

Achieving Sustainability Through Corporate Social Responsibility

A Case of Ambuja Cements Limited in Punjab

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Abstract

In the year 2015, Government of India introduced several amendments in Companies Act, 2013 thus making CSR expenditure mandatory for certain companies. In the light of these regulatory changes this study aims to explore the corporate social responsibility activities undertaken by Ambuja Cements Limited in Punjab region of India. Further it will also analyze the implications of these activities on general public in Punjab. The case study explores and documents the perception of various stakeholders of Ambuja Cements Limited in Punjab with context to its social responsibility initiatives in the area. Both primary as well secondary data were collected. Primary data was collected by conducting field visits to area around its manufacturing facilities. Also unstructured interviews were conducted to gain insights from company employees, government officials and general public. Secondary data was collected from annual reports, company websites, newspaper articles and other internet source. The case study documents the CSR initiatives undertaken by Ambuja in Punjab region of India. The study finds that Ambuja has made a lot of efforts over years towards benefiting the local communities by

improving their quality of life. It has also rolled out several programmes towards making women in rural areas self dependent thus uplifting their social status. This paper improves understanding of how social responsibility initiatives can be implemented in a way to ensure sustainable development.

Keywords: *Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility, India, Ambuja, Punjab, Water, Cement, Society, Education, Rural Development, Healthcare*

INTRODUCTION

Indian Cement Industry is the second largest producer of cement in world accounting for nearly 6.9 percent of world's total cement production. By giving employment to more than one million people either directly or indirectly it serves as crucial part of Indian economy. Due to rise in infrastructural projects and construction activities there is a continuous increase in demand of cement throughout country. With the current capacity of 425 million tones as on September, 2017 the total cement production capacity of India is expected to touch almost 550 million tons by 2025. In India, 20 major companies constitute 70 percent of country's total cement production with major players like Ultratech Cement Limited, Shree Cement Limited, Ambuja Cements Limited, ACC Limited, etc.

Ambuja Cements Limited is recognized as one of the most trusted brands in Indian Cement Industry. With ACC Limited becoming its subsidiary in August 2016, both companies together have an annual cement capacity of 63 million tons. With its headquarters at Ambujanagar, India it carries out its business with the help of more than 48000 dealers and

retailers in India and shares its presence in 90 countries across the world.

Ambuja Cements Limited

Ambuja Cements Limited was founded by Narotam Sekhsaria and Suresh Neotia in April 1983 as Gujarat Ambuja Cement Limited. The principal activity of the company is to produce manufacture and market cement and clinker for both domestic and export markets. It has five integrated cement manufacturing plants located at Ambujanagar (Gujarat), Darlaghat (Himachal Pradesh), Chandrapur (Maharashtra), Rabriyawas (Rajasthan) and Bhatapara (Chattisgarh) respectively. The eight cement grinding units of the company are located at Roopnagar (Punjab), Bathinda (Punjab), Sankrail (West Bengal), Farakka (West Bengal), Roorkee (Uttarakhand), Dadri (Uttar Pradesh), Nalagarh (Himachal Pradesh) and Magdalla (Gujarat).

With current cement capacity of 29.65 million tons, the company runs total 30 Ambuja Knowledge Centers (AKCs) across India which serves as knowledge sharing platform among various construction professionals. It was the first company in India to introduce the concept of bulk cement movement by sea and currently has its bulk cement terminals located at Muldwarka (Gujarat), Panvel (Maharashtra), Cochin (Kerala), Surat (Gujarat) and Mangalore (Karnataka). The company provides employment to almost 5183 employees permanently and follows 'I CAN' philosophy which gives its employees the authority to set their own targets and thus freedom to achieve their set goals.

