



Social Impact Assessment 2021-22

Firstsource Solutions Limited

**Prepared by Social Audit
Network, India**

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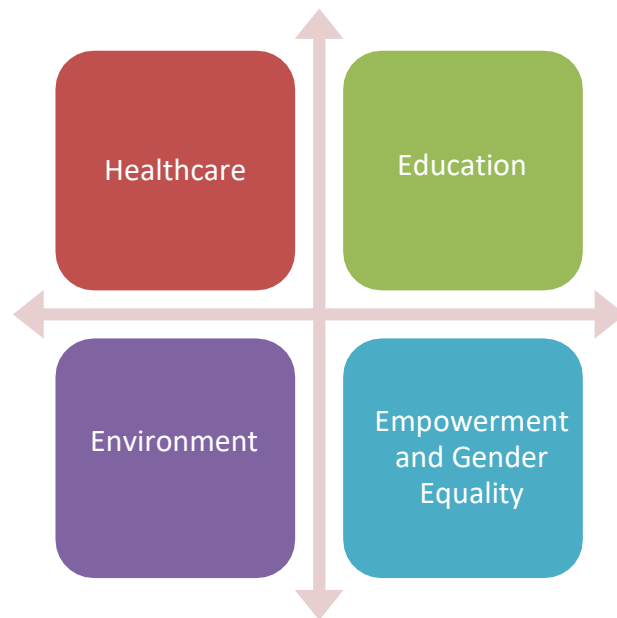
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1. Background

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can not only improve the community in which we live and have an impact on society, but it can also be a successful business strategy. It establishes a fundamental ethical tenet that holds members responsible for carrying out their civic duties. The entire society must profit from our activities. By doing this, we may strike the ideal balance between economic growth, societal well-being, and environmental sustainability.

Firstsource Solutions Limited (**henceforth it will be mentioned as Firstsource solutions**) is an Indian business process management company headquartered in Mumbai, India. It is owned by the RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group. Firstsource solutions provides business process management in the banking and financial services, customer services, telecom and media, and healthcare sectors. Its clients include financial services, telecommunications, and healthcare companies. Firstsource solutions hosts operations in India, US, UK, and the Philippines.

As a purpose-driven business, Firstsource Solutions is dedicated to supporting individuals in their time of need, not just in the way we conduct business but also in other ways. Firstsource solutions actively pursues its strong commitment to social and environmental responsibility through its CSR efforts. As a world leader, Firstsource solutions is committed to supporting CSR activities in the areas of Empowerment and Gender Equality, Education, Healthcare and Environment by leveraging its resources, people, and business processes. The key focus areas of Firstsource solution's efforts in CSR during the time period of the audit were.



2. CSR Projects by Firstsource Solutions Limited

As part of its CSR activities, Firstsource Solutions had implemented different projects in collaboration with 9 partner organizations covering the defined focus areas. These partners have been chosen based on their commitment and expertise in the domains. The projects that are taken for the scope of Social Impact Assessment study is INR 1.4 crores during the time period of this audit.

- Foundation for Excellence (FFE) henceforth in the report mentioned as FFE
- Transforming Rural India Foundation (TRIF) henceforth in the report mentioned as TRIF

Domain	NGO Partner	Spend
Healthcare	Nirmaan & Thuvakkam	32,57,030
Education	FFE & TRIF	17,78,000
Environment	Saytrees & Thuvakkam	21,24,000
Empowerment and Gender Equality	Nasscom & Goonj	68,77,500
Total		1,40,36,530

3.Scope of the Assessment

The social impact study was done for the 9 projects funded by Firstsource solutions and implemented by 7 different NGO partners in the financial period of Apr 21- Mar 22.

4.Evaluation Methodology

The methodology used for the impact assessment was a blend of primary and secondary data analysis. The SAN team visited 8 project locations. The Firstsource Scholarship Program conducted by FFE was audited through telephone calls and the available secondary data.

S. No	Project	Medium of Assessment	Date of Visit	No of Stakeholders consulted
1	Dignity For Work	Field- Visit	10/02/23	19
2	Setting up ICU ward in a Govt. Hospital	Field- Visit	20/01/23	13
3	Medical Equipment Donation	Field- Visit	08/02/23	3
4	Rural Students Literacy Development Program	Field- Visit	07/02/23	80
5	Urban Forest Creation Project (phase 1) Chennai	Field- Visit	08/02/23	3
6	Urban Forest Creation Project (phase 2) Hyderabad	Field- Visit	14/01/23	2
7	Urban Forest Creation Project (phase 3) Karnataka	Field- Visit	23/01/23	3
8	Digital Transformation & Digital Literacy Program	Field- Visit	08/02/23	23
9	Firstsource Scholarship Program	Telephonic Interview	27/02/23	8

The primary data was collected through interaction with beneficiaries during the visits. Focus group discussions and personal interviews were conducted with primary stakeholders, NGO management team, and employees of the NGOs. The secondary data was taken from the Firstsource solutions reports and documents shared.

5. Report on Performance

As a purpose driven organization Firstsource Solutions Limited carefully selected projects connected with their focused thematic areas as well as those which needed immediate attention and ensured timely completion of the projects with the help of reputed Non Profit Implementing partners to create long lasting impact.

I Healthcare

As part of its commitment to improving healthcare, Firstsource solutions has partnered with 2 organizations (Nirmaan and Thuvakkam NGO) to implement the following two projects in Telangana and Tamil Nadu respectively. A total of Rs 32.57 lakhs was spent through this exercise.

Table 1 Healthcare Projects

S.No.	NGO Partner	Project description	Beneficiaries	Cost	Area
1	Nirmaan	Provision of 10 Bed ICU wards for better treatment for BPL patients	BPL families and general public around Hyderabad	31,30,030	Hyderabad (Telangana)
2	ThuvakkamNGO,	Sophisticated (easy to carry and handle) portable ECG machines for healthcare professionals	Rural communities of Tiruvalangadu Block	1,27,000	Tiruvalangadu (Tamil Nadu)
Total spent on Healthcare projects				32,57,030	

Project 1 Setting up ICU ward in a Govt. Hospital

About the Project

Firstsource solutions wished to contribute to the care of Indian citizens as the pandemic continued into 2022. Based on the experiences of the second wave, the country in general lacked sufficient Intensive Care Units to cater to the kind of emergency our country faced during the second wave. Hence Firstsource solutions decided to donate an Intensive Care Unit [ICU] to Sarojini devi Eye Hospital, Hyderabad which has been named as one of the 6 secondary hospitals catering to COVID patients. The MOU was signed on 26th of November 2021. Nirmaan spent the period from the date of signing the MOU till March 2022 to procure equipment and setting up of the ICU. The same was operational in March 2022.

Relevance

Keeping the pandemic in mind, the devastation caused by the second wave, the Government's request for help and support to handle the pandemic, this project is very relevant. The Government's plea to the country was to join hands to prevent a disaster like the second wave, wherein the preparedness seemed insufficient. From that perspective, the project was and is relevant as a necessity, in case the pandemic raises its ugly head once again. However, due to the protocols designed by the Government for efficient handling of the pandemic, this ICU has not been used for COVID patients. Yet, the project still is relevant as the hospital is putting it to good use and the patients are benefitted. The ICU is mostly used for children as they need more clinical supervision if they have been under General Anesthesia for surgery. The services of this hospital are mostly availed by the economically weaker section from Hyderabad and neighboring states, thus making available good ophthalmology treatment available free of cost for 5 Districts.

Effectiveness

Some of the significant aspects of this project are zero cost treatment- patients avail the facilities of the ICU free of cost. Despite the program being free, treatment is not compromised. The medical team, all Government appointed, experienced and most importantly committed to the service. Hence the patients receive excellent treatment free of cost. According to the RMO, the medical employees are not burdened with any unrelated dead weight tasks and hence are able to focus completely on their clinical roles and responsibilities, which also could be a major reason for them to be able to provide good service.

Highlights

The project was very relevant keeping the pandemic and its impact on the country during the second wave. It was also aligned with the requests of the Government for support to fight the pandemic. As step for preparedness, this project is surely valuable and worthy of being appreciated. The Sarojini Devi eye Hospital deserves appreciation for being creative and practical and putting this project to use for the patients admitted at the hospital.

