



ACTIVITY REPORT

2016 - 2018

ABOUT CRB

Centre for Responsible Business (CRB, www.c4rb.org) is an independent organisation working out of its office in New Delhi. It was established with support from *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH of Germany*, *Social Accountability International (SAI) of US* and *Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) of Belgium* in 2010 as part of a German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supported initiative. CRB is a centre of excellence which works with stakeholders and businesses to promote responsible business strategies, policies and practices across sectors and thematic areas.

CRB involves various actors across the global value chain, viz. the national and transnational brands, various suppliers and manufacturers of the SMEs, many national and international organisations as well as the government, in order to create a shift towards a more sustainable future that will lead to more responsible behaviour and better relationships at workplaces along with environmental sustainability and better growth and business.

CRB works in the following four *programmatic verticals* with multiple stakeholders to evolve an ecosystem to drive sustainable and responsible business.

- **Action and Policy Research** particularly focused around human rights, social and environmental sustainability
- **Training and Capacity Building:** of various actors in the supply chain to enable them to adhere to domestic government and/or industry demands and also of international brands and standards
- **Customised Advisory Services and Technical Assistance:** facilitating businesses to integrate the Environmental, Social & Governance parameters at the strategic, managerial and operations levels
- **Knowledge Fora:** industry and multi-stakeholder fora to facilitate and enable collaborative approaches aimed at developing solutions for sustainability challenges

ACTIVITIES OF YEAR 2017-18

PROJECTS

1. Synergizing Environmental Sustainability with Industrial Growth in the Leather Sector of Uttar Pradesh

Given CRB's holistic approach of examining sustainability issues in sectors, the organisations endeavored to explore the *alignment between industrial growth and competitiveness in Uttar Pradesh's leather cluster with challenges of environmental sustainability in it.*

CRB closely studied the leather cluster in Uttar Pradesh (Jajmau and Unnao) in the period April-June 2017 and had discussions with key stakeholders at both the state and the national levels as part of this study. This was preceded by review of secondary literature, having discussions with other organisations that have worked in this sector/geography and identifying key stakeholders. These face-to-face interactions were held to develop an in-depth understanding of the key issues and challenges in UP's leather industry, especially given the government's intent to promote the sector under the 'Make In India' initiative and the how UP's leather entrepreneurs could take this advantage. The major political, environmental, technological and economic barriers faced by tanners were critically discussed to come up with a *strategic sectoral road-map*, comprising policy, technological and industry-level actions.

Most of the key stakeholder (and the state and national level) were met and their inputs were analyzed and summarized in the form of a SWOT (Strength-Weakness-Opportunities-Threats) framework. The aim of this SWOT analysis was to assess the opportunities and challenges in *aligning sectoral growth and competitiveness in the UP leather sector with the challenges that it faces on environmental sustainability issues*, and to use it for developing a road-map for the industry going forward.

2. Market Mechanisms in dealing with End of Life Management of Electronic Waste in India

In order to deal with the problem of electronics waste (e-waste), Government of India introduced the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in 2016 through an amendment in the E-Waste Rules 2011, to ensure producers set up a system to collect and manage end-of-life electronic equipment. However, differences were observed between the expectation of the State and the ability of producers to meet the standards incorporated. In the wake of envisaged weaknesses in the implementation of this legislation, it was felt that a market-based mechanism could better work for the private sector.