True to its vision 'to be the most sustainable and competitive company in our industry' Ambuja Cement has proved itself as an industry leader for using resources in a responsible manner

and meets almost 6.5 percent of its energy needs through renewable. It is the only water positive cement company in India which gives back to society almost 5 times the water used by it in its operations. By burning more than 50,000 tons of plastic waste in kilns which is equivalent to 1.54 times of total plastic used in its operations, Ambuja has become a plastic positive company. It also utilizes waste fly ash produced in its thermal power plant as a raw material for manufacturing 25 percent of Portland Pozzolana Cement (PPC) a major product comprising almost 93 percent of company's product portfolio.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee headed by Mr. N.S. Sekhsaria was constituted on May 3, 2013 at Ambuja's board meeting well before it was made mandatory by Government of India in 2015. The committee comprising of seven members, provides guidance on formulation and monitoring of CSR policy of the company. It also recommends the CSR activities to be undertaken by company along with ensuring compliance with the laws, rules and regulations governing the CSR. With an aim to streamline and carry out its CSR activities more efficiently and in a focused way, the company established a foundation and a trust which is discussed as under:

Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF)

It was founded by Mr. Narotam Sekhsaria to carry out CSR activities on behalf of Ambuja Cement Limited. Registered in 1993, this foundation operates in 12 states encompassing 22 locations and 928 villages across India engaging almost two million people till date. This foundation carries out

various programmes for uplifting social and economic status of marginalized sections of society around its manufacturing facilities. Working in line with its mission to 'energize, involve and enable communities to realize their potential', it carries out several rural development projects in collaboration with local masses, NGOs and Government. Most of funds for running this foundation are provided by its parent company Ambuja Cements Limited along with some contribution by local communities, government and other donor agencies. Till date ACF has won several awards and recognitions both nationally and internationally for its service towards society and environment.

Ambuja Vidya Niketan Trust (AVNT)

It is a non-profit making trust working towards ensuring quality education towards wards of employees of the company and other children from communities living around its manufacturing facilities. This trust operates 5 schools in 5 states and provides excellent facilities for overall growth and development of its students.

CSR ACTIVITIES BY AMBUJA PAN INDIA

Ambuja has been receiving prestigious 'CII Sustainability Award' consecutively for 9 years since 2010. As per new government regulations the company in accordance with its average net profit was supposed to spend INR 254.6 million in 2017-18 whereas it has spent INR 534.6 million which is almost double the prescribed amount on various CSR activities by the company. As seen in Table 1 the amount spent by it on various CSR activities has been exceeding the stipulated amount as per Government recommendations since years.

Table 1

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>CSR Expenditure Prescribed as Per Government Regulations (INR in Millions)</i>	<i>CSR Expenditure Actually Made by the Company (INR in Millions)</i>
2017-18	254.6	534.6
2016-17	277.4	587.9
2015-16	297.8	593.7
2014-15	346.4	409.8
2013-14	340	384

Although Ambuja has been carrying out its social responsibility initiatives through Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) since 1993, it started reporting expenditure in 2012. The data in Table 2 proves that Ambuja has been spending more than 2 percent of net profit on CSR activities since years in spite of the mandate brought by the Companies Act in 2015.

Table 2

<i>Year</i>	<i>CSR Expenditure (INR in Millions)</i>	<i>Percentage of Profit after Tax (PAT) (%)</i>
2017-18	534.6	4.2
2016-17	587.9	4
2015-16	593.7	6.12
2014-15	409.8	5.07
2013-14	384	2.56
2012-13	525.7	4.06
2011-12	390.8	3.07

The company carries out its CSR initiatives across India in the following areas:

Water Resource Management

Ambuja has been declared 100 percent water positive company by saving almost 75 million liters of water at various construction sites and 14 million liters by installing rainwater

harvesting systems across 519 towns in India. More than 22 water harvesting projects were constructed by it in various villages of Rajasthan in India. It also permanently reversed the trend of salinity on over 15600 hectares of agricultural land in 83 villages in Gir-Somnath district of Gujarat, which had occurred due to continuous ingress of saline water from droughts into groundwater and coastal agricultural land. With its motto of 'giving more than we take', it has carried out several initiatives in India thus engaging more than 40000 persons. Targeting to become over six times water positive by 2030, out of every 6.6 million cubic metres (Mm³) of water used by it recycled water constitutes almost 1 Mm³. Various initiatives undertaken by company include setting up Roof Rain Water Harvesting Structures (RRWHS), enhancement of water sources by installing percolation wells and check dams, farming low water intensive crops, and creation of a potable water distribution system.

