TOGETHER FOR COMMUNITIES

Special edition on Sustainable Livelihood
ACC DISHA
Featured Projects

1. Encouraging financial independence by identifying the earning potential of women
   **GAGAL**

2. Enabling villages to adopt alternative sources of livelihood for subsistence
   **LAKHERI**

3. Empowering the community to diversify their skill set
   **TIKARIA**

4. Achieving self-reliance through community development
   **KYMORE**

5. Promoting self-sustenance in the community
   **JAMUL**

6. Tailoring the way to success
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7. Opening avenues through life skills training
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8. Generating livelihood through the Damodhar Initiative for Social Holistic Advancement
   **DAMODHAR**

9. Encouraging new skills towards profitability
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10. Generating alternative livelihoods through a state-of-the-art skilling centre
    **WADI**

11. Bridging the skill gap
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12. Building the local economy through alternative means of livelihood
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13. Training the youth to work in the BPO sector
    **MADUKKARAI**

14. Creating sustainable avenues for income generation
    **CHANDA**

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**ACC DISHA**

(An alternative livelihood hub)

ACC’s DISHA project focuses on alternate livelihood initiatives by strengthening people capabilities, assets and activities required to earn a dignified and sustainable living. It has a three pronged approach:

1. **Skill development of youth for employability and placement**

2. **Microenterprises for Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs):** This initiative for women's empowerment and gender equality refers to increasing the economic, political and social strength of the marginalised sections, particularly the women and Persons with Disabilities (PwD) in society. Initiative for women’s empowerment and gender equality that refer to increasing the economic, political and social strength of the marginalised sections, particularly the women in society.

3. **Improvement of sustainable agriculture and agro-based livelihood options through ecologically sound and economically feasible methods.**

ACC DISHA is a collaborative project which works with the government, corporates and civil society organisations to train youth in life skills to generate alternate sources of livelihood and improve the quality of lives. Under this initiative, ACC has set up 14 DISHA centres, 10 women’s SHG federations and seven Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

ACC DISHA is currently reaching out to over 40,000 lives, with an aim to set up more institutions and expand its reach to 1 million lives by 2022.

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**Mapped To**

- **Sustainable Development Goals**
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth**
In communities residing around ACC Gagal Cement Works, men are usually the sole breadwinners because women are not engaged in any occupation, hence entirely dependent on male members of their families for their financial needs.

ACC TRUST at Barmana made rigorous efforts to mobilise women of the area to encourage them to reduce dependency on their male counterparts and contribute to the household income, thereby achieving financial independence. Around 400 women have formed 40 Self Help Groups (SHGs) titled Swamini, under the ACC DISHA programme. Out of these, 30 SHGs have been trained in income generating activities like mushroom cultivation, pickle making, bag and cushion making, knitting, cutting and tailoring, vermicomposting and goatery. These groups have been linked to banks and are carrying out internal credit loaning among themselves.

ACC TRUST has also trained women to become industrial tailors and embroidery artisans. The SHG Swamini has trained women to use industrial sewing machines and these women earn an average monthly income of ₹4,000 each and above.

Another SHG comprising four women has been involved in spice grinding and each member earns an average monthly income of ₹1,500.

ACC TRUST has also tied up with the Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Bilaspur, to provide National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) based training in information technology, electrical wiring, retail, hospitality and motor driving to interested youths in surrounding areas. Himachal Pradesh has a shortage of drivers and around 60 youth that were provided driver training have obtained licenses and are now engaged in the driving profession.

Beneficiary Speak

“ACC DISHA has given me the opportunity to earn money and increase my family’s income thus assisting my husband whose income was not sufficient to run the family.”

Kusum Lata, member of Radhe-Radhe SHG from Dhaun Kothi Panchayat

Kusum Lata makes pickles and sells them in the local market. Through ACC’s intervention, she has acquired the FSSAI certificate which makes selling her pickles much easier.
ACC Lakheri Cement Works is ACC’s oldest cement plant that has been in existence for over 100 years. A majority of the population depends on agriculture as a source of livelihood. However, in recent years, the area has been facing severe water shortage that has caused financial problems among the farmers who are unable to yield good crops. With the deteriorating quality of water, agriculture is no longer a sustainable source of livelihood.