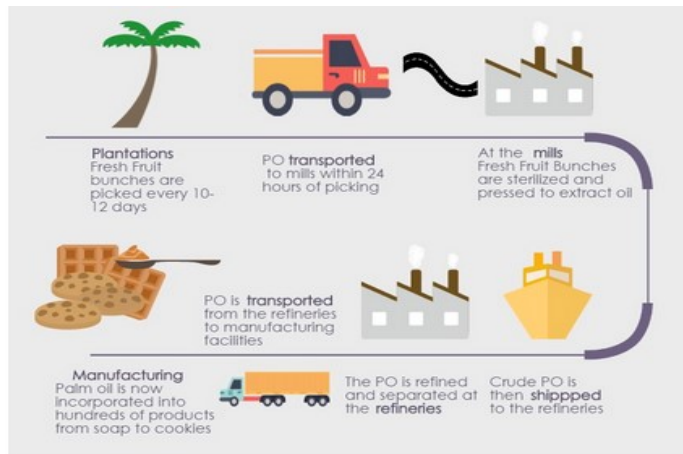
Given this background, CRB has been working with Green Electronics Council (GEC) since May 2017 to assess current priorities of the government and industry practices in dealing with end of life (EoL) issues pertaining to the electronics sector in India. In the period 2017-18, this partnership in consultation with key stakeholders explored capacity building opportunities for EoL management of specific IT products and came up with the suggestion to develop a set of 'criteria', with an explicit link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This partnership between the Green Electronics Council and CRB will continue in 2018. In 2018, as a follow-up, CRB will explore the feasibility of implementing a set of ‘criteria’ for end of life management of electronics, specific to India, under an eco-standard for electronic products. CRB envisages developing a criteria that support ‘capacity building’ to strengthening safe e-waste management across India. To this end, a CRB-GEC Fellow will undertake research to learn from producers the various types of initiatives they are currently supporting or implementing to meet e-waste collection targets under the recently revised 2016 E-Waste Rules.



3. Improving uptake of Sustainable Palm Oil in India

CRB conducted a Research Study on ‘Improving uptake of Sustainable Palm Oil in India’ in partnership with the Rainforest Alliance. Key features of the study were - mapping of the supply chain actors and other influencers; Analysis of the policy, legal and institutional framework that impact sustainable palm oil sector; India’s progress on the sustainable palm oil; the Indian paradox on the sustainable palm oil; and the sustainable palm oil commitments by industries in India. The study was conducted with multi-stakeholders in the sphere of sustainable palm oil including Government, Hotel and Restaurant industries, Consumer goods manufacturers, refiners and processors of the



palm oil, traders and importers among others.

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Key findings of the study were outlined in terms of India’s potential role in driving sustainable practices in palm oil sector, awareness of the consumers on sustainable palm oil production, industry collaborations and transformations, formation of a Forum to tackle issues of the Sustainable Palm Oil in India, among others.

4. Sustainability Policy of MSSSPL

Mahindra Sanyo Special Steel Limited (MSSSPL) is synonymous as the world's premier special steel manufacturer. It is one of those companies that have shown its commitment right from the top towards all elements of sustainability-social, economic, and the environment. MSSSPL has taken up numerous activities to fulfill its sustainability commitments and now keen to put together a Sustainability policy for the company.

In this regard, Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) designed an overarching Sustainability Policy capturing the values and commitments of MSSSPL and situating it within the overall SDGs framework. For a complex subject like sustainability which touches various aspects of MSSSPL's business, it was critical to deploy the policy across our functions and departments. Given the above, a bottom-up process was adopted for development of the Business Sustainability Policy, by engaging relevant staff.

5. Human Rights Due Diligence of a large MNC Power Company

Post the unanimous endorsement of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in 2011 (referred hereinafter as the *Guiding Principles*), governments, businesses and stakeholders have a clear global framework to shape and discuss businesses' strategy and practices towards protecting and respecting human rights. Companies can have implications on various elements of human rights not only of their employees and the community where they operate or the market where they compete with their rivals – but also along their supply chains.

They can have an impact – directly or through their business relationships – on virtually any element of the entire spectrum of human rights. The power company was keen to undertake human rights due diligence mapping covering not only the company staff and workers, but also extend its responsibility to its network of suppliers and contractors and the communities around its operations.

Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) assisted the company by conducting human rights due diligence mapping across a representative sample of the project sites in India. The exercise took into consideration the full scope of the Guiding Principles, and use existing approaches, knowledge and tools for human rights due diligence. The findings of the report helped the company in understanding and assessing actual and potential human rights impacts in accordance to the steps of human rights due diligence. The recommendations made also facilitated the company to integrate and act upon these findings.

6. Towards Sustainable Mica Supply Chain

Mica is mined in the districts of Koderma and Giridih of Jharkhand. The miners come from socially and economically backward communities, living and working in the remote corners of the state. There is also a growing interest among mica importing countries' businesses (especially in Europe, due to pressure from international NGOs) to contribute towards improving the conditions of the mica miners in the state. Terre des Hommes (TdH) is a leading NGO whose long-term goal is to eliminate child labour in the mica sector in Jharkhand approached CRB to develop and operationalize a strategy to engage private sector actors in the Indian part of the global mica value chain. This strategy is expected to result in a better positioning of the mica mining communities in Jharkhand. The strategy will employ a supply chain sustainability approach.