Agro-based Livelihood

As most of communities around Ambuja's manufacturing facilities are involved in agriculture so to assist them, company has developed various agro based livelihood programmes focused on sustainable agricultural practices thus reaching out to almost 130000 farmers. The company engages various state governments and agricultural universities to carry out successful implementation of these projects. As an implementing partner of 'Better Cotton Initiative' it supported almost 44826 farmers to use sustainable practices for producing cotton and hence increasing their production by 30 percent. In collaboration with IDH, Netherland it also initiated 'Sustainable Spice Initiative' to promote spice cultivation in India thus involving 3153

farmers who produced 6801 tons of cumin and 8239 tons of chillies. It has reached out to more than 10000 farmers under its 'System of Rice Intensification programme' initiated since 2009. The company has been supporting 2296 farmers to diversify crops and cultivate vegetables across 1616 acres of land thus promoting micro irrigation and other technological interventions to improve their income. Also it creates awareness and has helped almost 1994 farmers avail the benefits of government insurance scheme named Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). It also assists farmers in establishment of Kisan Clubs for sharing knowledge and building links with market.

Ambuja introduced aquaculture in interior regions of India with the help of 20 farmers which along with fish cultivation helps these farmers in using water for regular Kharif crop during dry spells and helps in water recharge. Under 'Krishi Mobile Project' the company started a mobile application for sending voice messages on crop management regularly to almost 2000 farmers. It also serves as a platform for interaction between these farmers and agriculture experts. Pashu Swasthya Sevikas model has been initiated to train women in primary care and cattle breeding. Also 129 camps were organized to treat almost 12000 cattles in various areas and to prevent the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease, 51352 cattles were vaccinated. Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to improve collective bargaining power of farmers are built totaling 11 in number. These FPOs allow farmers in remote areas to procure inputs at low cost and get reasonable price for their produce. Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) run by it conducts regular seminars and training programmes for farming community for creating awareness about latest and best technologies

in agriculture. Also it introduces farmers to a variety of Alternative Fuel Resources (AFR) where they get paid by Ambuja to provide bio-wastes like sugarcane trash, leaves, cotton stalk, wheat straw and other crop residues as biomass.

Skill and Entrepreneurship Development

Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Institute (SEDI) is a functional structure to promote productive employment and micro-enterprises thus offering 30 training courses to 36000 youths across 12 sectors in remote areas through its offices in 20 locations. It facilitates on-the-job training for its students and hosts Job Fairs and conducts campus interviews for its students. Physically handicapped students are encouraged to start their own business after being trained with skills like smart phone repairing, front office and retail. It also helps its students in applying for and receiving loan proposals to support development of new businesses. Almost 3010 new businesses have been established by graduates from SEDI.

Healthcare Promotion

The company has trained almost 352 local women as sakhis or community health workers. These women promote and address health issues in the community by focusing on Maternal & Child Health. As a result, the mortality rate has reduced in the project areas. The company also conducts regular tests for anemia and malnourishment among young mothers and their children and also distributes various nutritional supplements among patients. As a commitment towards Swachh Bharat Abhiyan¹ the company has set a target to make all its 259 core villages Open Defecation Free (ODF), out of which 95

¹ Cleanliness campaign run by Government of India.

villages have been declared with 100 per cent toilet coverage. Till date company covered 12000 households and 176 schools under its sanitation initiative by forming Village Development Committees (VDCs). The company also encourages villages to install Reverse Osmosis plants; it also constructs soak pits to keep villages clean, and conducts hand washing sessions at village schools. The company also provides curative services to rural villages via mobile medical vans, which bring doctors and medicine to villagers regularly. In 2016-17 almost 18,512 beneficiaries have been served by these diagnostic centers by conducting 229,070 tests and 6416 X-rays.