Efficiency

The records are being maintained well. The soft copy of the same is attached for reference. The hospital being run by the Government, most patients are from the lower economic strata and hence the project is being utilized by the economically weaker section and by those from neighboring states. Hence the project is being well utilized. Although the ICU department was donated for COVID patients, it has been a much-needed facility in the hospital and is being well utilized.

Social Impact

This project is aligned with UN SDG 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. The uniqueness is that this project aligns with UN SDG 3, with respect to the purpose for which it was established and how it is being utilized by the hospital now. The project is contributing towards overcoming visual impairments of various levels in children and adults. Thus, the project is striving towards reducing visual impairment and related ailments amongst the lower economic strata.

Recommendations

Based on the need of the hospital, a few more ICU beds may be added. Presently the ICU is mostly being used for children. In case the hospital has need for ICU for adults also, it may consider if the two ICUs may be separated. The hospital being a government hospital, it may not have adequate resources for maintenance/ servicing of the equipment that has been donated by Firstsource solutions. As a result, with time, this equipment may not function efficiently resulting in the facilities in the ICU gradually degrading. It may help if a maintenance fund is allocated for the upkeep of the equipment, the ICU room in general so that the facilities available today may be available without any compromise in the quality.

Conclusion

The total amount that was utilized for the project have been well invested for social welfare as the project is being used for the wellbeing of the economically weaker sections. The funds allocated have been utilized wisely. Thanks to the initiative of Firstsource solutions and the practical approach of Sarojini Devi Eye Hospital, children from the economically weaker sections of 5 Districts are benefitted. Nirmaan needs appreciation for identifying, facilitating, and ensuring the successful completion of the project.

Quotes from the Field

- *“I am from Begumpet and I came here for my son with a lot of apprehensions as this is a Government Hospital. But I was in for a surprise. The Doctors are excellent, taking time with patients and the parents. The toilets are spic and span. The ICU nurses and Ayahs are also available.”*
- *“My son will go for surgery today. The services are very good. We are taken good care. The food that they serve patients is very tasty. My son eats it happily and finishes the meal every time.”*
- *“I come from a nearby village. My son’s surgery has been successful. The doctors and nurses are kind. The ayah is caring. I am happy I came here.”*
- *One of the Ayah’s posted in the ICU had this to share, “I am happy to work here. Working in the ICU is no different from working in any other department. I am treated with respect by both the doctors as well as the caregivers of the patients. The caregivers are nice and do not express anger or dissatisfaction. So, working in ICU is not at all stressful.”*



Figure 1 ICU bed- Sarojini Devi Hospital



Figure 2 Pic with the team of doctors

Project 2 Medical Equipment Donation

About the Project

The company has donated an ECG machine to Thiruvallangadu Public Health Center a year ago. Thiruvallangadu PHC serves for seven villages at a radius of 20 km (approx.) to the population of 35608. This ECG has been added to the PHC as one of the lifesaving machines that were not available before. Around 250 to 300 outpatients visit the health center every day and around 3 to 5 inpatients admitted in this PHC. Around 3 to 4 patients need ECG diagnosis every day.

Relevance

The hospital is the only Government Health center available for 7 villages. ECG is considered as the gold standard for early diagnosis of cardiac functions. As per the data from National Family Health Survey 2021, prevalence of diabetes in rural parts of Tamil Nadu is 8%. Increase in Obesity, Diabetes and hypertension will increase the cardiovascular risk factor. Hence ECG is a prerequisite to save lives via clinical diagnosis in this geographic area.

Highlights

50% of the emergency care will be done in the health center if the ECG diagnosis is done here. After emergency care the patient will be moved to Tiruvallur Government Hospital for further treatment. This ECG machine has been a life saver machine in this PHC,

Effectiveness

The project provided has been instrumental in improving the screening facility at the primary health care, thereby leading to timely/early identification of issues. This automatically leads to an increase in quick delivery of the appropriate care pathway for those with cardiac issues. This support has helped in ensuring that the Public Health system is strengthened, thereby increasing access to quality healthcare. The essential goal of encouraging higher standards of care and welfare for all patients, as well as a positive experience with the healthcare system, is being met by the infrastructure provided

by Firstsource Solutions.

Social Impact

Possibility of saving lives has been increased because of the emergency treatment. Earliest Screening, interventions, and doctors' consultation on report at no cost is cost- effective for the marginalized sections.

Recommendations

The equipment needs to be serviced periodically via an effective Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC). This is not being done currently. Regular checklist for cleaning and basic maintenance is to be developed. Employees need to work around the maintenance schedule.



Figure 3 Geographic Area covered by the PHC



Figure 4 The portable ECG machine

II. Education

For poor students and children in rural India, the journey of education is not easy, as they face many challenges till, they finish their education. Their school education is mostly dependent on Government and Government-aided schools. Many research studies have shown that rural children lack foundation skills in reading, science, and arithmetic as a result of which they have poor learning outcomes. Also, these students have no access or lack of access to advanced learning tools such as digital learning, computer education, non-academic books etc.

Further, Private institutions are becoming a more popular option for higher since Govt institutes offer inferior education to what is offered in private ones. However, quality education comes at a hefty cost and parents must pay the tuition fees via OOP, (out of pocket expenditure). Need-based financial aid, which is generally given to college students in the form of scholarship grants, must be increased considering the government's call to action and the urgent need to build a secure future for the nation's students. This will guarantee that it serves as the first line of support for those in need. Here, the participation of CSR groups and NGOs that promote education is crucial because they may provide students the impetus through platforms where they can apply for scholarships and finish their choice of study.

Firstsource solutions partnered with 2 NGOs to promote its education projects implemented in Karnataka and Maharashtra respectively.

Table 2 Education Projects

S.No.	NGO Partner	Project description	Beneficiaries	Cost	Area
1	Foundation for Excellence (FFE)	Provision of scholarships to students wanting to pursue Engineering	Scholarships For 12 students pursuing Engineering	5,28,000	Latur (Maharashtra)
2	Transforming Rural India Foundation (TRIF)	Creating community learning center in Govt schools	400 government school students	12,50,000	Petlawad (Madhya Pradesh)
Total spent on Education projects				17,78,000	

Overall Impact Chart

PROJECT	OUTCOME	IMPACT	REACH
Firstsource Scholarship program	Ability to complete Professional Course	Provision of access to education Increased self-confidence, pride and boosts morale	12 students
Rural Students Literacy Development Program	Access to STEM education	Improved academic and career prospects	2000 + students
	Setting up Mata Samiti Committees	Empowered Communities Improved academic prospects	
	Training local volunteers and youth	Community Ownership Upgrading Grassroots educational institutes	
	Increase interest in studies	Empowered children who take ownership of their education.	
	Setting up common learning centers.		

Project 1 Firstsource Scholarship Program

About the Project

A need-based scholarship, as its name implies, is given to an applicant who comes from a less privileged financial background. These scholarships are given to applicants so they can finish their study even when they are unable to afford the financial requirements. This is especially important when it comes to highly regarded professional STEM courses. Scholarships are the favored choice for students from low-income homes, mostly because they are not repaid, unlike student loans. Need-based financial aid, which is

generally given to students in the form of scholarship grants, must be increased considering the government's call to action and the urgent need to build a secure future for the nation's children. This will guarantee that it serves as the first line of support for those in need. Here, the participation of CSR groups and NGOs that promote education is crucial because they may provide students the impetus through platforms where they can apply for scholarships and finish their choice of study. FFE provides support to the tune of 40,000 Rs per year (1,60,000 for 4 years) a month for Twelve Engineering & Medical Students with support from Firstsource Solutions.

Relevance

A decent education, particularly within English Medium Schools and professional courses and post-grad courses like Medicine, Engineering, Biotechnology etc is a matter of great prestige and pride in India, as it guarantees good career prospects and success. However, it is primarily the domain of students who are from well to do families. Even in institutes where the fee structure is relatively low, children from lower economic backgrounds cannot find it hard to continue their studies. The scholarship program works towards addressing this by creating a level playing field for students from underprivileged backgrounds. This program is pertinent because it supports such students from having the same access to prestigious courses as their counterparts who are from better socio-economic backgrounds

Highlights

With all the students coming from families and backgrounds, with a monthly income of less than Rs 20,000, the project clearly caters to students from diverse backgrounds and provides them with a platform equivalent to those available in private institutes. All of them needed the support and were happy with the scholarship provided which they believed to be timely. The need-based scholarships have helped the students pursue professional courses, thereby ensuring that students get the best possible shot to pursue a successful career whatever that may be. The scholarship therefore gives the, a variety of possibilities for continuing their education so that they are not limited to what their parents can pay for.