TdH and CRB is working together to develop a locally owned, stakeholder-led 'road-map' (leading to the aforementioned strategy) to improve the plight of the mica mining communities in Jharkhand, and set in motion the operationalization of the same.

EVENTS

1. Drive Sustainability

Drive Sustainability Training Events were organized - 25th & 26th October: Pune; 30th October: Bangalore; and 1st November: Chennai. These training events were organized as part of a programme called Drive Sustainability aimed at enhancing the understanding of automobile OEMS in India on sustainability and business ethics related issues. A set of Global Automobile Sustainability Guidelines have been developed as part of this programme and the trainings were organized to inform and educate how the elements of these guidelines could be applied by automobile OEMs in India – the benefits thereof.

As we can see from the 'Guiding Principles' these guidelines cover three issues: (i) Business Ethics, (ii) Environment and (iii) Human Rights. These three broad subjects have been further categorized into two topics (i) Business Ethics and Social Sustainability AND (ii) Environment, Health and Safety. CRB is implementing this project in partnership with CSR-Europe, who have also shared the templates of the presentations to be used for these trainings. They would need to be indigenized with examples and to align the presentations with the context and realities broadly on sustainability and particularly in the automobile sector in India. *Key participating companies were: Mercedes Benz, BMW, Ford, Scania, Honda, and Toyota.*

2. ICCO Events

State Consultation organized by the Stop Child Labour (SCL) program – India Platform held at **Hotel ROYALE de CASA on 11th May 2017** in collaboration with the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB). Stop Child Labour programme is a coalition of the Algemene Onderwijsbond (AOB), Mondiaal FNV, Hivos, the India Committee of the Netherlands (ICN), Kerk in Actie & ICCO Cooperation and Stichting Kinderpostzegels Nederland. The coalition is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands. The coalition cooperates closely with local organisations in Asia, Africa and Latin America that are committed to getting all children out of work and into school. In India, the programme is implemented by a coalition of BWI/RPKNMS, Manjari, SAVE, MV Foundation and ICCO.

The State Consultation emphasized on how the area based approach can be used to create Child Labour Free Zones and how different stakeholders like governmental and non-governmental organizations, communities, families, schools, companies and CSR initiatives can be actively involved in this process. Broadly, the consultation endeavours towards - Sharing experiences among participants and discussion by experts and representatives from Civil Society Organisations, INGOs, Private Sector and Academia on issues pertaining to child labour; and Share the concept of the area based approach towards the creation of Child Labour Free Zones and build relations with different stakeholders in the fight against child labour.

3. Engagement with Corporate Responsibility Watch

CRB is part of Corporate Responsibility Watch (CRW) – which is a coalition of Indian NGOs working on evidence based analysis of sustainable business practices in India. **CRB contributed a chapter on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in the 2017 report of CRW.**

4. India Standard for the Life and Building Safety (LABS) Initiative

On 30th January 2018, CRB joined hands with IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative to organise a multi-stakeholders’ consultation for presentation and finalisation of the ‘India Standard for the Life and Building Safety (LABS)’ Initiative. Stakeholders and experts discussed areas pertaining to electrical safety, fire safety and structural safety issues especially relevant to the apparel and textiles sector. The LABS programme will broadly focus on garment and footwear manufacturing sector initially and further scale up to other sectors. This programme will be implemented in four countries i.e. India, Pakistan, Cambodia and Vietnam respectively. Over 40 experts and stakeholders from government agencies, associations, textile brands and experts participated in this event.



5. State level Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Responsible Supply Chain in Tea Industry in Assam

A State level Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Responsible Supply Chain in Tea Industry in Assam held on 16th March 2018, Hotel Novotel, Guwahati, Assam. Save the Children, Centre for



