



DBL
SUSTAINABILITY



SUSTAINABILITY

REPORT 2020



RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION FOR BETTER TOMORROW

SUSTAINABILITY

REPORT 2020



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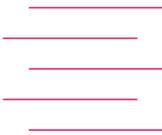
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year 2020 has been the most challenging year yet, not just for DBL Group, but for all businesses as well as individuals. The scar of the COVID-19 pandemic has left a global mark with lockdowns, new health protocols, and enormous challenge of the healthcare systems. Adopting to the “new normal” was not easy, but simply speaking, we just had to do it. And not only we have been able to survive, we also could contribute to countering some of the challenges of the pandemic. This report has some of the highlights of our interventions. Hoping for the best for everyone during this challenging time, it is my pleasure to introduce you to our Sustainability Report 2020.

Apart from health, one of the global issues that this pandemic highlighted was the need to contribute towards the environment. All our reports have been highlighting various issues through a variety of themes. This year's theme is on environment. We have focused on various of our interventions: some of these are highlighted at the end of each of the chapters in this report. A great inspiration came from the score we received from the CDP (formerly known as the Carbon Disclosure Project) after we

submitted our very first CDP report last year. The score of “C” meant that we are amongst 17% of companies that reached Awareness level in the Activity Group of textiles and fabric goods: which is higher than both the Asia regional average of D and the textiles and fabric goods sector average of D.

We have also started engaging in different programs by the UN Global Compact. The inaugural Young SDG Innovators Programme (YSIP), designed to engage young professionals working in Global Compact member companies, was launched in 2019. YSIP saw three of our young “Innovators” take part in reducing the loss of fabric during the Fabric Dyeing and Finishing operations. They even presented in the SDG Futures Lab in the Leader’s Summit in 2020. The team was led by Mashook Mujib Chowdhury, who in 2019 was recognized as one of the ten global young SDG Pioneers by the Global Compact. We will be engaging with further Global Compact programs in the future.

We were earlier selected by the Business Call to Action (BCtA) for the Impact Champions Programme. After completion of the program, BCtA published a case study on DBL Group’s Bandhan Fair Price Shop, one of our flagship initiatives. In 2016, we became a member of the BCtA through Bandhan which is an inclusive business model catering to the base of the pyramid as customers and employees.

For the very first time, an entire chapter dedicated to DBL was published by an external organization. The publication “Sustainable Consumption and Production, Volume II: Circular Economy and Beyond” was edited by Ranjula Bali Swain and Susanne Sweet from the Stockholm School of Economics. DBL’s chapter “Social Sustainability from Upstream: Important Takeaways from DBL Group’s People Programmes in the Bangladeshi Apparel Supply Chain” was written by Dr. Enrico Fontana, PhD, Lecturer, Management and Organization in Sasin School of Management in the Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and Affiliated Researcher in the Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden.

Just before the lockdown began, we were able to achieve one of the first HSBC Business Excellence Awards under the category of Export Excellence – Supply Chain and Backward Linkage. After winning the HSBC Export Excellence Awards five times out of eight, this was the first recognition we received from HSBC under their new format of excellence awards. In this report, we have included a summary of the awards and special recognitions we received in the last three years.

Since we are crossing 2020, we have put up updates in various chapters on our 2020 Goal which we introduced in our 2017 report. As it was the first time we set up these highly ambitious targets, we had a lot to learn. But we would not have achieved these progressions if we had set up minute targets. Taking the learning from these, we will be setting up further goals in the future reports too.

In alignment with the 10 principles of UN Global Compact, we are committed to ensure sustainable future for people and environment and to stand against corruption. We also respect human rights as part of our commitment to the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights.

We believe that excellence of a business can be achieved through a combination of integrity, passion, adaptability, and care. And excellence is a continuous process: which we aim to sustain. In this regard, I sincerely thank all our stakeholders for their ongoing understanding and continued support for our company. And I wish for the best of your health too. Let us hope for a quick and sustained recovery from this pandemic. Thank you.



Abdul Wahed
Chairman
DBL Group

MATERIALITY TEST

Most material
 Material
 Least material
 Any impact: 1
No impact: 0

Category	Aspects	Sustainability impacts, risks, or opportunities
Economic	Economic Performance	1
	Indirect Economic Impacts	1
	Procurement Practices	1
Social	OHS	1
	Equal Remuneration For Men & Women	1
	Supplier Assessment for Labor Practices	1
	Labor Practices Grievance Mechanisms	1
	Local Communities	1
	Compliance	1
Environment	Energy	1
	Water	1
	Emissions	1
	Effluents & Waste	1
	Compliance	1
	Supplier Environmental Assessment	1

MATERIALITY MAPPING

Influence on Stakeholder Assessments & Decisions	<p>Economic: Procurement Practices</p> <p>Social: Equal Remuneration for Men & Women</p> <p>Environment: Compliance</p>	<p>Economic: Economic Performance Indirect Economic Impacts</p> <p>Social: OHS Supplier Assessment for Labor Practices Labor Practices Grivevance Mechanism Compliance Local Communities</p> <p>Environment: Energy Water Emissions Effluents & Waste Supplier Environmental Assessment</p>
Significance of Economic, Social & Environmental Impacts		

REPORTING PARAMETERS

Period:	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020
Reporting cycle:	Annual
Most recent previous report:	DBL Group Sustainability Report 2019
GRI Guidelines followed:	GRI Standards
'In Accordance' option chosen:	In Accordance "Core"
Contact person:	Mohammed Zahidullah Chief Sustainability Officer Mobile: +880 1711 677 626 Email: zahid@dbl-group.com

Defining the Report Content and the Aspect Boundaries

The content of the report is based on the social, environment, economic and product sustainability practices at DBL Group. Identifying of the Aspects has been as per the guidelines of Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and indicators have been selected based on the availability of information on those practices. Some of the sustainability projects of DBL Group are beneficial to the organization itself and some others are benefitting the community as well. We have tried to create meaningful connection between the sustainability practices of DBL Group with the reporting guidelines of GRI.

This is our seventh reporting on sustainability and third adhering to the GRI Standards: our previous ones followed the GRI G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. Through this report we have focused our insights on setting goals, measuring performance and managing change in order to implement better performances. We would like to take our sustainability reporting practice to the next level by continuous improvement in our future endeavors in reporting.

Through this report, DBL Group continues its journey in sustainability reporting on the economic, environmental and social dimensions of its business activities. Through progressive advancement in reporting, DBL Group is committed to report transparently on how it manages its economic, environmental, social, and governance performance.

CHAPTER 1



SUSTAINABILITY AND DBL

DBL Group has a five-pillar strategic approach to Sustainability:
People, Process, Product, Community, and Environment.



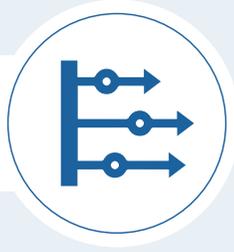
“

Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight.

Ban Ki-moon, 8th Secretary-General of the United Nations

”

**TIMELINE OF
SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING**



PILLARS OF DBL'S SUSTAINABILITY



DBL SUSTAINABILITY PILLARS

DBL Group's Sustainability strategy is based on five pillars: People, Process, Product, Community and Environment; thus, integrating a holistic approach towards Sustainability. For each pillar, there are several Sustainable Action Programs in place – both on large and small scales and short and long terms – through which the sustainability plans are translated into actions.

Several of our activities are in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): details are mentioned on our Sustainability page: www.dbl-group.com/sustainability.



PEOPLE

As an organization, we realize our responsibility towards our people: our employees. Our company understands how the business practices impact our employees and we work to serve in their best interests.

PROCESS

We are committed to continuously improve all our business processes: ranging from sourcing raw materials to transporting final finished goods. We give a strong emphasis on eliminating non-value-added activities while delivering quality products on time with greater efficiency and least effect on the environment.



PRODUCT



DBL Group is continuously working towards improving the quality of the products, and all the processes that go into making the final finished product and ensuring to minimize the negative impact on the environment and the consumers. The R&D department is actively involved in creating new and researching existing products and the processes associated with them.



COMMUNITY

We believe that together with our employees, customers, business partners and other stakeholders, we can create real and long-term changes for the betterment of the community and the environment. We can extend this impact from improving the livelihood of our employees to the development of the local community where we conduct our businesses.

ENVIRONMENT

Environment is an integral part of our company, and we work to decrease carbon footprint, water consumption, and waste from our manufacturing processes. We dedicate our selves in conserving energy, managing waste effectively and replenishing the environment to the best of our capacity.



DBL'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SDGs



ABOUT DBL GROUP



OVERVIEW



Started in
1991



100%
Knitwear
Exporter



Apparels



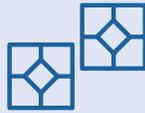
Textiles



Packaging



Based in
Bangladesh



Ceramic Tiles



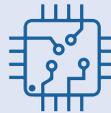
Pharmaceuticals



Headquartered
in Dhaka



Dredging



Semiconductor
Design



Telecommunications



Operations in
Gazipur

VISION



We envision to sustain and grow as a diversified global conglomerate.