Through various adolescent health programmes the company has trained 53 peer educators thus reaching out to 8295 adolescents and empowering them with information about issues like reproductive health, anemia prevention, HIV/AIDS and nutrition. These adolescent peer educators also organize various events like health day, no tobacco day, rallies and other initiatives in various schools. With the goal to reduce the incidence and impact of oral, throat and lung cancer, the company makes various efforts to empower village women and communities to create tobacco free villages. Ambuja runs 'Train the Trainer programme' which is implemented in 71 villages across 10 locations to eradicate tuberculosis and has already identified 112 TB patients. In 2015-16 company launched a program to tackle various non communicable diseases like diabetes, cardiac problems, cancer (with more emphasis on oral, breast and cervical cancers), respiratory disease, women's health and mental health problems. It was carried out in 4 locations thus reaching out to 97960 people across 18464 households. Also various specialty camps are organized at various

places to tackle health issues like cataract, diabetes, gynecological issues, child health, hypertension and cardiac issues.

Education Promotion

The company runs schools in each of its five integrated plants to provide education to the wards of employees of Ambuja and children from nearby villages. Also it appoints private teachers to help children understand subjects like math, science and english using varied teaching and learning methods. The company is involved with almost 390 education centers across the country in enhancing their quality of education by helping them in up-grading facilities, infrastructure development, starting reading clubs and math laboratories, etc. The company also organizes various events like summer Camps, sports Competition and craft activities for students of all age groups at schools in various villages. The company also runs total 50 Non Formal Education centres for migrant workers called Basti for teaching children left out of formal education system and then re-enrolling them into regular schools. The company also imparts education on cashless mode of financial transaction to the consumers.

Women's Empowerment

Ambuja has promoted 1975 Self Help Groups (SHGs) till date thus engaging women from 22,835 households across country. These SHGs serve as a platform for supporting women to start as entrepreneurs in dairy development, nurseries, mushroom cultivation, handicrafts, tailoring and food processing, etc., by providing them with affordable credit. The company has also taken up the initiative to digitize these SHGs and has already digitized almost 1333 SHGs by 2016-17. Skill development programmes run

by company offer various skills based training courses like nursing, computer hardware and software and beautician to women. Also more than 100 women have been trained as Internet Sathis' thus increasing digital literacy among rural women. These women have further trained more than 1, 00,000 rural women in internet, multimedia, social media, websites and information on the worldwide web.

Infrastructure Development

The company also supports the building of infrastructure like roads, street lights, school buildings, etc., for villages, in consultation with the residing communities. It also supports farming community in undertaking projects related to water resource management, through construction of water tanks to ensure storage of safe drinking water.

Disaster Relief

Ambuja cements serve people affected from natural calamities by distributing food packets, utensils, clothes, drinking water, oral dehydration salts and cotton blankets. To provide them with medical aid a mobile health van is also pressed into their service, various disinfection activities are carried out to prevent the outbreak of epidemics. The company was involved in relief activities following the natural calamities like Mumbai floods, the Tapi river overflow in Surat, the earthquake in Kutch and Jammu & Kashmir.

Energy Conservation

With the aim to promote clean and renewable energy, farmers in several villages are encouraged to adopt solar energy for irrigation pumping. Also solar power street lights and biogas plants have been installed in various villages. Ambuja is also promoting

smoke energy efficient chullhas in households to reduce fuel consumption and improve the rural kitchens. Energy conservation being major areas of concern, the company fulfills 6.5 percent of its energy needs through renewable sources. The company has also purchased renewable energy certificates equivalent to 21.66 million units. Conventional lights have been replaced with LED lights and automatic light sensors have been installed at all its offices and plants.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Ambuja cement being a part of the Cement Sustainability Initiative of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development is working on development and implementation of a low carbon technology roadmap for the Indian cement industry. The strategies mentioned in its roadmap were piloted at the Ambujanagar plant in 2015, with focus on energy efficiency opportunities. It has reduced the emission of greenhouse gases by 29.7 per cent by co-processing of industrial and other wastes as alternative fuels at its kilns.