Effectiveness

The program was not completely successful in supporting all the requirements of the students. The scholarships provided was Rs 40,000/year. This funding could pay only a portion of their tuition fees. However, the scholarships were provided on a timely basis.

Social Impact

Receiving a scholarship eliminates many financial worries. As a result, students have more time to study, learn, and get higher marks. They also have time to explore for chances to improve their knowledge and skills. The scholarship awardees may have more opportunities for employment when compared to their peers who do not receive any financial aid since they are equipped not just with increased academic support but also with the practical interactions that arise in diverse college or university settings. The scholarship provided have improved the student's chances of finding employment.

Recommendations

Recommended to increase the scholarship amount to cover at least 50% of the fees to make a significant economic impact.

Insights from the team

- *In addition to scholarships, we invest a lot of time in developing the soft skills of the students and making them career ready.*
- *They truly value the scholarship assistance given. I have been told that the students would not have the same access to a wonderful college that provided tremendous opportunities for learning and growth if it were not for your generosity.*
- *The scholars constantly express how grateful they are to study in a good university. It would not be feasible without the scholarship.*
- *They are thankful for every lesson and opportunity to grow, not only as a student but also as a person, in a society where it is easy to forget that education is a gift and a benefit.*

The support provided by Firstsource solutions, which allowed us to give the gift of education by covering the part tuition fees of these engineering students is much appreciated.

Project 2 Rural Students Literacy Development Program

About the Project

At Petlawad block, a subdivision of Jhabua District MP, a comprehensive project on primary education was initiated. The goal of this 6-month project, which began in April 2022, was to revitalize rural education. In a post-COVID world, this has been a crucial contribution from the Firstsource solutions to reviving field initiatives in education. The programme envisioned a change in school culture through enhanced teacher motivation, better parent-teacher communication, increased attendance, and improved parent-teacher relationships. This approach has gained popularity by providing learning exercises in schools as well as in homes and other community spaces, as education is becoming a crucial issue of discussion in various community structures and places. Some of the key envisaged outcomes of the project were as follows.

- To strengthen SMCs in 40 Primary Schools in Petlawad Block servicing 60 villages.
- To establish 10 Mohalla learning centers that will enable 300 kids to have remedial learning opportunities and re-enforcement of their learning.
- 2000 primary school goers will have an opportunity for improving their learning outcomes.

Relevance

The Madhya Pradesh area of Malwa includes Petlawad. Because of its position in the Jhabua area, Petlawad is well known for its Adivasi (ethnic and tribal) traditions. Most of the population are agriculture workers. The area is a significant component of the nation's wheat-growing region. Tomato, wheat, maize, soybean, peanut, and garlic are significant crops. Selling clothing and jewelry is a typical job in Petlawad outside of agriculture. Most of the locals come from relatively illiterate and low-income families.

There are very basic amenities within the villages and a minuscule number of hospitals and high-quality schools within a 50-mile radius. The nearest big town Indore is approximately 4.5 hours away. As a result, it was determined that this was necessary to improve the standard and mode of instruction in the neighborhood schools. The project has adopted a multi-pronged approach of providing support via key trainings and sensitization workshops to the community thereby leveraging community programme ownership for the local education.

Highlights

The SAN team met the local SHG group women, project coordinators, teachers school head master and students. The selected schools for the visit had all the infrastructure required. The students were very enthusiastic to show their learning centers, library and the classmates set up by TRI. The involvement of the 'Didi' in taking ownership of the community's education requirements is commendable. The age-old Gurukul like system was being followed wherein children come together in the common Aangan or Courtyard (Here called the learning center) after school hours. The program was conducted even during peak Covid period. The learning centers were running throughout despite the problems associated with the lockdown. Another highlight of the program was the renewed vigor and interest of the children, parents, and community in taking ownership of the child's learning requirements.

Effectiveness

896 children in 44 villages have had access to remedial learning opportunities and learning reinforcement trainings. 1632 children through learning centers have had the opportunity to improve their learning outcomes through this program. Out of 44 villages 36 villages have learning centers already been started till the end of the May 2022, soon before the elections incepted. These 34 villages had 61 Learning centers catering services to children.

Apart from didis, youth from the villages who got some orientation on teaching process and connected with the visioning had been serving as a learning hub facilitator. Importantly, out of 61 Learning centers, around 23% have been run by youths supporting 135 children education in it. These learning centers are being run by Volunteer (education change vectors, Youth volunteers and members of mother clubs).

The program has helped achieve the following objectives

- Engage students and involve them in learning process
- Reduce the risk of learning loss due to prolonged closure of schools

Children have a dedicated study corner also called the Learning Corner. The establishment of study corners in villages and the commemoration of significant anniversaries in schools have been two additional actions that have been successful in 100% of the villages, aside from the advancement in the major result areas. The project's primary goals of fostering community ownership and efforts in terms of sustainability have been achieved. Accessibility to quality education through the infrastructure provided and support of the Didis has helped the students and kids in government school. This would lead many of them to pursue careers with focus on Science and Maths.

Sustainability

There are currently in-home learning spaces under the name Har Ghar Padhai. Study corners have been established in most homes in around 13 villages. However, they are fully being practiced in 11 villages. 368 kids are frequently studying while seated in the corner. The study habits of the kids have improved. Parents cite that children's interest levels and regularity has risen, and that they continue to sit in their learning corners and in reading.

Social Impact

The collaboration was created with the idea of community ownership and empowerment. The emphasis in this engagement was that the community would be better equipped to make knowledgeable decisions about issues pertaining to children's education and to meaningfully interact with the educational system (demand side) so that an ecosystem would be created within the villages that would lead to a conducive learning environment for all children. Based on this assumption, TRI's intervention was concentrated on strengthening the institution's and CVs' capacity to connect with the educational system and close the gap between the community and the school. The underlying premise was that a protracted and ongoing conversation between the teachers and the community would facilitate a change in the culture of education. There are frequent neighborhood gatherings. Participants in the meeting include Mata Samhita Committees (Parents) and SHG members. It is positive that this approach for bettering school governance is in use in 37 villages. The team, comprised of 41 Mata samiti and SMC members, discussed educational topics during these meetings. The overall ecosystem created is sustainable and ensures long lasting learning among students, teachers, and other family members.

Recommendations

- The aim and objectives of the program have been successfully met. However, given that the program is on its way to achieving sustainability for children studying till class 5, TRIF needs to now focus on expanding the scale of its activities to meet the needs of children in classes 6-8 to ensure that their interest in learning is sustained. This will help reduce the number of school dropouts by class 9 and 10.
- Regular assessments need to be conducted to measure the students learning level and learning progress based on the inputs being provided. A baseline assessment must consider their skills in– Language, Math and Science. In general, a uniform improvement in scores needs to be focused upon. Monitoring and Evaluation Templates to be developed to understand the improvement in learning curve.
- Given the emphasis on digital learning material, TRIF can collaborate with other organizations who have already developed similar modules in the STEM and Language Enhancement fields so the children may have the added exposure
- they require. Science labs can be set up within the schools or learning centers wherein children can perform experiments etc to aid their learning. A computer lab with 5-6 computers can be set up within the schools.
- The library needs to be more effectively used. Current utilization rate is low.
- Within the existing beneficiary list, it would be ideal to cull out the list of children with learning difficulties, intellectual disabilities etc and connect them to organizations working in the ID and Learning Disabilities Space. This will ensure the learning requirements of all kinds of learners are addressed.