VALUES



-  Integrity
-  Passion
-  Adaptability
-  Care
-  Excellence

APPARELS AND TEXTILES CONCERNS



1991

Dulal Brothers Ltd:
Garments

2000

Jinnat Apparels Ltd:
Garments & Knitting

2002

Mymun Textiles Ltd:
Dyeing & Finishing

2003

Flamingo Fashions
Ltd: Garments

2006

Jinnat Fashions Ltd:
Garments & Knitting

Matin Spinning Mills
Ltd: Spinning

Hamza Textiles Ltd:
Dyeing, Finishing,
& Washing

2007

Atelier Sourcing Ltd:
Trading

Textile Testing
Services Ltd:
Testing Lab

2008

Parkway Packaging
& Printing Ltd :
Corrugated Carton

2009

Jinnat Knitwears Ltd:
Garments & Knitting

2010

Thanbee Print World
Ltd: Screen Printing

2010

DB Tex Ltd:
All-Over Printing

2012

Mawna Fashions Ltd:
Garments

2014

Color City Ltd:
Dyeing & Finishing

Beyond 2014

Capacity expansions:
All operation

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



Yarns

Cotton, Mélange,
Synthetic



Fabrics

Cotton, Viscose, Modal,
Nylon, Polyester, Wool,
Silk and its blends
along with Elastane



Casual knitwear

T-Shirts, Polo Shirts,
Tank Tops, Joggers,
Hooded Jackets, Cardigans,
Leggings, Trousers, Dresses



Fashionable wear

Skirts, Gowns

MANUFACTURING PROCESSES



State-of-the-art machineries



Best grade cotton in our Spinning Mill for all products



Fabric Knitting operation makes use of low-profile hazardous materials



Fabric Dyeing operation makes use of low water to dye ratio



Washing operations make use of machines which consume less water and have best filtering and spinning systems



Apparel manufacturing processes make use of Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Computer-Aided Screening (CAS), and Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM) systems

QUALITY ASSURANCE



Using new wave of technologies to put yarns through a series of quality control checks, to ensure strict quality standards



R&D department and in-house Design Team help in developing new products and process improvements



Desire for quality shared by team of highly qualified and competent professionals, under leadership of the Board of Directors



Shared vision helps in marching towards goal of attaining acknowledged leadership in providing quality products at competitive prices



Concentrating on process manufacturing and process improvements

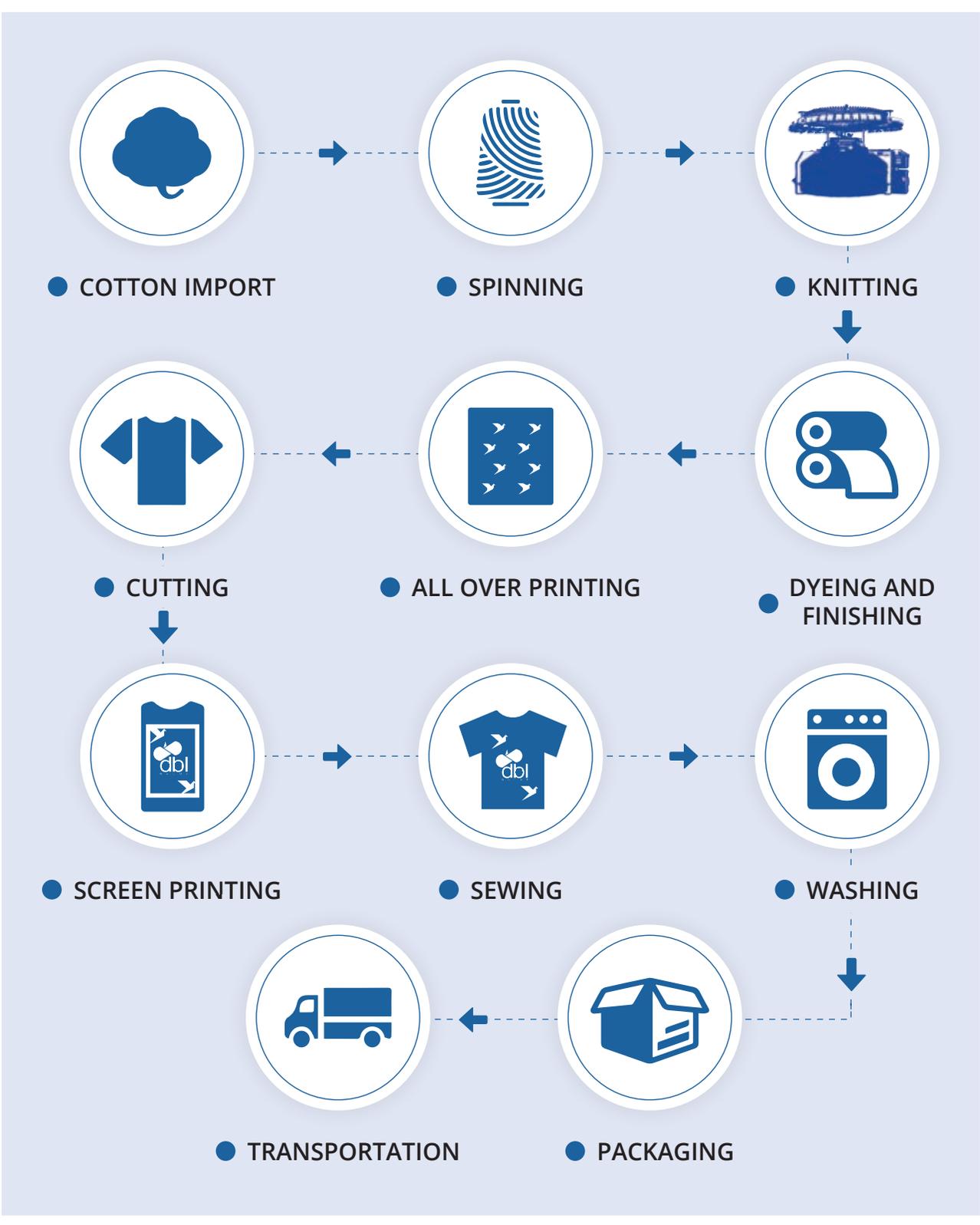
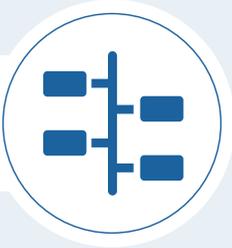


Set-up Industrial Engineering and Work Study departments



Root cause analyses done using statistical quality control tools

**PROCESS
FLOWCHART**



MAJOR BUYERS



George.

Walmart

ESPRIT



G-STAR RAW

YOUR M&S



next



TOM TAILOR

BONITA



GUESS

Target

carter's

BESTSELLER



GERRY WEBER

DECATHLON

KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



KFW DEG



giz





“

Excellence of a business can be achieved through a combination of integrity, passion, adaptability, and care.”

Abdul Wahed
Chairman

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The highest governing body in DBL Group is the Board of Directors. Our current Board consists of four Directors and one Advisor. The Vice Chairman is also a director and currently serving as Vice President, Finance, of the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), which is one of the largest trade associations in Bangladesh which represents the apparel industry. The company has defined guidelines and established a framework for the board meetings and other proceedings. These guidelines help decision-making processes of the board members to be carried out in a systematic, informed, and efficient manner.

The Board evaluates the following:



Strategic decisions of the company



Management policies and their effectiveness



Strategic review from each of the board members



Financial, production and other business performance through relevant reports.

DBL Group's senior management are chosen by the Board of Directors because of their vast experiences, immense knowledge, fascinating competence, cross-industry exposure, local and overseas footage, and well accepted market reputation. This cohesive team wants to make a difference, develop, and inspire others, drive innovative ideas and deliver results, and live with DBL Group's values.

The distinguished Board is cultivating a sustainable work culture through them. DBL credits its strength, the sustainability of a consistent approach to managing the business and the constant growth of its people to this senior management team.



“

Engage. Enable. Empower. That is the motto to bring up youths within an organization to ensure sustainability in governance.”

M. A. Jabbar
Managing Director

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE



DBL Group adheres to the definition of Corporate Governance of the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Corporate governance is defined as the structures and processes by which companies are directed and controlled. It concerns the relationships between the management, board of directors, controlling shareholders, minority shareholders, and other stakeholders. Good corporate governance helps companies operate more efficiently, improve access to capital, mitigate risk, and safeguard against mismanagement. It makes companies more accountable and transparent to investors and gives them the tools to respond to stakeholder concerns.

A sound corporate governance system will facilitate DBL to attain:



Better access to external capital



Lower financing costs



Higher credit ratings



Strong investor confidence

The company also considers a sound system of corporate governance as an important contribution to the rule of law in Bangladesh and an important determinant of the role of the company in a modern economy and society.

Through implementing the recommendations by IFC, DBL Group aims at bringing its corporate governance framework up to the best international practices and standards. This is critical to DBL given our expected growth. The desire to attract new investors will heavily rely on the existence of a concrete corporate governance system.



“

Commitment, communication, and collaboration are what drives financial sustainability of an organization and all its stakeholders.”

M. A. Rahim
Vice Chairman

FAMILY BUSINESS GOVERNANCE



Family Business Governance is an important issue for DBL Group since it is a family-owned business comprising family members vested with significant decision-making authority. The company is investing its time and effort on implementing Family Business Governance for the greater good of the company and a sustainable business.

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE



DBL Group's Corporate Governance framework is based on Bangladesh legislation as well as internationally recognized best practices and principles, such as the guidelines provided by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group.

The company's corporate governance framework is based on the following principles:



Accountability



Fairness



Transparency



Responsibility



“

For sustainability in operational processes, we need three steps: innovation, implementation, and inspiration.”

M. A. Quader

Deputy Managing Director and Group CEO

INTERNAL AUDIT AND CONTROL



The Board's Audit Committee: The audit committee focuses on three key areas: financial reporting, risk management, and internal and external audits (legal compliance and risk management).

Risk Management: The company places great importance on risk management, and it is the board of directors that is tasked with ensuring that appropriate risk management systems are established.

Internal Auditor: The internal auditor (or office of the internal auditor) is responsible for the daily internal control of the company's finances and operations.

External Auditor: An external auditor audits the company's financial statements.

Disclosure: DBL's current disclosures through its website are adequate for a non-listed private company in Bangladesh. However, once companies of DBL Group go public*, there will be a much higher level of expectations – market and regulatory. DBL will improve its disclosures in two primary areas: Annual Report information and website disclosures.

