across India, brilliant ideas live inside notebooks, lab files, and student laptops. Ideas for affordable medical devices. Smarter irrigation systems. Cleaner water solutions. Renewable energy models. Most of them never see the light of day. Not because students lack talent. Not because they lack ambition. But because they lack access to funding.

## The Gap Nobody Talks About

India has over 43 million students enrolled across more than 43,000+ higher education institutions. Yet meaningful research funding reaches only a tiny fraction of them.

While top-tier institutions receive significant research grants, students in Tier-2 and Tier-3 colleges often struggle to raise even ₹50,000 to build a prototype. Many never apply for funding at all because the process is complex, slow, and discouraging. As a result, innovation remains concentrated — and potential remains untapped. DreamXec was built to change that.

## A Bridge Between Ideas and Support

DreamXec is India's first dedicated

student innovation funding platform. It connects verified college students directly with alumni, individual supporters, and corporate CSR contributors through a transparent, milestone-based model.

Instead of navigating complicated approval cycles, students can:

- Create a verified profile using their institutional email
- Upload their project with clear goals and funding needs
- Receive optional faculty endorsements
- Go live on the platform with transparent tracking

Supporters can browse projects, fund them directly, and track progress in real time.

"We're building the missing bridge in India's research ecosystem," says Ashish Trivedi, Founder & CEO of DreamXec. "Alumni want to give back, CSR funds are available, institutions are under pressure to do more research, and students have ideas worth backing. But there has not been a transparent, structured way to connect all of them."

"At a time when policies like NEP 2020 and RDI scheme put unprecedented emphasis on research, innovation and India's aspiration to become a global knowledge leader, our goal is to co-opt and support the entire ecosystem - students, faculty, alumni, institutions, CSR and government — by plugging gaps wherever they exist to work better together. DreamXec exists to make it simple, accountable and inspiring for anyone who cares about India's

future to fund the next generation of problem-solvers."

## Designed for Trust

Trust is at the heart of DreamXec. Projects go through multi-layer verification. Funds are released milestone by milestone. Supporters can see exactly how their contributions are being used.

"India has the scale. What we needed was infrastructure," says Sanskar Seth, Co-Founder & Tech Lead. "We've built DreamXec to handle millions of students while keeping accountability strong. Innovation shouldn't depend on geography."

## Why This Moment Matters

India speaks often about its demographic dividend. But demographic advantage becomes innovation advantage only when opportunity is distributed. Across the country, students are building solutions in agriculture, climate tech, health-care, and sustainable engineering. With the right early support, these projects can evolve into startups, patents, or scalable social impact ventures. Without that support, they remain unfinished experiments. DreamXec wants to ensure fewer ideas are left behind.

## What's Next

At launch, DreamXec aims to onboard:

- 100 colleges across India
- 50 verified student projects in high-impact sectors
- Early alumni and CSR partnerships

Over the next five years, the platform envisions supporting 400,000 students and mobilizing ₹5,000 crore toward student-led innovation.



4-acre Water pond rejuvenated by Godrej Enterprises Group in Chuni Kalan village, Mohali

# **GODREJ ENTERPRISES GROUP SCALES COMMUNITY-LED WATER CONSERVATION ACROSS INDIA, STRENGTHENING LOCAL WATER SECURITY**

The efforts span community-focused conservation, urban water restoration, and sustainable farming safeguard millions of litres of water annually

**A**s water stress and climate variability intensify across India, Godrej Enterprises Group is scaling community-led water conservation initiatives to strengthen local water security across multiple states. Anchored in the company's Good & Green philosophy, these efforts focus on restoring natural water systems, improving groundwater recharge and promoting sustainable water use across rural and urban landscapes.

Godrej's integrated water stewardship initiatives span water body restoration, wastewater treatment, urban water regeneration and sustainable agriculture practices, working closely with local communities and institutions. To date, the company has supported the restoration of 10 water bodies, planted 1,00,000 trees under the afforestation project and partnered with more than 1,000 farmers to adopt water-efficient land-use practices. Collectively, these interventions help conserve over 300 million litres of water annually, treat nearly 1 lakh litres of wastewater every day, and deliver measurable improvements in groundwater levels in select regions. Commenting on the initiatives,


Ashwini Deodeshmukh, Head – CSR and Sustainability Reporting, Godrej Enterprises Group, said, “Our approach to water stewardship is grounded in the belief that long-term water resilience must be built locally. By restoring water bodies, improving recharge and working closely with communities, we aim to create solutions that are both environmentally durable and socially relevant. These efforts go beyond addressing immediate water needs, they are about building ecosystems that can withstand climate variability and continue to support livelihoods over time.”

### Strengthening Local Water Security in Mohali, Punjab

In Chunni Kalan village, Mohali, Godrej Enterprises Group has rejuvenated a 4-acre community pond, improving local water availability and resilience. The project involved desilting, embankment strengthening, and sedimentation and filtration systems, increasing the pond's water-holding capacity to 336 lakh litres. The pond now supports over 400 households and provides irrigation for more than 100 acres of farmland, contributing to improved agricultural productivity and livelihoods.

### Expanding Urban Water Solutions in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

In Chennai, where the city faces both acute water shortages and recurring flooding, Godrej Enterprises Group has supported the restoration of key urban water bodies to help manage seasonal water disputes. The restoration has also improved one of the city's most flood-prone areas, improving local water storage, reducing flood risk, and strengthening groundwater recharge. Beyond water management, these restored lakes and ponds also support local biodiversity, providing habitats for birds and other freshwater species, while helping communities better cope with rising temperatures and longer heat periods.

With water availability increasingly shaped by seasonal variability, Godrej Enterprises Group's on-ground efforts are focused on strengthening natural and built water infrastructure. These interventions are designed to improve water retention, reduce vulnerability to extremes, and build long-term water assets that continue to benefit communities and local economies. 

