

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



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## *Preface*

The year has been the most difficult year in the living history of many people. The Covid-19 pandemic virtually ruled the world and became the cause of death.

Many thanks to our donors and supporters who helped us and the communities we work with to cope with the worst. The equanimity with which the migrant workers and local communities faced the pandemic and accompanying economic hardships was commendable.

Our colleagues and communities enabled achieve our planned activities by stepping up their efforts in the windows that were available for working.

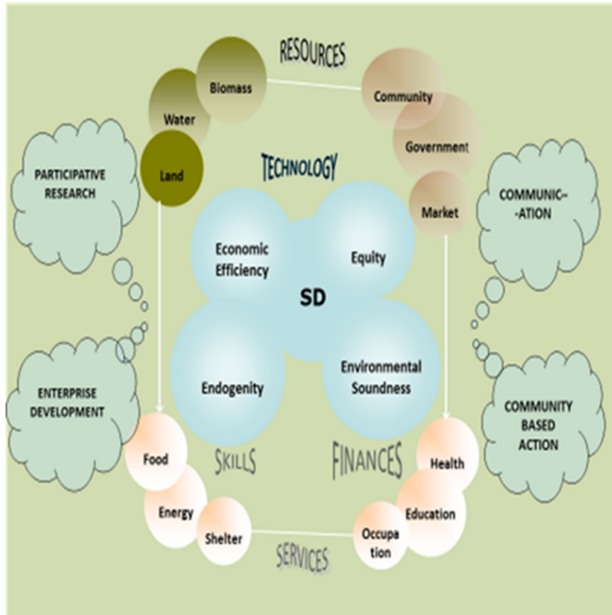
We pray and hope that the world never faces another pandemic like this.

Sreedhar Ramamurthi

Managing Trustee

## Conceptual Underpinnings and Mission

Stepping into a new millennium and having gone past two decades, browsing back for repair or reviving natural systems already damaged is not a matter of choice anymore. It is now common ground to perceive limits: limits of development, resource availability,



environmental stability, and economic viability of development as it has been practiced over the past, particularly in the final centuries of the last millennium. To respond to this complex task, humankind has evolved newer concepts and paradigms and organised people and resources to form institutions.

The mission of the Environics Trust is to evolve innovative solutions to the problems of community development. Environics Trust reaches out to mountain, mining, marginalized and coastal

communities. Each community responds to the diversity and complexity of specific ecosystems and social environments. Environics implies the study of the influence of the environment on human behaviour. Environics Trust interprets it more comprehensively as the mutual influences of environment and social behaviour and attempts to explore this critical area through its programmes focused on communities.

The World Commission on Environment and Development defined Sustainable Development as that which meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without comprising the ability to meet those of future generations. This is an approach that ensures that the process takes environmental considerations into account, not just the economic aspects of development or even the wider perspective put forward by the UNESCO.

In the last decade a perceptible shift has occurred globally, with the reversing of natural resources destruction and conserving a healthy environment have become explicit objectives of development. It is founded in the belief that development must not come at the expense of the life-support systems of other groups, or later generations, nor threaten the survival of other species.

Over the years, Environics Trust has evolved a pragmatic model for sustainable development. Sustainable Development is defined as the 'set of processes that enables the local and global systems to be in ecological harmony'. The four non-orthogonal attributes of sustainable development are:

1. Equity and Justice
2. Environmental Soundness
3. Endogeneity or Self Reliance
4. Economic Efficiency.

Societies should identify, evolve processes and implement programmes that concurrently address these four attributes at whatever levels and scales the intervention takes place. In practical terms, an understanding of the existing biophysical and psychocultural systems to establish new paradigms and identify specific efforts that are necessary.

The basic biophysical underpinning for any effort can be visualized as the triumvirate of biophysical resource potential of Water-Land-Biomass. These loops must be closed at the smallest scale providing for the basic biophysical needs, expressed as the triumvirate of biophysical resource demands of a society, in the form of Food-Energy-Shelter.

The psychocultural environment presents the institutional resource potential in the form of the Government-Market-Communities. The evolution of these institutions and their mutual interaction particularly determine the equity and social justice systems as well as the endogeneity of a society to meet its developmental aspirations in a sustainable manner. The primary charge of these institutions would be to meet the psychocultural demands of the society in the form of Health-Education-Occupation.

While at the biophysical level one could be a little more deterministic to state that more immediate and local the needs are met the more sustainable it is likely to be, it is much more complex to determine the levels and scales at which psychocultural needs must be met. The nation state has been a unit in herding the demands at this level and has been overwhelmingly accepted as the scale at which these needs are addressed, despite exposures of the inability of nation states to meet these needs in acceptable manner. This has resulted in a situation where societal governance has come to mean 'keeping discontent within manageable limits' rather than a proactive process of creating conditions for life fulfillment. Thus, at the local level the development process, without the current complications of sectoral evolution, must attempt to meet the biophysical needs of the local people. Given the diversity of the biophysical environment, the processes may be simple or complex and its dynamics largely determined by the context. The psychocultural systems however have grown to become complex and often complicated, without the variety to deliver the basic demands placed on them, thereby forcing us to look for new paradigms and processes that can meet the aspirations of current generations without foreclosing future options. ***Therefore, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT is practically an exercise of conserving existing options and generating more alternatives.***

The complexity of the current local, national and global conditions of the biophysical and psychocultural systems does not allow for a development space to unconditionally focus upon the various elements in an integrated manner, limiting the options to organizations at all levels – multilateral organizations to local institutions. Broadly these inputs could be characterized as the triumvirate of organized inputs of Technology-Skills-Finances.

The role of technology has been debated for long and several efforts have been made to mould global opinion to focus attention on 'appropriate' technologies and giving up of technologies that are destructive of the biophysical environment. However, the fact remains that technology does often define and take over the nature of impacts on the biophysical systems and the interaction within and among the broad elements of the psychocultural environment. It is therefore necessary to identify technologies which can be quickly 'appropriated' by the community so that the impact of the technology can be focussed to meaningful in its context.

The need for finances in the development and evolution of societies has become far too critical than what can be philosophically justified. Further, these 'financial resources' have become progressively abstract with the world moving away from physical resource equated currencies to what has now been truly termed as 'paper' and 'paper-less' money with a large part of the global engine being fuelled by the stocks and their derivatives.

Finances have to be invested to make any intervention possible for the acquisition and maintenance of technologies and also to generate and utilise the other critical input of skills. Skill generation systems have largely been equated with the education process and the inadequacy of the global educational system is reflected in every local context. The dynamics of the social demands requires a rapid acquisition of skills and the ability to develop new skill sets.

Institutions are therefore defining the functional space, like mountain regions and communities therein which the Environics Trust holds in focus and identifying the most optimal methods to deliver these inputs to the community. In order to search for that means, a basic set of paradigms are essential which govern the objective arena of the institution which emerges from intimate understanding of the functional environment.

These paradigms are succinctly stated as:

1. The diversity and the complexity of the ecosystems can be addressed only with a thorough understanding;
2. The potential of the ecosystems has to find expression in economic and ecological value terms;
3. The economic efficiency of the primary production systems will have to be considerably raised without diminishing their ecological value;
4. The critical role of Women in the design of development processes have to be recognised and consciously incorporated;

5. Communities and their institutions have to become self-dependent in Resources, Technologies and Investments;
6. Marketable surpluses have to be generated and value-addition must occur at local levels and
7. Strategic interfaces have to be developed with the outside world, so that integration with the larger economy is mutually beneficial.

In order to reach our primary goal of evolving a general and consistently applicable model, a process is necessary to identify and modulate the inputs within the functional space of the institution. This is the means by which the institution contributes to the larger societal process, the practice of which is the operational principle of Environics Trust. These activities are Participative Research, which enables documentation of existing conditions and the changes aspired; Community Based Action to demonstrate the possibility of transforming innovations into a physical and social reality; Enterprise Development and Servicing to respond to the current reality of the economic world and identify sustainable entrepreneurial and occupational niches and Communication to interface with a larger universe to mutually learn and contribute. These are ideas whose practices are taking shape and are reflected in the glimpses presented here.

*And finally, a word of caution, no model is reality, but a framework to enable.*



## *Piloting Alternative Livelihood Options*

### **Introduction**

Parts of Central India, devastated by coal mining and polluted with extremely high levels of air and water pollution, is the nucleus of our nascent experiments in transition. The future of coal and coal-based economy, which is the reason here for “development” and classic “resource curse”, is now exacerbated by crisis of uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, diminishing economy, runaway climate change and the huge number of returning urban migrant workers. We will leverage the skills of returning migrant workers and those from power projects that are retired and stranded, land losers who need alternative livelihoods and establish a process that will sustain the communities and the current workers.

We are establishing “Prosumer Hubs” as regions which have centres where a variety of products and services are produced, and linkages are built to directly reach the local users and specific consumers.

In the two-year duration of the programme, we will have three hubs in Chhattisgarh each anchored by one producer owned company.

There will be several units established in each of these areas.