Committees:



The Board's Audit
Committee



Risk
Management



Internal
Auditor



External
Auditor



Disclosure

*Martin Spinning Mills Ltd. is currently the only concern of DBL Group which is enlisted under Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission and is available for public trading. A stock enlisted company needs to comply with regulatory requirements for disclosure and the company is ensuring essential disclosures of the concern through Annual Reports and its own website.

GENERAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



THE COMPANY HAS THE FOLLOWING GOVERNING AND OTHER BODIES:

THE BOARD

Responsible for the strategic direction of the company, and the guidance and oversight of management

CEO

Assigns the day-to-day task of the management of the company and carries out strategy as approved by the board

INTERNAL AUDITOR

Develops and monitors internal control procedures for the business operations of the company.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Allows the shareholders to participate in the governance of the company

COMPANY SECRETARY

Ensures that the governing bodies follow internal rules and external regulations to facilitate clear communications between the governing bodies, and acts as an adviser to directors and senior executives

STRUCTURES AND COMMITTEES

DBL Group has established the following Board Committees:

- The Audit Committee
- The Remuneration Committee
- The Nominations and Corporate Governance Committee
- Other committees deemed necessary by the Board

Environment-friendly machineries



DBL makes high investment in procuring **environment-friendly machineries** in all its operations. These machines ensure energy and water saving as well as longevity and efficiency. As an example, the machines in the Spinning Mill have Programmable Logic Control (PLC) which automatically adjusts the revolutions per minute (RPM), saving energy. The Dyeing machines consume up to **46%** less water than conventional ones.



CHAPTER 2



PEOPLE

As an organization, we realize our responsibility towards our people: our employees. Our company understands how the business practices impact our employees and we work to serve in their best interests.



“

Humanitarian response, sustainable development, and sustaining peace are three sides of the same triangle.

António Guterres, 9th Secretary General of the United Nations

”

PEOPLE



As an organization, we realize our responsibility towards our people: our employees. Our company understands how the business practices impact our employees and we work to serve in their best interests.

BANDHAN FAIR PRICE SHOP



“Bandhan” – a Bengali word which refers to “bonding” – is a fair price shop which serves low income workers with all the essentials and commodities at factory price of manufactures. The shop is aimed at reducing workers’ monthly expenditure and sheltering them from the economic inflation. Any employee of DBL can buy items through zero-cash and on-credit transaction: the bills are simply adjusted with their salaries at the end of the month. The entire system has been designed and managed in-house. Bandhan was recognized by the Business Call to Action (BCtA) as an inclusive business model and gained DBL a membership of the BCtA. The case is further detailed on the BCtA website



BANDHAN

Fair Price Shop



External links:

Membership in the Business Call to Action (BCtA) of the UNDP:

<https://www.businesscalltoaction.org/member/dbl-group>

Case study published on Business Call to Action (BCtA) site:

<https://www.businesscalltoaction.org/news/impact-case-study-dbl-group>

Case study published on UN Global Compact's SDG Industry Matrix: Industrial Manufacturing:

<https://www.unglobalcompact.org/library/3111>

FEMALE SUPERVISOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



The Female Supervisor Leadership Program is an in-house training program for the women workers. Over a period of 2 months, training on both hard and soft skills is provided to potential in-house female workers having worked in sewing or quality departments within DBL. After successful completion of the training program, they are promoted as Supervisors.

DBL currently has 66 Female Supervisors, having trained 96 till 2020. They are now contributing to 22% of the total Supervisors. Although our aim was 50% by 2020, the highly ambitious target has helped us achieve this milestone.

96 women workers promoted to Supervisors

DBL Group's vision for women

“To be the most attractive employer for the women workers in the garments industry of Bangladesh”

FEMALE

Supervisors



SHOBOLA: EMPOWERMENT FOR BETTER BUSINESS



In partnership with amfori and the CSR Centre, DBL Group has signed an agreement for the Shobola project. The project aims to empower female workers to take up supervisory positions.



5

women workers promoted to Supervisors

CSR Centre is the implementing partner with amfori being the funding and monitoring partner. DBL being the knowledge sharing partner has provided in-kind support with its technical expertise. The project began in 2019 in DBL's Mawna Fashions Ltd. factory. Both management and workers will be trained on the different soft skills focusing on team building. Currently, 5 Female Supervisors have been created from this project.

WOMEN HEALTH INITIATIVE



Starting from March 2013, the program targeted all the female workers of DBL Group with a long-term objective to ensure good health and hygiene for all female workers. The initial activity was providing women with sanitary napkins at a highly discounted price of 12 cents per pack: thus, not only limiting to educating women, but also providing opportunities for ensuring their safe health.

AVERAGE SALES



per month in 2019-20, up from 511 in 2014-15

Analysis and follow up are done to encourage women to make proper use of these products. For instance, to maintain the privacy of workers, the pads are now made available in the female washrooms. Due to the sensitivity in purchasing such products, the Bandhan Fair Price Shops have female staff for the convenience of the female workers. Counselling sessions are also done regularly to aware women regarding the health benefits of the products. The effectiveness of these initiatives has been visible from the substantial increase in sales.

NIRAPOD SRHR PROGRAM



6,500



women have received training on SRHR

NGO Phulki, in partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, is working towards promoting health awareness among the female RMG workers of DBL Group involving peer educator groups. Starting in August 2013, Phulki has expanded the reach of this project through a partnership approach. These training sessions are provided during orientation. The second phase of Nirapod was completed in two newer factories of DBL.

DBL PHARMACY



\$205,734



Worth of medicine sold in 2019-20 in 8 pharmacies

DBL's in-house pharmacy is open for all workers and their families. Various types of medicine are available at subsidized prices. As for the Bandhan Fair Price Shop, the medicines here are subsidized too. In 2019-20, a total of \$205,734 worth of medicines were sold in the 8 pharmacies in the different complexes, including our Ceramics manufacturing plant.

BETTER BUSINESS FOR CHILDREN



The second program with UNICEF, being implemented by Phulki, focuses on the Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP). This program aims on improving the following:

52



workers and management were trained on CRBP

- Daycare services available to employees
- Community living conditions for employees
- Employee and child health and nutrition

As an impact of this program, UNICEF has established 64 Non-Formal Primary Schools in the Kashimpur community which are catering to children less than school-going ages.

MOTHERS@WORK



“DBL signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNICEF to promote and improve breastfeeding practices in the workplace. The Mothers@Work program targeted to reach female workers, pregnant and lactating women and 340 infants and young children over the 3-year span of program implementation. Infants from both the Day Care Centre and the community are availing the service. The program was implemented by BRAC. DBL was one of the two pilot factories where this program was launched.



Program by **UNICEF**
Implemented by **BRAC**



313

pregnant and lactating
mothers received **counselling** on
the importance of **breastfeeding**



concepts being
expanded
to other factories



2

additional **30-minute**
slots for breastfeeding



124

workers and
management **trained to**
support breastfeeding



2

Dedicated private
lactation stations



Express breastmilk
extraction and storage



175

mothers using **breastfeeding**
bottles to preserve breastmilk
in factory and at home