ACC TRUST Lakheri found ways to help the community to improve their situation by mobilising unemployed youth and conducting programmes through its DISHA centre to enhance their knowledge and skills based on their needs, interests and market feasibility. The TRUST also encouraged them to become entrepreneurs. Men were trained in various trades such as automobile, air condition and refrigerator repair and electrician courses. Women have been organised to form Self Help Groups (SHGs) and have received training in zardozi, gota patti, aari tari and sitara moti (types of embroideries on Indian clothing).

Through ACC’s interventions, over 1,000 youth have been trained under the DISHA programme across areas such as Chamawali, Utrtrana, Sakhawada, Papari & Kankra Dungar and Lakheri. After completing the training programmes, trainees have been hired by well known companies with a basic salary of ₹11,500 per month along with food, accommodation and transport. Approximately 1,500 women and girls, who were encouraged to start a home based embroidery unit on traditional Indian attires like saris, lehengas, etc, are now commercially employed. ACC TRUST assisted these artisans in establishing links with the market, designers and raw material suppliers, and they now earn approximately ₹5,000 per month during their spare time after completing their household chores.

Haseena Bano has three children and her husband was the sole earning member with a monthly income of ₹5,000; making it difficult for the family to sustain. Haseena approached the DISHA centre after getting to know about SHGs. She formed a SHG called ‘Ramjaan’ along with other women. She now earns ₹2,500 per month from embroidery work by sparing 2-3 hours per day. As a dedicated and hard working woman, she has undertaken the additional responsibility of training women in embroidery work from neighbouring units.
Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the people of Tikaria area but it remains non-remunerative due to small land holdings and some being landless. ACC Tikaria Cement Works is the only industry operating in the area, which employs a large number of local residents in plant operations. Beyond that, the youth of the area are unable to find employment and hesitate to move out of the area in search of employment.

Understanding the severity of this issue, ACC TRUST set up the DISHA centre to mobilise youth and encourage them to enhance their skills to gain employment or become self-employed. ACC Tikaria has a large requirement for truck drivers to transport cement and raw materials to and from the plant. Keeping this in mind, the DISHA centre provided a month long motor driving training programme and facilitated the issuance of permanent driving license. A total of 75 unemployed youth were trained, issued driving licenses and have started work as truck drivers within ACC Tikaria.

Additionally, the DISHA centre started two free computer courses – a basic computer course and a Course on Computer Concepts (CCC) certified by the National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIEIT), a mandatory course while applying for government jobs. A total of 368 youth across six villages have received computer training from ACC’s DISHA centre.

A tailoring and stitching centre was set up at Annibejal village where 148 women and girls have been trained over the last three years and have successfully increased their family income.

As a part of skill building for the rural youth, ACC TRUST enrolled 2,065 youth and trained them in retail and hospitality. So far 80% of youth have been placed in various companies over the last three years.

**Case Study**

Aditi has four siblings and her father is a farmer. She discontinued her education after 12th standard as her parents were unable to bear the expenses. She visited the DISHA centre and enrolled herself in the CCC and received the NIEIT certificate, which enabled her to secure employment as a computer teacher at a college near Amethi.
ACC Kymore Cement Works remains the largest employer of local residents of Kymore. Due to limited opportunities within the company, residents of the area usually move outside to gain skilled employment. However, they are often reluctant to do so and remain unemployed.

To combat the situation, ACC TRUST Kymore has taken a holistic approach towards its community development agenda and are benefitting a population of around 35,000 people across 16 villages surrounding the plant and mines. Through ACC’s DISHA programme, ACC aims to enhance literacy and education, livelihood, employability and income generation within the community.