Responsible Business (CRB), Civic Engagement Alliance (CEA) as part of the ICCO Corporation were the partners for this event. Resource persons in this consultation were Mr. Ravi Raj Atrey, Centre for Responsible Business, Dr. Sunita Changkakaty, Chairperson, ASCPCR, Ms Geetanjali Ghose, Asst. Professor, NLUJA, Dr. Chiranjeep Kakoty, Expert from Industry Association, and Mr. D. M. Kakoty, Director, Assam Tea Board. The consultation was

attended by the representatives from Tea Industries, Government agencies, Civil Society organizations, Industry associations, Academia, advocacy groups and think tanks. Centre for Responsible Business facilitated the Panel Discussions and the Group Work with the participants with objective to identify the challenges and inputs for action plan to overcome those challenges in Responsible Supply Chain in Tea Industry in Assam. Issues like lack of social security, education, awareness on rights, poor implementation of the labour laws, children related issues in tea supply chain, access to water sanitation and hygiene, women's health, crèches/breastfeeding booths, child trafficking etc. were highlighted in the discussions. A draft action plan was developed with inputs from all the stakeholders present in the consultation.

6. ZED Training Events in Gujarat, 2017

Addressing the nation on India's 68th Independence Day, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi urged the industry, especially the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) of India, to manufacture goods in the country with "zero defects" and to ensure that the goods have "zero effect" on the environment. Ensuring competitiveness of India's MSME is critical as it will contribute to the overall growth of the manufacturing sector and the country's economy. International companies competing in global markets focus on their competitive strengths of costs acceptable to the market, technology, innovation, service delivery, lean manufacturing, and defect free products for Zero Defect and Zero Effect (ZED).

While the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion took the responsibility of creating an atmosphere of Ease of doing business, QCI along with the M/o MSME started exploring the idea of creating a holistic scheme to engage the MSME sector, long considered as a propellant for sustained growth, by improving their quality and competitiveness; thus ZED came into existence. The ecosystem around ZED model is calibrated to make aware, assess, rate, counsel, handhold, re-assess & certify MSMEs and ensure that they rise up the ZED ladder, thus enhancing their competitiveness in the global marketplace. Quality Council of Indian engaged CRB as an implementing agency to build awareness of the MSME on the ZED Model. In this regard, CRB organized 2 training programmes in collaboration with South Gujarat Textile Processors Association (SGTPA) in Surat and Federation of Gujarat Industries in Vadodara in March 2017. The programmes were attended by around 100 participants from MSMEs and well received by them.

OTHER IMPORTANT INITIATIVES

1. Indo-Dutch CSR & Sustainability Forum (INDUS-Forum)

In mid-June 2017, in partnership with the Dutch Embassy, New Delhi and MVO Nederland, CRB organized a set of three sector-specific roundtables for promoting sustainable trade and investment between India and the Netherlands in three specific sectors: (i) Apparel and Textiles, (ii) Agro-business and (iii) IT and ITeS. The purpose of these discussions was **to identify and design 1 or 2 concrete ground-level interventions** in each of these sectors to be undertaken involving Dutch businesses and

actors operating in India and Indian stakeholders to promote sustainable business practices. In each of these round-table discussions, a group of key stakeholders brainstormed and identified specific ground-level interventions, which could be undertaken under the aegis of the INDUS-Forum project.

On 19th June, CRB organized a seminar entitled, *‘The Road towards an Inclusive and Sustainable Business Case’* being organized under the auspices of the Indo-Dutch CSR & Sustainability Forum (INDUS-Forum). This event was being jointly organised by CRB, Embassy of Netherlands and MVO Netherlands – and had Martin Van den Berg, Dutch Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade as the Chief Guest. Mr Van den Berg stressed how international trade can both create opportunities as well as risks for businesses along the value chain,



especially in today’s interconnected world characterized by global production networks. He asserted that Netherlands and India can work together hand-in-hand to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries, with sustainable business being at the heart of this relation. Over 60 people participated in this event including corporates, knowledge organisations, NGOs, business associations, experts and academicians. From the discussions, it was evident that *INDUS-Forum*



is expected to provide different set of support services and information to help address the varying nature of sustainability challenges

2. Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) on Sustainable Consumption and Production, UN Environment

CRB is an active member of the Multistakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Consumer Information programme of UN Environment’s Sustainable Consumption and Production programme (referred to as the 10YFP programme).

CRB contributed towards the development of A Guideline for companies to provide reliable Sustainability Information to Consumers. This Guidelines was first launched (globally) in Geneva at the International Trade Centre (ITC), Trade for Sustainable Development event in October 2017.

Subsequently, the regional (South Asia) launch was held as part of CRB’s Annual Conference in November 2018 in New Delhi. CRB has been able to mobilise participation of leading Indian companies in the road-testing of these global guidelines.

