

Business India

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CORPORATE WORLD

August 12-25, 2019



**INDEPENDENCE DAY
SPECIAL**



INCLUSIVENESS



ANNUAL CSR ISSUE

CSR and more

uncertainty in business, and improved attention of entrepreneurs on operations and quality improvement.

Some of the key challenges of the project were the acquisition of smart mobile devices by the beneficiaries, lack of entrepreneurial experience and capacity, and the complexity of the entire project which had multiple functionalities and dependencies. To

address some of these challenges, the project not only included a technology solution but a comprehensive capacity building plan for the beneficiaries.

The project had a positive impact on the beneficiaries. Over the three years, the cumulative incremental income of the SHG women entrepreneurs has been over ₹22 crore with a projected 50,000 SHG women

entrepreneurs benefitting from this project throughout its lifecycle. The Gross Merchandise Value at the end of the project is projected at ₹248 crore. Of the projected numbers, 84 per cent of the target women entrepreneurs are already enrolled in the project. There have been new and inter-chain linkages set up in agriculture and dairy value chains. ♦

TATA POWER

Project Dhaaga

Tata Power undertakes CSR initiatives in 348 villages across 15 states of India in the vicinity of its business operations. It focusses on education, health and sanitation, livelihood and skill-building, financial inclusivity and water. Interventions have reached out to 24.67 lakhs beneficiaries against an annual target of 20.30 lakh beneficiaries. Strategic partnership and collaboration with NABARD, IIT Gandhinagar, Haqdarshak, BAIF, ACT, ALC, Highline, Kalaraksha, Pratham and various corporates including Tata Group companies have enabled to scale interventions.

Dhaaga is a social initiative promoted by Tata Power for improving the quality of life of rural women. The social aspects were to enable them to enhance their social positioning, economic aspects were to empower them economically and increase their income levels, while governance aspects were to build their leadership abilities to raise their voice and become part of the decision-making process.

Initiated in 2016-17 at Maval in Maharashtra with 15 women, it has scaled to 1,050 women members across 16 locations in six states (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Odisha and Delhi). The strategy includes mobilising and training rural women in garments and handicraft making. Tata Power initially funded the training part to the tune of ₹30 lakh with other partners like Tata Chemicals, Highline, Kalaraksha and Amar Kutir involved in offering their technical expertise in the design and quality management of the products. The implementation model also focussed on innovation, for example the value addition to convert tiger grass into a handicraft and revival of



Bagging orders to meet customer requirements

embroidery work of Kutch were evolved as a part of this intervention.

Market linkages Subsequently, market linkages were established with national brands including Tata Chemicals (Okhai), Taj Hotels, and various corporates. Dhaaga's product portfolio includes Kurtis, Palazzos, wrap rounds, aprons, clutches, office folders, embroidery work, Tiger Grass-handicrafts and pen stands. This has augmented the monthly household income of these rural women by ₹2,500. Besides the skills provided, women were trained on customer engagement. The linkages with local financial institutions have helped them to be economically viable. Regular customer feedback is also obtained by the women entrepreneurs to meet their requirements. The trained women acted as trainers for the new members. This helped them to build their ability to seek and meet bigger targets.

Dhaaga members have bagged orders to meet the requirement of Mumbai Municipal Corporation and Indian Hotels for paper bag and apron supply respectively. The coverage of rural

women is expected to touch 5,000 members by 2025. Collaboration with national brands like Big Bazaar, Amazon and other retail chains is part of the plan to scale the interventions. The mission is also being taken to the next level with institutionalisation of Dhaaga Enterprise as a legal entity (as a Section 8 company), which will run and independently manage its operations in a professional manner with help of experts.

The intervention has delivered high-impact to the women across all the 16 locations. The basic aspect of women being able to come together and develop a shared goal was the key impact. Dhaaga offered a platform to deliberate and take up social aspects besides economic aspects. The women are now confident and encourage more women to come forward to become part of this mission. The additional monthly income is used to fulfil the educational needs of their children, particularly girls. Also, the ability to reinforce the social positioning in the village has been a major impact of the intervention. The women are being respected for upholding their traditional and innovative work. ♦