Wildlife Protection

In the Gir forest adjoining Ambuja's plant in Kodinar, the company constructed parapet walls around the wells to prevent wild animals especially the endangered asiatic lions from falling down.

Waste Management

Ambuja undertakes initiatives to manage not only its own waste but also provides waste management services to other industries and waste generators through cement kiln co-processing by its Geocycle brand. The company also co-processes waste from the agricultural, industrial and public/municipal

waste thus enabling it to replace, traditional fuels with Alternate Fuels & Raw materials (AFR).

Biodiversity Promotion

The company follows sustainable mining practices, water bodies and pastureland development, and land rehabilitation in areas around its manufacturing facilities to protect ecosystem and conserve biodiversity. Also various biodiversity (flora and fauna) studies have been conducted by third parties for all its mining areas. Ambuja is a signatory to the India Business and Biodiversity Initiative (IBBI) of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit. The company has also been actively involved in International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Leader for Nature (LfN) initiative. It also follows the Group Biodiversity Directive that requires it to prepare a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for sensitive sites.

STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES

In order to understand the opinion of several stakeholders' regarding CSR initiatives undertaken by Ambuja, various interviews and field visits to several sites were conducted. Winning accolades since years, the visit to company's social work sites speak for itself about the commitment shared by it towards social welfare. Doing full justice to its vision of sustainability it carries its developmental projects in a phased manner ensuring sustainable development. Ambuja's deep involvement and empathetic devotion towards its social welfare programmes is very much visible thus distinguishing and establishing it as a leader among all the players in industry.

In Punjab state of India, the company mainly carries out its CSR activities in the villages of Bathinda, Ropar, Mansa, Moga, Barnala, Abohar and Fazilka districts. As a process oriented company its main areas of focus are health, education, women empowerment, skill development, water resource management and agriculture. First of all need assessment is carried out in order to chart out areas in which company's intervention is required. Then sustainability of programme is evaluated. Only those projects which are considered to be sustainable are carried and sponsored by the company. Later on implementation is carried out in a participatory manner, by engaging beneficiaries of the project in the cost sharing process. The company following a long term orientation believes in bringing behavioral changes in the beneficiaries to ensure the achievement of complete development.

Ambuja has constructed sanitation facilities in several government schools in the villages of Bathinda district. On visit to Government Senior Secondary School Buladewala, the school authorities appreciated Ambuja for its contribution towards school infrastructure. Various seminars to create awareness about road safety and providing career guidance to these students are conducted regularly in the school. The company also runs a preventive programme for eradicating Anaemia among young girl students. Due to lack of awareness and discrimination for girl child the problem of iron deficiency is highly prevalent in rural areas of our country. Every year in the month of October general medical test is conducted for all the students from several government schools. Also all girl students are checked for blood haemoglobin level and are monitored for anaemia by conducting blood tests. Students who are found to anaemic are provided with proper food products rich in

iron. Also proper record of all girl students is maintained and tracked by company. It also conducts awareness programmes against prevention of iron deficiency from time to time in various government schools.

Hygienic waste management system was initiated in 2014 in Ropar by constructing drains in collaboration with financial investment from the village authorities.

The women in rural areas enjoy a second citizen type status. They are not allowed to work. Ambuja creates awareness campaigns in villages and try changing mindset of rural people. It also supports formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) targeting landless women in villages. Women especially from economically weak background are mostly uneducated; hence they are unable to make any economic contributions to their families. By forming these SHGs, Ambuja has given wings to their potential. Each of these women are given training in hand embroidery, stitching, knitting, dairy production, food processing etc. on the basis of their interest areas. Later, it facilitates these women members of SHGs in getting bank loans to invest in their business activities. Currently there are 50 SHGs in Bathinda district, a member of Shakti SHG from village Behman Diwana informed that there are 17 groups in whole village with at least 10 members in each group. Each member of group is trained in a skill by conducting workshops thus guiding them to increase their income and contribute towards family income. Also regular classes are conducted by experts to give basic knowledge on various areas like mathematical calculations, signature learning etc. to assist them in carrying their business activities. Being members of these SHGs they can easily avail various loans at very low rates of interest thus making it easier for them to invest in their business ventures and

make progress in life. Similarly the women of Ropar have launched a wool distribution center cum outlet named Satluz Nari Shakti Producer Group in Ghanauli Village which serves as a platform for the sale of various knitting products.