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Singapore's expanded emissions registry is critical to helping the city-state achieve net zero emissions by 2050, officials say. *Image: Robin Hicks / Eco-Business*

# SINGAPORE EXPANDS EMISSIONS REGISTRY TO BOOST CORPORATE CARBON REPORTING

The expanded emissions database comes ahead of a regulatory mandate for listed companies to report Scope 3 emissions this financial year, says **Robin Hicks**.

**S**ingapore has expanded its national emissions factors database with 94 new locally derived metrics, a move aimed

at improving the accuracy of corporate carbon reporting as mandatory Scope 3 disclosures loom for large listed companies. The Singapore Emission Factors Registry (SEFR),

launched in October 2024 as the country's single reference point for localised emissions factors, now contains 319 factors covering all Scope 1 and 2 emissions, as well as four of

the 15 Scope 3 categories. Emissions factors are scientific multipliers that translate business activity data – such as energy use or spending on services – into estimated greenhouse gas emissions. Scope 1 and Scope 2 refer to a firm’s direct emissions and indirect emissions from power use, respectively. Scope 3 refers to a company’s full value chain emissions, which are the hardest to abate.

The latest update adds Singapore-specific emissions factors for cleaning, security and professional services, five new factors for information and communications technology (ICT), and 86 additional factors covering industry processes and product use, refrigerants, purchased energy and building materials.

The expansion comes ahead of a regulatory shift that will require Straits Times Index (STI) companies to report Scope 3 emissions from the 2026 financial year. While Scope 3 reporting remains voluntary for non-STI firms, these indirect emissions usually account for the bulk of a company’s carbon footprint and are increasingly scrutinised by investors, customers and regulators.

The three new service-sector emissions factors were prioritised after consultations led by industry group the Singapore Business Federation (SBF), which identified cleaning, security and professional services as common inputs across most businesses. International databases typically rely on economy-wide averages that may not reflect local operating conditions, particularly for services, authorities said.

To address this, the Agency for Science, Technology and Research, known as A\*STAR, developed a new Lifecycle Environmental Assessment Framework (LEAF), which applies life cycle assessment principles and aligns with the ISO 14067 standard and the Partnership for Carbon Transparency methodology.

As well as improving reporting accuracy, the analysis identified

decarbonisation opportunities for Singaporean businesses. In cleaning services, emissions are largely driven by materials and equipment use, pointing to gains from greener supplies and energy-efficient machinery.

For security services, about 14 per cent of emissions stem from transport, suggesting benefits from fleet electrification and improved driving practices. In professional services, emissions are driven by transport and IT equipment, with opportunities to cut carbon by extending the life of devices or leasing refurbished hardware.

Kok Ping Soon, chief executive of SBF, said in a statement that this work would help companies see more clearly where their emissions are coming from and what they can

main power guzzlers, and Singapore has among the world’s largest data centre capacities.

The remaining 86 emissions factors – covering industrial processes, refrigerants, energy and building materials – were contributed by the National Environment Agency, Energy Market Authority and Singapore Green Building Council.

Lee Chuan Seng, chairman of the SEFR Governance Committee, said that the emissions factors would be critical to helping Singapore achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The island nation is aiming to hit peak emissions of 60 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030.

Authorities said the registry will continue to expand and encouraged companies of all sizes to use and

**In professional services, emissions are driven by transport and IT equipment, with opportunities to cut carbon by extending the life of devices or leasing refurbished hardware.**

realistically do about them, which would help them lower costs as well as emissions.

SEFR has also added five new ICT emissions factors developed by the Infocomm Media Development Authority and the National University of Singapore’s Energy Studies Institute. A new online carbon calculator has been launched alongside the factors to help businesses compare emissions from cloud versus on-premise systems and across different vendors.

ICT consumes about 7 per cent of Singapore’s total electricity use, an amount that is projected to rise to 12 per cent by 2030 due to AI growth. Data centres are the ICT sector’s

contribute data to strengthen Singapore’s carbon accounting ecosystem.

Late last year, the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority and Singapore Exchange Regulation delayed climate reporting requirements for small- and mid-sized companies (SMEs) by five years.

Initially set to take effect in financial years starting in 2025, SMEs – which make up 99 per cent of Singapore’s business landscape – now have until 2030 to start reporting in line with international climate disclosure standards. 

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/singapore-expands-emissions-registry-to-boost-corporate-carbon-reporting/>)



A view of Taiwan's capital, Taipei.  
Image: Jimmy Liao/Pexels

# TAIWAN MAPS SEA, LAND OPTIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION WASTE AS LANDFILL CAPACITY TIGHTENS

Plan identifies ports, farmland and offshore sites  
as potential outlets for surplus construction soil and debris,  
writes **Taejun Kang**

**T**aiwan has drawn up a nationwide plan to channel construction waste to ports, farmland and offshore reclamation sites, after the government warned that existing legal disposal capacity could be exhausted within two to three years if development continues at its current pace.

The interior ministry said it began enforcing a “full flow management” policy this year to track construction soil and debris from source to final destination, aiming to curb illegal dumping and burial. But a recent government inventory showed that approved landfill-style soil resource sites and major public works, including projects at Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung ports, can absorb only about 90 million cubic

their capacity to construction waste, replacing traditional sand dredging.

For offshore disposal, the government overlaid environmental sensitivity data to identify 73 “potential land reclamation locations” around Taiwan, covering about 33,000 hectares. Officials estimate these areas could theoretically absorb nearly 2 billion cubic metres of material – roughly 50 years of current waste output. Any proposal would still need to pass feasibility studies, coastal management reviews and environmental impact assessments.