Women workers have
less stress



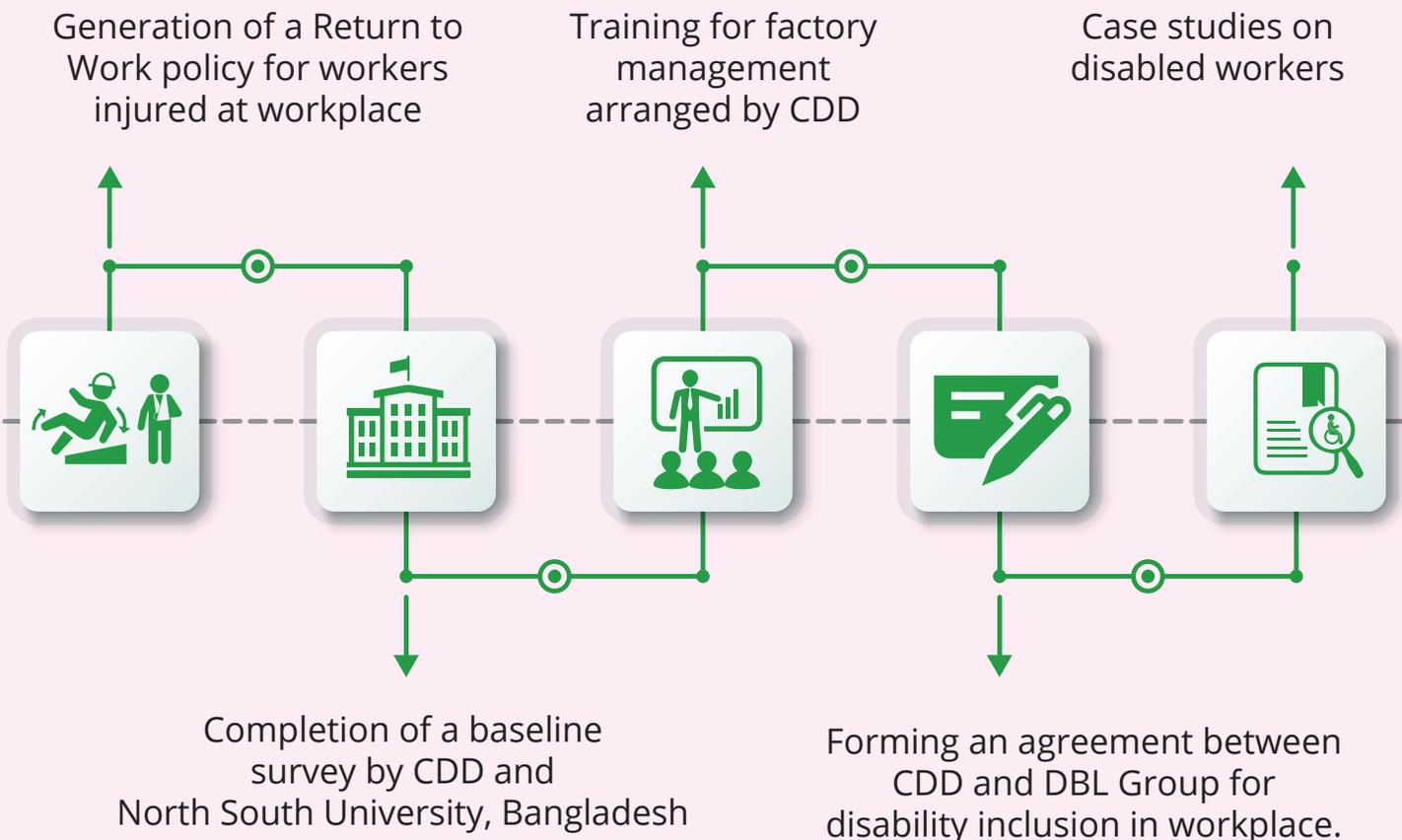
DISABILITY INCLUSION PROGRAM



DBL Group believes in Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17). To include people with disabilities within the workforce, DBL Group has partnered up with the Center for Disability in Development (CDD). CDD has provided training and conducted awareness programs for the factory HR departments. This way, the importance of the inclusion of people with disabilities has been brought into realization. The Disability Inclusion Program is growing with a vision to have a one percent of our workforce to consist of people with different types of disabilities. Multiple initiatives have been taken by DBL Group in collaboration with GIZ and CDD.

DBL also has been engaged with the Innovation to Inclusion (i2i) project since January 2020, a disability inclusion program implemented by CDD and the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN), led by Leonard Cheshire (LC) and funded by DFID.

THE EMPLOYMENT INJURY PROTECTION SCHEME (EIPS) ENABLED DBL TO IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING:



THE RETURN TO WORK (RTW) PROGRAM WITH CDD AND GIZ ENABLED DBL TO:

- Form a Return to Work Committee in DBL's factories
- Assign a "Return to Work Coordinator" hired under the HR department
- Amend existing HR policy to accommodate the RTW clause
- Follow international and legal context of RTW policies
- Follow legal frameworks of constitution of Bangladesh, Persons with disability rights protection act in Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Labor Act

THE RTW PROCESS CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING:



Referral



Assessment



Designing RTW
Plan



Implementing
RTW Plan



Monitoring and
Coordination

Setting a highly ambitious target of 1% in 2017, DBL now has 0.49% of its workforce consisting of people with disabilities. A total of 223 disabled people have been recruited since 2018.



162

Disabled people recruited
till 2019-20 DBL Group of
which **104** are male and
58 are female

FAMILY PLANNING CORNER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



A Family Planning Corner has been set up in one of the RMG manufacturing complexes of DBL Group in 2016. In addition to family planning services, the setup provides antenatal care and pathological tests. Due to the popularity, the setup has been expanded to DBL's different facilities as well, along with support from the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) of the Government of Bangladesh. The DGFP is providing free family planning products which are being distributed to the workers at free of cost.

14,946 family planning services provided since 2016

CHILDREN EDUCATION SUPPORT INITIATIVE



4 QUALITY EDUCATION

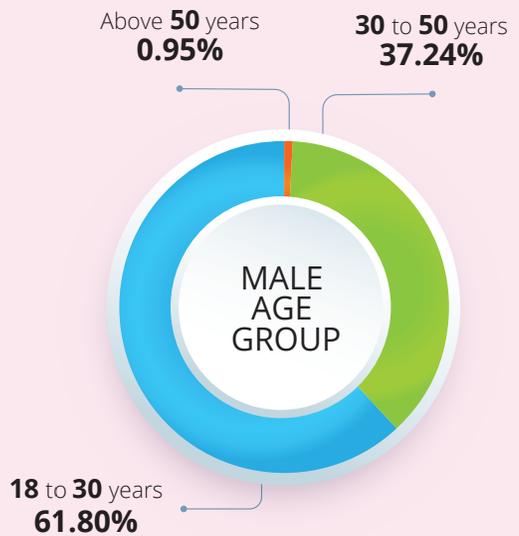
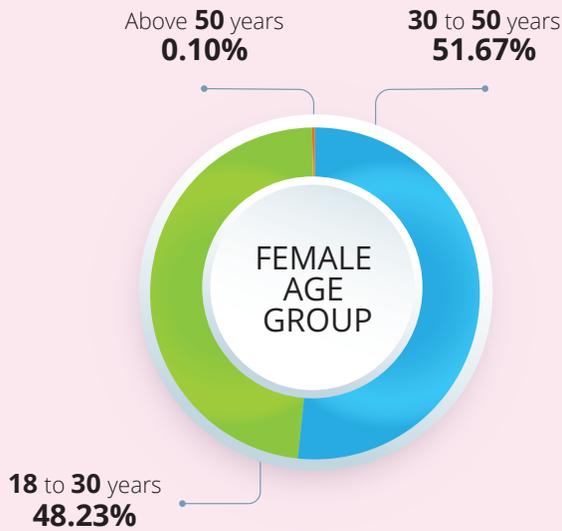
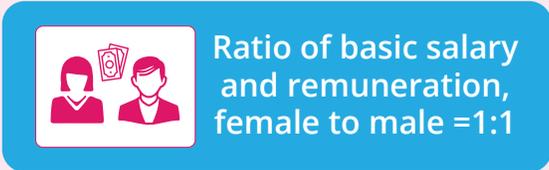
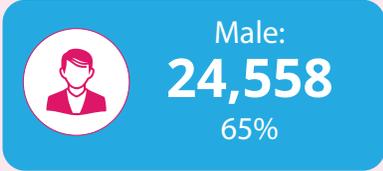
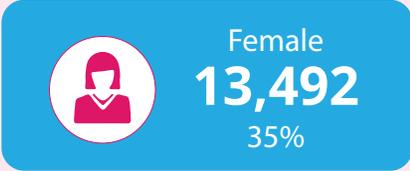
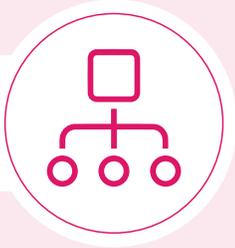


A set of programs exist under the Children Education Support Initiative which focuses on accessibility to education for all the employees of DBL. These consist of:

- Recognition for meritorious students
- Providing career path counselling to students who have passed Higher Secondary education

289 students received recognition for outstanding results till 2020

**EMPLOYEE
DISTRIBUTION**



- Lifting and Carrying Procedures
- Electric Safety and Operation of Boilers
- First Aid
- Fire Safety
- Machine Operating Process and Safety
- Awareness on Health and Nutrition for Pregnant Women
- Disciplinary Procedure as per Bangladesh Labour Law
- Environment, Energy, and Water Saving Awareness
- Waste-handling Procedure
- Participation Committee (PC), OHS, and Environment Committee's Functions
- Child Labor, Forced Labor, Discrimination, Harassment, and Abusive Behavior
- Anti-harassment, Anti-abuse, and Grievance Procedure
- Awareness on AIDS and Transmissible and Non-Transmittable Diseases

The specific training targets mid-level management, workers, chemical handlers and spot removers, loaders, quality inspectors, first aiders, fire fighters, evacuators and rescuers, cleaners, etc.

In addition to the above trainings, skill development trainings have also been provided for the employees. A summary of these have been included in Chapter 5 (Community) of this report.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



A variety of activities are present in DBL for the welfare of employees including the following. Some of these have already been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.