Another marvellous feat by Ambuja for farmer's welfare is creating the local farmers producer organizations or farmer clubs in each village. Based on sustainability approach these clubs ensure provision of proper assistance and up to date technological knowledge to farmers. This has been a great initiative and has had a positive impact on overall production and productivity of the farmers. In each village around 20 farmers gather together to form a club and where the size of village is bigger, 2 or 3 such groups are made consisting of 20 farmers each. These clubs at village level combine together to form a registered club association at district level which is a sort of distinct company with a member of board of directors from each village. These farmers collectively can take bank loans to buy agricultural equipments for the association which can later be used by the member farmers of the association by paying a nominal fee, thus saving them a lot of money in comparison to renting these equipments from private owners. Also this association buys plantation seeds and cattle feed in bulk directly from the suppliers, then selling it at a reduced price to local farmers. These seeds, cattle feed, etc., are made available to other member and non members with a very less margin at a very low price in comparison to market rates. Such association promotes the feeling of togetherness in the community and reduces the individual high cost of machinery. A fellow member from Hari Kranti Group told us there are 10 clubs in each of 10 villages of Bathinda district

which have merged together to form Bathinda Farmer Producer Group at district level thus engaging total 500 farmers. Every month a meeting is organized by each club to share information and discuss ideas by gathering all farmers together. He also discussed that due to provision of Happy Seeder machine by the Bathinda Club they did not have to burn the stubble this year and contribute to the health hazard due to smog formation in the environment. These farmer clubs also organize seminars by inviting experts to guide farmers on various agricultural techniques, proper use of pesticides, disease prevention and other farming related issues.

With an aim to conserve water the company is also making efforts to introduce Drip Irrigation² System in Punjab. This method is believed to reduce water consumption, nutrient loss, growth of weeds, time wastage, usage of fertilizers and pesticides while increasing the total production. In order to instigate this project company invited all farmers from Bathinda district to a meeting where they were made aware about the pros and cons of this method along with providing guidance about its implementation. At the end of the meeting ten farmers volunteered and agreed to test and try this methodology in one acre of land by each farmer. The total cost of project per acre is Rs 80000, out of which Rs 40000 is the subsidy provided by Government and Rs 30000 is agreed to be borne by company and Rs 10000 is supposed to be the farmer's contribution. Ambuja has collaborated with Netafirm Irrigation India Pvt. Ltd. for supplying all accessories like

² Drip irrigation is a method of controlled irrigation in which water is slowly delivered to the root system of multiple plants. This method can help reduce evaporation and runoff, and contribute to water conservation.

pipes and fitting to farmers for implementing this project successfully. As shared by the volunteers from Deona village the motivation behind them pairing up with this project was desire to learn a new technique and increase in production of cotton. The company believes that the success of these demonstrations will determine the future of this project in Punjab. If this method benefits these selected farmers then through word of mouth other farmers will be motivated to further adopt and implement this methodology, thus bringing a kind of water revolution in Punjab.

Ambuja is also working towards the cause of Drug de-addiction in various villages of Punjab. At village gatherings and events like melas, the company motivates youth to renounce drugs by conducting Nukkad Nataks and plays. After that announcements regarding drug de-addiction are made and interested persons are gathered, motivated and put in touch with proper rehabilitation centers to assist them in proper de-addiction process. Till date approximately 3500 young persons in various villages in Bathinda region have been linked with various rehabilitation centers. Also awareness campaigns to motivate village women to grow vegetables at home by adopting a Kitchen Garden approach are carried by the company.

