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DCM SHRIRAM

More crop per drop

Given the presence of its multi-product manufacturing facility at Kota for over half a century, DCM Shriram has had a long standing association with Rajasthan. This project was triggered by a desire to address the water scarcity and weak socio-economic conditions of the adopted villages in 2017, in keeping with its belief that 'every drop counts'. The programme was conceptualised to ensure availability of sufficient water for irrigation, drinking and livestock, reducing the depletion of ground water and for raising the socio-economic status of the villagers. The projects were undertaken to support the Mukhya mantri jal swawlamban abhiyan (MJSJA) of the government of Rajasthan.

The second programme, layered on the first, included an agri-skilling project 'Jeetega kisaan', which strives to achieve the targets of SGD-2 – Zero Hunger. It aims to help farming communities increase their productivity and income. With an increase in irrigated area, cultivable area and adoption of advanced agricultural techniques, this led to increase in productivity and profitability of the farmers. Farmers were also helped in creating market linkages for their crops and giving them access to last mile delivery.

In 2017, the programme was designed as a partnership model, wherein organisations were roped in to collaborate with the CSR and the business team of the company, to bring in their respective core competencies. The major focus of the programme is to work towards propagating good agriculture practices and demand and supply side water management measures. Water is at the core of sustainable development and is critical for socio-economic development, healthy ecosystems and for human survival itself.



Working towards propagating good agriculture practices

Holistic socio-economic growth

Over the last three years, the increased water storage capacity of 640,000 cu m and improved farming practices have benefitted 12,650 people living in 23 villages. Improved agronomic practices, better quality, appropriate quantity of agri inputs, water management and better linkage to markets have together delivered holistic socio-economic growth. The water availability improved along with rise in the water table, recharging of bore-wells, hand-pumps, etc, enabling farmers to cultivate two crops in a year, as against single crop cultivation before intervention. The company recharged more than 100 wells across 23 villages through construction of anicuts, MST and pond renovation. Adoption of vegetable cultivation was a key aim of the project and the land under vegetables increased after training. The adoption rate of vegetable cultivation was 68 per cent.

The replication of agri-skilling programme – Jeetega kisaan – was undertaken by expanding the coverage through increasing the number of

villages. This programme, layered on the first (water conservation), included helping farming communities get 'per drop more crop' from the conserved water. The reach was expanded from five villages to 18 more by 2019, making the intervention cover 23 villages in total. This model of water conservation followed by the company recharged more than 100 wells across 23 villages through the construction of anicuts, MST and pond renovation/ redevelopment. The replication of the project helped more beneficiaries in upgrading from old technique of farming to new technique and were able to cultivate two crops in a year, as against a single crop before the intervention.

The implementation of unique, scalable and sustainable CSR projects calls for a robust alliance between corporates and NGOs. The company believes that each entity has a critical role to play. While the corporate sector brings managerial expertise, efficiency and organisational capabilities, the development sector augments them with local reach, passion and know-how. To successfully implement water

conservation and agri-skilling programme, the company has undertaken partnerships with the government, ISAP, NM Sadhguru and NABCONS.

These water conservation and agri-skilling projects have been scaled to other geographies too. Recently, DCM Shriram has also launched Jeetega

kisaan – a sustainable paddy programme – in partnership with IFC and ISAP as its implementation partners in 46 villages of Sonbhadra and Chopan districts in UP.

The objective of the project was to organise beneficiaries into farmers' productivity groups by providing

them training on agricultural productivity enhancement for enhanced income from agriculture and allied activities. Also the project by providing information on high-value crops, including vegetables, fruits and other medicinal crops helps increase the annual income of the farmers. •