Love for the Learning Center and Learning Corner

- *Do I like the learning corner? Of course!! It is so nice. I can sit and study, keep my books in one place. No one disturbs me when I am in my learning corner*

– Child 1

- *The Learning Center is one activity that the children whole heartedly embrace. In addition to studying, they sing songs, rhymes, learn from one another. I also learn from them when I sit with them- Didi*
- *The interest levels are so high at the learning center that sometimes we must force them to go back to their houses. This has never happened before. – Coordinator.*
- *I love my learning corner and the camps in schools. It is so much fun.*

Teachers Tales

- *The support provided by TRIF in upgrading the school library is much appreciated. Earlier, we never could dream of facilities like this in our village.*
- *I see a tremendous shift in the energy over the years. Children seem to more interested in studying, parents seem to extremely invested in the child's education and the system bolsters change in a positive manner.*
- *Any time we require something, we approach the Didis and the TRIF team. They are always ready to help us out.*
- *The children eagerly wait to go to the learning centers dafter school to finish their homework. This has never happened before!!!*

Dialogue with the Didis

- *It took a lot of time and energy to get the school authorities and villagers to embrace our program. Now, they are equally cooperative and approach us to seek solutions.*
- *Whenever I sit with the children in the learning Aangan, I also seem to learn. I have developed a new taste for studies in my 60's.*
- *TRIF has been instrumental in changing not just our lives but the lives of allthe people in our villages.*
- *Earlier, our opinions were not taken seriously. With regular trainings from TRIF, we have been groomed to become confident women who can safely express our views on a public platform.*
- *Today we take part in the decision-making process for all the village activities. We have a dream for ourselves, our families, and our village. Nothing will stop us from doing all we can to achieve this.*
- *The TRIF team is so supportive and they constantly help us find solutions to any problems.*

Parents Profess

- *I am so happy with the learning center and learning corner set up inside my house. Both my children get very excited about the space. They have become more interested in learning after we set up the learning corner.*
- *My son wakes me up at 4 am in the morning to give him the mobile phone so he can study from the app. This has never happened before.*
- *My children express great desire in studying when compared to before. It is remarkable how different they are from other children.*
- *Even during Covid, the didis came and ensured the learning centers were open. We did not have to worry about our children being out of their classrooms because they were still learning.*

- We have big dreams for our son and the children of this village. Slowly, we see them being realized in front of our eyes. The experience is beautiful.
- Our children have all the learning facilities that we did not have. We are so happy this is happening.
- When I compare my child with children from other villages, she already has learnt so much more and knows a lot more. I wish all children had these facilities in their own villages.

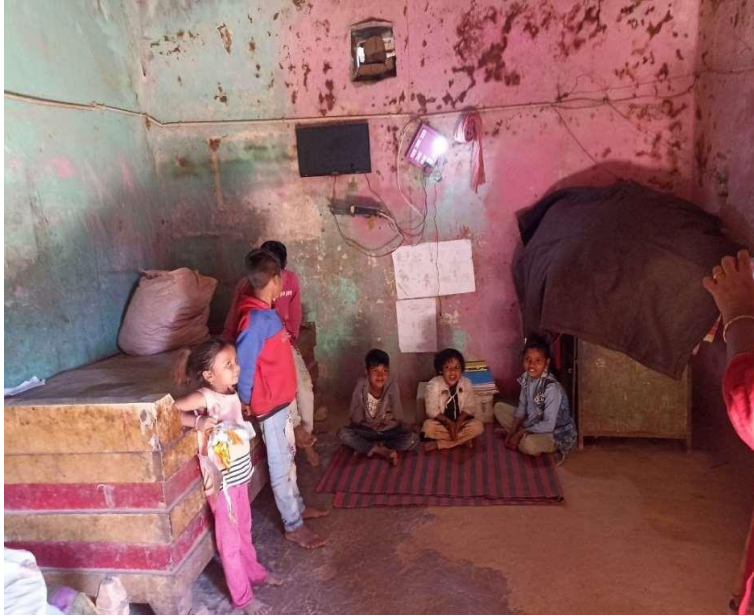


Figure 6 learning Corner in the house of a student



Figure 7 A wall on a student's house



III Environment

The urgent threat of climate change and the promise of forest-based natural climate solutions have reached a tipping point throughout the world. Organizations have been planting trees as part of their CSR efforts for decades because it has strategic advantages. Businesses have started to prioritize planting trees in their value propositions. According to the UN, we have fewer than 8 years to prevent a catastrophic case of climate change, and we are running out of time to protect the ecosystem. The world's largest, most polluted, and warmest cities are all in India, making Indian megacities the ones most impacted by climate change.

Most Indian metropolises are rapidly losing their greenery, and 50–70% of the trees currently available is non-native, which is bad for our urban biodiversity and citizens' health. We therefore require an organic, long-lasting solution that can provide remarkable outcomes in a short amount of time and area. Supporting Urban Forest Cover Rejuvenation via the Miyawaki Technique which is an innovative, fast growing native, natural is one of the answers to provide available solutions to restore balance. In order to adopt this within four urban cities in India, Firstsource Solutions supported funds worth Rs 21,24,000 spent in two phases. Four urban forest areas within four states of India were set up through this.

Table 3 Environment Projects

S. No	NGO Partner	Project description	Beneficiaries	Cost	Area
1	Thuvakkam	Setting up Urban Forests via the Miyawaki method of propagation.	Villagers	1044000	Chennai, TN Hyderabad (Telangana)
2	Saytrees	Setting up Urban Forests via the Miyawaki method of propagation.	Villagers	10,80,000	Mumbai (Maharashtra) Bengaluru (Karnataka)
Total spent on Environment projects				21,24,000	

Project 1 Urban Forest Creation Project

About the Project

As per the MOU, 4800 tree saplings were planted. Some plants died soon after, due to the toxicity of the lake water. The same were replaced. The total area allotted by GHMC is 6500 sqft. Thuvakkam and Saytrees have planted around 30-40 species which include canopies, trees, subtrees, and shrubs. Care is taken to plant only native trees. They include fruits and flowers. Water source is the neighboring lake. This lake is very polluted and contaminated due to the garbage being thrown into it by the neighboring societies/apartments. The care takers appointed water the plants/ trees twice a day. A water pump has been installed for this purpose. He also clears the ground of weeds/ unwanted growth. Presently, some papaya trees have borne fruits. Buds are sighted in many of the flowering plants. All the residents of the societies in the neighborhood. Since this urban forest adopts biodiversity, this facilitates the existence of various species of birds and insects. Since the urban forest is designed to be an oxygen factory, anyone passing by, within 1 km radius is a beneficiary.

Relevance

Urbanization is the process of increasing proportion of people living in cities or towns over rural areas. Though development in urban areas indicates economic growth, it carries along with it various disadvantages. Some of the alarming disadvantages that are now a global concern are poor air and water quality, pollution, increase in diseases due to poor air quality and pollution and decreasing natural spaces, to name a few. Urbanization often results in deforestation, habitat loss, and can cause a decrease in biodiversity, which in turn can affect the various species, even leading to their state of extinction or nearing it. The urban forestation drive has chosen the Miyawaki Forest Principle to achieve its goal. The urban forest developed in the above-mentioned address too follows the same principle.

Miyawaki Principle is based on the technique developed by a Japanese Botanist, Akira Miyawaki in which, young native plant species which include trees, subtrees, shrubs are planted near degraded lands. Saplings planted close together grow rapidly as they compete for light. Under this principle, saplings of same species are not planted next to each other.

Forests grown based on this principle, grow 10 times faster, 30 times denser, 100 times more increased biodiversity, 30 times better Carbon-dioxide absorption, 30 times better noise and dust reduction, 30 times greener surface area, as compared to a monoculture plantation. Keeping in mind the rapid urbanization of the city of Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bengaluru the vision of Govt., and Firstsource solutions objective of contributing towards environment betterment, this project is very relevant and fulfils the objectives.

Effectiveness

This project is based on the Miyawaki Forest Principle and hence is scientifically proven to be effective. The growth of the plants and trees are rapid as evident in the pictures attached. The lands chosen are allocated within the city limits and hence, when this urban forest is fully grown, it will be an oxygen factory, contributing to minimize pollution, reduce carbon in the environment and contribute effectively towards a healthier environment. The objective of Firstsource solutions, to contribute to Urban Forests is fulfilled as this land is within city limits, amidst a residential locality. The trees planted are of native origin. Some of them have already begun to bear fruits. Hence, this urban forest is sure to thrive and grow and offer to be a home for birds and insects. Some flowering shrubs are already in bloom. Blooms attract bees and insects.