#### **CANDIDATE TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES**

##### **TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCTS**

###### **FARM AND FOREST**

- CEREALS, PULSES, SALT, OIL SEEDS, MUSHROOM, SPICES AND CONDIMENTS, FOREST PRODUCTS, FRUITS AND VEGETABLE

###### **SHELTER**

- HONEYCOMB, FLYASH, SOIL BLOCKS, PLUMBING, WIRING, BAMBOO

###### **ENERGY**

- BIODIESEL, MICROHYDRO, SOLAR, BIOGAS, WIND
- HEALTH
- SANITARY NAPKINS, OXYGEN CONCENTRATORS, AIR MONITORING

##### **COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

- WIFI – COWMESH, RADIO, IVR SYSTEMS
- ART-THEATRE-AUDIO-VIDEO

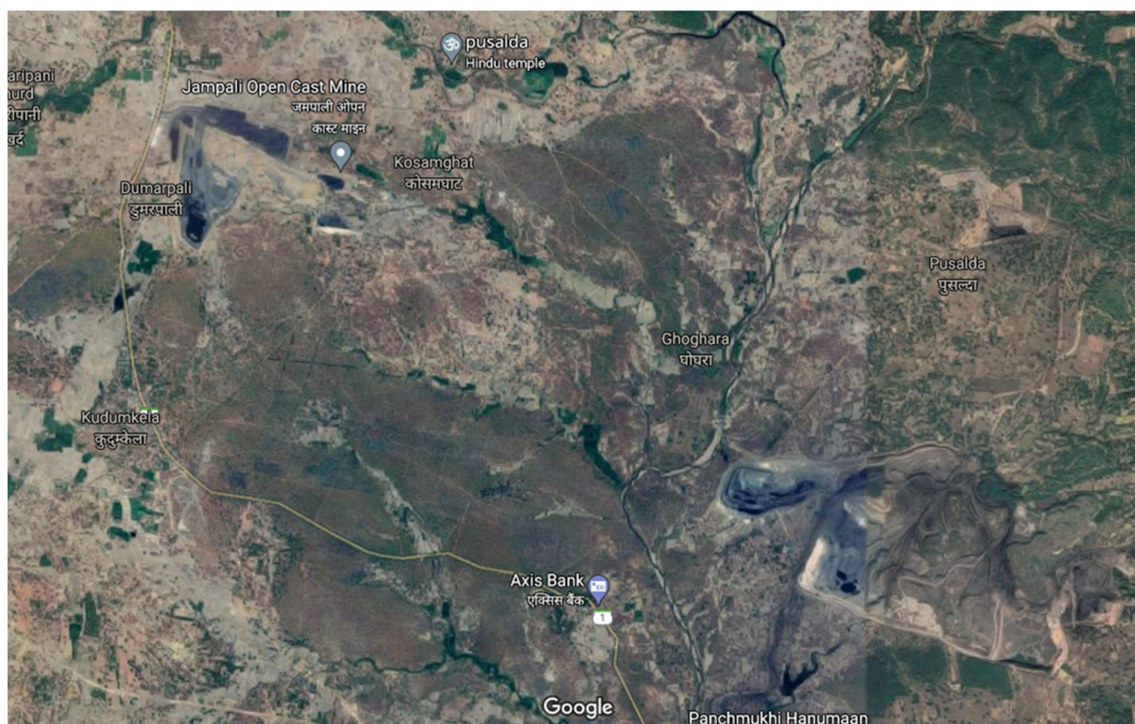
##### **FISCAL GATEWAYS**

- SMALL FINANCES THROUGH DIRECT LENDING TO SHG AND JLG
- ACCESS SERVICES TO VARIOUS LOCAL AND STATE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

### **1. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF HUB CENTRES**

#### **(i) Kudumkela, Raigarh**

Kudumkela village is located in Gharghoda Tehsil of Raigarh district, 15 km from sub-district headquarter Gharghoda and 50 km away from district headquarter Raigarh. The total geographical area of village is 3162.22 hectares with a total population of 5,914 (2011). The village is at the edge of two large coal mines of the South Eastern Coal Field Limited – Jampalli and Baroud Open Cast Mines.



The Jampalli Open cast Mine displaced 190 families and so far, only 36 families have been resettled and even they have not been properly rehabilitated. The mine has a production capacity of 3 MTPA with a Project Area of 658.10 Ha. of which 91.91 Ha is forest land<sup>1</sup>.

The Baroud project<sup>2</sup> involves total 1111.40 Ha of land for quarry, industrial and residential complex, safety zone and external dumps etc. The 835 number of affected land oustees has been estimated and the number of families to be displaced. The CAG had noted that, “In accordance with guidelines issued by Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), industries / infrastructure / mining projects were required to obtain NOC for the use of ground water. We observed that CCL (Piparwar OCM), BCCL (DBOCP, Kuya, Moonidih UG and Putki Balihari mines) and SECL (**Baroud, Gevra** and Rajendra mines) continued to use ground water for their mining operations without obtaining NOC from CGWA<sup>3</sup>.”

A gathering was held of the community in the proposed location of the Raigarh Prosumer Hub with the maximum participation of the Majhi Tribal Community in the region.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/EC%20Compliance%20Report%20for%20Half%20yearly%20ending%20June%202019%20Jampali%20SECL%20Raigarh%20Area%20.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/EC%20Compliance%20Report%20for%20Half%20yearly%20ending%20June%202019%20Baroud%20SECL%20Raigarh%20Area.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://cag.gov.in/webroot/uploads/download\\_audit\\_report/2019/Report\\_No\\_12\\_of\\_2019\\_Assessment\\_of\\_Environmental\\_Impact\\_due\\_to\\_Mining\\_Activities\\_and\\_its\\_Mitigation\\_in\\_Coal\\_India\\_Limited\\_and\\_its\\_Subsidaries.pdf](https://cag.gov.in/webroot/uploads/download_audit_report/2019/Report_No_12_of_2019_Assessment_of_Environmental_Impact_due_to_Mining_Activities_and_its_Mitigation_in_Coal_India_Limited_and_its_Subsidaries.pdf)





Meeting In Kudumkela, Gharghoda Tehsil, Raigarh on 14.03.2021



Raigarh Prosumer Hub being established here will have nearly 10 acres of land and a centre for research and experimentation on organic farming and various livelihood activities.

## **(ii) Bhatora Resettlement Village, Korba District**

Gevra, Dipka and Kusmunda are three adjacent mines which are among the largest in terms of the capacity of production in the country in the district of Korba with nearly 10 percent of the total licensed capacity.

### **10 Acres of Land for the Hub**



Together these mines have displaced among the highest number of people and has had an extremely poor history of resettlement. Though it is often stated as “Resettlement and Rehabilitation”,

hardly any rehabilitation has taken place. The status of displacement and the resettlement of these projects indicates how this activity seems to be of incredibly low priority for the mining company even though it is a Public Sector Undertaking. People have been constantly

<b>Gevra Project</b>						
Sl.No	Villages Involved	PAFs At Site	Cash	Grant	Not Eligible	Balance
Old						
1	Bareli	131	131	0	0	0
3	Dhurena	40	40	0	0	0
4	Junadih	149	149	0	0	0
5	Kusmunda	232	232	0	0	0
6	Binjhra	150	150	0	0	0
7	Ghatmunda	75	75	0	0	0
New						
1	Pondi	470	0	405	65	0
2	Amgaon	491	62	231	192	6
3	Bahanpat	358	0	168	188	2
4	Bhatora	380	0	35	31	314
5	Ralia	150	0	0	0	150
6	Bhilai Bazar	400	0	0	0	400
7	Naraibodh	350	0	0	0	350
<b>Total</b>		<b>3376</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>1222</b>
<a href="http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/6%20MONTHLY%20REPORT%20Sept%202019%20gevra%20with%20annexes.pdf">http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/6%20MONTHLY%20REPORT%20Sept%202019%20gevra%20with%20annexes.pdf</a>						

struggling to realise their rightful entitlements but on each occasion the company is raises some issues of documentation or transfer the burden to the local administration stating that it is unable to secure land for resettlement. Despite people approaching the courts and the tribunal for addressing their issues, these projects have been expanded without the consent of the local people by using loopholes in the law.

<b>Dipka Project (Total 1999.293 Ha Acquired)</b>			
Name of the village	Total PAF's	PAF's Shifted to R&R site	PAF's to be shifted
Sirki	388	136	21
Chainpur	385	92	01
Suwabhondi	148	0	10
Jhingatpur	134	65	03
Beltikri	351	124	16
Malgaon	284	13	72
Jhabar	0	0	0
Dipka	0	0	0
Renki	0	0	0
Ratiza	0	0	0
Hardi Bazaar	Village Hardibazaar has been acquired but not under possession yet		
Amgaon	R&R for this village will be carried out by Gevra OC project		
Total	1690	430	123
<a href="http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/six_monthly_dipka-ocp_oct18_mar19.pdf">http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/six_monthly_dipka-ocp_oct18_mar19.pdf</a>			

Kusmunda Project (Total 1655.825 Ha Acquired)							
Sl.No	Name of Rehabilitation Site	Area of Rehabilitation Site (Ha)	Displaced Villages	PAF's	Rehabilitated at site	Cash Grant	Total
1	Sarvamangla Nagar Phase-I	18.955	Durpa	598	598	0	598
2	Sarvamangla Nagar Phase - II		Barpali	299	288	11	299
3	Yamuna Nagar	99.593	Kamariya	85	85	0	85
4	Vaishali Nagar	13.354	Dullapur	76	51	25	76
5			Barkuta	76	75	01	76
	Total	131.902	5 Villages	1134	1097	37	1134
<a href="http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/EC%20Compliance%2036%20MTY%20Apr-Sep%202018%20for%20upload_optimize.pdf">http://www.secl-cil.in/writereaddata/EC%20Compliance%2036%20MTY%20Apr-Sep%202018%20for%20upload_optimize.pdf</a>							



Bhatora New Resettlement Village

Our effort will be focused on these communities and adjoining industrially displaced communities and areas where they are trying to rehabilitate themselves.

Bhatora Resettlement Village has been established by 120 families who were displaced by the Gevra mines and were not being properly resettled. The displaced community took the initiative of resettling themselves. This community is very keen on establishing alternative livelihoods for themselves.

## 2. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

### (i) Processible Raw Commodities

An initial set of products have been identified which have a potential for value addition and expansion of activities.

#### A. Black Rice

Black rice or “forbidden rice” is being cultivated as the traditional varieties are not fetching adequate returns. Growing consciousness on healthy food and the market for Black rice is growing. We plan to enable these rice growers to improve upon their production, enhance the acreage and enable value addition through better packaging and marketing. Currently 60-90 Tonnes are being produced by the producer cooperative.

#### B. Cashew

Nearly 30 tonnes of cashew are being produced by the farmers on a cooperative basis. Currently it fetches around Rs 650 to 700 per kg. The cashew is of good quality and proper packaging and marketing will enable better returns.

### **C. Jamun (*Syzygium cumini*)**

Nearly 600 Tonnes of Jamun is collected from the forests by the communities from adjoining forests. Currently this fetches a very low price of Rs 25-30 per kg. The retail price of Jamun is currently very high as this is seen as a fruit that provides immunity to Covid-19 and is highly recommended for diabetics even in normal times. The powder of the seeds also has medicinal properties. We will initially help in finding better value for the fruit and in due course establish a processing unit to make juices and other products.