3. BIS Management Standard on CSR Projects Implementation in India

CRB has been actively engaged in a Sub-Committee appointed under the aegis of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to develop a set of management standards for implementing CSR initiatives in India – to ensure proper alignment and consistency across CSR interventions undertaken by companies in India.

4. Global March toolkit to address Forced Labour in Supply Chain

Human trafficking is rampant in the supply chains of many products – cotton, garments, cocoa, mica, etc. to name a few. Most of the victims are being trafficked from and inside Asia. Many countries in Asia serve as the source, destination and transit locations for human trafficking. Despite growing awareness regarding the problems related to human trafficking and forced labour, and efforts on the part of many companies to stem such abuse and violations, the diversity and complexity of today's global supply chains can challenge even the most well intentioned companies.

The Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) is partnering in the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) programme that aims to contribute to building a society where children, especially girls and young women, are better protected from all forms of labour exploitation, violence and are economically empowered. Further, human trafficking has become part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under SDG 8.7. It is likely that the issue of human trafficking will receive more attention globally and nationally.

Given the above, CRB is developing a toolkit for Global March to help Dutch companies understand, assess and reduce the problem of human trafficking, particularly of children, girls and young women, in the Garments and Fisheries sectors of Bangladesh, India and Philippines. Once developed, this toolkit would be used by CRB and Global March to enable Dutch companies better understand and address the menace of human trafficking in their supply chain in these countries in Asia.

5. India and Sustainability Standards: International Dialogues and Conference 2017



The theme for the 2017 event was ‘from tragedies of the commons to the strategies for the commons’. The event offered an occasion for participants to discuss challenges and opportunities presented by international and Indian Sustainability Standards and Collaborative Sustainability Initiatives, in supporting business and policy contributions towards positive social, economic and environmental impacts in India and beyond. It has been felt imperative to appreciate the nature of the tragedies of the commons and the

implications for sustainable and inclusive development. The varied stakeholders who have participated in ISS 2017 includes international policy actors, government agencies, standard setters, large and small businesses, civil society, academia, and media agencies, for participatory and inclusive dialogues on opportunities and challenges for promoting responsible business in India and beyond, with special reference to sustainability standards and collaborative sustainability initiatives.

Tragedies associated with the commons were highlighted and strategies were worked out on the following issues:

- Food Sustainability, Agriculture and role of standards
- Cotton sector and VSS
- Electronic sector and VSS
- Forestry and VSS
- Textile, Apparel and VSS
- Child Rights, Responsible Business Practices and Sustainability
- Role of VSS in Financial Sector
- Energy Efficiency
- Women Empowerment Issues and Sustainability
- Role of VSS in Beverages
- Issues relating to Human Rights
- MSME sector and sustainability challenges

6. Workshop on Excellence in International Academic Publishing

Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) organized a one day workshop on “Excellence in International Academic Publishing”, aimed at offering a day full of learning, skill building and networking for research scholars from social science, business and management institutions in India. This workshop was designed and developed by CRB in collaboration with Alliance Manchester Business School, The University of Manchester, Aston Business School, Aston University, University of Basel, Deakin University, and Schulich School of Business, York University. The workshop was in two parts: a) Part I was an introductory course on theorising to model building; and b) Part II was learning from the editors of international journals on developing excellence in academic publishing.



ACTIVITIES OF YEAR 2016-17

PROJECTS

(I) Indo-Dutch CSR & Sustainability Forum (INDUS-Forum)

CRB has been involved in a project entitled Indo-Dutch CSR & Sustainability Forum (INDUS-Forum). The aim of this initiative has been to promote and facilitate dialogues, debates and thought leadership between Indian and Dutch companies on strategic and operational aspects of CSR and sustainable business, to complement the existing trade and economic relations between these two countries.

Over the course of this project, CRB engaged with a number of Dutch and Indian businesses and other stakeholders, based in India and in The Netherlands. Feedback and inputs received from these representatives and subsequent discussions involving senior representatives of businesses, experts and representatives from the Dutch Embassy in India helped CRB to develop the vision, objective and scope of the INDUS-Forum.