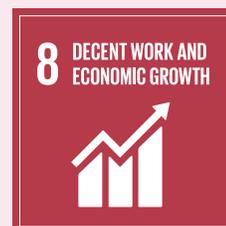
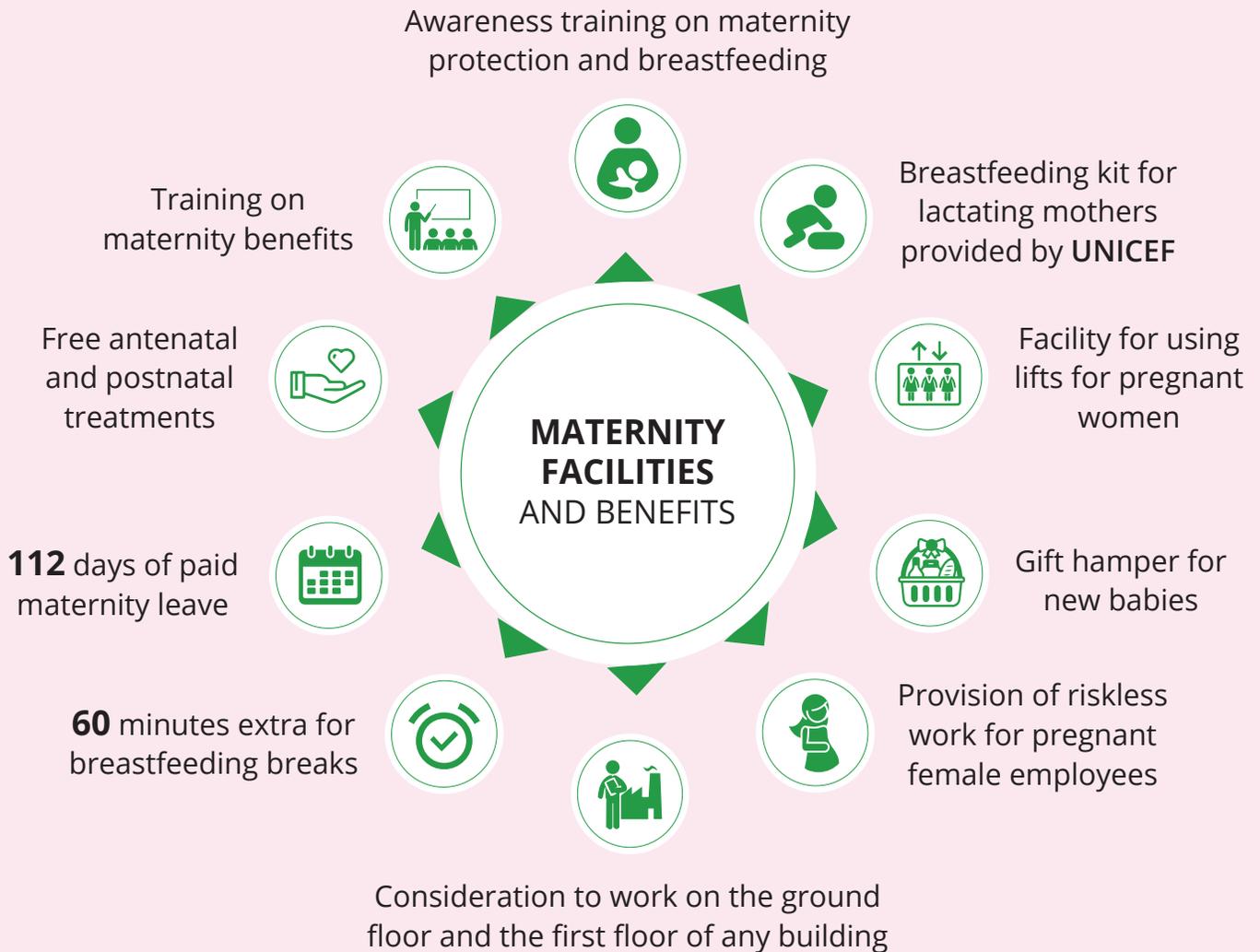
- Life insurance and disability and invalidity coverage as per Bangladesh Labour Law and Group Insurance Policy
- Retirement provisions
- Stock ownership (currently one business unit of DBL is listed under the Dhaka and Chittagong Stock Exchanges)
- In-house day care center with trained professionals
- In-house medical center with a wide range of tests and even providing outpatient medical services
- In-house pharmacy providing medicines at fair price even for employees' family members
- Participating and organizing in-house sports tournaments such as cricket, football, and volleyball
- Promoting culture through the encouragement of music and art competition
- Worker-Management Relationship program where personal issues and needs discussed every month through the Participatory Committee (PC) meetings



MATERNITY FACILITIES AND BENEFITS



All the female employees of DBL Group are entitled to take parental leave. The pregnant women can also avail the following services:



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS)



DBL Group aims on creating a healthy, environment-friendly and safe workplace by educating the workforce regarding health and safety issues. A good work environment not only has a direct impact on the employees' health but also plays a vital role on the productivity level.



OHS POLICY

Our Occupational Health and Safety Policy and related procedures encompass all national and international standards. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 including the amendments and the rules
- 2) Other national laws
- 3) ILO Conventions
- 4) Buyers' Codes of Conduct

All employees are covered under this policy and this is applicable to all units of DBL. Dedicated teams are present to oversee the different health and safety needs and maintain safety standards.

All instances of accidents, injuries, and occupational diseases are kept in record at DBL. Each record of an occurrence is categorized into multiple types to analyze the specific type of injury and disease.



MEDICAL CENTER

Occupational diseases are prevalent in the workplace due to the existing surroundings. The presence of dust, heat, chemicals, work stress, posture of working, etc. make rise to illnesses such as cough or cold, headaches, back pains, allergies, neck pain, as well as sinusitis.

Most of these diseases can be cured or even prevented through the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

A dedicated medical center is present in each factory complex which manages and treats all kinds of occupational diseases. In addition, the center also deals with non-occupational but common diseases such as fever, measles, tooth pain, and so on.

Furthermore, to aware employees and workers regarding various health issues, awareness programs, meetings, training, and workshops are conducted on a regular basis. The topics of these sessions also deal with issues such as personal hygiene, for example washing hands, thereby dealing with a preventive measure for various diseases. Health and safety committees are present in each of the factory complexes: who comprise of 3.70% of the total workforce.



FIRE PREVENTION TEAMS

Fire safety is one of the most important issues regarding occupational safety. The Compliance department performs audits to ensure unobstructed evacuation paths, properly designed evacuation maps and lighting present in required areas. To tackle the events of fire, four teams – the fire fighters, the rescue team, the cordon party and the first aiders – are involved.

RISK MANAGEMENT



Given the nature of business, the raw materials and products that DBL handles and the scale of operations, our risk management systems are designed to ensure that all our assets are safeguarded and protected against any kind of loss.

For worker safety, specific risk analyses are done based on their workplaces. These workplaces include a wide variety of areas within the factories such as the chemical storerooms and the Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs), as well as the zones containing different machines such as compacting machines and generators.



Pregnant women are also considered under risk management: to avoid the risk to the fetuses, they are to be seated when working, allowed to leave early during the lunch breaks, and not allowed to work overtime.

Each type of analysis includes the description and consequence of the hazard, the person at risk and the control or preventive measures that can be taken. In addition, hazards are given ratings, calculated by using the frequencies of occurrence and the severity, thereby effectively identifying the risks or hazards to prioritize on.

OHSAS 18001:2007 STANDARD



The Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) is an international management system specification for occupational health and safety. Implemented by the GIZ, one of DBL Group's dyeing units acquired this certification in April 2016. OHSAS was chosen to further reduce illness and incidents through continual improvement, increase awareness about health and safety, and establish a health and safety management system within the factory. The multi-department committee formed has enabled multiple benefits including increased hazard awareness, safety culture, and reduced risk behavior.

SAFETY MEASURES



FIRE SAFETY

- Fire extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Stretchers
- Smoke detectors
- Sprinklers
- Fire hose cabinet boxes
- Water drums and buckets
- Fire beaters
- Fire hooks
- Gong bells
- Lock cutters
- Emergency lights
- Safety equipment such as gloves, helmets, gas masks and gumboots
- Mini Fire Station (details under Chapter 5: Community)



BUILDING SAFETY

- Structural assessments
- Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) during construction
- Certification with Architectural and Structural Design Standard
- Scaled as-built drawings



CHEMICAL SAFETY

- Careful assessment of chemicals
- Chemical usage policy
- Material safety data sheet (MSDS)
- Regular trainings



ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Top quality cabling and accessories
- Trained technicians for maintenance
- International safety features for equipment
- Maintenance and risk analysis records

HUMAN RIGHTS



INVESTMENT

Significant investment agreements include participation in training, creation and implementation of a new policy or procedure, and other activities that DBL Group undertakes to promote labor practices, human rights, societal and environmental concerns, as well as any sustainability issue. DBL has dealt with multiple activities that promote human rights. These are summarized below.

DBL Group has made investment in various training sessions. The Mothers@Work program is designed by UNICEF and implemented by BRAC to train pregnant and lactating mothers on maternity protection and breastfeeding. The Better Business for Children is another program by UNICEF which is being implemented by Phulki. This program provides training on UNICEF's Children's Rights and Business Principles with focus on community improvement.

The Nirapod program is Phulki's approach supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for saving women from unwanted and unsafe pregnancy. The second phase of Nirapod is already under implementation in two factories. In addition, Phulki is also providing training on UNICEF's Children's Rights in Business Principles.

DBL has also made investments to include people with disabilities. Multiple programs have been in place and are underway with GIZ and the Center for Disability in Development (CDD).

Further details of these and other programs have been explained earlier in this chapter of the report.



FORCED LABOR

DBL does not use involuntary or forced labor. The Code of Conduct emphasizes that all employees should be working at a factory voluntarily and no means should be adopted as a measure which may indirectly result in an employee working forcibly. The freedom of movement of employees is not restricted except for the protection of property and security of factory personnel. Additionally, no employees are recruited on contract basis and an employee may resign from the company by giving one month's notice.



CHILD LABOR

DBL is not engaged with any form of child labor. At the time of hiring, psychological interviews are done to determine the age of potential employees. In addition, documents such as proofs of age are collected from all potential employees and the authenticity of age documents is verified. In the absence of age documents, the potential employee is to be verified and confirmed by the registered doctor available at the factory.



SECURITY PRACTICES

All security personnel in DBL are of our own: there are none from third party organizations. Human rights topics are communicated to all security personnel via training that takes place every month.





NON-DISCRIMINATION

DBL employs, pays, promotes, and terminates workers based on their ability to do the job, rather than based on personal characteristics or beliefs. Discrimination on any ground is not allowed. Due to the strength of the practice, there have been no cases of discrimination



FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

DBL recognizes and respects the right of employees to exercise their lawful rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining. No discrimination is done against employees who form or participate in lawful associations and or collective bargaining. The presence of the Participation Committee (PC) allows the workers to freely communicate regarding any issue. To ensure these rights are exercised, monthly audits from the Compliance team take place, noting the composition of the committee members, frequency of meetings, topics discussed, and so on.



DBL management has been able to form PCs according to the guidelines which is very effective for conveying information to both labor and management and resolving any grievances if present.

Significant operational changes are communicated with the concerned employees a minimum of 3 months prior to the change.



SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT

Suppliers of DBL are also assessed for labor practices, human rights, societal and environmental impacts. The DBL Compliance team conducts supplier assessment through specific standards questionnaires on social and environmental areas based on the DBL Code of Conduct. Before making a business relationship with a supplier, it is compulsory that the supplier abides by our Code.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE



At DBL, we train our Welfare Officers to exercise grievance procedures very professionally and encourage employees to express their concerns without hesitation through the complaint management system. Workers feel comfortable sharing any concern that they might have with the Welfare Officers. We process grievances both formally and informally. These include:



THE SUGGESTION/GRIEVANCE BOX

- Written down issues dropped confidentially
- Boxes checked every week by designated people
- Grievances recorded in register



THE BANDHAN NEWSLETTER

- Complaints placed in monthly newsletter
- Section of newsletter can be detached
- Written down issues dropped confidentially in suggestion/grievance box



VERBAL COMPLAINT

- Verbal complaints by workers
- Made to Officers from the Welfare, Compliance, Human Resource (HR), and/or Admin departments
- Made also to their Supervisors or Line Chiefs



PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE (PC) MEETINGS

- Expressing through a PC member
- PC member puts forward the complaint during meetings

Grievances of all employees regarding any topic are considered by the management. This includes violations of rights of indigenous people. In 2019-20, there were no incidents reported where the rights of such people were violated either through formal grievance mechanisms or through informal ones. DBL Group's grievance procedure addresses labor practice issues as well as human rights and societal topics. In overall, 2019-20 recorded 171 grievances of which all were addressed and 147 resolved. 35 grievance of 2018-19 were resolved this year.

Heat recovery from Stenter machine



The Fabric Finishing process in our wet processing plant has **Stenter machines**: the function of which is to stretch the dyed fabric widthwise and recover the uniform width. Each of our Stenters have an Eco Booster, which is a state-of-the-art **heat recovery** system with automatic cleaning. The Eco Booster also consumes low amount of water during the cleaning process. A total of five Eco Boosters are present in our newer dyeing factory, which saves up to **1,741,815 kWh** of energy every year.



CHAPTER 3



PROCESS

We are committed to continuously improve all our business processes: ranging from purchasing raw materials to transporting final finished goods.



“

*If you quit on the process,
you are quitting on the result.*

Idowu Koyenikan, Organizational Consultant & Author

”

PROCESS



We are committed to continuously improve all aspects of our business processes ranging from procurement of raw materials to transporting final finished goods. We give a strong emphasis on eliminating non-value added activities while delivering quality products on time with optimal efficiency and least impact on the environment.

RESOURCE SAVING DYEING AND FINISHING



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



FEATURES



Procuring
energy efficient
machineries



Energy meters to
ensure proper
mesasurement



**Temperature
adjustment** done
depending on fabric



Dyes used allow
low **energy
consumption**



**Reduced fabric
weight loss** during
processing



**Low water to dye
ratio:** using 55 liters
to dye 1 kg fabric

USE OF ENZYMES*



4 liters of **water
saving** for every
production batch



1 hour processing
time saving for every
production batch



**Lesser effluent
and treatment
requirements**

* Novozymes' CombiPolish

AUTOMATION OF FABRIC MANUFACTURING OPERATION PROCESS



The Management Information System (MIS) team of DBL Group developed an in-house system in the Fabric Knitting section to transfer the manual operation practices into an automated one. Earlier, on-time and on-line information were unavailable which led to wastage and indecisiveness in the process. The new system automates the manufacturing process operation to make effective decisions, reduce wastage, and ensure convenience. Workers are now using electronic tabs and computers to input production and operational information.

The management now has a digital dashboard to understand the most recent status of different machines and can hence make instant decisions related to the operation. Some of the key features include:



On-line and on-time production and efficient monitoring system



Supply chain traceability



Barcode and labeling system for fabric tracking



On-line and off-line quality control



Simplified electronic delivery system



Efficient inventory system



Significant reduction in fabric wastage



Completely paperless operational system



“Smart” centralized production planning: system suggests what to do

YOUNG SDG INNOVATORS PROGRAM (YSIP), UN GLOBAL COMPACT



The Young SDG Innovator Program is a ten-month accelerator program which gives business leaders and change makers the opportunity to engage in sustainability efforts. It is a platform that encourages innovative ideas and development of solutions based on company specific sustainability objectives.

DBL Group’s Md. Sadequr Rahaman, Senior Executive, Environment Management, and Tafazzal Hossain, Executive, Human Resources were among the inspiring individuals selected to participate at the SDG Futures Lab for the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit in 2020.

Fabric loss reduction was attained by removing the process of using the compactor process for fleece fabric and by switching to usage of special fabrics that helped to reduce difficulties in dyeing both sides. Measures to attain this goal have already been implemented throughout the entirety of the supply chain.

ANNUAL SAVINGS



*mn stands for million

WASHING PLANT INTERVENTIONS



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Ozone Wash/ Air Wash:

Ozone air is a natural gas which typically acts as a sterilizing agent as well as a mild bleaching agent which changes blue color to white. This technique of Denim Washing or Knit Washing has reduced DBL's water consumption by up to 50% and energy usage by up to 61% for certain product lines compared with conventional methods.

Laser Wash:

Laser is an energy source which can be precisely controlled in terms of intensity and power. This enables the following advantages with the machines.

Less water, energy and time consumption

Higher levels of Production

Complex designs can be created

Premium quality clothing generated





LEAN MANUFACTURING

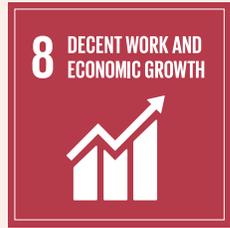


12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



Lean Manufacturing is a business model and collection of tactical methods that emphasize eliminating non-value-added activities (waste) while delivering quality products on time at less cost with greater efficiency. The project was launched following the guidelines and support of Walmart in Jinnat Fashions Ltd. and various methods were implemented for the garments cutting, sewing, and finishing operations. Replication of the practices are ongoing at other garments and non-garments units including fabric knitting, fabric dyeing and finishing, and garments printing.

IDEA CLUB



DBL encourages ideas from any employee, regardless of their designation. Their efforts are recognized through a monthly recognition system: the “Employee of the Month”. In 2015, a yearly recognition system was launched as well, named the “Employee of the Year”. The program has been inaugurated in the knitting section and has been replicated for other units too. This encourages employees to work at their full potential and gives them a feeling of fairness as every employee has an equal opportunity at obtaining this reward.



315

Employee of the Month presented since 2016-17

QUALITY CONTROL (QC) CIRCLES



The Quality Control (QC) Circles promote employee engagement in workplace decision making. The bottom-up approach to quality empowers employees and workers to make effective decisions which influence production directly. Each of the different operations has their own QC Circles. These teams have participated in both national and international QC Circle competitions and won the highest recognitions on multiple occasions.



122

QC Circles in different units of DBL Group up from 2 in 2014

Resource saving



EFFICIENT MACHINERIES



DBL believes in investing in the best quality machines as these not only provide longevity but also resource saving. We have installed state-of-the-art dyeing machines that consume 50% less water in comparison to the average dyeing machines. This in turn has a direct effect on the receding water table and energy consumption and the associated carbon emissions.



REDUCED WATER CONSUMPTION



Water consumption in the fabric dyeing process has been reduced from 120 liters per kg of fabric to 55 liters per kg. Less water directly impacts the consumption of dyes, chemicals, steam and electricity and reduction in waste water discharge. As such the environment impact is reduced and production cost is also lower. In 2019-20, a total of 5,463,298 cubic meters of water were used in the different operations.

OTHER WATER SAVING PRACTICES

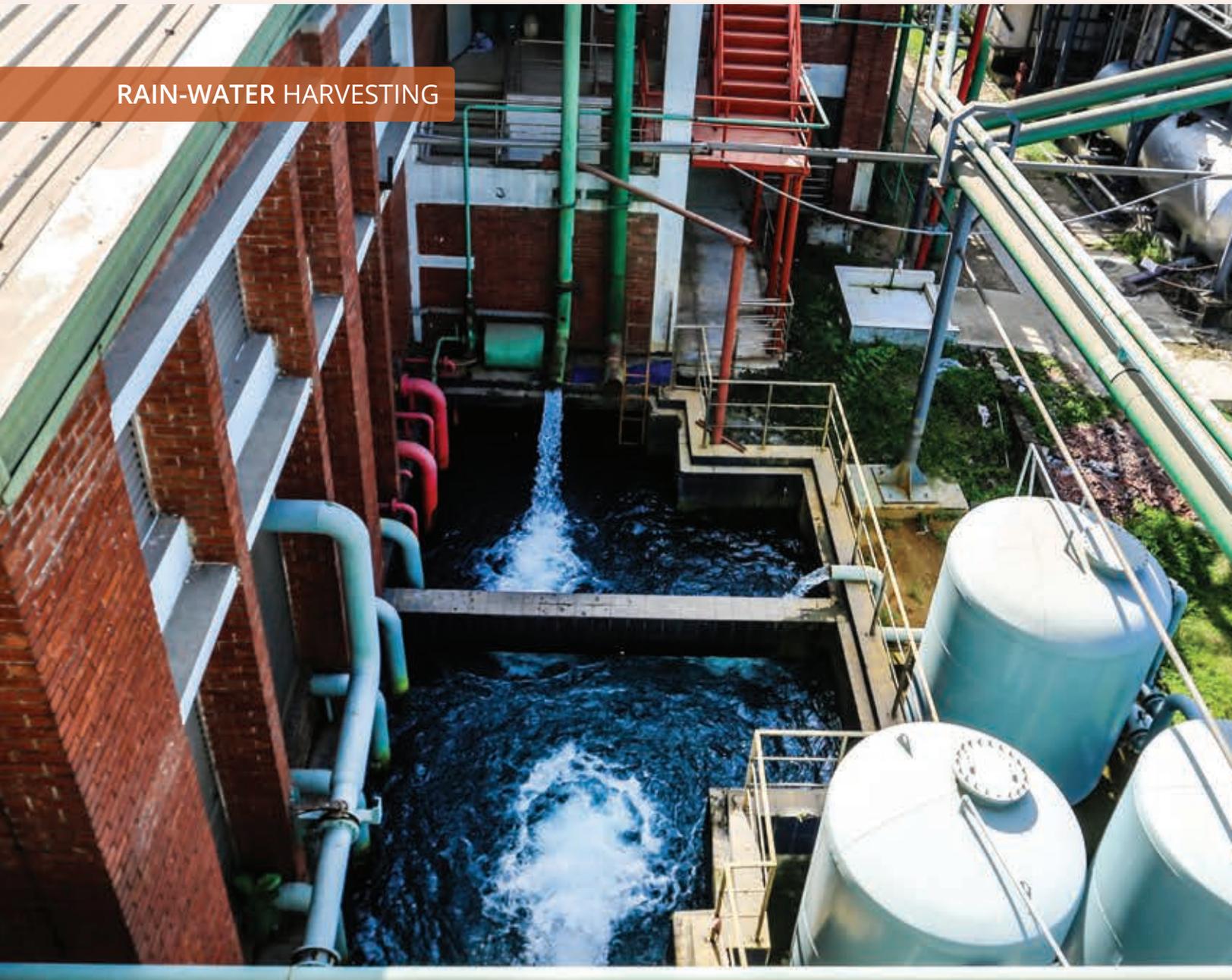


9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



- Rain-water harvesting
- Low-liquor ratio machines which contribute to up to 46% lower water consumption
- Repair leaking taps
- Educate staff on saving water
- Replace water taps without aerators by taps with aerators
- Replace single flush cisterns with dual flush
- Reusing hot water from boilers