It is also possible that it will attract animals that require dense forestation to survive. Thus, these forests will promote biodiversity. Prior to plantation, the soil was treated with organic materials such as cocopeat and compost. The manure being used after plantation also is organic, thus the soil / Mother Earth is being nurtured in a healthy manner. The fruit bearing trees naturally provide food for birds. Care has been taken not to plant the same species next to each other [as per the Miyawaki principle]. Organic manure is provided to the plants/ trees every fortnight. Regular periodic nurturing yields healthy trees and in turn healthy flowers and fruits. In Hyderabad, GHMC proposes to create walking/ jogging track in this area and the space in and around this urban forest can be utilized to improve the health of the community.

Highlights

- Aligning with UN SDG 13 AND 15.
- Following the Miyawaki principle.
- Green cover within city limits.
- Restoration of biodiversity.
- In Hyderabad, the venue – by the side of Kudikunta Lake thus water source for the forest is also natural and in abundance. Generally, the soil in and around closed water bodies are rich.
- Timelines adhered.
- Creating avenues for local job opportunities by hiring the villagers from the local community to water and maintain the plants in Bengaluru.

Social Impact

- The project has succeeded in contributing towards creating an urban forest within the city limits of Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bengaluru.
- GHMC has commenced a drive to create a Green City based on the Miyawaki Forest Principle and this project has effectively contributed to this vision of GHMC.
- This project is aligned with UN SDG 13 and 15 viz. DG 13 (Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and its Impact) and SDG 15 - Protect, Restore and Promote Sustainable Use of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Sustainably Manage Forests, Combat Desertification, And Halt and Reverse Land Degradation and Halt Biodiversity Loss.
- Hyderabad: The urban forests seem to have created some amount of awareness among the neighboring residents and they have stopped throwing garbage into the space of the urban forest.
- Bengaluru: This forest is nestled amongst many societies and the green cover contributes towards providing the residents of that area an unpolluted environment, clearing of carbon, and producing more oxygen.

Recommendations

- The forests are growing well and it may be a good idea to consider some form of seating arrangements made of environment friendly material so that the forest may serve as a resting place for many.
- Boards mentioning the presence/ development of a biodiversity urban forest also may serve as an awareness post for public.
- Names of trees/ plants mentioned may serve to educate the common man/ woman of the varieties present in the forest.

Conclusion

The objective of creating urban forest within city limits has been achieved. The efforts of Thuvakkam and Say Trees are evident on visiting the urban forest. The funds have been utilized appropriately. This project contributes towards the environment and subsequently, social welfare.

Testimonials

- *My friend and I have been living in this village since the time I was born. We feel happy to take care of the Forest and attend to it every day.*
- *Earlier, the villagers were skeptical of outsider involvement. Today, they see the positive change in the environment and are happy.*
- *In the last two years, I see more birds here than ever. The entire atmosphere has changed. It is more positive, verdant, and alive.*
- *We distribute the fruits to the villagers itself. They are very proud that there is a place like this so close to their homes.*





Figure 8 Urban Forest – Fruits, Flowers and Foliage

IV. Empowerment and Gender Equality

In addition to being a fundamental human right, gender equality is also a prerequisite for a world that is stable, affluent, and sustainable. Although there has been progress in recent decades, gender equality will not be achieved by the year 2030 as planned. The COVID-19 pandemic's social and economic effects have made the situation much worse. Many aspects of development are lagging, such as the amount of time spent on unpaid caregiving and domestic work, decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health, and gender-responsive budgeting. Services for women's health, which were already underfunded, have been severely disrupted.

Women continue to experience a lot of violence. And even though women took the lead in reacting to COVID-19, they still are far behind men in obtaining the positions of power that are rightfully theirs. To hasten change, commitment and bold action are required.

Firstsource Solutions partnered with two NGOs to implement their women empowerment projects worth Rs 68.77 Lakhs within two States (Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra respectively).

Table 4 Empowerment and Gender Equality Projects

S. No	NGO Partner	Project description	Beneficiaries	Cost	Area
1	NASSCOM Foundation	1 year training in Financial, Entrepreneurship and Digital Literacy	150 Women Artisans from Bagh District	38,77,500	Bagh (Madhya Pradesh)
2	Goonj	Dignity for Work program	578 households	30,00,000	Latur (Maharashtra)
Total spent on Empowerment and Gender Equality projects				68,77,500	

Project 1: Digital Transformation & Digital Literacy Program

About the Project

Bagh printing is a traditional Indian craft that was developed in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar area. Hand-printed wood block relief prints using naturally available pigments and dyes are what define the process. Bagh prints, a common type of textile printing, feature motifs that are often composed of geometric, paisley, or floral designs and are colored with red and black vegetable dyes over white backgrounds. Its name comes from the Bagh River's bankside settlement of the same name.

In the 1960s, many craftsmen abandoned the traditional process of Bagh prints in favor of using synthetic fabrics. Yet, a number of craftspeople, such as Ismail Suleman Khatri, continued to work within the boundaries of the craft's established traditions and made innovations that elevated Bagh prints to a global level of recognition. Despite this, only a small number of families who appeared to have monopolized the entire art form were engaging in the practice. Others primarily took on the role of employees. They were not valued for their originality, talent, or craft, either. They continued to behave as if they were daily wage workers who had no control over their finances, no knowledge of the ways of the world, and no say in their craft.

NASSCOM joined together with Umang Sridhar, a businessman who had developed a relationship with the Bagh artisans in the chosen area. The goal of the collaboration was to give local women the financial, technological, and entrepreneurial skills they need to market their own goods.

Relevance

Rural women are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental, and social changes required for sustainable development. Empowering them is the key to improve economic productivity among rural communities. Women in rural areas face constraints in engaging in economic activities because of gender-based discrimination and social norms, disproportionate involvement in unpaid work, and unequal access to education, healthcare, property, and financial and other services. This program has helped in slowly working towards addressing these gaps. Over 80 percent of the women who are part of the Bagh community belong to marginalized groups, most of them are working in an informal and home-based setting. Based mostly in rural areas of Bagh, these women artisans have limited market intelligence, inadequate channels to sell their products, besides low capital and limited digital access.

The online digital empowerment program conducted by NASSCOM foundation addresses the actual training needs of the women and keeps into account the growing needs of the community.

Effectiveness

The program has been instrumental in improving the women artisan's knowledge of financial literacy and digital literacy. The basics of financial literacy were covered within the students and women of self-help groups about financial planning. In all, 150 women took part in the training. The trainings were conducted in batches online with support from NASSCOM and Umang. Some of the women attended two or more batches.

S.No	Training Held	Period of Training	No. of women who attended the training
1	Batch 1	26 April to 13th May	22
2	Batch 2	14th to 26th May	26
3	Batch 3	27th May to 7th June	12
4	Batch 4	13th to 23rd June	20
5	Batch 5	26th June to 4th July	60
6	Batch 6	8th to 16th July	40
7	Batch 7	20th to 28th Aug	20

A notable improvement in awareness in the following areas were observed including use of payment system like Google Pay, Internet Banking, Phone Pay and Paytm, threats of digital paymen, Uptake and Use of Social Media platforms to market their products, Costing and Negotiation skills and Use of WhatsApp for ease of networking with business prospects, sourcing products.

The training program was delivered in a timely and orderly fashion in the local language. The program was conducted as part of a TOT approach wherein select representatives from the community itself supported the learning process. All the participants claimed that the topics were extremely useful and pertinent. It was observed that the trainers addressed the queries of the participants.

The program done with the support of NASSCOM's grassroots partner Umang Shridhar Designs has significantly improved the skill set of women business owners in Madhya Pradesh's tribal district of Bagh. As a result, the market's demand for Bagh printed items has gradually increased, as has the size of the industry's manufacturing base for mass-produced, utility-based, and lifestyle goods.

Trainings sessions for Women Artisans in a hybrid mode. Handholding support through mentoring and coaching were provided in order to fast track digital adoption. Some of the other changes that were observed during the SAN team's visit were.

All participants agreed that they had an increase in monthly income of Rs 6000–7000 on average. 20% of the participants have already used the platforms to sell their goods online. They gained the knowledge to calculate costs better as a result of the training. Previously, just 65% of women craftsmen had access to smartphones, but today 96% do.

Sustainability

Other notable changes that were observed by the women included

- A 100% increase in financial decision-making skills of the women.
- Around 70% of women artisans have shared they are confident enough to use smartphones and have rated themselves 7/10 on their skills, 10/10 on their happiness levels and 8/10 on their entrepreneurial abilities.
- 100% of women artisans are happy with the training and seek more reinforcement trainings.