The INDUS-Forum has finally been launched in an event held on 22nd March in New Delhi with its vision, **‘Let’s make all trade and investment between Indian and the Netherlands sustainable’**. Going forward, this initiative will be further supported by the Dutch Embassy and implemented in India through a strategic partnership involving MVO-Netherlands and CRB. It has also been decided that the INDUS-Forum will focus on three sectors for implementing projects on the ground, going forward, viz: (i) agriculture/agri-business, (ii) apparel and textiles and (iii) IT and IT enabled Services.



The

Following is a low-down of the activities undertaken under this project:

S.N.	Activities	Date/Period
1	Preparatory Work (Operational strategy, identification and mobilisation of businesses and other stakeholders)	May-June 2016
2	Research (survey and stakeholder discussions)	July-September 2016

3	1 st National Consultation Meeting	15 th September, 2016, New Delhi
4	Side Event at CRB 3 rd Annual Conference (ISS 2016) on 'Bilateral CSR and Sustainability Forum'	17 th November, 2016, New Delhi
5	2 nd National Consultation Meeting	18 th January, 2017, Hague
6	3 rd National Consultation Meeting	22 nd March, 2017, New Delhi

(II) ISEAL Business Cases (Benefits of Sustainability Standards for Companies)

CRB partnered with ISEAL Alliance to prepare a list of five 'business case' studies, to demonstrate how the adoption of sustainability standards by select Indian companies (in certain sectors) has helped these companies meet sustainability and business objectives. These cases were gathered from companies and standards organisations operating in the financial services, jewellery, coffee, forestry and speciality chemicals markets.

These businesses cases would be used by ISEAL Alliance as part of one of their project to help educate other industry players and stakeholders about the relevance and benefits of standardisation and certification both for achieving sustainability goals and helping other business benefits. The project came to an end in August 2016 with the submission of these business cases to ISEAL.

ISEAL has been undertaking a number of such projects aimed at scaling up the use of sustainability standards in emerging markets. CRB has partnered with ISEAL Alliance

(II) H&M Social Dialogue

Social dialogue is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to include all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It is a mechanism or instrument, which promotes better living and working conditions as well as social justice for workers. Social dialogue essentially amounts to clear and effective communications, open consultation, and /or fair negotiations between employers and workers (and government, where relevant).

H&M recognises the importance of participatory work culture and has been proactively working towards a partnership approach with their suppliers towards improving the functioning of the 'Works Committee'. H&M had identified 5 of their suppliers for who CRB undertook awareness sessions to explain to them the importance of social dialogue and the functioning of the 'Works committee' within the factory. A number of other activities were implemented by CRB as part of this project since September 2015. Some of the activities which were implemented within this year (2016-17) are provided below:

- A two day programme on orienting the management representatives of the works committee on their roles and functions in the committee was conducted by CRB on 7th-8th June 2016 in Bangalore.



- A four day training programme was conducted for the worker representatives of the 'works committees' to enhance the

worker representatives' understanding about their roles and functions in the works committee, providing deeper understanding about the legal aspects related to works committee and also to build some basic skills such as communication, problem solving and team management

- A 2 day training programme for the Vice Chairperson and Joint Secretary of the works committee was conducted on 29th-30th September 2016 in Bangalore, to orient them on their roles and the roles of the other members of the committee
- Finally, factory level visits were held in the months of November and December, 2016 to observe the learning feedback presentations of the Works Committee and observe them conduct demo session in their respective factories.

EVENTS

(I) **FICCI India Sustainability Conclave (Session on Sustainable Supply Chains – a Business Imperative), 7th July 2017**

Sustainable Supply Chain refers to management of environmental, social and economic impacts and the encouragement of good governance practices, throughout the lifecycles of goods and services. The objective was to create, protect and grow long-term environmental, social and economic value for all stakeholders involved in bringing products and services to the market (UNGC & BSR, 2010).

This session put forth a multi-stakeholder view on why Indian supply chains need to gear up to the expectations of national and international corporate buyers, the challenges faced by the MSMEs in compliance even of the basic environmental regulations and how corporates are enabling their supply chains to integrate sustainability-related performance indicators and drivers into their processes.