RAIN-WATER HARVESTING



ENERGY MANAGEMENT



Energy is an essential point of the industrial sector to achieve sustainability as it is directly related to financial matters and global climate change. Energy consumption within the organization is monitored and tracked to reduce wastage of the energy. The following steps are currently implemented to reduce energy consumption:

- Preparation of energy management policy
- Collecting consumption of water, steam, diesel, gas and electricity along with monthly production
- Benchmarking and regulating energy consumption in consultation with the production team by doing process re-engineering and innovations
- Reducing carbon emission
- Reducing diesel consumption in generators
- Taking initiative to reduce energy consumption by choosing alternative sources of non-renewable resources
- Training employees on energy and environmental aspects within the industry
- Using Exhaust Gas Boilers

In 2019-20, 57,238,014 cubic meters of natural gas and 4,759 cubic meters of diesel have been used. For transportation, 1,003,873 cubic meters of natural gas, 573 cubic meters of diesel and 179 cubic meters of octane were used. A cumulative total of 145 kW solar power generation has been set up in multiple facilities which in 2019-20 generated approximately 116,780 kWh power. Further renewable energy projects will be implemented in the coming years.

SERVO MOTORS



We are using sewing machines with energy efficient servo motors instead of the traditional clutch motors in the sewing lines. Servo motors consume electricity only when the machine needle is active whereas the clutch motor consumes electricity even in standby mode. The remaining clutch motors will be replaced as soon as the machines are out of order.

ENERGY EFFICIENT MACHINERIES



High-end energy efficient capital machineries from Europe, USA and Japan are used in our production processes. These world class machineries have greatly reduced the energy consumption for different production processes by up to 15%. As an example, the machines in the Spinning Mill procured to date provide significantly high efficiencies. The Programmable Logic Control (PLC) systems allow the machines to make the necessary adjustments and thereby provide significant energy savings. Some of the other features of our energy efficient and environment friendly machines are as follows:

- The dyeing machines have individual heat recovery unit resulting in lower power consumption and energy saving by 15%
- Water consumption saving of 20% compared to normal dyeing machines, which in turn reduces the need for water extraction
- Heat recovery from Captive Power Plant is providing energy saving of about 15%

OTHER ENERGY SAVING PRACTICES



Hot Water recovery
(lowering the consumption of fossil fuel)



Reducing light intensity in certain areas



Switching off unnecessary lights during day time



Regular maintenance



Recovering steam condensates

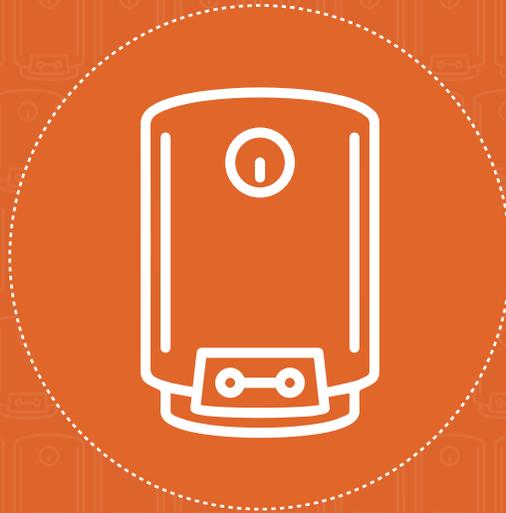


Purchasing Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) in-built air compressors



Replacing T8 and T5 lights with the more efficient LEDs (light emitting diodes)

Exhaust Gas Boilers (EGBs)



An **Exhaust Gas Boiler (EGB)** is a form of heat recovery system which uses the heat generated from the generators. The heat is collected from the generator exhausts, and this is used to heat up the boilers instead of consuming extra fuel. Multiple boilers have been installed in different complexes.

These EGBs saved up to **6.5 million** normal cubic meters of natural gas saving in 2019-20 alone. More EGBs will be installed to further reduce the impact on the environment, especially in terms of carbon emissions as this is significantly lower due to the lower consumption of fossil fuels.



CHAPTER 4



PRODUCT

We continuously work towards improving the product quality and the processes that go into making the final finished product to minimize the negative impact on the environment and the consumers.



“

*If a design is to be ecologically responsible,
it must be independent of concern for
the gross national product.*

Victor Papanek, Advocate of Socially & Ecologically Responsible Design

”

PRODUCT



DBL Group is continuously working towards improving all aspects of their product lifecycle. We work on improving the quality of the products, and all the processes that go into making the final finished product so that we can ensure the mitigation of negative impacts on the environment as well as on the consumers. Our R&D Department is actively involved in creating new products as well as researching to improve the processes associated with our existing products.

INNOVATION IN YARN PRODUCTION



Our Spinning Mill makes use of different processes that reduces the consumption of cotton. Recycled textile materials are used instead of raw cotton. The yarns for loop and brush use reduces the consumption of raw materials by up to 60%.

Up to 30% recycled materials can be used with virgin fiber to produce ornamented products known as Cotton Neppy Mélange yarns. Different colored neps (produced from recycled polyester) are visible in the yarn body and this works as ornamentation on the fabric surface. Mixing of spinning waste produces Snow yarns, which create a snow effect in the finished fabrics which takes its place in the new fashion trade.

Furthermore, in collaboration with the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC), traceability is being introduced for the viscose used in the processes. The FSC promotes the responsible management of the world's forests. In addition, under the Global Recycled Standard (GRS) certification, recycled polyester blended yarn is being produced to create a variety of sustainable products.

Currently, our Spinning Mill is producing 18% of such yarns. As part of the 2020 Goal, it targeted to have 20% of total production made from these recycled products by the year 2020.



Innovating
since 2012



Dedicated
Yarn Development
Team



Analyzing
special fabrics

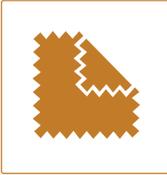


Researching
on production



300+
samples created
every month

BETTER COTTON INITIATIVE



The program has been adopted to support the global standards for Better Cotton and to promote our commitment to make global cotton production better for the producers, environment and the sector. 60% of the total yarn production is from BCI.



ORGANIC COTTON



It is an initiative to reduce the negative impact on the environment and consumers. Organic cotton is imported from India to process organic yarn. This comprises about 35% of the total yarn production.

OEKO-TEX STANDARD 100: PRODUCT CLASS 1



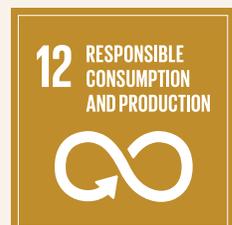
For our Spinning, Dyeing, Printing and Garments processes, we follow the Restricted Substances List (RSL) specified by Product Class 1 of the Oeko-Tex Standard 100 certification.

GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD (GOTS)



The GOTS certification is a worldwide leading textile processing standard for organic fibers. This includes ecological and social criteria, backed up by independent certification of the entire textile supply chain.

YARNS FROM PLASTIC



With H&M, a project was initiated focusing on recycling. Pet bottles from Coca-Cola are used by Maliha Poly Tex Fiber Industry Ltd. to form polyester fibers. These were then used by our Spinning Mill, Matin Spinning Mills Ltd, along with cotton to form special yarns. These yarns in turn were used to produce apparels, made from recycled pet bottles.

EARTH COLOR / NATURAL COLOR DYEING



DBL Washing Plant has introduced earth colors, thus extracting from nature to fashion. Earth Color dyeing is a new method of creating warm shades from nature. The Earth Colors are made available from a range of seven dyes that are made from wastes left over by the non-edible agricultural and herbal industries, covering a palette of natural shades for cellulosic based fibers such as cotton, viscose, linen, bamboo, kapok, etc.

ECONOMIC SUMMARY



Economic summary All amounts in million US\$ (USD 1 = 83.75 BDT)

2019-20

Revenue (gross)	554.61
Other income	3.73
Direct economic value generated	558.34
Operating costs	396.97
Employee wages and benefits	76.69
Payments to providers of capital	36.34
Payments to government	6.29
Community investments	0.13
Economic value distributed	516.42
Economic value retained (direct economic value generated less economic value distributed)	41.91

Tax rates

- Garments: 12%
- Textiles: 15%
- Corporate: 32.50%

DBL'S APPAREL EXPORT OVERVIEW



\$283,071,886
exports in 2019-20

6.41% More exports
than in 2018-19

EUROPE	AFRICA	ASIA & OCEANIA	NORTH AMERICA	SOUTH AMERICA
AUSTRIA BELGIUM CROATIA DENMARK FRANCE GERMANY GREECE ITALY NETHERLANDS NORWAY POLAND RUSSIA SERBIA SPAIN SWEDEN TURKEY UK	MOROCCO SOUTH AFRICA	AUSTRALIA CHINA HONG KONG INDIA INDONESIA JAPAN MALAYSIA NEW ZEALAND PHILLIPPINES SINGAPORE SOUTH KOREA TAIWAN THAILAND UAE	CANADA EL SALVADOR MEXICO USA	ARGENTINA BOLIVIA BRAZIL CHILE ECUADOR PANAMA PARAGUAY PERU URUGUAY VENZUELA

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY



The apparel manufacturing industry continues to contribute to Bangladesh's total exports. However, the impact of COVID-19 was well felt: the exports in 2019-20 dropped from \$34.13 billion to \$27.95 billion^[1], a drop of 18.12%. The knitwear exports specifically dropped from \$16.89 billion to \$13.91 billion^[1], a drop of 17.65%.