### **D. Honey**

Nearly 3 Tonnes of Wild Honey is collected from the forests by the tribal community. The honey is of extremely high quality and currently fetches about Rs 600 per kg. There is a huge scope to properly brand and raise the value of return to the collectors.

### **E. Chironji (*Buchanania lanzan*)**

Chironji is a wild dry fruit which is used in several sweets and as condiment in India. Currently 5-6 Tonnes is being collected and raw fruit fetches Rs 130-150. Processing and proper packaging and marketing will enable value addition. In retail market the seed is sold for nearly Rs 1500 a kg.

### **F. Mahua (*Madhuca Indica*/Mahua longifolia)**

Mahua is an important forest produce and is a versatile tree providing for various local uses. The flowers are used for making liquor and is also consumed. The seeds produce oil which is used for various purposes. Currently it is collected and sold without any value addition to the traders.

## **3. DEMOGRAPHY AND LOCAL MARKETS**

The focus during this period was to understand the lead bank system and the priority lending schemes of the government. The State Bank of India is the lead bank. The Annual credit plan for the districts has significant allocation and the lead bank officials are keen to discuss their plans and how we can integrate our activities and also leverage state resources for expansion of our activities. These discussions are still very preliminary. For the financial year 2021-22 the following amounts are significant. However local communities feel that these are not being optimally used.

<b>District (Amount in Lakhs)</b>	<b>Total Farm Credit</b>	<b>Total Agri Infrastructure</b>	<b>Food &amp; Agro Processing</b>
Korba	34243.85	2320.24	2826.70
Raigarh	99347.50	19649.21	15226.54

## Communities in Coal Mining Areas

**Objective I: Populate data and develop actionable information on socio-environmental impacts from extractives through fact finding**

### 1. Mapping of New Blocks Put Under Auction

The Ministry of Coal released a [Discussion Paper](#) for comments of stakeholders including proposals for which of the mines need to be auctioned at <https://coalblock-is.cmpdi.co.in/pages/dashboard.php>. Stakeholders concerned were requested to submit/indicate the following by 1600 hours on January 31, 2020. We submitted this brief response and followed with details.

There are at least Seven Good Reasons why this should be a larger public discussion with deeper dialogue with the communities to be directly affected before embarking on the process of auction.

1. The auction prior to any intimation and knowledge of the people who are going to be directly affected is grossly unfair but over-rides several concurrent laws. It also provides the State with a position of push it as a *fait accompli*. There are rights vested to the corporates without any discussion or dialogue with the prior right holders.
2. Since most of the blocks are in tribal areas and are governed under the overarching protection of the V Schedule, and the inviolate clauses of land and peoples' consent will have an over-arching role in the roll-out of the project.
3. The Government needs to present how much capacity has already been sanctioned for coal mining and what is the capacity utilisation so that there is a rationale for auctioning new mines, squatters are identified before initiating auction of new blocks and better price discovery is ensured. The top 26 mines in the country in the country has an authorised capacity of nearly 640 Million Tonnes. Currently the sanctioned operational capacity of all operational mines could be much beyond the coal requirement until 2030.
4. While the auction process itself so far has raised lot of concerns, even if the auction were fair and transparent, the scope of corruption and intimidation is huge in getting all the listed clearances with specific timelines.
5. The idea of auction is not just to periodically give away land to enable profligate expenditure by the State. It is to enable the best value capture and ensure zero-loss to the nation. The 12 Blocks currently listed in the discussion paper has a total reserve of over 7 Billion Tonnes which could have a nominal present value of 160-200 Billion Dollars.
6. The people who would be affected directly will receive very little of this value capture as the land valuation and ignores the huge resource and are being seen as a "over-burden" losing their land, forests and other livelihood resources.
7. There is a huge scope for total rationalisation of the coal and mining sector from an Indian perspective of development and value capture. The resources that are being impacted can be better utilised and investments brought in sectors which will enhance local employment and restore land.



It is hoped that the government will not rush through this auction until a clear understanding of the entire economic, social and cultural implications. This will also enhance productivity, deter corruption, increase value for the nation. A detailed discussion on each of these aspects could be appreciated lest this becomes the first step of the *fait accompli* process.

*New coal blocks which have been opened for auction have been mapped.  
A video in Hindi and English was developed and circulated among members in the  
region and social media*

### **Talabira, Sambalpur, Odisha**

This is a coal mine located in Sambalpur District, Odisha. The case is in the National Green Tribunal. The fact that ease of transferability has led to fourth ownership transfer within the life of this mine has only dragged the liabilities of prior allottees. The coal scam and Supreme Court's Judgment led to cancellation of coal mining leases in 2014. This mine was auctioned, GMR won the mine and the earlier environment clearance was transferred to GMR, another major infrastructure development company which took this mine for its thermal power plant in Chhattisgarh. Yet another turnaround in the year 2018 took place, Adani Enterprises bought over GMR and took this mine as well as its power plant in Chhattisgarh. Now Raipur Energen Ltd. is the operational subsidiary of AEL. The case was filed with the NGT on 15.03.2016 where Hindalco and GMR were made party alongwith regulatory agencies. The petition sought restitution of environment and compensation to communities whose lands were lost to the overburden dumps and embankment in an unlawful manner.

Interestingly, the MoEFCC, one of the respondents was told by the court to list all violations of this mine since inception in order to figure out the substantial violator. MoEFCC filed the affidavit and has listed out enormous number of violations happening seamlessly across all owners of this mine since its inception. The violations ranged from over extraction of coal beyond its capacity, poor management of over burden dumps and infrastructure associated with it to contain pollution, absence of green belt, failure to implement the mine closure plan etc. The matter was last listed on March 3, 2020 where detailed reply on MOEF's affidavit was filed. Respondent no. 4 (Hindalco) took time to respond to the MOEF's affidavit and case was listed on 30.03.2020. Due to covid pandemic, all cases are now postponed. The case is at a critical juncture where violations have been vetted by the regulatory authority and now the issue of liability has to be decided and we hope some positive outcome in this case.

### **Carrying Capacity Studies**

Carrying capacity has never been seen as a guiding principle in the mining sector. The impacts and changes to the environment of communities and resources is never seen as a deterrent to limit extraction to a level best suited to maintain an optimal level with the people, resources and the environment. Gare Palma is a cluster of mines in the Tamnar area of Raigarh District in Chhattisgarh. A preliminary field visit was made by a team of



Envionics to look at the state of environment. A basic information and database has been prepared and a draft report was brought out. While carrying capacity may mean differently for different stakeholders, it is essential to form a framework which best describes the communities as central to it. A series of maps have also been prepared to spatially represent the information. It is clear that the region has lost its rural character and the infrastructure is unable to cope with the ever-increasing extraction and hence heavy traffic, pollution from transportation and mining. The basic elements of environment - land, water and air are affected and putting them into the framework of a decision-making model to reduce extraction as a response to compatible living environment is a long term goal and is being tried. The NGT has also asked all the pollution control boards to take stock of pollution and penalise industries for environmental compensation. It has also said in an order that until this database is created and fines realised, no new or expansion activities shall be allowed in such critically polluted areas.

Carrying capacity has to be objective as well as practical to address sustainability. It is also an area which has several limitations - ecosystem dynamics is one of the prime issues followed by data and measurements which are varying in country contexts. The issue of risk assessment may be one of the approaches to reach upto the singular or multiple aspects which need their understanding to define and assess carrying capacity. For example, health impacts in the mining and industrial zones may be a non-negotiable aspect including workers health.

If human well being is the main thrust of development as well as sustainability, than probably the area has to be weighed in terms of different development contexts. Uprooting of communities for the sake of mining itself will be directly proportional to risk for communities as well as their resources. Which indirectly means no-mining scenario. Arresting exploitation of coal without expanding over land could be one limiting factor whereas if one goes deep, it has its own repercussions.

Coal is present underneath agricultural fields which is directly linked to food security. The change of land use from agriculture to coal mining is ultimately going to increase the emissions, destabilise the existing ecosystem in terms of environment balance created by land (soil), forest (vegetation) and resources, water. It would be prudent to look at multi layered themes in order to comprehensively understand the lay of land (surface and sub-surface) and resources (surface and sub-surface) and see interrelationships among them. Hydrogeology is important to understand the interaction of sub-surface strata with geological formations, deep seated minerals and whether to conserve them and safeguard confined/unconfined aquifers. There is no environmental economics behind any decision on mining and its environmental consequences - for example water is treated as a free resource and is generally pumped out or used in operations almost free.

Another approach which needs to be decided is to identify certain non-negotiables which become the primary components of decision making or addressing the direction which

should or should not be taken. Public health and safety is one such theme, food security, common lands could be another.

## ***Objective II: Uplinking public health by air pollution monitoring***

### **1. Air Pollution**

The low-cost air monitors have been installed in several coal mining and power plant areas in consultation with the communities. These equipments have led to a sharp enhancement of understanding of Air pollution parameters among the communities and other stakeholders. The equipment's have been instrumental in capturing data which can be used in other areas of work and also help in advocacy with the state governments and other avenues to stop polluting units and ensure industries follow all norms within different acts. In the reporting period, analysis of data captured was performed for the quarters of October –December 2019 -and Jan-March 2020. During both these periods, Asansol recorded extremely high values of AQI. More analysis was also performed, and data was shared among the relevant people on the ground. The links for these reports is as below

October – December 2019 - <http://environicsindia.in/2020/01/07/air-pollution-brief-analysis-for-the-quarter-october-december-2019/>

January – March 2020 - <http://environicsindia.in/2020/04/14/air-pollution-analysis-january-march-2020/>

The analysis of January- March 2020 also contains a brief analysis of the initial impact on Air pollution due to a country wide lockdown due the pandemic of Covid 19.

A webpage on the Environics trust website has been created to capture information about the air pollution at different sites. A daily PM2.5, PM 10 and AQI table and a graph of AQI of last 10 days updated regularly has been created. The page also contains all the articles published on Air pollution for ease. <http://environicsindia.in/2020/04/22/aqi-info/>

A WhatsApp group of relevant community members has been created to disseminate daily information on AQI in different sites. Important information on air quality is also shared on this platform.