On land, the scheme allows for expansion of landfill-style soil sites and the use of severely subsiding private farmland for soil improvement, provided only “clean, high-quality” construction material suitable for agriculture is used. In 2023,

The groups also cautioned that proposed sites off Taiwan’s west coast could disrupt seabed ecosystems and intertidal zones, particularly if different types of soil and rock are used in muddy marine environments.

The Environmental Protection Administration, now the Environment Ministry, in 2012 proposed an environmental impact assessment for offshore waste disposal islands, but withdrew the plan in 2014 to revisit its waste management strategy.

Government officials said the mapped sites are only preliminary.

“The potential locations do not mean they will be developed,” said Tseng Sheng-feng, a section chief at the National Land Management Agency, in an interview with

**For offshore disposal, the government overlaid environmental sensitivity data to identify 73 “potential land reclamation locations” around Taiwan, covering about 33,000 hectares. Officials estimate these areas could theoretically absorb nearly 2 billion cubic metres of material – roughly 50 years of current waste output.**

metres, a volume officials say will be used up within a few years.

Taiwan generates an estimated 39–46 million cubic metres of construction waste annually.


In August 2025, the cabinet approved the “Final Disposal Planning Scheme for Surplus Construction Soil and Rock”, setting out three main channels: ports, land-based sites and the sea.

Under the plan, existing commercial ports and the Changbin Industrial Park remain the most developed outlets. Future port reclamation projects will be required to allocate at least 50 per cent of

authorities identified 2,385 hectares of farmland nationwide as severely affected by land subsidence.

Domestic environmental groups warned the plan places too much emphasis on expanding disposal capacity rather than reducing waste at the source, saying Taiwan’s limited land and marine space means final disposal sites will inevitably run out. They said offshore reclamation should be tied only to genuine infrastructure needs such as port or airport expansion, rather than projects aimed primarily at creating dumping outlets for construction waste.

local media. He said projects must demonstrate an actual development need to clear the review process, citing Taipei Port as a past example. He added that construction soil and rock can be more stable than sand dredged for reclamation, reducing the risk of uneven settlement or soil liquefaction.

The planning scheme also calls for developers to cut waste at source through better on-site sorting, material exchanges between public works projects and increased reuse of construction resources before sending residual material to final disposal. 

# CLIMATE CHANGE COULD LEAD TO **500,000** 'ADDITIONAL' MALARIA DEATHS IN AFRICA BY 2050

Climate change could lead to half a million more deaths from malaria in Africa over the next 25 years, according to new research, writes **Ayesha Tandon**, Carbon Brief



Disruptive climate extremes – rather than temperature and rainfall changes alone – are set to drive most of the projected rise in malaria cases and deaths across Africa, even under current emissions pledges.

Image: Asian Development Bank, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

The study, published in Nature, finds that extreme weather, rising temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns could result in an additional 123 million cases of malaria across Africa – even if current climate pledges are met.

The authors explain that as the climate warms, “disruptive” weather extremes, such as flooding, will worsen across much of Africa, causing widespread interruptions to malaria treatment programmes and damage to housing.

These disruptions will account for 79 per cent of the increased malaria transmission risk and 93 per cent of additional deaths from the disease, according to the study.

The rest of the rise in malaria cases over the next 25 years is due to rising temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns, which will change the habitable range for the mosquitoes that carry the disease, the paper says.

The majority of new cases will occur in areas already suitable for malaria, rather than in new regions, according to the paper.

The study authors tell Carbon Brief that current literature on climate change and malaria “often overlooks how heavily malaria risk in Africa is today shaped by climate-fragile prevention and treatment systems”.

The research shows the importance of ensuring that malaria

control and primary healthcare is “resilient” to the extreme weather, they say.

### **Malaria in a warming world**

Malaria kills hundreds of thousands of people every year. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 610,000 people died due to the disease in 2024.

In 2024, Africa was home to 95 per cent of malaria cases and deaths. Children under the age of five made up three-quarters of all African malaria deaths.

The disease is transmitted to humans by bites from mosquitoes infected with the malaria parasite. The insects thrive in high temperatures of around 29°C and need stagnant or slow-moving water in which to lay their eggs. As such, the areas where malaria can be transmitted are heavily dependent on the climate.

There is a wide body of research exploring the links between climate change and malaria transmission. Studies routinely find that as temperatures rise and rainfall patterns shift, the area of suitable land for malaria transmission is expanding across much of the world.

Study authors Prof Peter Gething and Prof Tasmin Symons are researchers at the Curtin University’s school of population health and the Malaria Atlas Project from the The Kids Research Institute, Australia.

They tell Carbon Brief that this approach does not capture the full picture, arguing that current literature on climate change and malaria “often overlooks how heavily malaria risk in Africa is today shaped by climate-fragile prevention and treatment systems”.

The paper notes that extreme weather events are regularly linked to surges in malaria cases across Africa and Asia. This is, in-part, because storms, heavy rainfall and floods leave pools of standing water where mosquitoes can breed. For example, nearly 15,000 cases of malaria were reported in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai hitting Mozambique in 2019.

However, the study authors also note that weather extremes often cause widespread disruption, which can limit access to healthcare, damage housing or disrupt preventative measures such as mosquito nets. These factors can all increase vulner-

ability to malaria, driving the spread of the disease.

In their study, the authors assess both the “ecological” effects of climate change – the impacts of temperature and rainfall changes on mosquito populations – and the “disruptive” effects of extreme weather.

### Mosquito habitat

To assess the ecological impacts of climate change, the authors first identify how temperature, rainfall and humidity affect mosquito life-cycles and habitats.

The authors combine observational data on temperature, humidity and rainfall, collected over 2000-22, with a range of datasets, including mosquito abundance and breeding habitat.

The authors then use malaria infection prevalence data, collected by the Malaria Atlas Project, which describes the levels of infection in children aged between two and 10 years old.