ACC TRUST offers National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) based courses such as life skills, retail, selling skills, domestic BPO and machine operator. The participants receive training through instructor led presentations and are also provided workbooks in Hindi. After receiving a month long training, these youth are successfully placed in the service sector in different companies in and across Madhya Pradesh with monthly salaries ranging from ₹5,000 to ₹8,000, including free accommodation and subsidised food.

ACC offered a six-month training programme on ‘Life Skills’ to transform the rural youth with no or less school education to enable them to enter the workforce. A programme of 1,000 hours aimed at total transformation of the individual comprised full day sessions on spoken English, computer skills, life skills behaviour, confidence building, leadership and basic arithmetic. Till date, 58 youth have completed their training and have been successfully placed in various industries of which five of them are now motivated to pursue higher education while others aim to be self-employed.

A basic painting certificate course was conducted for 15 men and 15 women in the community to learn Plaster of Paris (PoP) and wall putty applications, paintings on walls/wood/metal surfaces and wall textures/designing etc.

Over a period of five years, ACC TRUST’s interventions on skills development in Kymore have impacted 744 people, thereby providing them with alternate livelihood opportunities.

Case Study
Sameer Khan, 23 years, the oldest of four children, lost his mother during his childhood while his father worked as a locksmith. Unable to make ends meet, Sameer dropped out of school and enrolled himself in the machine operator course at ACC’s DISHA centre in Kymore. On completion of the course, he was placed as a machine operator earning a monthly salary of ₹4,500. He then moved on to work in a garment factory as a team leader and earns ₹30,000 a month. He purchased a taxi and works with a transportation company, where he earns an additional ₹15,000 a month. Sameer is now supporting his family financially.
Some villages surrounding ACC Jamul Cement Works are economically backward. Students often drop out of educational institutions due to lack of funds. With limited employable skills and opportunities in the area, the youth are unable to gain employment within Jamul. Even though there are opportunities in nearby industrial areas like Raipur, Durg and Bhilai, some youth are reluctant to move out of their comfort zone in search of employment, thereby leading to a large number of youth within the area being unemployed.

Seeing the gravity of this situation, ACC TRUST Jamul set up the DISHA centre to harness talent and potential of youth from economically weaker sections of the community, by training them in alternate livelihood options. ACC conducts several courses like automobile repair, air conditioning and refrigeration, electrical, welding, fitting, masonry, computer hardware, Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES), industrial sewing and light motor driving. ACC TRUST not only provides training to the youth, but also assists in placing them.

Through the DISHA centre, ACC TRUST is uplifting the socio-economic status of youth within the host communities to achieve self-sustenance. Due to ACC’s intervention, 1,628 youth have undergone skill development training and 1,237 of them have been placed with reputed organisations post completion of the programme. The youth that have been placed earn an average monthly income of ₹6,500.

Case Study
Motilal Markande has two older sisters. His father is a farmer while his mother is a homemaker. After completing 12th standard, he joined his father in farming and earned approximately ₹2,000 per month. He undertook a six-month welding course at ACC DISHA Jamul. His skill in welding earned him the first place at the district level Skill Olympiad and second place at the state level Skill Olympiad. He was also felicitated by Dr Raman Singh, former Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. He received a prize of ₹20,000 and a certificate of appreciation in recognition of his extraordinary talent. Motilal now works as a welder and earns ₹7,500 a month.
ACC Chaibasa Cement Works, situated in Jhinkpani and Tonto block of West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand covers a population of 21,251 people across five villages, belonging to the Ho tribe where rain fed farming remains the main source of livelihood. Despite the Ho tribe being patriarchal in nature, women enjoy equal status and freedom as men. With no skilling institutions nearby and 90% of the population speaking Hindi or the tribal language, the youth were unable to find employment in the area.

ACC TRUST Chaibasa stepped forward to provide a better future for youth within the host community and launched an initiative to encourage women and girls to upgrade their skills to enhance their family income and lead better lives.