### **2. Power Plants case in High Courts**

The case on Occupational Health of power plant workers and environmental pollution is being tracked in different High Courts of the country. Occupational health and Safety Association (OHSA) who was the original litigant in the Supreme Court has joined as a party in the Chhattisgarh High Court. This will help in further involvement in the case in the state. The State government in Chhattisgarh has already identified about 2000 workers suffering from different occupational diseases and this involvement will help in getting justice not only for these workers but other communities as well. The case is also being tracked in other states.

## **Engagement with Thermal Power Plants in Chhattisgarh on awareness generation on Asbestos Health Hazards**

As Coal-fired thermal power plants (TPPs) use various types of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in thermal insulation of piping systems, furnaces, and other areas, it becomes important to have work- place safety in place and minimize the exposure. Power plant insulation and maintenance workers especially are exposed to airborne asbestos at concentrations that may exceed the Permissible Exposure Limit as per Indian standards. It's not only workers directly handling asbestos-containing materials who are at high exposure risk, but their families and managements too are prone to second-hand exposures. Hence, action like replacing asbestos with non-asbestos products and providing proper personal protective equipment (PPEs) to mitigate the risks should be taken.

In order to start the dialogue on just transition, four power plants in the district of Korba are been Identified, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited and Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company Limited (PSUs) and Captive TPP of Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd (BALCO) and Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited (Private). Medical camp to identify the victims are planned. For the medical camp to take place initial screening of the workers needs to be done. A first round of intial screening has been done at Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited and similar process will be applied to other plants too. The management of these TPPs, Directorate of Industrial Health & Safety, Chhattisgarh, and Trade Unions has been involved in the entire process.

As, there is an immediate and urgent need for the government to develop a comprehensive action plan and road map for the elimination of asbestos exposure. The ultimate goal of the action plan should be a total ban on the use of asbestos. In the meantime, employers need to implement and enforce occupational hygiene practices, including engineering and administrative controls, as shown to reduce exposures in many other countries. Without enforcement, regulations often do not properly protect workers and work-related disease and deaths will still result.

## **Coal fire mapping and data collation**

Jharia and Raniganj coalfields in the eastern belt have been burning from several decades and no respite has been provided to the communities even after the formulation of the Master Plan for these regions. BCCL and ECL are two subsidiaries of Coal India Limited operational in Jharia and Raniganj respectively. Owing to increasing pollution due to continuously burning coal (coal fire in seams) a cluster approach was adopted by the authorities i.e. to bring mines as a sub set of a cluster and manage production vis-a-vis control fire within the cluster by mining seams under fire and/or stowing sand or dousing fire by creating trenches. Around 17 clusters are formed by BCCL and thus a need was realised to review the conditions of environment clearance and specifically those surrounding coal fire control measures. The clusters are mapped with approximate boundaries along with air monitoring stations.

## Road Infrastructure Development

### CASE OF KIRATPUR - NER CHOWK EXPRESSWAY, NH21, HIMACHAL PRADESH

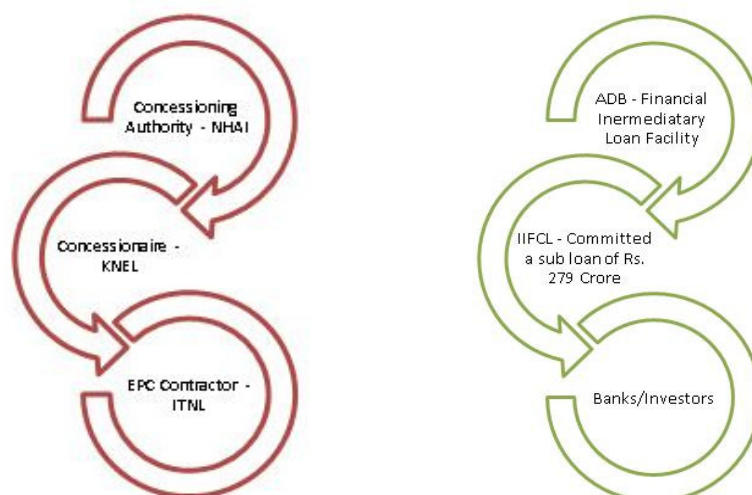


*This case study highlights role of Government companies and International Lending Agencies (Multilateral Banks) in development finance and how environment, ecology and communities become victim of ill governed project. The project is located in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The case study assumes importance as the parent company declared bankruptcy and is under insolvency proceedings under the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). It also brings in focus of how limited is the responsibility of the lending agency which is Asian Development Bank (ADB) in this case.*

#### **BACKGROUND**

The project is part of the National Highway Development Programme (NHDP) Phase III in India. The 84.375 Km project is divided into two sections, Kiratpur to Bilaspur and Bilaspur to Nerchowk commonly known as NH21 Kiratpur-Nerchowk Expressway. The project was conceived as a Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis under NHDP Phase-III, through public, private partnership (PPP) which eventually changed to Hybrid-Annuity Model (HAM), brought out to facilitate market raised finance in the volatile financial situations prevailing globally. In this model, financial risk is shared by the government. The regulatory clearances are also a responsibility of the State.

ADB, through its multi-tranche financing facility, financed this project (one of the 19 sub-projects) under Tranche I. The total Tranche I loan was approved in October 2013 of USD 400 million. The total cost of the project in 2012 was 2291 Crore (22,910 INR million) with IL&FS as an EPC contractor and several independent consultants. IL&FS is a non-banking financial company and is a large conglomerate which funds infrastructure projects. The total term loan<sup>4</sup> for this project stood at 1474.86 Crore. IL&FS further awarded the concession to a SPV formed for the purpose of implementation of project, called Kiratpur-Nerchowk Expressway Limited (KNCEL)<sup>5</sup>. KNCEL further sub contracted works (*see broad relationship structure above*).



#### SITUATION: POLICIES, CONDITIONS AND LENDING

The alignment is located in the fragile catchment of Gobind Sagar Reservoir which is the largest man-made reservoir in sub-Himalayan region. Many fishing cooperatives depend on this reservoir to earn their livelihood. Agriculture and forests are so intertwined that any construction, especially road is going to create large scale impacts. Environment clearance for the project was obtained on March 21, 2013. The specific environmental conditions were stipulated to address environment management. The role of ADB and IFFCL remain primary in implementing their respective policies to ensure safeguards are applied at various stages of the project cycle. Several public sector banks and largest public insurer Life Insurance Corporation of India provided loan to the project.

ADB approved the loan in October 2013 and within one year of loan approval, administrative set up of the project and grant of environment clearance, the project was taken to the court. Gross violations and non-compliance of conditions stipulated in the environment clearance were witnessed. An application was admitted by the NGT (OA 487/2014) in November 2014 primarily on the issue of illegal dumping of debris in River Sutlej causing undue harm to the environment and mismanagement of approved dumping sites. While the application OA 487 was decided by the court in 2016 with liberty to applicant to approach the Tribunal if the occasion arises. The applicant filed fresh application OA 02/2017 stating that the grievances pertaining to non-compliance of environmental conditions, especially muck dumping in river Sutlej is by far the largest impact on the ecology of river and it remains even after court appointed committee's

<sup>4</sup> The loan sanctioned (Rupees in Crores) by various banks which include: Yes Bank: Rs.250.00 Cr., Indian Bank: Rs.350 Cr., Central Bank of India: Rs. 45.00 Cr., Oriental Bank of Commerce: Rs.100.00 Cr., Allahabad Bank: Rs. 100.00 Cr., Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd.: Rs. 75.00 Cr., Corporation Bank: Rs. 150.00 Cr., IIFCL: 279. 86 Cr. & Life Insurance Corporation: Rs. 125.00Cr

<sup>5</sup> Promoted by IL&FS Transportation Network Limited

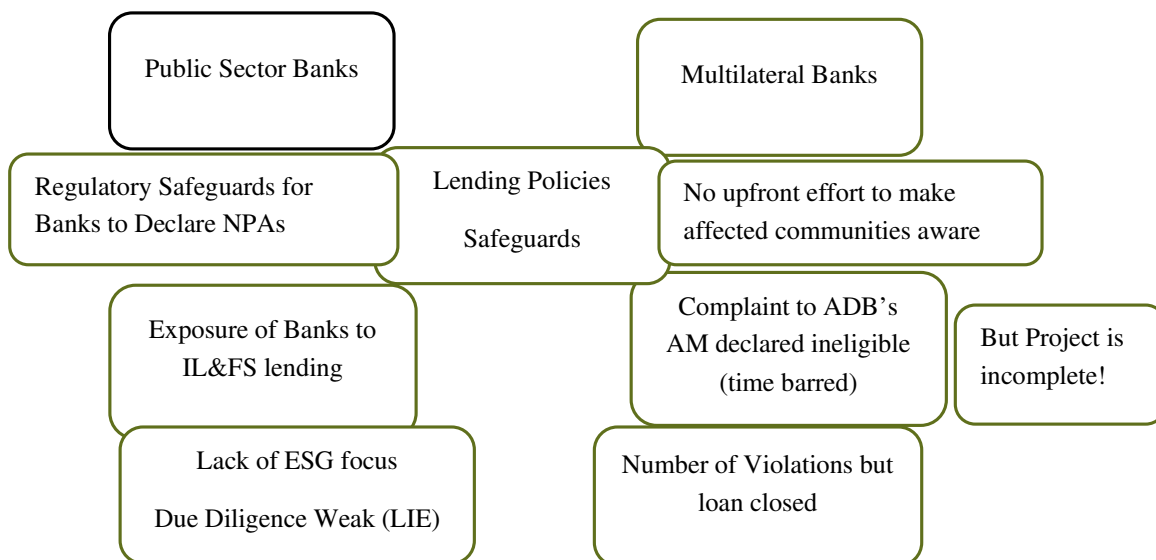


monitoring. It was in the year 2018 that the parent company IL&FS came into the grip of financial irregularities and non-payment of debt.