Highlights

- Use of WhatsApp: Cross -Marketing and Selling of their peers through their individual and group WhatsApp accounts. The trainees are using it in engaging with their buyers for receiving orders as well as connecting their vendors for giving orders for raw material
- YouTube: About 10% have started to refer YouTube to adopt new design for businesses, and few of them have created their own channel and started to post videos.
- Instagram and Facebook: They are using Instagram business and Facebook live to post about their product and engage with new customers and have more buyers for their products.
- Pinterest: Women Artisans are using it in engaging themselves to develop new design and pattern for their product to create good customer base.
- Product development with the help of online applications
- The group managed to onboard on the Ecommerce platform Ajio and sell 1300 bedsheets.
- 20% of the participants spoken to shared that they would like to earn at least 1 lakh a month and start their own designer boutique indicating increased career aspirations.

Social Impact

Through this initiative, Firstsource solutions and NASSCOM have been successful in

- Involving the local women in taking ownership of their own finances, business prospects and entrepreneurial ambitions.
- Improving the awareness of the women on pertinent areas like financial literacy, entrepreneurship, digital literacy
- Mobilizing and increasing the use of locally available and eco-friendly materials
- Raising awareness of traditional Bagh Printing which is a slowly dying art form.
- Improve the entrepreneurial aspirations of some of the trainees
- Increase in self-confidence, motivation levels and pride in themselves.
- Change in the attitude of the family towards them and involving them in the family's financial matters.
- Increasing the geographic reach of their product's sales.

What could be improved?

- The trainings' logistics need to be carefully organized. There were a few trainees who did not attend all the training sessions because the trainings were held during the busiest summer and wedding season.
- It is necessary to offer reinforcement trainings because some women are still unsure how to use the platforms on their own.
- Constant interaction with the women is necessary to maintain their high levels of motivation. The community's Master Trainer, who has overseen the project on the ground, can receive training in leadership techniques to inspire the group.
- There is a need to strengthen their market linkages through tie-up with online retail platforms.
- NASSCOM partnering with design schools like NIFT and businesses (where Bagh stationery kits, office décor, files, etc. may be advertised) can assist women find greater prospects.
- Many of the trainee groups' female members also manage their own tailoring businesses.

NASSCOM can hold additional classes on how to stitch into-western clothing using the traditional material considering the growing acceptance and popularity of indo-western attire (like those offered by Umang)

- NASSCOM can pair up trainees who have expressed a desire to establish their own business, open a boutique, etc. with a retired entrepreneur who can mentor and coach them as they hone their business acumen, people management and entrepreneurial abilities.
- While emphasizing women's empowerment is beneficial, it should be remembered that menfolk, who make up a sizable portion of Bagh artisans in India continue to perform most of the laborious work in Bagh printing, such as dyeing, cleaning, working with the vats, etc. Due to their history, exposure, and the fact that some families have a monopoly on the Bagh trade, they are also comparatively marginalized. Providing them with similar trainings and understanding that improving their digital skills will help drive the penetration of the Govt's digital agenda in rural areas.
- Some of the participants did not have mobile phones and/or internet connectivity. A more robust beneficiary selection process will be required to ensure that the learnings from the trainings are being translated in real-time scenarios.
- Since the modules have already been created, Firstsource solutions can use the same content to expand the scale of the project to similar artisans in other rural areas.
- The need assessment checklist and baseline/endline assessment tool can be further developed and fine-tuned to assess on-field translation of knowledge.

Conclusion

To address the challenges encountered by women and close the gap caused by the society with reference to several aspects including Digital illiteracy and unfamiliarity, fear of isolation, and gender discrimination, NASSCOM has made substantial advances in the position of women in Bagh. A comprehensive digital skilling course, training in financial and soft skills, mentoring and hand-holding through the transition into financial independence, and creating their command over safe online behavior are just a few of the technology-driven interventions created for socially disadvantaged women's groups by NASSCOM that consider the vulnerabilities that these women and girls have to face. These interventions also ensure that they learn and work independently while ignoring social discrimination.

Testimonials

- *“We firmly believe that when you empower a woman, you empower the entire community. One of the main indicators for attaining SDGs is by ensuring women have access to technology. With that belief, we have encouraged women from marginalized communities to leverage technology to scale businesses and bridge the socio-economic divide. Their uptake of digital skills and its impact on their entrepreneurial dreams has been phenomenal.”*
- *“I have been using social media such as Facebook and Instagram for a while now but could not use it efficiently. However, during the training, we learnt how to make interesting reels on Instagram, go live on Facebook, create YouTube shorts, post informative videos about our line of products with complete details, usage of appropriate hashtags and making the best use of social media channels to market our products and expand our business. We want to make the best use of our learnings through the digital learning program to showcase our collections and promote our work on a broader scale.*

Quotes from the field

- *Before, I had no idea how to even use a phone. The training program helped me so much. Today, my husband asks me in case he has any doubts when using Facebook.*
- *The most exciting part is putting up reels and pictures on Instagram and Facebook live.*
- *Earlier, we were so dependent on others even to withdraw money from the Bank. We would have to follow up with so many people. Today, with the click of a button on Gpay, I can send and receive money. This training has been phenomenal.*
- *I feel so excited that both my daughter and I have learnt new things that will help us increase our family's income.*
- *Earlier, my husband would never consider my opinions or inputs seriously. Today, after I have managed to successfully start my own online business and contribute to the family, things have changed. Even though he does not articulate it, I can see that he is proud of me.*





Figure 9 The Bagh Block- A symbol of the age-old art form, Bagh women at Work in their own business unit The Bagh print,

Project 2 Dignity for Work

About the Project

The Dignity for Work Project by Goonj was conducted in Latur district within 2 towns (Ausa & Renapur). Goonj has been advocating rural empowerment through special and unique self-reliance model where they involve villagers to improve their local infrastructure and in return provide them with basic material needs such as Utensils & Clothes. In the time period of the audit, Firstsource solutions has supported the running of the following activities under the Dignity for Work program including making reservoirs, check dams, new ponds for water catchment, cleaning of canals, drain repairing, community center, school, park, village health care center, colony cleaning, kitchen gardening, soak pits for drainage water, tree pits for tree plantation & building tree benches

Relevance

The Latur area typically experiences water scarcity for at least six months out of the year. Women were ignorant of the direct and indirect effects even the smallest actions could have on the community. The village's schools, community centers, drain water canals, and other communal places were in poor shape. Nevertheless, the ladies lacked the motivation to engage in any community development efforts.

Highlights

Residents are identifying and prioritizing issues that will help the village. Using resources, efforts, and conventional wisdom that are readily available locally, women are applying creative thinking to solve their problems. Residents are also eager to pay cash contributions towards the costs of the village's development operations.

Effectiveness

The adjacent villagers were made aware of the village's development efforts and requested the Goonj team to carry out these activities in their villages. It was also observed that the village's general cleanliness and hygienic conditions have improved. The school's principal and teachers have participated actively in the events, which has increased their relationship with parents. Because all activities are carried out by the villagers, fewer daily wage workers are required to do the same tasks, which also results in cost savings (Rs.3000 – 5000 for each activity)

Social Impact

Increase in self-confidence and dignity among women. Women work together in a group for village development activities fostering teamwork and bonding among themselves. The kitchen garden activity results in sufficient organic vegetable supply for midday meals. This has increased children's nutrition, health and school attendance. The kits have helped them to meet their basic household necessities. Awareness among women regarding cleanliness & hygiene of village has improved. Women are encouraged and willing to do more work for village development besides their daily wage work

Recommendations

Some incentive / reward to head volunteers or women who take initiative in encouraging & convincing other women to participate in the activities. There can be planned / scheduled revisits to the villages at least once in every six months. The quality of goods within the kits can be standardized and need to be improved.

Dignity Diaries

“When our team visited Latur district of Maharashtra, they were surprised to see the village lanes piled up with dirt. “The roads were covered with all sorts of unhygienic materials and the surrounding gave off a stench,” a team member said. So, after a meeting with the local residents, it was decided to dig soak pits outside the houses to ensure the cleanliness of the surroundings. Motivated by our team, 19 participants worked under Goonj’s ‘Dignity for Work’ initiative and were rewarded with ration kits, mosquito nets and daris”

“As a result of Goonj’s work, today, the waste water from the homes no longer runs to the roads or gets accumulated there. This has made the roads commutable. Moreover, thanks to the soak pits, the residents of the village, especially children, no longer have to battle health issues arising out of the stench from the piled-up rubbish.”