Some of the action points that emerged from the discussions were:

- Need for more robust certification systems and standards, as well as product labelling to bring about a change in customer's understanding of the advantages of sustainable products like the star rating by BEE
- Combating the lack of awareness by creating better programs for trainers and imparting knowledge on the benefits of sustainable practices to the MSMEs
- Greater awareness about the advantages of enzyme technologies that reduce pollution and environmental footprint could be explored in specific MSME clusters

(II) **Asia-Pacific Water Stewardship Forum (held on the sidelines of the International Rivers Symposium), 13th September 2016, New Delhi**

The statistics of water usage in India does not paint a pretty picture. The growing population, drive for economic growth and the rapidly changing demographics and lifestyle has put immense pressure on the water resources of the country. Some figures released by the Asian Development Bank indicate the need for better governance of water related challenges, viz. (i) India has the maximum ground water extraction in the world and 89% of it is spent on irrigation, (ii) India has significant inequalities in water household security, (iii) Only 9% of its waste water is treated by India.

On the sidelines of the IRS, Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), Water Stewardship Australia (WSA) and India Water Stewardship Network (IWSN) organised this event with the following objectives:

- Understand the business imperatives for water stewardship across Asia-Pacific
- Increase understanding and uptake of water stewardship across Asia-Pacific
- Contextualise water stewardship from the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Provide an opportunity for intra-regional learning on water stewardship

- Strengthen collaborative opportunities between different sustainability approaches



Over 50 participants from businesses, NGOs, research and academic organisations participated in this event. Apart from participants from India, experts from Australia, China and Pakistan were also part of this event.

(III) **Activating Institutional Investors for Sustainable Infrastructure Finance in Asia, 22nd November 2016**

The overall objective of this meeting was to discuss innovative tools to foster sustainable infrastructure investments in India – as part of a project being implemented in three emerging Asian countries, India, Indonesia and China by GIZ in partnership with Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), based in Brussels (Belgium). Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) organised this event in partnership with GIZ and CEPS on 22nd November in New Delhi.

Speakers included experts from SEBI, WRI, GIB Foundation, GIZ, CEPS, IDFC, CDP. After the inaugural there were two sessions in the event, (i) **The role of (institutional) investors for infrastructure finance in India and Asia** and (ii) **The business case of sustainable infrastructure finance**. Some of emerging issues from the panel discussions were:

- There's a need for conceptual clarity and perhaps definition of 'Sustainable Infrastructure', especially in the Indian context
- Sustainable planning remains at its core in sustainable infrastructure projects. India can learn from EU in retrofitting (existing infrastructure) such that their sustainability quotient is improved – rather than only considering building new sustainable infrastructure projects
- The 'business case' in favour of sustainable infrastructure projects is becoming clearer. But there is a need for considerable stakeholder awareness development.
- Can Annual Business Responsibility Report (ABRRs) be used into infrastructure investment decision-making?
- A lot of action will happen in the Municipality level – do Municipalities in Indian cities have enough understanding and capacity (including those earmarked for the SMART Cities project)

TRAINING & ADVISORY

(I) Trainings on Rights and Responsibilities of Women Workers in TN Spinning Mills

The aim of this project implemented by CRB in partnership with Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) was to help the workers, managers and spinning mill owners across spinning industry of Tamil Nadu to have an improved mind-set towards life, work and business operations. For this purpose, modules were designed to train the 'Worker Peer Groups' (peer educators) on issues of worker responsibilities, rights and welfare. Also, training resources were provided and the required handholding done to effectively roll out the training to all the workers at their respective spinning mill.



A management sensitisation film (in Hindi and Tamil) were included in the overall training programme in order to clearly demonstrate to the mill owners and the management, both the business linkages and the commercial value of such a strategic training initiative.

(II) Rights and Responsibilities trainings for Apparel & Textile factory management

These 1-day Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop have been designed by CRB to support the garment manufacturers and exporters to further improve relationship between factory management and workers by training factory managers to conduct awareness sessions for workers on their rights and responsibilities (workers' rights and responsibilities) in the factories using five short films (refer: <http://rnrinfofilm.weebly.com/>) on key worker-related (labour standard related) issues viz.: *Health & Safety, Misconduct, Good Working Environment, Overtime and Workers Representation*. Two training sessions were conducted in Delhi (April 14th 2016) and in Chennai (May 27th 2016) as part of this programme.

Subsequently, CRB has decided to review both the content of these programmes and the strategies for popularising them in the apparel and textiles sector. Therefore, further trainings have been on hold for the moment.