ADB's finance facility is backed with safeguard processes like Accountability mechanism and compliance review. ADB has failed in popularising the AM policy during the inception of the project. Neither the loan recipient nor the concessionaries revealed to the people about project, grievances resolution systems and compliance review mechanisms. The project public hearing did not disclose these safeguard aspects, which could have increased the chances of compliance. The process was not known to the affected and they lost time in struggling to get right information about the issues which have been raised since the beginning of the project. A summary of impacts is as below;

- a) Individual agricultural fields and houses of people along the alignment have been damaged. Many of them were promised restoration of agreed dumping sites to agricultural fields but it has not been done yet.
- b) Fishermen have been facing undue damage from the silt flowing down into the catchment of Bhakra Reservoir thus reducing the fish catch by these numerous cooperatives. Unmindful dumping along the alignment in the local streams has impacted the spawning of fish which eventually used to flow down in the reservoir.
- c) The road alignment has been changed thus damaging the forest land and opening up and diversion of forest without any clearance for the changed patch.
- d) The nature of infrastructure development is such that it outsources its scope of work to different contractors. When IL&FS went under insolvency proceedings, workers had to face the consequences. Worker dues (HPPWD workers union) have not been paid for want of timely representation before the NCLT's Resolution Professional. Workers were not aware of such procedures and were based in project location and were never informed by the company or the contractors for filing due forms to claim their dues.
- e) The (All Himachal PWD-IPH & Contractual Workers Union) workers engaged in the project complained to invoke Compliance review by the CRP in June 2019 through BWI and NGO Forum on ADB. The complaint raised several critical issues like non-payment of wages, absence of employment letters and poor OSH standards among many other problems. Rs. 17 million was claimed by the workers union as dues. But the complaint was turned ineligible due to passage of more than 2 years from loan closure.

### Interlinkages of Things Gone Wrong



The financial troubles of IL&FS were exposed when NCLT invoked its powers and granted the interim prayer of suspending the existing board of directors on October 1, 2018 and reconstituting the same with persons proposed by the Union of India. The new board was constituted on October 4, 2018.

The creditors of IL&FS Group companies were invited to submit their claims along with proof in respect of liabilities due up to and including October 15, 2018. Grant Thornton India LLP was appointed Claims Management Advisor. Workers find no place in the claims management.

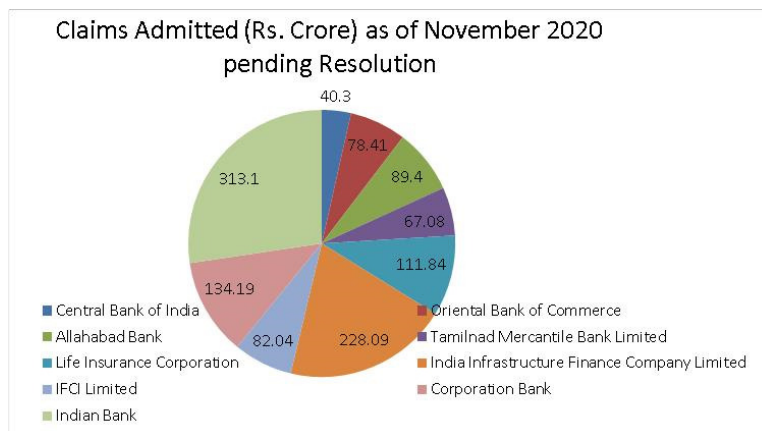


Figure 2 – Financial creditors’ claims in Rupees Crore

It is however quite clear that there is no robust mechanism to shield the financial entities because of the fact that these institutions fund the project on the face value of infrastructure finance and goodwill of the company. There is no objective assessment of the processes like environment and forest compliances embedded in the process of financial due diligence and monitoring of safeguard measures.

Component	Claimed Rs (Crore)	Claims Admitted Rs. (Crore)
Term Loan (various banks <sup>6</sup> including LIC)	1145	1145
Contractors/EPC, 62 nos.	273	167
Workers		

KNEL and ITNL (a transportation vertical) both have been kept in the Red category by NCLT. “Red” entities i.e. those entities which cannot meet their respective payment obligations towards even senior secured financial creditors as and when they fall due in the Testing Period. ITNL is listed on NSE and BSE, ILFS holds 73.2% of its share capital.

<sup>6</sup> Allahabad Bank 894.018 million INR, Central bank of India 403.029 million, IFCI limited 820.474 million, Indian Bank 3131.068 million, LIC 1118.466 million, OBC 784.190 million, Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd. 670.848 million, IIFCL 2280.952 million, Corporation Bank 1341.905 million

## LEARNINGS

1. ADB as a DFI and IFFCL as an intermediary both have safeguard policies but none was popularised or pro-actively grounded during the project roll out. If it was so, affected people's association could have invoked the AMP and CRP with lots of documented evidence at hand. It was only in the year 2018 when both ILFS and its concessionaire KNEL came into the news of financial stress and works came to a halt that workers discovered with their fellow institution that there exist a compliance review mechanism.

**Even the public hearing platform was one of the opportunities for the lenders, executers, and developers to present the grievance redressal mechanisms to the public to resolve the issues in-situ, but it miserably failed.**

2. IIFCL's financing requires it to follow its Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy (ESSP) and use its Environment Social Safeguard Framework (ESSF<sup>7</sup>) to implement the policy. The policy says it upfront that it *'takes note of environmental and social safeguards requirements of its financial partners and lenders including multilateral and bilateral development financial institutions (DFIs)'*. Two important statements put the whole project (NH21) in context of policy statement and its actual implementation;

*"IIFCL gives due consideration to environmental and social (E&S) considerations in examining the credit proposal and financing infrastructure projects in order to avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental and social adverse impacts and risks, if any*

*To comply with applicable environmental and social policies, laws and regulations of the Government of India (GOI) and states of India".*

**As per IIFCL policy, Environment and Social Due Diligence Reporting (ESDDR) reflects on safeguards compliance in the project loan cycle. The latest available ESDDR for Kiratpur-Nerchowk (2015) has no reflection of impacts on the ground. But the impacts are brought up by affected people's association in its petition before the NGT which was filed in the year 2014<sup>8</sup>.**

- The periodic Environment and Social Performance Report<sup>9</sup> states that *"The project is monitored through Lenders Engineer's reporting. The Lender's Independent Engineer is appointed by the Lead Bank of the Lender's Consortium to monitor the physical, financial progress and the compliance of various regulatory requirements. Periodic LIE reports are provided by the Lead Bank to the IIFCL. The LIE reports generally cover areas related to statutory approval status, forest diversion, tree cutting status, safety management, land acquisition status, utility shifting and pending litigation etc"*.
- On the contrary, there have been issues raised by the affected people regarding deviation in alignment, illegal muck dumping, damages caused to the property of affected, damages caused to the environment and impact on forests. In one report

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<sup>7</sup> The ESSF applies to projects financed by IIFCL for lending under various schemes, i.e. direct financing, takeout and refinancing under DFI's line of credit

<sup>8</sup> OA 487/2014 Madan Lal Vs Union of India and Others

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/47083/47083-002-esmr-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/47083/47083-002-esmr-en_0.pdf) (Annexure E-17, page 4, S.No. 13)



of DFO<sup>10</sup>, it is admitted that ‘no approval for deviation in approved road alignment has been obtained/applied by the user agency’. Several conditions of Environment Clearance have been violated and similarly violation of FAC 1980 has been committed.

**The ESSF policy also states that ‘Any incremental safeguards requirements due to DFIs involvement in project financing will be identified during due-diligence procedure and additional measures will be attempted to implement in agreement with project developer (ILFS)’. None of this is reflected in the project documents available on ADB’s project page.**

- Although violations were recognised and directions were given by the NGT, the formation of the committee and monitoring of issues raised in the petition and allowing the petitioner to approach the court in case of unattended grievances is a proof enough that the policies did not survive the fitness test. In 2016, the project consultants<sup>11</sup> also warned the project authorities about very slow work in all the sections. They specifically said that concessionaire is required to provide adequate resources and improve the resources planning as per site condition to speed up the progress.
- The issues brought up in the case reflect the failure of the ESSF and its reporting per ESDDR. ADB declared its exit from the project in January 2017 when these issues were still being contested in the court. The ADB escaped easily by stating that when the loan is disbursed and closed, applicability of AMP ceases beyond a 2 year period from the project closure. ADB, however recognised that the complainants were engaged in dialogue with ADB since August 2018, but CRP has no discretion to apply any time limit other than that specified in the AMP. It exposes the double standards of ADB which looked more interested in avoidance of the issue than engaging and improving its own and its borrowers compliance mechanisms. If the ADB had acted upon in 2018 (a lapse of almost one and a half year from loan closure date and well within the AMP time limit) the trajectory would have been different.

**The project has not completed implementation as the work stopped in July 2018 due to bankruptcy filing and insolvency proceedings. IFFCL’s policy states that safeguard processes and their reporting will continue until its exposure to the project continues.**

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<sup>10</sup> Telecon with the affected people’s organisations President, Bilaspur (HP)

<sup>11</sup> Monthly Progress Report, No.48, September 2016 – Getinsa-Payma, SL with Segmental Consulting & Infrastructure Advisory Pvt. Ltd. India

## *Occupational Health and Safety for Street Vendors*

Street vendors form considerable and important part of the Informal sector economy and contribute greatly to country's savings and GDP employing mostly low skilled and lower income class of migrant workers. As per estimates there are close to 10 million street vendors in India and it can be said that roughly 2% of any city's entire population are street vendors. In Delhi, as per estimates there are close to 300,000 street vendors but the Municipal Corporation of Delhi official figure of "legal" vendors is roughly around 1,25,000, of which around 30% (37,500) are women (Source - <https://sewadelhi.org/advocacy-campaigns/street-vendors/>). These workers perform their duties under open sky exposed to weather elements and experience exposure to vehicle exhausts, Road and construction dust, hazardous gases and smells emitted from open drains, garbage dumps, chemicals, rotten raw materials etc. Despite facing all these problems they provide cheap and quality service to society. Several laws and regulations have been made to improve their conditions but the implementation of such regulations is not up to the mark. In view of other major obstacles faced by such workers related to their livelihood, health concerns take a back seat. Preventing health ailments and hazards is unheard of for them and they remain concerned only about getting treatment after falling ill, costs of which only reduces the already meagre earnings.