6 Rating of Performance

This section reports on the performance and impact of the Firstsource Solutions on the four verticals – Education, Disability and Skill development mentioned before. The information presented in this section is based on the observations made during the field visits to the project sites and interactions with the stakeholders by the SAN team. It also includes the secondary data that was gathered by the SAN team. The projects were evaluated using the REESS framework

The REESS framework

REESS framework measures the performance of programme on five parameters – **Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Social Impact and Sustainability**. The REESS criteria answers the following questions and is defined as follows

Relevance	How important is the relevance or significance of the intervention?
Effectiveness	Are the planned objectives of the interventions being achieved?
Efficiency	Are the objectives being achieved economically by the intervention?
Sustainability	Are the positive effects or impacts sustainable? Are sustainability plans in place for continuation of the project?
Social Impact	Does the intervention contribute to social change? What is the impact or effect of the intervention to the primary stakeholders?

A five-point performance rating scale was used to rate the relevant indicators that were defined for each REESS parameter. The scale used was

Rating	Points
Highly Unsatisfactory	2
Unsatisfactory	4
Satisfactory	6
Highly Satisfactory	8
Excellent	10

The average rating for each REESS parameter would reflect the credibility of the projects implemented by the Foundation. The SAN team devised REESS indicators for the three verticals based on all the activities that were carried out by all the implementing NGOs.

i. REESS - Health

REESS RATING INDICATORS		Nirmaan	Thuvakkam	AVG REESS
RELEVANCE	Need assessment done	10.0	7.0	9.0
	Socio Economic Profile of the beneficiaries	10.0	7.0	
	Addressal of disparities	10.0	10.0	
	RELEVANCE AVG	10.0	8.0	
EFFECTIVENESS	Improvement in awareness or uptake of services	9.0	8.0	8.4
	Increased quality of life	8.0	8.0	
	Improved health and dignity	8.0	8.0	
	Creating healthy spaces	9.0	9.0	
	EFFECTIVENESS AVG	8.5	8.3	
EFFICIENCY	Targets versus Achieved	9.0	7.0	8.0
	Cost/Beneficiary	9.0	7.0	
	Timelines met	9.0	7.0	
	Reporting	9.0	7.0	
	Fund Utilization	9.0	7.0	
	EFFICIENCY AVG	9.0	7.0	
SUSTAINABILITY	Ability of organization to take the project forward	8.0	7.0	8.2
	Promotion of independent decision making	5.0	7.0	
	Maintenance and continuity	8.0	8.0	
	SUSTAINABILITY AVG	8.8	7.6	
SOCIAL IMPACT	Reduced disparities	8.0	8.0	8.6
	Increased self-confidence	8.0	8.0	
	Reduced gender disparities	9.0	8.0	
	Social inequality reduction for the rural / disadvantaged	10.0	10.0	
	SOCIAL IMPACT AVG	8.8	8.5	

ii. REESS- Education

REESS RATING INDICATORS		FFE	(TRIF)	AVG SCORE	REESS
RELEVANCE	Need for program	8.0	10.0	9.0	
	Lack of availability of similar service providers	6.0	10.0	8.0	
	Beneficiary Selection	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Receptivity of Beneficiaries	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Caters to underserved	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Aligns to beneficiaries aspirations and skills	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Alignment with Organization's vision and mission	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	Alignment to UN SDG	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	Alignment with Govt Programs	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	AVERAGE RELEVANCE RATING	8.9	10.0	8.9	
EFFECTIVENESS	Improved academic performance	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Increased access to quality and holistic education	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Achievement of program targets	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	Adherence to program timelines	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Support delivery of Quality Education	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Improving ease of Availing education	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	AVERAGE EFFECTIVENESS RATING	9.0	9.9	9.5	
EFFICIENCY	Ratio of Support provided to overall requirement	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	Affordability of education	10.0	9.0	9.5	
	Helps reduce debt	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Timeliness of the support	9.0	8.0	8.5	
	Waiting time for availing support	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	AVERAGE EFFICIENCY RATING	9.6	9.2	9.4	
SUSTAINABILITY	Continued access to support	10.0	8.0	9.0	
	Financial Sustainability after giving the support	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Organization capacity to continue support	10.0	9.0	9.5	
	Adapting to evolving needs of students and ecosystem	10.0	7.0	8.5	
	Sustained interest among parents and students	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Creating school/college programs/networks to ensure continuity	7.0	10.0	8.5	
	AVERAGE SUSTAINABILITY RATING	8.2	8.8	8.5	
SOCIAL IMPACT	Provision access to education	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Involvement of the community	8.0	10.0	9.0	
	Increased self-confidence, pride and boosts morale	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Reducing gender barriers to education	9.0	10.0	9.5	
	Improved academic and career prospect	10.0	10.0	10.0	
	AVERAGE SOCIAL IMPACT RATING	9.0	10.0	9.5	

iii. REESS- Environment

REESS RATING INDICATORS		Chennai	Hyderabad	Bengaluru	AVG REESS
RELEVANCE	Need assessment done	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.3
	Socio Economic Profile of the beneficiaries	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Addressal of disparities	7.0	7.0	7.0	
	Beneficiary receptivity	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	RELEVANCE AVG	8.3	8.3	8.3	
EFFECTIVENESS	Enhanced air quality	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.8
	Increase in flora and fauna	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Increased quality of life	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Improved health and dignity	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Creating local employment opportunities	7.0	7.0	10.0	
	Creating healthy spaces	8.0	9.0	9.0	
	EFFECTIVENESS AVG	8.5	8.7	9.2	
EFFICIENCY	Targets versus Achieved	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Cost/Beneficiary	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Timelines met	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Reporting	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Fund Utilization	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	EFFICIENCY AVG	9.0	9.0	9.0	
SUSTAINABILITY	Ability of organization to take the project forward	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.8
	Promotion of independent decision making	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Maintenance and continuity	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	SUSTAINABILITY AVG	8.7	8.8	8.9	
SOCIAL IMPACT	Creation of healthy urban spaces	10.0	10.0	10.0	9.0
	Improved health	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Improvement in air purity	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Bio diversity increase	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	Reduction in Pollution	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	SOCIAL IMPACT AVG	9.0	9.0	9.0	

iv.

v. REESS –Empowerment and Gender Equality

REESS RATING INDICATORS		Nasscom Foundation	Goonj	AVG REESS
RELEVANCE	Need for program	10.0	8.0	9.6
	Lack of availability of similar service providers	10.0	9.0	
	Beneficiary Selection	10.0	10.0	
	Receptivity of Beneficiaries	10.0	8.5	
	Caters to underserved, underprovided sections of society	10.0	9.0	
	Aligns to aspirations and skills of beneficiaries	10.0	8.5	
	Alignment with Organization's vision and mission	10.0	10.0	
	Alignment to UN SDG	10.0	10.0	
	Alignment with Govt Programs	10.0	10.0	
	AVERAGE RELEVANCE RATING	10.0	9.2	
EFFECTIVENESS	Improved income generation	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Increased access to quality and holistic skill sets	9.0	8.5	
	Achievement of program targets	9.0	9.0	
	Adherence to program timelines	9.0	9.0	
	Support delivery of Quality services	9.0	9.0	
	Improved financial independence/independence	10.0	9.0	
	AVERAGE EFFECTIVENESS RATING	9.2	8.9	
EFFICIENCY	Ratio of Support provided to overall requirement	9.0	9.0	9.2
	Affordability	9.0	9.5	
	Helps reduce dependence	9.0	10.0	
	Timeliness of the support	9.0	9.0	
	Increased income	9.0	9.0	
	AVERAGE EFFICIENCY RATING	9.0	9.3	
SUSTAINABILITY	Continued access to support	10.0	10.0	9.4
	Financial Sustainability after giving the support	10.0	8.0	
	Organization capacity to continue support	10.0	10.0	
	Adapting to evolving needs of beneficiaries	10.0	9.0	
	Sustained interest of the beneficiaries	10.0	9.0	
	Creating networks to ensure continuity	9.0	8.0	
	AVERAGE SUSTAINABILITY RATING	9.8	9.0	
SOCIAL IMPACT	Provision access to digital platforms or newer interventions	10.0	9.0	9.0
	Involvement of the community	9.0	9.0	
	Increased self-confidence, pride and boosts morale	9.0	9.0	
	Reducing barriers	9.0	9.0	
	Increased aspirations (entrepreneurial or otherwise)	8.0	9.0	
	AVERAGE SOCIAL IMPACT RATING	9.0	9.0	

Consolidated REESS rating

	Health	Education	Environment	Women Empowerment	Average REESS
RELEVANCE	9.0	8.9	8.3	9.6	9.0
EFFECTIVENESS	8.4	9.5	8.8	9.0	8.9
EFFICIENCY	8.0	9.4	9.0	9.2	8.9
SUSTAINABILITY	8.2	8.5	8.8	9.4	8.7
SOCIAL IMPACT	8.6	9.5	9.0	9.0	9.0
AVERAGE REESS	8.4	9.2	8.8	9.2	8.9

All the verticals have a score of 8.5+ indicating that the performance of all the projects implemented by Firstsource solutions in these areas were HIGHLY SATISFACTORY.