Symons and Gething explain that they can then use “sophisticated mathematical models” to convert infection prevalence data into estimates of malaria cases.

Comparing these datasets gives the authors a baseline, showing how changes in climate have affected the range of mosquitoes and malaria rates across Africa in the early 21st century.

The authors then use global climate models to model future changes over 2024-49 under the SSP2-4.5 emissions pathway – which the authors describe as “broadly consistent with current international pledges on reduced greenhouse gas emissions”.

The authors also ran a “counterfactual” scenario, in which global temperatures do not increase over the next 25 years. By comparing malaria prevalence in their scenarios with and without climate change, the authors could identify how many

malaria cases were due to climate change alone.

Overall, the ecological impacts of climate change will result in only a 0.12 per cent increase in malaria cases by the year 2050, relative to present-day levels, according to the paper.

However, the authors say that this “minimal overall change” in Africa’s malaria rates “masks extensive geographical variation”, with some areas seeing a significant increase in malaria rates and others seeing a decrease.

### Disruptive extremes

In contrast, the study estimates that 79 per cent of the future increase in malaria transmission will be due to the “disruptive” impacts of more frequent and severe weather extremes.

The authors explain that extreme weather events, such as flooding and cyclones, can cause extensive damage to housing, leaving people

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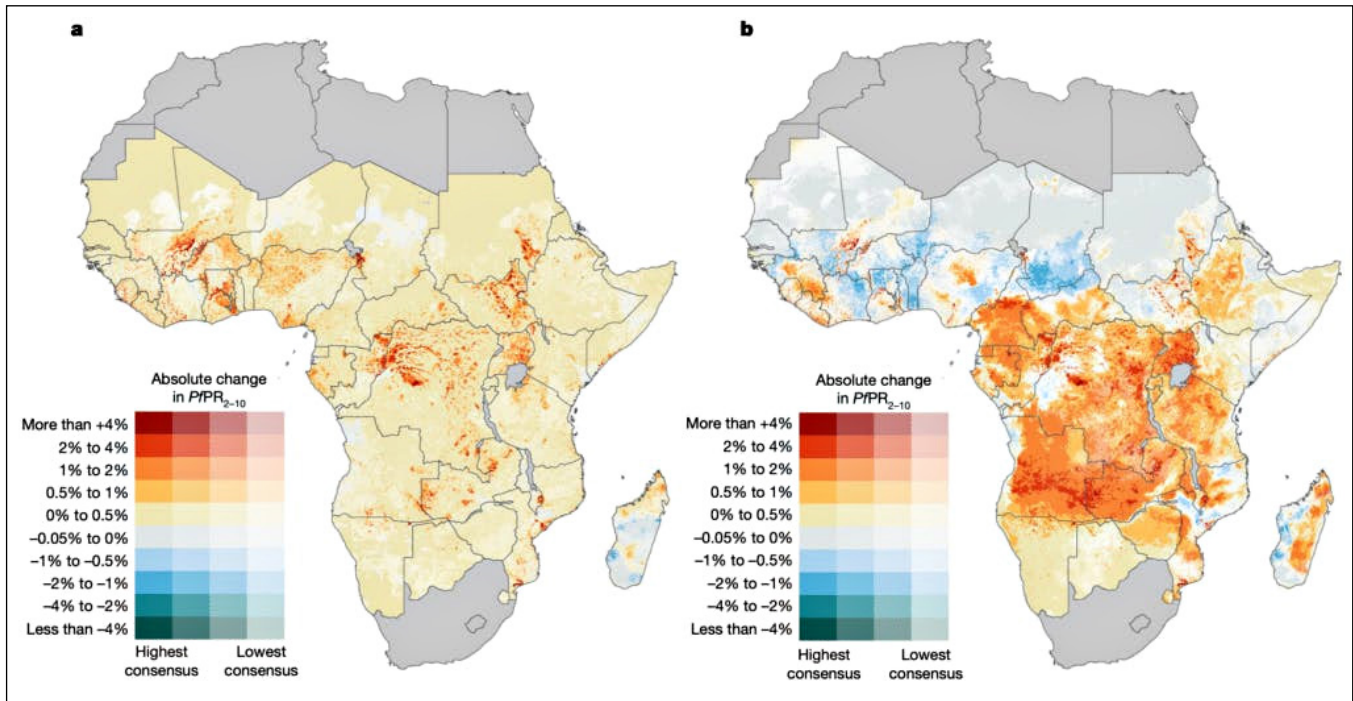
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**Increase in clinical cases of malaria projected across Africa over the next 25 years, broken down into the different drivers of malaria risk. Blue shading indicates “disruption”, while grey shading indicates “ecological” changes. Source: Symons et al (2026).**

without crucial protective equipment such as mosquito nets.

It can also destroy other key infrastructure, such as roads or hospitals, preventing people from accessing healthcare. This means that in the aftermath of an extreme weather event, people face a greater risk of being infected with malaria.

The climate models run by the study authors project an increase in “disruptive” extreme weather events over the next 25 years.

For example, the authors find that by the middle of the century, cyclones forming in the Indian Ocean will become more intense, with fewer category 1 to category 4 events, but more frequent category 5 events. They also find that climate change will drive an increase in flooding across Africa.

The study finds that without mitigation measures, these disruptive events will drive up the risk of malaria – especially in “main river systems” and the “cyclone-prone coastal regions of south-east Africa”. Between 2024 and 2050, 67

per cent of people in Africa will see their risk of catching malaria increase as a result of climate change, the study estimates.

The map below shows the percentage change in malaria transmission rate in the 2040s due to the disruptive impacts of climate change alone (left) and a combination of the disruptive and ecological impacts (right), compared to a scenario in which there is no change in the climate. Red and yellow indicate an increase in malaria risk, while blue indicates a reduction.