ACC TRUST started a tailoring centre for women. This centre conducts six-month courses on stitching and embroidery. So far, over 1,000 women have benefitted from this initiative. Most women have started their own shops while others have bought sewing machines and are stitching clothes at home. These women earn an average of ₹4,000 to ₹6,500 a month.

23-year-old Dashmati Hassa was trained in stitching and embroidery at the tailoring centre in 2013. She opened a tailoring shop in the area and earns ₹8,000 to ₹10,000 a month. She went on to employ three girls and is paying them each a monthly wage of ₹2,500 and is looking forward to expanding her business. She says, “I am happy with the choice I made. ACC TRUST has helped me achieve my dream of being independent.”

Case Study
ACC Sindri Cement Works is surrounded by villages where a large number of people work as janitors and earn a meagre wage. Though school education is free, the problem arises when these students are unable to fund their higher education due to low family income and hence drop out of school. Therefore, most of the youth within the project area around ACC Sindri were either unemployed or have joined their family members to work as janitors.

ACC TRUST Sindri decided to come to the aid of the youth by setting up a DISHA centre 500 metres from ACC Sindri plant and provide them with a six-month life skill programme. The curriculum of the programme includes learning the English language, basic arithmetic, computers, building confidence and leadership skills and effective communication. On completion of the programme, personal skills and people skills of students are well developed and they are equipped with skills needed to gain employment. So far, 615 students have benefitted from this programme.

Women in the area belong to families that are dependent on agriculture and industrial labour for their livelihood. ACC TRUST provided these women training in industrial stitching and kantha embroidery. With adequate training, these women have upgraded their technique from manual stitching to machine stitching, which has increased their productivity, thereby giving them the opportunity to earn more in a shorter period of time. On average, each woman earns ₹2,000 per month by sparing 2-3 hours a day.

Completion of the two-wheeler repair, electrical and welding courses has enabled unemployed youth to gain employment in multinational companies with an average monthly income of ₹8,000.

**Case Study**

Arup Kumar worked as a labourer and struggled to make ends meet. After attending the Life Skills training programme at ACC DISHA centre, he works as a pizza chef and earns a monthly income of ₹10,000 with food and accommodation being provided by his employer.
Damodhar is a socio-economically backward area of West Bengal. Several youth in the area have completed courses from Industrial Training Institute (ITI) but have to travel over 50 kilometres a day for work due to lack of opportunities within the local area. Usually unwilling to travel or relocate for work, a majority of the population is either unemployed or underemployed, earning a meagre wage and unable to make ends meet. Some of the residents have turned to alcohol and other vices, thus discouraging them from undertaking sustainable livelihood activities.

ACC TRUST Damodhar plays a vital role in providing alternate sources of livelihood for residents of six project villages around ACC’s plant under its DISHA programme titled ‘Damodhar Initiative for Social Holistic Advancement,’ where residents have been mobilised to form Self Help Groups (SHGs) to carry out trade together.

Under ACC DISHA, 45 trainees from four different SHGs completed a training programme on agarbatti making out of which 20 of them have established a microenterprise where each member earns an average monthly income of `1,200 per month after selling their products in the local market.

The demand for mushrooms is increasing and to cope with this demand, a mushroom spawn production unit has been developed at ACC’s DISHA centre. So far, 10 trainees have successfully been trained and have set up a microenterprise that is engaged in a profitable business.

Kantha embroidery is a traditional handicraft that is popular in West Bengal. However, there were very few Kantha artisans within Purulia district. ACC DISHA provided training to 45 women who showed interest in exclusively taking on Kantha work and 20 of them are now engaged in the trade.

ACC DISHA has been instrumental in training 20 members to form a SHG that has set up a microenterprise to manufacture phenyl and detergent that is being sold at the local market.

Through ACC’s intervention, the residents of Damodhar have created sustainable employment opportunities for themselves within their area.
ACC Barghar Cement Works is a major employer in the area that has seen families and generations work within the same organisation. While the local youth aspire to work within the cement industry in Barghar, opportunities are limited and there is a gap between their line of education and the work opportunities they seek.