In light of all these difficulties faced by these workers, an awareness training on Occupational health and safety was organized by Environics trust on 27 October 2021 at Dilshad Colony, New Delhi. About 25 street vendors participated in the meeting and learnt about the various hazards faced by them doing their jobs and how to protect themselves from the harms of such hazards. Before the training a sample survey of 200 vendors had been done in 4 locations in Delhi to understand the kind of problems faced by the vendors. In addition to the health related problems, information on other difficulties and access to government relief schemes was also collected in the survey.

The survey showed that the major health ailments are –

- respiratory problems
- eye irritation
- Musko-skeletal problems

In addition, so called life style diseases like Diabetes and Blood Pressure problems were also narrated

The vendors categorically stated that they don't go to any health facilities if and when they fall ill. 15% respondents went to government health care facilities while 11% respondents prefer private hospitals in place of government hospitals which costs out-of-pocket expenses for the family. Even though government facilities provide free services

and medicines, they are not preferred as services are poor and medicines are mostly not available.

Health insurance was unheard of even though there is a flagship government program for such group of people. Only 8 people out of 200 were enrolled in a health insurance scheme.

Lack of access to clean drinking water and clean toilets was yet another problem highlighted. Lack of such facilities can lead to several debilitating health problems. In addition, small living spaces with large family size can cause issues.

Vendors also complained about lack of access of government schemes and regulations made especially for them. There was lack of focus from the government to popularize the schemes and remove hurdles in implementation. The schemes are inaccessible at the time when they are most needed. Lack of legal status and licenses from authorities lead to a lot of corruption and bribes are common. Several instances were told where goods and materials were seized and money had to be paid. Even if licenses are provided, no infrastructure or facilities are provided at vending places.



The meeting started with a brief introduction by the vendors about the types of vends. Long working hours, irregular working hours, different types of vends, unpaid assistance by family members, atrocities by authorities were common issues again highlighted by the participants. All the participants were from the nearby area of Dilshad Colony in East Delhi. Training was held in Hindi.

After the introduction, the survey results and findings were presented and a short discussion took place over the findings from the survey. The participants agreed completely with the findings and narrated the problems faced by them.

Dr Ashish Mittal, medical practitioner and OHS expert and discussed with the participants the concepts of OHS and the principles of identification of Hazards and prevention. The basic human body structure was explained with a description of important organs and processes. The concept of OHS was introduced along with the various factors both occupational and environmental, which may affect the health. Difference between treatment and preventive health was explained with examples. The importance of prevention was stressed upon and there was a short discussion on this important point.

The hierarchy of controls concept was discussed with examples. Dust and noise as hazards were discussed in detail with both environmental and occupational sources of. Participants were informed about the various ways to control dust / noise and to wear mask and ear muffs as a last resort. Ergonomics was discussed as most of the vendors work in difficult and monotonous positions and experience chronic back and joint pains. The correct posture and ways to lift weights was demonstrated. It was explained to the participants how to reduce repetitive movements and to use the body as it was made to be used.

Some common and easy to do exercises were taught which can help in improving blood circulation and strengthen key body muscles. Correct way to wash eyes, neck exercises, shoulder movements was also done. Finally, the different type of available masks, their utility and effectiveness was discussed.

Light refreshments were served after the meeting and the discussion continued even during the refreshments. This was a new concept for the participants but they listened attentively but it will take effort for some change to occur. Vendors are more concerned with earning a living and health always take a back seat in such scenarios. Another issue is that different vendors have time available during different time slots and it becomes difficult to arrange a slot when most can join in for such meetings.

There are very few studies conducted on the health impacts on street vendors esp in India. In one study conducted among vendors in Delhi and Hyderabad<sup>12</sup>, it was reported that in Delhi, 92% and in Hyderabad, 81.3% did not use any personal protection equipment (PPE). Health insurance was unheard of by 46% in Delhi and 34.7% in Hyderabad while The private sector emerged as the main healthcare providers in both cities. Another study conducted among self-employed street vendors of Chandrapur district of Maharashtra<sup>13</sup> reported issues including respiratory tract infections (32%), musculoskeletal problems (54.4%), gastrointestinal problems (18%), generalized weakness (12.7%), non-communicable diseases including hypertension, diabetes (26.6%). Among those who had

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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330158488\\_Occupational\\_health\\_and\\_Safety\\_of\\_Street\\_Vendors\\_of\\_Delhi\\_and\\_Hyderabad\\_A\\_Case\\_for\\_Universal\\_Health\\_Coverage](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330158488_Occupational_health_and_Safety_of_Street_Vendors_of_Delhi_and_Hyderabad_A_Case_for_Universal_Health_Coverage)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ijcmph.com/index.php/ijcmph/article/view/6369>

suffered from these health problems, the majority (68%) utilized private healthcare facilities and 21% utilized public healthcare facilities.

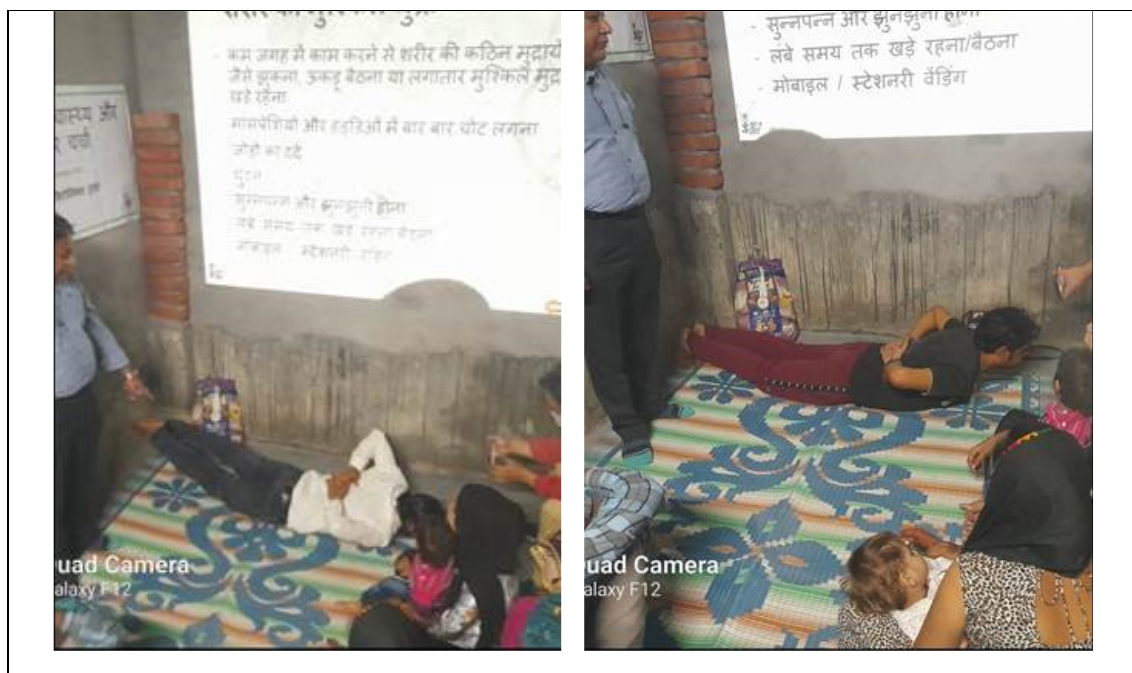
Even while there is a need for detailed studies and research to be done to gather information and data about number of street vendors and the health impacts faced by them, the next step of diagnosing the health impact needs to be tackled on a massive and urgent scale. There needs to be a mechanism where in the health impacts are not only detected early but the preventive aspects need to be focused on simultaneously. Safe working methods need to be developed in consultation with the vendors so that the methods can be readily incorporated in the way of work.

#### Way forward

1. More such trainings will be held to enforce the concept of preventive health.
2. Short videos on different type of hazards and their prevention will be made so that these can be aired whenever even a small group of vendors are available for trainings. Such videos will be shared with other likeminded organizations and available on social media for use.
3. Health camps will be planned in consultation with vendor organizations to identify common ailments and to find workable solutions.
4. Environmental Air pollution monitoring can be done to ascertain individual exposure to pollutants for further discussion with the regulatory bodies.

The meeting ended with an expression of thanks to all the participants and gratitude to DWOI - AIHA, Maquiladora health & Safety Support Network who supported this program.

#### Some Photos from the meeting





Participants demonstrating the exercises for back, legs, shoulders



Correct Way to wash eyes



Shoulder exercises



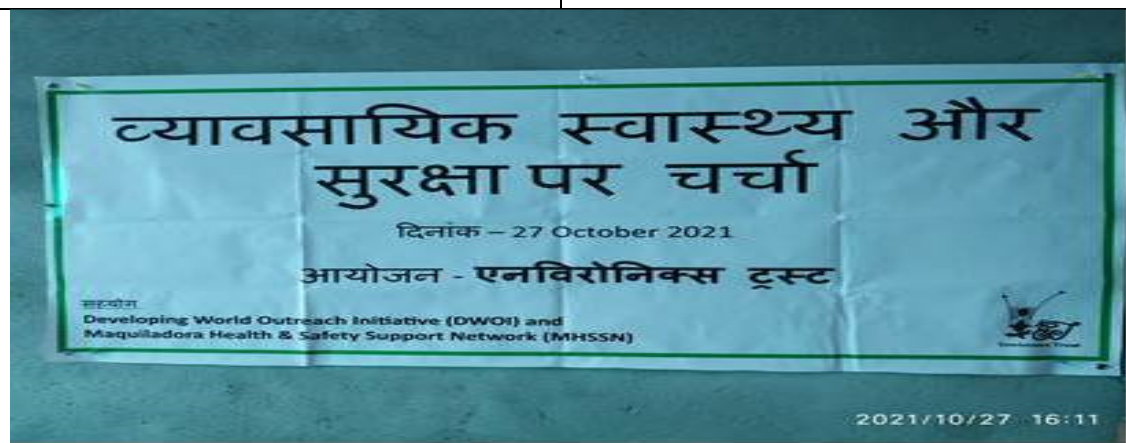
Different types of masks and their efficacy



Discussion on body organs and processes



Demonstrating Correct Way to lift weights



Discussion on Occupational Health and Safety

## *Direct Support To Stranded Workers*

The COVID-19 Pandemic has upended the lives of millions of Indians with some sections of society much more disproportionately affected than others. While there is an increasing recognition of the hardship faced by migrant workers and labourers, not much has been discussed about the negative consequences of India's pandemic strategy on women.