Colours in lighter shading indicate lower model confidence, while stronger colours indicate higher model confidence.

The maps show that the “disruptive” effects of climate change have a more uniform effect, driving up malaria risk across the entire continent.

However, there is greater regional variation when these effects are combined with “ecological” drivers.

The authors find that warming will increase malaria risk in regions where the temperature is currently

too low for mosquitoes to survive. This includes the belt of lower latitude southern Africa, including Angola, southern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zambia, as well as highland areas in Burundi, eastern DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda.

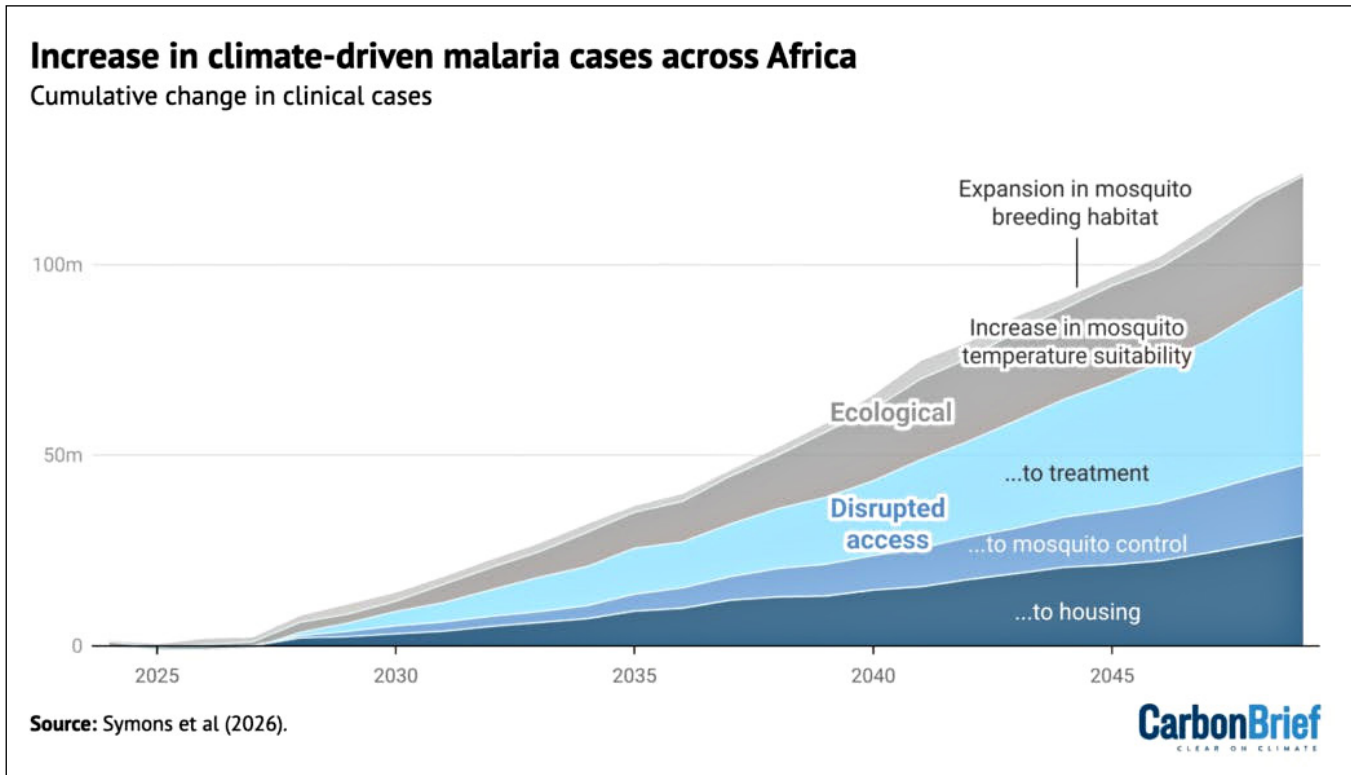
Meanwhile, they find that warming will drive down malaria transmission in the Sahel, as temperatures rise above the optimal range for mosquitoes.

### Rising risk

The combined “disruptive” and “ecological” impacts of climate change will drive an additional 123m “clinical cases” of malaria across Africa, even if the current climate pledges are met, the study finds.

This will result in 532,000 additional deaths from malaria over the next 25 years, if the disease’s mortality rate remains the same, the authors warn.

The graph below shows the increase in clinical cases of malaria projected across Africa over the next 25 years, broken down into the dif-



**Increase in clinical cases of malaria projected across Africa over the next 25 years, broken down into the different drivers of malaria risk. Blue shading indicates “disruption”, while grey shading indicates “ecological” changes. Source: Symons et al (2026).**

ferent ecological (yellow) and disruptive (purple) drivers of malaria risk.

However, the authors stress that there are many other mechanisms through which climate change could affect malaria transmission – for example, through food insecurity, conflict, economic disruption and climate-driven migration.

“Eradicating malaria in the first half of this century would be one of the greatest accomplishments in human history,” the authors say.

They argue that accomplishing this will require “climate-resilient control strategies”, such as investing in “climate-resilient health and supply-chain infrastructure” and enhancing emergency early warning systems for storms and other extreme weather.

Dr Adugna Woyessa is a senior researcher at the Ethiopian Public Health Institute and was not involved in the study. He tells Carbon Brief that the new paper could help inform national malaria

programmes across Africa. He also suggests that the findings could be used to guide more “local studies that address evidence gaps on the estimates of climate change-attributed malaria”.