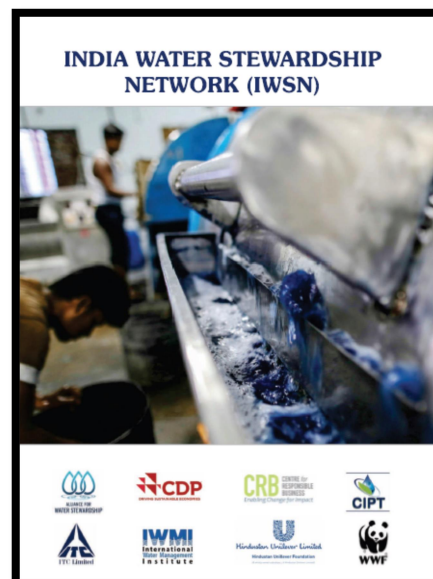
(III) Sustainability Policy for MSSSPL

CRB is developing the Sustainability Policy for Mahindra Sanyo Special Steel Limited (MSSSPL) located in Khopolic, Maharashtra. The approach used by CRB integrates the values and commitments of MSSSPL with the overall SDGs framework, to help develop the policy and a road-map for its implementation. It is expected that the Policy would be ready by August, 2017.

KNOWLEDGE FORUM

(I) India Water Stewardship Forum (IWSN)

India Water Stewardship Network (IWSN) was a direct outcome from the discussions held at the 2nd Annual Conference of CRB (India & Sustainability Standards) in 2015. The founding members CRB, Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), WWF-India, ITC, Hindustan Unilever Foundation, CIPT and IWMI held meetings in April and July 2016 to develop a year-long activities plan for the network – which would include expanding membership, creating a dossier of ‘case study’ on water stewardship, organising events to maintain visibility.



(II) India Sustainability Standards 2016

The theme of CRB’s 3rd annual conference, **India and Sustainability Standards: International Dialogues and Conference 2016** (ISS, 2016) revolved around the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** – especially how the corporate sector is contributing and could contribute towards the achievement of some of these ambitious goals. It is well established that governments alone will not be able to meet these goals alone. Hence there is a need for active engagement of businesses and other stakeholders.

The programme of ISS, 2016 was organised such that Day 1 (16th Nov) set the stage of the conference through panel discussions on key subjects such as: relevance of standards and regulations for sustainability; sustainability standards as tools for achieving SDGs; and strategic partnerships and collaborations for sustainable development. Moving on, Day 2 (17th Nov) and Day 3 (18th Nov) comprised 21 Parallel Sessions on contemporary themes and sectors. The various themes and sectors covered were as follows:

Themes	Industry Sectors
Operationalising Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indian States	Sustainable Tourism: Opportunities & Challenges in India
Enabling Sustainable Solutions Among MSMEs	Sustainable Infrastructure
Bilateral Forums on CSR and Sustainability	Sustainable ICT & Electronics: Priorities for India
International Labour Standards and the Indian Workplace in Global Supply Chains	Sustainable Cotton
Mainstreaming Human Rights in Business Policy	Sustainable Forestry and SDGs
Roadmap for Indian Life Cycle Assessment Network	Roadmap for Sandstone Stewardship in India
Sustainability Education in India	Responsible Finance
Water Stewardship in India	Towards Sustainable Tea Sector in India
Integrated Reporting & Transparency: Linkages to SDGs	Promoting Responsible Agriculture Value Chains
Masterclass on Business & Human Rights	Apparel & Textiles Sector Sustainability
Masterclass on Low Carbon Lifestyle	

The 2016 edition of ISS had over 620 participants over the period of three days, nearly 60 partner organisations joined hands with CRB for their engagement in different sessions of the conference. Over 150 speakers (national and international) made their contributions in the various sessions and panels.

The Annual Conference of CRB (India & Sustainability Standards – international dialogues and conference, www.sustainabilitystandards.in) has been envisaged as an occasion for CRB and its partners to share knowledge, good practice and tools for promoting sustainability in key sectors and thematic areas, that are relevant for India. A number of international experts and organisations participate in this event annually and bring their knowledge and understanding on relevant issues to be practically useful for the Indian practitioners.



Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)

USO House, USO Road,

6 Special Institutional Area,

Off Shahid Jeet Singh Marg,

New Delhi – 110067

Tel: +91 11 41088853, 41841091

Email: info@c4rb.in

www.c4rb.org; www.sustainabilitystandards.in

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