The Coronavirus pandemic has triggered what can be described as "Sanitary Pad/Napkin Crisis" in India. In some parts of India schools play a critical part of the supply chain providing a pack of pads to girls each month. With lockdown supply chain was stopped and closed abruptly. The situation became worse when complete lockdown was announced on March 24<sup>th</sup>. This put an immediate stop to monthly supply of pads that millions of adolescent girls who received from schools and women those who received free supply from the Government. The production of sanitary napkins came to a screeching halt and lead stock outs in several localities.

Though sanitary pads have been included as essential commodity the shops were out of stock. There is no clear mention that sanitary pads is a basic requirement for maintaining period hygiene. Sanitary pads were reclassified as essential item even the supplies did not resume to normal in many places.

Environics Trust-Sanitary Napkin Unit stepped in to fill the vacuum created by the pandemic. We at Environics distributed free Sanitary Napkins to women and adolescent girls. About more than six hundred packets of ten each were distributed free of cost. Girls and women were also educated on maintaining good menstrual hygiene.

It was concluded that good menstrual hygiene is much more than just access to sanitary pads. Water, toilets and equitable gender norms also matter, they are essential in management of periods otherwise they are far from sustainable.

If anything positive outcome of COVID-19 crisis is that the world's most stringent lockdown revealed the plight of vulnerable Indian migrant labour force.

The issue of migrant workers was one of the most cruel and highlighted issue in this pandemic where millions were rendered unemployed, stranded without money, food and shelter. Crossing the country's highways to return to their villages and several meeting with accidents and deaths on way. Unemployment has rendered a large section as directionless, leaving the social health as well as economy in shambles.

There is also a silver lining to the impact of COVID-19. It brought together thousands to provide relief for stranded migrant workers, temporary shelters and basic amenities. Labour migration appeared in mainstream policy discussions for the first time.

Now is the moment to harness all these efforts. Unite them in wider movement for social change that will better the terms and conditions for migrant workers. If there is anything



that long term work on seasonal migrant workers in India has shown it is the need to consider three things:-

1. Better conditions and pay must be adopted both for workers' households and for the workers in their place of work.
2. Tracking discrimination against caste, tribe and religion-based migrant is a must to lift oppression.
3. Finally, the internal oppressive structure drive countrywide uneven development, which forces people to move into such vulnerable conditions in places of work must be reversed.

Envionics Trust enabled about 150 stranded migrant workers to reach home provided them with temporary shelter and food packets.

We distributed dry ration and sanitary napkins to about 134 households.

## *Amphan-Covid Relief Support Through Local Communities*

The Amphan Cyclone and Covid-19 pandemic have affected the vulnerable population in the coastal and tribal areas in Odisha disproportionately due to inadequate basic healthcare facilities, lack of nutrition, lockdown restrictions that curbed access to their livelihood activities, thus pushing them to abject poverty or economic distress and hunger. At the same time, extraction of natural resources continued as 'essential activities' in the State even when the pandemic was raging and these communities in the remotest corners, unaware of the virus, were struggling for their lives and livelihoods. The inter-state mineral ores transportation too continued and posed as a potential threat to the communities of virus transmission. Such 'consideration' to mining industry was not given to the sectors that boosted rural economy such as forest produces, betel leaf cultivation, agriculture or fisheries that resulted in huge losses to the livelihoods of the communities. The Odisha government even though announced relief packages, the same did not reach the communities either due to lack of identity documents or having no bank accounts.

The Amphan -Covid relief fund from the Adivasi-Koordination targeted 14,500 families in 88 villages across Odisha. The pandemic along with frequent natural disasters like cyclone and floods have multiplied their woes and have further exacerbated their socio-economic vulnerabilities. These are communities where our communities contacts existed.

Since the pandemic restrictions and the per family is very meagre, it was proposed that the materials will be sent to local communities and the distribution will be through their own channels. The per family support was under INR 1250 and in most cases materials upto INR 500.

The Responsible Persons in each district are as follows

1. Lambodar Mohanta, Jajpur District
2. Sunil Gagrai, Jajpur District
3. Hari Senapati, Puri
4. Dhaneswar Martha, Khordha
5. Subash Mohapatra, Jagatsinghpur
6. Dhanajay Behera, Jagatsinghpur

Begunia and Bolagad blocks of Khordha district in the state of Odisha. Both the blocks comprise of 110 'Saara' villages with approximately 20,000 population. They have not been recognised as Scheduled Tribes (ST). They belong to the 'Sabar' tribe but lost their tribal status after being erroneously spelt as 'Saara' in the government documents. This error has deprived them from their constitutional rights as they do not have any caste certificates. Thirteen hundred of them were provided with modest relief.

Kujanga block, Jagatsinghpur District, is often known as the gateway of Paradip industrial area. It has approximately 5km coastline to Bay of Bengal and is thus prone to

cyclonic storms and devastating floods. There are about 115 villages in the block. The villages close to the coast who were affected were targeted for relief.

Ersama Block, Jagatsinghpur District, the communities have been cultivating betel leaf for generations on forest land over which they have no ownership. The area is famous for its high quality betel leaf cultivation, agricultural and fish produce and contribute significantly to the state economy by not only meeting the local demand but also exporting betel leaves to other states in the country. It was because this flourishing venture was hit, and all the betel vines were destroyed. Apart from betel vineyards, the lush fertile land has provided the communities with cashew, coconut, drumstick, mango, jackfruit, betel nut, pineapple, guava, many other varieties of fruits, roots, and vegetables. The communities are also dependent on cattle rearing and livestock and carry out extensive fishing. They are also facing the threat of displacement.

Bramhapuri Block, Puri, Odisha has one of the most beautiful sea beaches in India, particularly the Puri- Konark coastline for its golden sand seashores. However, there are increased concerns about coastal and marine ecosystems caused due to mass tourism. The expansion of tourism projects along the fragile coastline has impacted the local communities as well as the coastal environment. One third of Odisha's coastline is under threat of erosion.<sup>14</sup> The coastline of Odisha has rich mangrove cover and it plays a crucial role in the coastal ecosystem. Due to human interferences, the mangrove vegetation has rapidly reduced and has also threatened the habitat of some of the aquatic species, such as the Olive Ridley Sea Turtle. Communities in this area were severely affected.

There is mass unemployment in the affected villages and due to the pandemic the communities are left with no work, hence are migrating. They have complained to the local administration that have not received any work in the mines but are only impacted by the toxic fumes and dust. They have not benefitted from any of the welfare schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme or any housing schemes like the Prime Minister Awaas Yojana and Odisha Pucca Ghar Yojana. There is lack of drinking water facilities and women have to walk for 1-2kms to fetch water. In some villages, they have to walk to the neighbouring district, Dhenkanal to collect drinking water crossing a river (*Refer to picture on the right*). The District Mineral Foundation Trust's fund supposed to be used for the welfare of the mining affected communities is being grossly misused.

S.No	Location	Number of families	Number of Villages
1.	Jagatsinghpur District	5700	35
2.	Khurda District	5300	35
3.	Puri District	1500	11
4.	Jajpur District	2000	7

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.publishingindia.com/GetBrochure.aspx?query=UERGQnJvY2h1cmVzfC8yNDk5LnBkZnwwMjQ5OS5wZGY=>

## *Innovation for Change: Member Safe Space*

### Hackergram Open Mic



Hackergram conducted the monthly open mic on the 26 of September. The open mic got 27 registration on the form out of which 13 signed up as participants and 14 signed up as an audience.

There were a total of ten performances. The age of the performers ranged from 3 to 70 years. The participants performed a wide range of performances namely singing, dance, poem recitation, storytelling and sharing information about Indian rivers. The video of the event can be seen [here](#). The video streamed live on facebook got 656 views as on 28th of September. The event reached more than 1100 people out of which more than 250 engaged with the post.

The open mic event helps us in reaching out to new audiences and helps us in spreading awareness about the member safe space. Additionally it gives participants an online safe space to express themselves.

### Hackergram Cultural exchange with local community



Hackergram hosted a cultural evening on 29th of September with local musicians from Nainital Uttarakhand. Local musicians Sanjay and Pankaj were invited as performers. All the attendees of the event sanitized their hands before attending the event as per the Covid guidelines. Twelve people attended the event.

Hackergram believes in the philosophy that sharing good food and music brings people together hence events like these are very effective in initiating dialogues. As people are more open to sharing when they are in a celebratory mood thus these cultural evenings help us in spreading awareness about the safespace in the local community.

#### Online webinar with COCAP



Karan Joshi from the hackergram team spoke at [COCAP Volunteer-Collective Campaign for Peace](#)'s South Asian Regional Webinar addressing violence and strengthening human rights in South Asia on the topic of “Online behaviour and its impact on modern democracy” on the 12th of October. There were speakers from three different countries from South Asia present in this event Nepal, Pakistan and India. There were approximately 50-60 participants attending the event. The webinar was under the member safe space activities of I4C for COCAP.

Hackergram provided a perspective which consisted of how online behaviours have changed the way that the Indian democracy functions. The presentation also touched on how disinformation exploits human biases which sometimes leads to violence.

## Shwe Gas project

Myanmar's natural resources are a shared inheritance which belong to the nation's 54 million women, men and children. This includes Myanmar's offshore gas revenues which are forecasted to be USD \$1.54 billion or about 10% of the Union Government's revenue for financial year 2020-22 (see Table [1]).<sup>15</sup> The Shwe Gas project is one of four main projects and consists of the Shwe, Shwe Phyu and Mya offshore gas fields, located the Bay of Bengal, Myanmar. The project started production in 2013 and is operated by POSCO International from Korea<sup>16</sup> with joint venture partners Gail JJ, ONGC from India, Korean Gas Corporation (KOGAS) from South Korea and MOGE. The project has contributed between \$214 million and \$471 million per year from 2015 to 2019.