ACC TRUST Barghar sprung into action to mobilise youth to develop alternate means of livelihood. Through its DISHA centre, ACC TRUST Barghar has trained 313 unemployed youth in refrigeration, air conditioner, and automobile repair courses. On completion of the course, 63.75% of the trainees were placed in different trades.

This year, for youth school drop outs, the DISHA centre commenced a soft skills training programme within Dunguri area. The course aims at personality development and enhanced communication skills. So far, 20 students have enrolled in the course.

ACC TRUST Barghar identified women and encouraged them to come together to form a Self Help Group (SHG) and trained them in tailoring at the DISHA centre. The women began their work using domestic sewing machines and have recently been introduced to industrial sewing machines, thereby increasing their output within a shorter period of time. The SHG have 100 women and 60 adolescent girls who make school bags and purses using industrial sewing machines and earn a monthly wage of ₹8,000 each.

**Bhubaneswar Bhoi, 22 years, aspired to study the Mechanic Motor Vehicle (MMV) course from Industrial Training Institute (ITI). Due to low family income, he dropped out of school and joined his father in agriculture, which was still insufficient to make ends meet. When he heard about the DISHA centre, he enrolled himself into the two-wheeler mechanic course and after completing the 500-hour course, he has found a suitable job as an assistant technician at a company nearby. Bhubaneswar earns ₹8,000 a month, is able to support his family and fund his sister’s education.**
Wadi is known for its limestone deposits and is home to two ACC cement plants. Agriculture and mining are the main sources of livelihood for the people of Wadi and there are a large number of private mines and polishing units that employ local residents. They provide an easy earning opportunity of ₹100 to ₹200 per day due to which the youth in the area discontinue their education and start working at an early age, without realising that the pay opportunity is limited and temporary and can render them unemployed at any time. ACC Wadi Cement Works still remains the major employer in the area and a job at ACC Wadi is the most sought after by locals. Those who are unable to secure employment in Wadi tend to be unemployed due to reluctance in moving out of the region in search of employment.

ACC TRUST Wadi is committed towards improving the local economy of host communities in six villages within Kalaburagi district, by promoting alternative livelihoods through skill development at its DISHA centre. The state-of-the-art DISHA centre is well equipped with 10 classrooms and a conference hall that is designed to provide training to 500 people at a time. The DISHA centre regularly conducts courses such as basic computers, beautician, motor driving, masonry, tailoring, retail marketing, electrical, candle making, mobile and automobile repair and air conditioning and refrigeration maintenance, among others.

Due to ACC's intervention, 2,303 unemployed youth in Wadi have been trained and are either employed or have set up a business.

**Case Study**

Raj Ahmed, 19 years-old, had dropped out of school in eighth grade due to low family income and poor grades. His parents are illiterate and his father works at a stone polishing quarry nearby. Raj was introduced to the DISHA training centre where he enrolled himself in the two-wheeler mechanic course. On completion of the course, Raj got placed with a two-wheeler manufacturer in Bengaluru.
The villages surrounding ACC Kudithini Cement Works are socially, economically and educationally backward. The youth in the region are engaged in casual jobs in agriculture and allied activities and struggle to make ends meet with a meagre daily wage of ₹150. With the recent entry of industries in the region, agricultural activities have received a setback and many have lost their jobs and regular income.

There are about 2,150 labourers in the vicinity who do not possess adequate skills to secure a job within a factory. In order to train people to acquire skills to make them employable in the local area, ACC TRUST Kudithini Works set up the DISHA centre. The skills in demand in the area include data entry, motor driving, masonry, electrical and tailoring.