Also company runs Non Formal Schools for children with backgrounds in Joginagar and Oriyabasti, which are marginalized slum areas of Bathinda. Prior to company intervention none of the children from these two slum areas was going to school. In 2005, Ambuja started providing education to these children from marginalized communities by opening two Gyan Deep Kendras to give basic education and later linking them up with local Government schools. As these children being completely devoid of any

education could not directly be enrolled in formal schools, so through these informal schools these children were prepared in basic subjects and then linked with formal schools so as to ensure they cope up with regular academic curriculum. Due to regular services of these Gyan Deep Kendras since 13 years, currently there is not even a single child who is not going to school. Now these centers run evening classes to facilitate students of these areas in their weak subjects. As these students cannot afford private tuitions so to guide them in various subjects like Math's, English, Science, etc., free tuitions are provided in the evenings. Along with providing guidance in various subjects, children are also given training and awareness on road safety and hygiene. The duration of these evening classes is 3 hours from Monday to Saturday in the evening.

Oriyabasti is major slum area of Bathinda where migrants from Orissa and Bihar reside. The cleanliness and hygienic condition in this slum area is commendable. Due to continuous motivation and infrastructure support in building sanitation facilities, playground, Gyan Deep Kendras and support talent promotion by ensuring participation of local children in various company events, the Ambuja has changed the life of the residents of this locality.

Ambuja Manovikas Kendra recognized as one of the best special schools in Punjab for mentally challenged kids was taken over by Ambuja in the year 1999 with merely 10 students in Ropar, Punjab. Today this institute takes care of more than 100 mentally challenged children by providing them with environment to meet their individual developmental needs. It helps disabled students in improving their self-help skills, academic skills and social skills. It mainly

trains students dealing with four types of disabilities namely intellectual disability, autism, cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities by conducting several behavioral modification programmes. Till date 9 students from AMK have participated in world Olympics winning total 13 medals and AMK has also been champion consistently since 12 years in state level competition. The achievements and reputation earned by AMK in Punjab and world speak for itself about the commitment and involvement shared by Ambuja towards its social responsibility works. Also AMK won the DERIOZIO National Award for Excellence in the Field of Special Education in the year 2016.

Ambuja established a new Skill Development Center in Ropar, Punjab to train 50 special adults in mainly three trades namely bakery, pottery and artificial jewellery making. Also a workshop to create awareness about the Rights of Persons with Disability was organized at District Level in Punjab, with 80 officials and school principals in attendance. The purpose of this program was to ensure that disabled people enrolled in government schools can access the benefits of different schemes available to them. The company also conducted surveys across 131 villages in Punjab thus identifying 415 persons with different disabilities in Punjab to help them access various government benefits available to them.

Also on interviewing residents of surrounding villages it was found that damage caused, due to overloaded trucks from the company, to the link roads and heavy pollution attributed to the emissions from the industrial unit were a major area of concern among local masses. The residents claimed that because of rising pollution level in the area the problems related to breathing and skin are on continuous

surge. Also they told that company drains its polluted water in Sutlej River, thus leading to water logging and other water borne diseases in the area. Some of the residents also complained that company is not giving direct employment to the local residents and is collaborating with private contractors for cement transport which are further exploit local employees by paying very low wages.

AMBUJA AND THE PYRAMID OF CSR

Carroll's CSR Pyramid is probably the most well-known model of CSR (Visser, 2006). As originally proposed by this pyramid, 'Corporate social responsibility encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time' (Carroll 1979, 1991). This four-part definition of CSR was originally published in 1979 and was recast in the form of a CSR pyramid in 1991 by Carroll. Previously, this model of measuring a company's social performance has been used as an accepted framework for understanding CSR in several research studies (Maignan and Ferrell, 2001;

Ameer and Othman, 2012; Rahardjo et al., 2013).