**The combined “disruptive” and “ecological” impacts of climate change will drive an additional 123m “clinical cases” of malaria across Africa, even if the current climate pledges are met.**

Study authors Symons and Gething tell Carbon Brief that during their study, they interviewed “many policymakers and implementers across Africa who are already grappling with what climate-resilient malaria intervention actually looks like in practice”. These interventions include integrating malaria control into national disaster risk planning, with emergency responses after floods and cyclones, they say. They also stress the need to ensure that community health workers are “well-stocked in advance of severe weather”.

The research shows the importance of ensuring that malaria control and primary healthcare is “resilient” to the extreme weather, they say. ☑

*This story was published with permission from Carbon Brief.*

*(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/climate-change-could-lead-to-500000-additional-malaria-deaths-in-africa-by-2050/>)*



Delegates at the Unlocking Capital for Sustainability Malaysia 2025 event in Kuala Lumpur. The rise in use of AI to do labour-intensive jobs such as sustainability reporting has deprived junior and mid-level staff of the experience needed to progress in their careers, creating hiring problems for CSOs, recruiters say. *Image: Eco-Business*

# WHAT CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICERS FEAR IN 2026

From dwindling influence to grappling with policy delay, Eco-Business asked Asia's sustainability leaders what is likely to keep them awake at night in the year of the horse.

An analysis by **Robin Hicks**

In 2026, the chief sustainability officer (CSO) is no longer just grappling with carbon metrics and supply chains. The role itself feels increasingly fragile.

As companies confront market volatility, geopolitical shocks and intensifying cost pressures, sus-

tainability leaders are being asked to prove their value in tougher, more politicised boardrooms – or risk being sidelined. High-profile exits and restructures have fuelled anxiety that the CSO role could be diluted, folded into other functions, or scrapped altogether.

At the same time, expectations have not eased. Budgets are tightening even as regulatory demands expand across Asia Pacific. Sustainability is now increasing everyone's job as companies integrate the function across the organisation, yet many CSOs worry that capability,

accountability and ambition are not spreading fast enough beyond their teams. Add to this the risk of supply chain inertia and reporting fatigue, and the job can feel like a balancing act with no safety net.

Darian McBain, the former CSO of Monetary Authority of Singapore and Thai Union, who started her own consulting venture in 2023, says that the frothiness of environmental, social and governance (ESG) mania from 2021/2022 has dissipated, and committed organisations are quietly continuing by taking action. But those that appointed CSOs just for optics have dropped commitments or are maintaining a “compliance-only mindset”. Eco-Business spoke to CSOs and sustainability consultants to get a sense of the issues that will keep the corporate conscience awake at night this year.

### The vanishing job

Companies including Apple, Nike, HSBC, Unilever, and, at the start of the year, Hong Kong-headquartered conglomerate John Swire & Sons, have parted ways with sustainability heads – some, like Swire, Apple and HSBC without naming a successor as the role was scrapped.



**Cathay Pacific majority owner Swire was among those firms cutting the sustainability head role.** Image: Thai Nguyen/Flickr

### The shrinking budget

Many sustainability teams are being asked to do more with less, or are seeing roles consolidated into finance, risk, or operations, according to Kaushik Sridhar, CEO of Australia-based consultancy Orka. “The risk isn’t just smaller teams – it’s that sus-

tainability becomes compliance-led rather than strategy-led if capability is hollowed out,” he noted.

CSOs not facing budgets cuts are being told to be more cautious in their spending, and ensure better return on investment, said Christina Lee, founder of Singapore-based consultancy Global Green Connect.

### Policy delay

Policy u-turns or delays to major pieces of sustainability legislation, such as the European Union’s corporate sustainability due diligence



**Singapore’s five-year climate disclosure delay for most listed companies could be disruptive for CSOs committed to meeting requirements.** Image: Robin Hicks/Eco-Business

directive (CSDDD) and Singapore’s climate disclosure mandate, have been disruptive for CSOs running organisations committed to sustainability – particularly those at larger organisations that pooled resources early on towards meeting requirements.

These CSOs have found that their strategic advantage has been eroded, and worry about other regulations being hollowed out this year. But the proactive approach by companies in assessing the risks and opportunities of real world problems like climate change and biodiversity loss should be worth the effort in the medium and long term, said Sridhar.

### Pressure to prove business value

CSOs are now under greater pressure to prove the business value of sustainability. Even companies

that have long standing sustainability commitments are suddenly being asked to prove value of the function to the bottom line, said Steve Newman, CSO of Earthcheck, a consultancy. “We’re seeing the role increasingly judged not just against targets and reporting, but against near-term value creation. I think part of this is to be expected as sustainability draws on other traditional business roles to be accountable,” said Newman, adding that it is important for CSOs to be supported by the wider business rather than

pushing the demand onto sustainability practitioners alone to prove the financial value of their role.

### Market volatility

For CSOs working in real economy sectors like agriculture, instability in both markets and production continues to pose problems. Whether the instability comes from tariff changes, conflict, extreme weather events or political upheaval, there is no such thing as business as usual for most organisations with long value chains, McBain told Eco-Business. This is especially the case in Southeast Asia as many companies bridge regional and international value chains.

### The risk in letting go

As sustainability starts to become everyone’s job, and the discipline starts to flow through other depart-

ments, CSOs worry that the finance, HR and operations guys now responsible for sustainability will veer off course. “How do I hand off parts of the business to somebody else to manage and lead, and have the confidence that the business will continue down the right path?” Anita Neville, chief sustainability and communications officer of Golden Agri-Resources told Eco-Business’ On the frontlines podcast.

**Role uncertainty**

As ESG responsibility shifts toward chief financial officer and enterprise risk functions, sustainability leaders are asking: what does my role become? The CSOs who stay the distance will be those who evolve into integrators and strategic advisors, rather than owners of a standalone function, Sridhar argued.