7 Recommendations for way forward

#	NGO	Recommendations
1	Goonj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some incentive / reward to head volunteers or women who take initiative in encouraging & convincing other women to participate in the activities. • There can be planned / scheduled revisits to the villages at least once in every six months. • The quality of goods within the kits can be standardized and need to be improved.
2	Nirmaan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the need of the hospital, a few more ICU beds may be added. • It may help if a maintenance fund is allocated for the upkeep of the equipment, the ICU room in general so that the facilities available today may be available without any compromise in the quality.
3	Thuvakkam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The equipment needs to be serviced periodically via an effective Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC). This is not being done currently. Regular checklist for cleaning and basic maintenance is to be developed. Employees need to work around the maintenance schedule.

#	NGO	Recommendations
4	TRIF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRIF needs to now focus on expanding the scale of its activities to meet the needs of children in classes 6-8 to ensure that their interest in learning is sustained. This will help reduce the number of school dropouts by class 9 and 10. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular assessments need to be conducted to measure the students learning level and learning progress based on the inputs being provided • Monitoring and Evaluation Templates to be developed to understand the improvement in learning curve. • Given the emphasis on digital learning material, TRIF can collaborate with other organizations who have already developed similar modules in the STEM and Language Enhancement fields so the children may have the added exposure they require.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Science labs can be set up within the schools or learning centers wherein children can perform experiments etc to aid their learning. • A computer lab with 5-6 computers can be set up within the schools. • Within the existing beneficiary list, it would be ideal to cull out the list of children with learning difficulties, intellectual disabilities etc and connect them to organizations working in the ID and Learning Disabilities Space. This will ensure the learning requirements of all kinds of learners are addressed.
5	FFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended to increase the scholarship amount to cover at least 50% of the fees to make a significant economic impact.
6	Saytrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forests are growing well and it may be a good idea to consider some form of seating arrangements made of environment friendly material so that the forest may serve as a resting place for many. • Boards mentioning the presence/ development of a biodiversity urban forest also may serve as an awareness post for public. • Names of trees/ plants mentioned may serve to educate the common man/ woman of the varieties present in the forest.

#	NGO	Recommendations
7	NASSCOM Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trainings' logistics need to be carefully organized. There were a few trainees who did not attend all of the training sessions because the trainings were held during the busiest summer and wedding season. • It is necessary to offer reinforcement trainings because some women are still unsure how to use the platforms on their own. • Constant interaction with the women is necessary to maintain their high levels of motivation. The community's Master Trainer, who has been in charge of the project on the ground, can receive training in leadership techniques to inspire the group. • There is a need to strengthen their market linkages through tie-up with online retail platforms. • NASSCOM partnering with design schools like NIFT and businesses (where Bagh stationery kits, office décor, files, etc. may be advertised) can assist women find greater prospects. • Many of the trainee groups' female members also manage their own tailoring businesses. NASSCOM can hold additional classes on how to stitch into-western clothing using the traditional material considering the growing acceptance and popularity of indo-western attire (like those offered by Umang) • NASSCOM can pair up trainees who have expressed a desire to establish their own business, open a boutique, etc. with a retired entrepreneur who can mentor and coach them as they hone their business acumen, people management and entrepreneurial abilities. • While emphasizing women's empowerment is beneficial, it should be remembered that menfolk, who make up a sizable portion of Bagh artisans in India continue to perform the majority of the grunt work in Bagh printing, such as dyeing, cleaning, working with the vats, etc. Due to their history, exposure, and the fact that some families have a monopoly on the Bagh trade, they are also comparatively marginalized. In order to ensure that the Block printing technique flourishes, empowering them is vital. Providing them with similar trainings and understanding that improving their digital skills will help drive the penetration of the Govt's digital agenda in rural areas.






#	NGO	Recommendations
	NASSCOM Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the participants did not have mobile phones and/or internet connectivity. A more robust beneficiary selection process will be required to ensure that the learnings from the trainings are being translated in real- time scenarios. • Since the modules have already been created, Firstsource solutions can use the same content to expand the scale of the project to similar artisans in other rural areas. The need assessment checklist and baseline/endline assessment tool can be further developed and fine- tuned to assess the actual on-field translation of knowledge

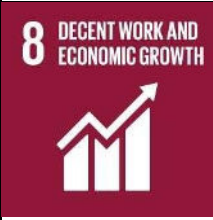



Other Recommendations

- A thorough needs assessment with qualitative and quantitative deliverables need to be part of the NGO's proposal before Firstsource solutions ties up with them. Firstsource solutions to develop a robust Monitoring & Evaluation tool for all its projects. Getting quantitative data from the implementing partners is not sufficient to report on the impact of the project. Outcome based monitoring tools to be used to capture the outcomes and impact on beneficiaries. The data available is largely quantitative and not sufficient for capturing social impact.
- Firstsource solutions needs to invest in creating tracking mechanisms for each project that will not only help MF to track impact but will also enable the implementing partners to understand the importance of data and the need for data analysis for social impact.
- The team is to be trained in many aspects of social impact management, who could further train the implementing partners in appropriate data collection mechanisms. This would help them track the SROI of all its projects.
- The Foundation could appoint 2-4 volunteers for each project who would visit the project locations on any convenient day every month and keep track of the beneficiaries' development. They could also volunteer to help the NGOs with their documentation and IT needs. This would be a win for both the NGOs and the Foundation.

8 SDG Alignment

CSR goals must be aligned with UN's Sustainable Development Goals to unite all developmental efforts. The activities of Firstsource solutions have found to be in alignment with 9 of the 17 SDG goals

SDGs	Indicators for Alignment
 <p>1 NO POVERTY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating livelihood opportunities through Bagh Project via NASSCOM • Supporting rural children with quality learning strategies and aids that enable them to continue with their education and preventing them getting trapped in the poverty cycle. • Supporting poor students with scholarships.
 <p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing learning labs to people with Disabilities • Medical support in Hospitals • Community Based Support • Improved health through GOONJ
 <p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling mainstreaming and continuation of education for children within Govt schools • Creating skilled workforce among youth and women through scholarships • Learning centers for TRIF • Government School infra support through TRIF
 <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing livelihood opportunities for vision impaired girls • Providing sustainable livelihoods to women and youth in rural Latur. • Providing sustainable livelihoods to women in Bagh
 <p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Health, Hygiene and Sanitation through Goonj in Latur. • Increased access to health via cardiac machines. • Upgrading Govt health facilities in Sarojini Devi Hospital • Improved health through creation of urban forests. • Enhanced biodiversity.

SDGs	Indicators for Alignment
 <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance employment opportunities created for women in Bagh.
 <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting over 4000 trees in 4 locations across India helps in prevention of climate change by removing carbon dioxide from the air, storing carbon in the trees and soil, and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.
 <p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting trees leads to improved air quality on land and decreased humidity. • Improves the biodiversity in the region. • Enables needed habitat for birds and animals in the region.
 <p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the CSR activities are implemented through Experienced Partner NGOs whose mission is in line with the mission of the CSR activities of Firstsource solutions • Involvement of Civil society organizations in Government schools