Due to ACC’s interventions, 30 construction workers completed the Advanced Skills on Masonry course. Out of the 135 youth trained in data entry, 90 have been placed in various organisations and earn an average monthly wage of ₹6,500 to ₹10,000. The 153 who were trained in heavy and light motor vehicle driving have permanent driving licenses and are now either employed or self-employed and earn an average monthly income of ₹8,000 to ₹15,000. The 10 youth trained in the electrical course are self-employed and earn ₹10,000 per month.

The village witnessed good rainfall which increased the amount of rainwater being harvested. Once the project was complete, the villagers were overjoyed and commended the work carried out by ACC TRUST.

The dress making and designing and vermicelli units are very popular in Veniveerapura and Kudithini. A total of 120 women have been trained and are stitching garments such as jeans, pants and shirts and earn approximately ₹6,500 per month. The women engaged in the vermicelli trade earn ₹4,500 to ₹6,500 per month. ACC started these units by offering a grant of 50% of the amount while the other 50% was leveraged from members of the SHG. With close monitoring and support from ACC TRUST, these SHGs have become federations, which make them self-sustainable.

Case Study
Basappa successfully obtained a permanent driving license after completing the heavy motor vehicle driver training programme at the DISHA centre. He now works at a nearby school as a bus driver and earns ₹15,000 per month.

Trainees learning to stitch on sewing machines at ACC’s DISHA centre in Kudithini

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Case Study
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Since agriculture is the main occupation of people living near Thondebhavi Cement Works, water scarcity is a major woe to the farmers and they are unable to carry out their trade. ACC, the only industry operating in the area, has provided employment within plant operations to most locals.

At educational institutions, in the respective area, the medium of instruction is Kannada. Several students drop out of school as they are unable to cope with studies in languages other than Kannada. This has led to unemployment among the youth. Understanding the gravity of the situation, ACC TRUST Thondebhavi started the Sustainable Livelihood Programme at the DISHA centre where youth are offered training courses in computers, two-wheeler, refrigerator, and AC repair. Women were particularly interested in computer courses in order to obtain government jobs at the taluk and panchayat offices. ACC TRUST Thondebhavi mobilised a group of 40 women in the area to set up a Self Help Group (SHG) to be trained in making candles and artificial jewellery. The candles and artificial jewellery made during the training period were sold, raising ₹7,000 for the SHG. The newly trained women are now assessing demand of these products in the local market and will begin commercial production shortly.

For more details, please contact subhash.devadiga@acclimited.com

Women from host villages being trained in candle making by members of ACC AHEAD, Thondebhavi Cement Works.

MADUKKARAI

TRAINING THE YOUTH TO WORK IN THE BPO SECTOR

Villages around ACC Madukkarai Cement Works do not have access to premium educational facilities. Due to poverty, students drop out of school and pursue jobs with low remuneration. Those who complete their education do not have the necessary marketable soft skills to obtain jobs in their field of study.

Based on ACC TRUST’s skill mapping, it was observed that youth of Madukkarai were interested in learning computers and working in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector but lacked the required skills. ACC TRUST started a 45-day BPO skill training programme at its DISHA centre where youth were taught basics in computers, typewriting, spoken English and communication skills to equip them to obtain jobs in a BPO. Out of the 30 youth that were trained, 17 have been placed at two BPOs and earn an average monthly income of ₹8,000 to ₹12,000.

For more details, please contact daniel.sunderraj@acclimited.com

Case Study

Mundendra Rao completed his Industrial Training Institute (ITI) course and was looking for local employment while also assisting his father in agriculture. Unable to gain employment, he enrolled himself in the three-month two-wheeler repair course at the DISHA centre. On completion of the course, he was placed at a showroom as a mechanic and earns a monthly income of ₹8,000.

For more details, please contact daniel.sunderraj@acclimited.com

Case Study

Nisheedamolpm quit her B.Com. course to marry her husband, who works in a vegetable market. Unable to make ends meet, Nisheedamolpm approached the DISHA centre and enrolled herself in the BPO skill training programme. On completion of the course, she secured a job as a voice telecaller at a BPO and earns ₹8,000 per month. She also gets incentives for meeting and exceeding targets at work.
The residents living around ACC Chanda Cement Works enjoy better economic status as compared to those in other areas. Men in the area work outside the house while women are homemakers and depend entirely on the male members of their families for their needs.