**Greenwashing risk**

Though incidences of greenwashing have declined in recent years as firms become more hesitant in communicating their green credentials for fear of backlash, CSOs remain wary of the damage that exaggerated marketing campaigns based on flimsy or flawed data can do to a brand’s reputation. Greenwashing – when firms repeatedly

shift or revise climate goals they cannot meet – has emerged as a new form of greenwashing over the last year. “[The fear of greenwashing backlash] is driving a shift from storytelling to defensible, assured data – but it also increases pressure and personal risk for sustainability leaders,” said Sridhar.

**ESG pushback**

Even in Asia Pacific, where ESG backlash hasn’t been as loud as in the US, CSOs are feeling more cautious about increasingly cynical boardroom sentiment. “There’s concern about being caught between rising regulatory expectations on one side and growing scepticism or politicisation of ESG on the other,” said Sridhar.

Newman sees this caution translating into inaction while many CSOs wait to see how ESG pushback will play out in their context. “At the moment we can’t tell what the repercussions for doing nothing will be, and for some, if it’s worth the risk to proceed as the clock counts down to delivering on promises for 2030,” he explained.

**Talent pipeline block**

As a result of the rise in use of artificial intelligence (AI) to do labour-intensive jobs such as sustainability

reporting, junior and mid-level staff are being deprived of the experience needed to progress in their careers. This is creating “massive talent issues” for CSOs, who are starved of the people they need to staff their teams, commented Paddy Balfour, Asia Pacific head of recruiting firm Acre. More needs to be done by industry and academe to develop mentorships in companies to give newcomers sufficient real-world experience, he added.

**Nature knowhow**

Nature and biodiversity continues to be a blind spot for many CSOs – even in such a biodiverse region as Asia Pacific. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework



**Biodiversity is a blind-spot for many CSOs, even in biodiverse Asia Pacific.**  
Image: Robin Hicks/Eco-Business

Target 15 requires companies to measure, map, set targets and disclose biodiversity risks the same as climate – and yet most have not begun this process, as they are still struggling with climate, observes Newman.

He expects that by the middle of 2026, biodiversity will become more prominent as key sustainability reporting standard ISSB has integrated nature disclosure framework TNFD. However, biodiversity remains complex for CSOs, as it is mostly non-traditional knowledge, and means data gaps and issues over metrics.

**Skills gap**

As sustainability becomes more embedded in the corporate structure, there’s growing anxiety that capabilities are not spreading fast



**Dr Thanyaporn Krichitayawuth, UN Global Compact Network Thailand’s executive director, highlighted the trend of firms repeatedly shift or revise climate goals they cannot meet.**  
Image: UN Global Compact

enough across the organisation. CSOs are usually still the people who translate sustainability issues for those in finance, legal, and operations. As mandatory disclosure kicks in markets such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Hong Kong, the real bottleneck isn't ambition – it's a lack of ESG literacy among non-sustainability professionals that troubles CSOs, said Sridhar.

### Overwhelm

One of the hardest things about the CSO job is the constant exposure to the inescapable realities of the planet's demise. "You have to hold those truths loosely somehow," said Neville. "You have to be able to be aware but not be overwhelmed by



**Sustainability heads need to be able to hold the harsh truths of the job "loosely" or they will struggle.** Image: David B/Flickr

those truths. Otherwise you won't move forward – and you won't get anything done."

If these feelings are not managed, CSOs risk burning out as they throw themselves into an ever-expanding role with little support. "I still hear of people leaving their roles because the pressure is put on them solely to deliver across all aspects of sustainability," Newman noted.

### Target trepidation

At a time when sustainability targets are coming under growing scrutiny – many companies, such as Coca-Cola, Unilever and HSBC have watered down or scrapped them altogether – how ambitious goals are is a constant concern. "If you stretch too far [with climate targets], you lose credi-



**CSOs feel like they're stuck in "perpetual reporting mode".** Image: Robin Hicks/Eco-Business

bility. On the other hand, if you don't stretch enough, we are not going to address the crisis in front of us," the deputy chief sustainability officer of Hong Kong real estate Hang Lung Properties, John Haffner, said on an episode of On the frontlines.

### Supply chain sluggishness

While the list of companies committed to sustainability continues to grow – more than 22,000 companies disclosed environmental information through Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) in 2025 – getting the supply chain on board continues to be a problem, said Venisa Chu, Asia Pacific sustainability director of L'Occitane, a B Corp-certified, Science-Based Targets initiative target-approved cosmetics firm with a vast network of suppliers in the region. "We have markets ranging from Korea to India. You can just imagine the differences in terms of the sustainability appetite and knowledge of the topic. [The biggest challenges are] getting them to understand the data requirements for basic ESG reporting, why it's important and the purpose behind it."

Newman added that supplier engagement is becoming a strategic long-term commercial programme not just a one-off survey, with growing pressure for credible transi-

tion plans that require collaboration with suppliers.

### Reporting fatigue

Even though the consolidation of the disclosure landscape that started in 2021 has made things somewhat simpler, and AI can do an increasingly amount of the reporting grunt work, a persistent drain on CSOs is sustainability reporting. "Many CSOs feel they're stuck in perpetual reporting mode, leaving little time to focus on transformation or value creation," Sridhar told Eco-Business.

### Data quality

A bottleneck for most CSOs as they work towards sustainability targets is data quality. This is a problem as CSOs must increasingly prove business value and defend against greenwashing scrutiny and ESG pushback, according to Newman. Many businesses are still reliant on spreadsheets and manual processes, and need to invest in data architecture, metering, supplier platforms, internal controls to live up to expectations for data quality, assurance, controls and understanding live sustainability performance, he said. 