Although the civilian government between 2015 and 2020 appeared to be seeking to exercise more control over gas revenues, there is a long history of gas revenue being misappropriated through opaque accounting<sup>17</sup> and exchange rate manipulation.<sup>18</sup> Since the February coup which has seen the Myanmar military illegally take control of the country, kill hundreds and arrest almost 4000 people taking part in peaceful protests, pressure has been growing on foreign governments and companies to weaken the economic power of the military. This includes the companies invested in the Shwe project: POSCO International, KOGAS, Gail JJ and ONGC.

Importantly, the Shwe gas project is the second largest source of revenue of the four offshore projects in Myanmar. It was forecast to produce 30% of all Myanmar gas for 2020-2021.<sup>19</sup> 80% of gas is exported to China and approximately, 20% is used domestically where it is sold to the military and its business associates and the Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> FY 2020-2021 Budget Brief on the Oil and Gas Sector", *Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industries*, July 2020

<sup>16</sup> Nam Hyun-woo, *POSCO Daewoo renamed as POSCO International*, The Korea Times, 18 March 2019, [https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2020/02/693\\_265546.html](https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2020/02/693_265546.html)

<sup>17</sup> State owned Enterprises (SOE), such the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) retained 55% of their 'profits' which were held in the Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB), another SOE, in funds called 'Other Accounts'. As of 2016, MOGE's cash in hand "represented more than 3 times revenues and more than 7.5 times expenditures ... MOGE's cash-on-hand also represents the highest share of total assets of any national oil company in the world" and as of March 31, 2018, MOGE's 'Other Accounts' held USD 4.75 billion (see Bauer et al, 'State-owned Economic Enterprise Reform in Myanmar : The Case of Natural Resource Enterprises', Report, *Natural Resource Governance Institute*, 2018: pg 18.). The absence of transparency means it is unconfirmed, but it is thought that large sums were loaned to military-linked businesses and will never be repaid. Whilst the NLD government ordered that the Other Accounts be closed in 2019, the only civilian government officials that could confirm whether this took place have been detained since the coup.

<sup>18</sup> Up until 2012, the military government exchanged its revenue from natural gas exports at a rate of 6 kyat to the dollar, while the market exchange rate was 1,000 kyat to the dollar. For the Yadana project, from 2000 to 2009, USD 4.83 billion of earnings based on the market exchange rate would have been recorded by the military government as USD 30 million in the national budget. This leaves about USD 4.8 billion of natural gas revenue unaccounted for in the national budget during this period (see TOTAL Impact: The Human Rights, Environmental, and Financial Impacts of Total and Chevron's Yadana Gas Project in Military-Ruled Burma', *EarthRights International*, September 2009, p. 43.).

<sup>19</sup> FY 2020-2021 Budget Brief on the Oil and Gas Sector", *Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industries*, July 2020

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, EITI Report (2017-18) available at: [https://eiti.org/files/documents/meiti\\_reconciliation\\_report\\_2017-2018\\_final\\_signed\\_31st\\_march\\_2020.pdf](https://eiti.org/files/documents/meiti_reconciliation_report_2017-2018_final_signed_31st_march_2020.pdf) and Publish What You Pay Australia, (2021), "The military or the people. Who will benefit from Myanmar's offshore gas projects?", <https://www.pwyp.org.au/publications/who-benefits-from-myanmar-gas>

Following the coup, the military is likely to once again use MOGE to misappropriate all payments (gas sales revenues, pipeline dividends and taxes) to sustain its control of the government apparatus, finance its operations against the local population and to seize portions for private gain. The military similarly exercises control over the state-owned enterprise banks in which MOGE has its accounts.<sup>21</sup> Therefore all revenue flows from these projects and pipelines are now controlled by the military. This means any international oil and gas company making or facilitating the payment of funds to MOGE is likely to be assisting the Myanmar military in committing extensive human rights abuses and financing and legitimizing its claim to be the government of Myanmar.

Myanmar civil society groups and the CPRH, which has since formed a National Unity Government (NUG), are calling for these payments (gas sales revenues, pipeline dividends and taxes) to be paid into escrow accounts until a democratically elected government is in power. Notably they are not calling for production to be stopped. With increasing violence from the military, the international community must support the calls from the Myanmar people, civil society and the NUG.

**Oil and gas companies extracting in Myanmar, including KOGAS, POSCO, ONGC, and GAIL must:**

Use their stakes in joint ventures with the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) to ensure payments do not reach bank accounts now in the control of the Myanmar military, its leaders, business interests or business partners.

Place revenue payments into escrow accounts until there is an elected, civilian government.

Support targeted sanctions on the gas sector that prevent revenues reaching accounts controlled by the military but allow production to continue.

Make a public declaration of support for contract disclosure and pledge to actively push for it in Myanmar and other countries where they operate.

Disclose all relevant payments to government at the project level where they do business

**Governments including South Korea and India must:**

Support comprehensive, targeted sanctions against MOGE, the military, its leaders and its business interests and business partners as demanded by the National Unity Government.

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<sup>21</sup> The Myanmar Economic Bank and the Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) and potentially the Myanmar Investment and Commercial Bank (MICB).

Suspension of all commercial ties between Indian companies (including state owned) with Myanmar entities including MEC and MEHL.

Use all diplomatic leverage and influence to ensure rule of law is upheld and a return to democratic norms, civilian led government and the immediate release of those men and women detained including journalists, civil society activists and MPs.

Introduce legislation to ensure all public listed and private companies publicly disclose their payments to governments at a country-by-country, project-by-project basis in-line with the laws already in place in the 27 EU nations, UK, Canada, Norway, Switzerland and awaiting implementation in the US.

**Investors in oil and gas companies in Myanmar must:**

Use their influence to demand companies rule out financial payments flowing to MOGE, the Myanmar military, their business interests or associates.



# Financials

ENVIRONICS TRUST RECEIPT AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD 01ST APRIL 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021					
RECEIPT	AMOUNT	Rs.P	PAYMENTS	AMOUNT	Rs.P
<b>Opening Balances:-</b>					
Cash inhand			Administration & Office Expenses		
Cash at Bank-A/c 017101006263		6046.00	Documentation	46921.55	
Cash at Bank-A/c 017101006864		56029.24	Electricity & Water	128458.00	
		92465.15	General Expenses	436044.00	
<b>FCRA Grant Received</b>			Printing & Stationary	8634.00	
Asia Monitoring Resource Centre	684079.62		Rent	1358880.00	
Oxfam India	332150.00		Computer Maintenance	8688.00	
Both Ends	13954751.09		Vehicle Maintenance	43755.00	
New Ways to Palo Alto	37187.00		Office Maintenance	29250.00	
Publish What You Pay	190151.49		Institutional Overheads	750000.00	2810630.55
TIDES IC4-Innovation for Change	617728.46				
Mac Arthur Foundation	14454109.00		<b>Communication</b>		
Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs	289784.00		Postage	477.00	
Adivasi Koordination in Deutschland	5826924.00		Telephone	59949.58	
Global Green Grants	1540035.00		Courier	4560.00	
	37926899.66		Internet	16492.80	
Foundation For Ecological Security		37926899.66	SIM Device Recharge	56671.03	
Operation receipts		2300070.00	Sensor	2429.00	156155.41
Interest		13303668.69	Zoom Link	15576.00	
Interest on Fixed Deposit		85719.00	<b>Travel</b>		
Tax Deducted at Source		248346.00	Fuel Expenses	95644.26	
		18626.00	Local Conveyance	15364.91	
			Outstation Travel	176446.81	287455.98
			<b>Professional Cost</b>		
			Salaries & Benefits	12003684.00	
			Audit Fees	157530.00	
			Other Fees	342548.00	12503762.00
			Insurance		32551.00
					<b>15790554.94</b>
		<b>54037869.74</b>			



*Neelkan*

Balance/fwd	54037869.74	Balance/fwd	15790554.94
		Workshop, Training, Conference & Events	616759.96
		Work in Progress	4335053.00
		Field Operations cost	10696452.69
		<b>Assets</b>	
		Furniture/Fixtures	35000.00
		Inverter	14500.00
		<b>Skill Development Costs</b>	
		Sanitary Napkin	109720.00
		Learning Hub	6796.00
		Fixed Deposit (Interest)	116516.00
		Tax Deducted At Source	248346.00
		Bank Charges	18626.00
		<b>Closing Balances</b>	20699.63
		Cash in Hand	2423.00
		Cash at Bank-A/c 017101006263	7303.24
		Cash at Bank -State Bank of India	
		SBI -MAIN A/c 39738126085 (FCRA)	20380512.00
		SBI-UC-(SAKET)A/c 39953471740	1755123.28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54037869.74</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22135635.28</b>
			<b>54037869.74</b>

For Environics Trust

R.Sreedhar  
(Managing Trustee)



For Suvid & Associates  
Chartered Accountants

B.K.Karn (Membership No.094790)  
(Partner)



Date:- 12-Feb-22  
Place:- New Delhi

Environics Trust is a not-for-profit research and community development organisation and an enabling institution. Environics conducts participatory research on issues of environmental and human behavior and uses these outcomes for innovative community development programmes.

Environics provides research and evaluatory services to International, National, State and Local Institutions and directly works with marginalised communities such as those in the mountain regions, tribals and communities adversely affected by mining and industrialisation. Environics conducts formal and informal courses with reputed academic institutions.

Environics anchors several networks and partnerships. It is currently the Secretariat for the Indian Ban Asbestos Network and the Mineral Inheritors Rights Association affiliated to the Global Publish What You Pay Coalition. Environics is a co-founder and promoter of the mines minerals and PEOPLE alliance (mm&P), the Indian Network on Ethics and Climate Change (INECC), the EIA Resource and Response Centre (eRc), Occupational and Environmental Health Network of India (OEHNI). Environics is a member of the International Coal Network, Asian Peoples Movement for Debt and Development, Tax and Fiscal Justice Asia (TAFJA), NGO Forum on ADB, Fair Finance Asia and the Indo-Nepal Joint Action Forum.

[www.environicsindia.in](http://www.environicsindia.in)



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