ACC TRUST Chanda saw talent and potential in these women and decided to intervene to encourage these women to acquire a skill and to use their spare time to engage in income generating activities to boost their family income, thereby reducing their dependency on male members of their families.

ACC TRUST Chanda established a Community Managed Resource Centre (CMRC), a collective of Self Help Groups (SHGs). It began when a group of 19 women undertook an eight day training programme in broom making at the DISHA centre in Nakoda village. During this time, ACC assisted the CMRC in establishing market linkages so that the women could sell brooms in the market. Following the success of these women, orders for brooms started pouring in from local vendors. The unit has been running for over a year in a self-sustainable manner.

Till date, 101 women are engaged in making brooms across four units set up by ACC TRUST. The units produce two types of brooms — soft and hard, in three sizes — small, medium and large. Each woman earns an average of ₹200 per day. Their income is expected to increase in 2019 as these women aim to expand their outreach by tapping into markets of nearby cities. The management team of the broom making enterprise comprises a group of dedicated women from 13 villages around ACC Chanda.

Case Study

Vaishali Neemgade resides in Nakoda village with her husband and children. She used to work from home as a tailor but used to earn ₹1,500 a month sporadically, making it difficult to make ends meet. She enrolled herself in the first batch of the broom making course at ACC Chanda. Not only does Vaishali make brooms but she also trains other women in broom making. She earns ₹5,000 a month from making brooms and ₹500 per training session.
ABOUT US
ACC Limited is India’s foremost cement manufacturer with a countrywide network of factories and marketing offices. Established in 1936, it has been a pioneer and trend-setter in cement and concrete technology. Among the first companies in India to include commitment to environment protection as a corporate objective. ACC continues to be recognised for environment friendly measures taken at its plants and mines. Its commitment to sustainable development, its fairness in business dealings and the considerable on going efforts in community welfare have won the company acclaim as a responsible corporate citizen.

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The Government of Odisha, awarded ACC the ‘Most Innovative CSR Project’ for Vidya Utkarsh, at the Make in Odisha Conclave 2018 in Bhubaneswar, in recognition towards creating a social, environmental and economic value for its host communities in Odisha. Naveen Patnaik, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha presented the award to Pratyush Panda, Head-CSR and Jamil Khan, CSR, Bargarh.

Odisha is on a rapid road of growth and development and ACC is actively contributing to its journey. Under the Vidya Utkarsh project, ACC TRUST Bargarh team supports students studying in primary and secondary schools in Khaliapali, Bardol, Dang, Bargaon, Patikarpali, Katapali, Bhatli, Dungri, Sauntamal, Badmal and Ambabhona areas of Odisha. The schools in these areas had high drop-out rates in girls, beyond class VIII, besides lack of basic Hindi, English and Mathematics knowledge among students and insufficient teaching staff.

The Vidya Utkarsh project aims at facilitating the reach of quality education to every child in the host community. In Odisha, the project focuses on improving the learning outcome of 3,650 government school students from classes 1 to 10, encouraging rural students to take up higher education, and facilitating skilling for 350 underprivileged students through training in life skills and entrepreneurship. Various activities are carried out under the Vidya Utkarsh initiative, such as Digital Equalizer (DE), providing quality education in elementary schools and Vidyasarathi – a scholarship scheme for rural students and book distribution. These activities have created major impacts such as, average reduction of 28-35% in school dropout rates and 60-65% increase in learning outcomes of students. A total of 62 meritorious students were awarded scholarships under the Vidyasarathi programme. A total of 3,376 medical and engineering students were provided with more than 70,000 entrance test preparation books in Bargarh and Kalahandi districts.

In 2018, ACC Vidya Utkarsh touched the lives of 44,381 students through 160 government run schools across India.