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/what-chief-sustainability-officers-fear-in-2026/>)

# INDIAN, REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL PARTNERS LAUNCH INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS EXTREME HEAT IN SOUTH ASIA

The World Health Organization (WHO)–World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Climate and Health Joint Programme, The Rockefeller Foundation, and Wellcome announce new regional efforts to connect climate science to health action to prevent heat impacts, help communities flourish, and save lives.

**A**t the inaugural edition of Mumbai Climate Week, the WHO-WMO Climate and Health Joint Programme, The Rockefeller Foundation, and Wellcome announced two new integrated initiatives to protect South Asians from extreme heat – a rapidly escalating threat to human health and economic stability in the subcontinent.

The two new initiatives, funded by The Rockefeller Foundation and Wellcome, will strengthen South Asia’s ability to detect, prepare for, and respond to extreme heat and other weather- and climate-related health impacts.

The South Asia Climate–Health Desk, established as part of the WHO–WMO Climate and Health Joint Programme and implemented

with the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), India Meteorological Department (IMD), and other partners will improve how climate and weather information is translated into action to protect health.

Complementing this work, the South Asia Scientific Research Consortium, supported through a Rockefeller Foundation grant to the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Pune, will deepen the region’s scientific understanding of how heat affects different populations. These projects are the first two components of a broader, more ambitious regional strategy to address extreme heat risks to health. As part of a growing suite of Joint Programme initiatives, including regional activities of the Global Heat Health Information

Network, these are first steps of coordinated science-driven efforts to protect communities, with more updates on the broader rollout coming soon.

“Extreme heat is a growing risk for lives and livelihoods in South Asia,” said Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, IMD’s Director General of Meteorology and Permanent Representative of India to WMO. “IMD welcomes this partnership with IITM under the South Asia Climate–Health Desk, which will strengthen the science-to-services pathway, improve early warning support for health, and help decision-makers act in time to protect communities during severe heat events.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called for urgent global action to address the growing risk

of extreme heat worldwide, which takes a heavy toll on health in South Asia – the world’s most populated region. According to WMO, Asia is warming nearly twice as fast as the global average, intensifying extreme weather and placing growing pressure on lives and livelihoods, health systems, economies, and ecosystems across the region, putting the most vulnerable and exposed communities at critical risk.

In India and Pakistan, pre-monsoon temperatures regularly rise above 50°C, and heat-related mortality in the region today exceeds 200,000 deaths per year. At the same time, extreme heat undermines economic stability and productivity. In 2024 alone, heat exposure in India led to 247 billion potential labor hours lost – reducing labor capacity and leading to an estimated \$194 billion loss in income, according to the Lancet Countdown.

“Few regions feel the impacts of extreme heat as sharply as South Asia, and I welcome the clear determination to respond. We all know that every death primarily due to excess heat can be prevented and heat health action plans are saving lives,” said Professor Celeste Saulo, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization. “By uniting science, government leadership and support, and community action, countries here are proving that this challenge can be met.”

Addressing extreme heat requires coordinated, transdisciplinary action. This integrated effort equips governments, public services, communities, and health systems with the actionable knowledge they need to prevent avoidable illness and save lives. The two coalition initiatives include:

### South Asia Climate-Health Desk:

Led by IITM in partnership with IMD, this new unit will help meteorological institutions and health

partners in South Asia work closely together to develop more robust decision support tools, such as early warning and risk assessments.

Representing one of the first units to be launched as part of the Joint Programme spanning Research and Development (R&D) and operational domains in climate and health, it will strengthen the ability of a wide range of stakeholders to co-develop, validate, and share health-relevant and fit-for-purpose weather and climate information, so communities, health authorities, and health services can build resilience and act quickly before and during dangerous heat events and other climate-related health risks including disease outbreaks.

### South Asia Scientific Research Consortium:

Led by IISER Pune, this consortium of research institutions, including MS Swaminathan Research Foundation and IITM, will deepen understanding of how heat affects people across South Asia—depending on where they live, the work they do, and the different conditions they face. By developing tailored heat-risk thresholds, this consortium aims to ultimately strengthen heat action planning, early warning systems, and preparedness efforts, helping communities and institutions better adapt to rising temperatures in one of the world’s most heat-vulnerable regions.

This announcement is the first in a series of rollouts planned in 2026, highlighting work being carried out in the region. The Rockefeller Foundation and Wellcome’s US \$11.5 million investment in the WHO-WMO Climate and Health Joint Programme aims to expand climate-informed health action in vulnerable regions. The two philanthropies committed the funds to pioneer new models of science-driven collaboration between health partners and meteorological departments, aiming to

bridge a gap that often leaves health systems without critical climate information that can protect communities and save lives.

Through the establishment of these initiatives, South Asia is leading the way in implementing this integrated climate and health approach that connects research, climate monitoring and forecasting, and health responses to protect people from the health risks of climate variability and change.

“After a decade of punishing and increasingly deadly heatwaves across India and the wider South Asia region, it’s clear that business-as-usual public health approaches are no longer enough. Protecting India’s most vulnerable communities requires rethinking how we deliver care and invest in the solutions frontline providers and patients urgently need today,” said Dr. Naveen Rao, Senior Vice President of Health at The Rockefeller Foundation. “Through our support to the Joint Programme, we aim to help turn cutting-edge science into real-world impact, helping India and the region build a resilient, climate-ready health system fit for the 21st century.”

“Rising temperatures due to climate change are a public health threat, endangering people’s lives and livelihoods throughout the world. In South Asia, extreme heat is hitting communities hard - in particular children, pregnant people, older people, outdoor workers and those communities with the least resources to respond,” said Dr. Alan Dangour, Director of Climate and Health at Wellcome. “We need to invest in science-led solutions that both cut emissions and build resilience, with public health at the core of decision-making. Wellcome is proud to work with partners and communities across South Asia to develop the evidence, tools and solutions that will ultimately improve health and save lives.” 

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