As seen in Figure 1, a company shall fulfil these four responsibilities to meet the criteria for being considered socially responsible. The economic responsibility of business is to be a profitable unit. Ambuja cements reported net sales of INR³ 10.977 billion by selling around 24.18 million tons of cement and net profit of INR 14.87 billion in the fiscal year 2017-18. Hence this proves that company is performing very well in terms of fulfilling its economic responsibilities towards shareholders and other stakeholders of the company. With respect to legal responsibilities, every company is obliged to obey the laws prevailing in its areas of operation. Ambuja Cements is currently facing two law suits which are, firstly, the penalty imposed by the Competition Commission of India against certain cement manufacturers including Ambuja cements concerning alleged contravention of the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002. Secondly, the complaint by State of Haryana alleging cartelization in the tender for supply

³ INR stands for Indian Rupee which is the official currency of Republic of India.



Figure 1

of cement by some cements companies including Ambuja Cements Ltd. Both these legal cases are under trial. Hence in legal context, the verdict by law tribunals in these court cases will decide whether company is fulfilling its legal responsibilities or not. With respect to ethical responsibilities, the company shall conduct its operations ethically. Ambuja Cements policies on ethics, bribery, corruption and the whistleblower policy cover all its directors, employees, vendors and customers. In the year 2018, Ambuja received total 31 complaints, of which 8 complaints were pre-assessed by the Ethical View Reporting Committee but did not warrant further investigation. Ethical View Reporting Committee is a committee formulated for the effective implementation of the whistleblower policy. Further, 17 complaints were investigated and concluded whereas 5 complaints are still under investigation. The cases investigated were mainly of the nature of bribery, kickbacks, theft, and violation of code of conduct. Also the complaints by local residents, around company's manufacturing units, about problems of air pollution and water pollution along with paying low wages to them question Ambuja's integrity to serve local masses. Hence ethical responsibilities of Ambuja demand it be just and fair and pay attention to the issues faced by villagers living near its manufacturing plants. Lastly, in terms of philanthropic responsibilities which a company performs at its own discretion, Ambuja spent INR 534.6 million on its CSR initiatives in 2017-18 whereas it was prescribed to spend INR 254.6 million as per rules. As discussed in the previous sections Ambuja is well respected in the community for its deep involvement and true to heart service to the society. As observed from the discussions with stakeholders of the company, instead of duplicating efforts made by other

companies on similar areas, Ambuja through its innovative thinking is carrying out projects in a sustainable manner to create a bigger impact on the society. So company is a role model for other industry players with context to fulfilling its philanthropic responsibilities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ambuja follows a process oriented approach and with a major focus on sustainability of social development projects it has distinguished itself from other companies in the country. Since it has been carrying out CSR for many years and with its experience in the field of social welfare, it has gained an expertise in this arena. With its focus on sustainable development it implements projects according to the local requirements with participation from local communities. The company's major aim while implementing these social development projects is to bring behavioural changes in the beneficiaries so as to ensure sustainability of these projects. On analyzing the social responsibility performance of Ambuja with context to expected CSR beliefs it can be observed that company is fulfilling its economic and philanthropic responsibilities very well. However in terms of fulfilling ethical responsibilities and legal responsibilities some discrepancies have been observed which need to be given due consideration. Ambuja should divert more resources on curbing the problems of water pollution and air pollution around its manufacturing plants. Also fair wages and proper employment opportunities should be given to residents of surrounding villages.

Taking motivation from global player Nestle, Ambuja can also adopt the concept of creating shared value in its business operations. Creating Shared Value means generating economic value in a way that also produces

value for society by addressing its challenges. This principle is deeply ingrained in the value system and culture of Nestle ever since its incorporation and contributed inherently towards its huge success and global stature. By following a similar philosophy of carrying CSR initiatives which create value for both local community and strategically benefit the company as well, Ambuja can further make progress socially and economically. Also Punjab being an agrarian state, farming community constitutes a major chunk of the local populations. However, due to high debt burdens and low income, the rate of farmer's suicides in Punjab has been continuously increasing. Ambuja in partnership other companies can work towards addressing this major social issue in Punjab by establishing a Farmer Suicide Relief Fund. The partner companies can mutually agree to divert a certain percentage of their total prescribed CSR expenditure for the year towards this Farmer Suicide Relief Fund. This can further strengthen the relationship Ambuja shares with the local community while addressing a major problem being faced by the local residents of the state.

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