DBL Group was one of the few companies which managed to increase the exports as it rose by 6.41%. Having been able to strictly undertake proper safety measures (detailed further in Chapter 7 of this report), DBL has been able to continue its operations following the country-wide lockdown which contributed greatly to the success. Constant expansions and a variety of sustainability initiatives have further contributed to the rise.

Apart from the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry in Bangladesh has changed significantly and is changing still. With the inclusion of health and safety, focus on social and environmental impact is being addressed as well, even from the end of the buyers. The finished product is now being tracked way back to the cotton fields and all raw materials used, including the chemicals, in the entire supply chain. Companies are now to report on how they are addressing social issues including the communities that they are operating in. The end-product is now a socially and environmentally addressed one. More companies have now started with sustainability reporting which contribute to providing transparency and trust.

Economic sustainability is also being addressed through these social and environmental ventures. In our previous report, some discussions were made regarding these, with a focus on the environmental side. From the social side, the direct business impacts occur as there is increased production. For instance, an in-house study showed that female Supervisors are about 3% more efficient than the males and hence this has a direct relation to increased production. Indirect impacts include decreased turnover and increased retention.

[1] https://www.bgmea.com.bd/page/Export_Performance, Accessed: 26 June 2021



USE OF MATERIALS



Depending on the different production processes, different raw materials are used. All input materials are weighed and tracked to control unwanted wastage. Systems such as Lean Manufacturing, Kaizen and 5S are included to make proper use of materials thereby reducing waste. Electronic tabs are used for data input with in-house developed software and hence moving a step closer to paperless systems.

External assessments by government and private organizations are made on noise and air pollutions and the quality of wastewater before discharging. DBL performs its own assessments as well. All recommendations are implemented to reduce impact on the environment.

■ The primary raw materials for the different production processes

PROCESS	INPUT MATERIAL(S)	OUTPUT FROM PROCESS
Spinning	Raw cotton	Yarns
Fabric Knitting	Yarns	Fabrics
Fabric dyeing and finishing	Fabrics, dyes and chemicals	Dyed fabrics
All-over printing	Fabrics, dyes and chemicals	Printed fabrics
Garments manufacturing	Fabrics, accessories	Finished garments
Garments printing	Finished garments, dyes and chemicals	Printed garments
Garments washing	Finished garments	Washed garments
Corrugated carton	Cardboard	Cartons

■ Materials used by weight or volume

MATERIALS	UNIT	AMOUNT
Cotton	kg	16,944,553
Yarn	kg	27,655,910
Fabric	kg	50,802,048
Dyes	kg	805,045
Chemicals	kg	8,684,558
Salt	kg	8,061,941
Cut panel pieces	pieces	55,693,457
Paper	kg	6,089,063



WASTE MANAGEMENT



All waste in DBL are tracked and monitored regularly. Non-hazardous and hazardous are given to government authorized waste collectors for proper disposal. Different types of waste are disposed of in different ways. Before disposing any waste, they are categorized according to their characteristics. In general, they may be categorized as hazardous and non-hazardous.

■ Category wise list of wastes in different sections:

SECTION/ AREA	TYPES OF WASTE	
	Non-hazardous	Hazardous
Cutting	Cotton fabric, paper, carton, fabric rolls	Synthetic fabric, poly bag, cutting knife, scissors, blade
Sewing	Cotton fabric, cotton thread, cotton label, paper	Synthetic fabric, synthetic thread, synthetic label, poly, cutter, scissors, needle, plastic cone, button, zipper, rivet
Finishing	Cotton thread, cartons	Needle, poly, used gum tape, tag pin, empty bottle of spot lifter
Medical Centre	Gauge, unused cotton	Syringe, synthetic packaging materials of medicine, empty, medicine bottle
Canteen	Gauge, unused cotton	Plastic packets, water bottle etc.
Lab	Cotton, paper boxes, etc.	Detergent (liquid and solid)
Common	Papers and others	Tube lights, electric bulbs, oil, electric wires, rubber mats, metal, empty chemical drums

■ Total weight of waste by type:

TYPE OF WASTE	UNIT	AMOUNT
Cotton	kg	101,497
Yarn	kg	4,087
Fabric	kg	13,621,071

There are 3 separate dustbins clearly labeled set in the medical center for depositing all types of bottle/strips, cotton/bandages and syringes/needles respectively. All concerned staff are instructed to deposit waste in those specific dustbins.

AWARDS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS



DBL Group has received multiple recognitions, both locally and internationally. The awards won in the last three years include the following:

1. Platinum Awards received by all three teams during the 45th International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) in 2020
2. 1st HSBC Business Excellence Awards 2019
3. 6th ICSB National Award 2018
4. ICMAB Best Corporate Award 2018
5. Tom Tailor Sustainability Award, 2019
6. UN Global Compact 2019 SDG Pioneer for the empowerment of working women
7. Puma Sustainability Award 2019
8. Business Call to Action (BCtA) 2019 Impact Champion
9. National Export Trophy 2014-15 (received in 2018)
10. Superbrands Award, 2018
11. 8th HSBC Export Excellence Awards, 2018, DBL Group
12. Honorable Mention, Bangladesh Innovation Award 2018 under Best Social Innovation
13. Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) Champions of Disability Inclusive Employment Award, 2018
14. 5th ICSB National Award 2017 for Excellence in Corporate Governance
15. ICMAB Best Corporate Award, 2017
16. National Export Trophy, 2015-16 (received in 2018)
17. 5th HSBC Climate Awards (received in 2017)
18. ICSB National Award: Gold (received in 2017)



■ **DBL has also received the following special recognitions in the last three years:**

1. Recognized by the **UN Development Programme** Impact Bangladesh for being the number one among the Top 10 most SDG engaged companies of Bangladesh
2. Recognition by the **United Nations Global Compact in “SDG Industry Matrix”** under SDG-1: No Poverty, for the Bandhan Fair Price Shop and under SDG-5: Gender Equality, for the Women Empowerment Program
3. Participated in the inaugural **UN Global Compact Young SDG Innovators Programme (YSIP)** and was **the only country from Bangladesh** that presented during the SDG Futures Lab held online in June 2020. The entire session’s video can be accessed using this link <https://youtu.be/MIVldBLcg4Q>
4. Featured under a **full chapter** in the publication “Sustainable Consumption and Production, Volume II: Circular Economy and Beyond”, edited by Ranjula Bali Swain and Susanne Sweet from the Stockholm School of Economics. The chapter, entitled “**Social Sustainability from Upstream: Important Takeaways from DBL Group’s People Programmes in the Bangladeshi Apparel Supply Chain**” was written by Dr. Enrico Fontana, PhD, Lecturer, Management and Organization in Sasin School of Management in the Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and Affiliated Researcher in the Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden. The chapter abstract and other details are available on the following webpage: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-55285-5_13. This was the **first time a dedicated chapter on DBL** was published on a research publication.



5. As part of the Impact Champions Programme, the **Business Call to Action (BCtA)** published **a case study on DBL Group’s Bandhan Fair Price Shop**. The full case study is available in the following link:



<https://www.businesscalltoaction.org/sites/default/files/case-studies/UNDP-Impact%20Measurement%20Case%20Study-DBL%20Group-D3.pdf>

5. Received the score of “C” in the recently released report by the **CDP**, which is a score in the “Awareness” band. DBL is **amongst 17% of companies that reached Awareness level** in the Activity Group of Textiles & fabric goods. This is **higher than both the Asia regional average of D and the Textiles & fabric goods sector average of D**.
7. DBL being recognized as one of the **100 Most Powerful Companies of Bangladesh** by Arthakantha, jointly published by Arthakantha Publications and Business America Magazine Inc

PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY



CUSTOMER HEALTH, SAFETY AND PRIVACY

DBL respects the privacy of all customers and henceforth there has been no complaints regarding breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data. DBL does not engage itself into incidents of non-compliance with regulations and voluntary codes concerning product and service information and labeling.

Additionally, there were no incidents of non-compliance with any regulations or codes that deal with marketing communications, including advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. Furthermore, DBL incurred no fines for non-compliance with laws and regulations concerning the provision and use of products and services.

■ DBL ensures the following for each product created:



Pull-testing of buttons to avoid choking hazard



Button strength test for children-wear



Fusing process for embroidery to safeguard human skin



Created according to brand specifications



Restrictions on use of certain substances and methods

E-flow technology in Washing



The **E-flow technology** in our **Washing Plant** uses pressurized air where dyes and chemicals dilute with less water and are put into a tank. The machines spray the diluted dyes and chemicals with the help of pressurized air through a nozzle into machine like dew drops. The advantage of this process is no water medium are needed for dyeing, whereas conventional methods need at least **10 liters** of water to process per kg articles of clothing in every step of the dyeing and washing processes.



CHAPTER 5



COMMUNITY

We believe that together with our employees, customers, business partners and other stakeholders, we can create changes for the betterment of the community and the environment.



“

*The idea of service leads
to community.*

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Architect

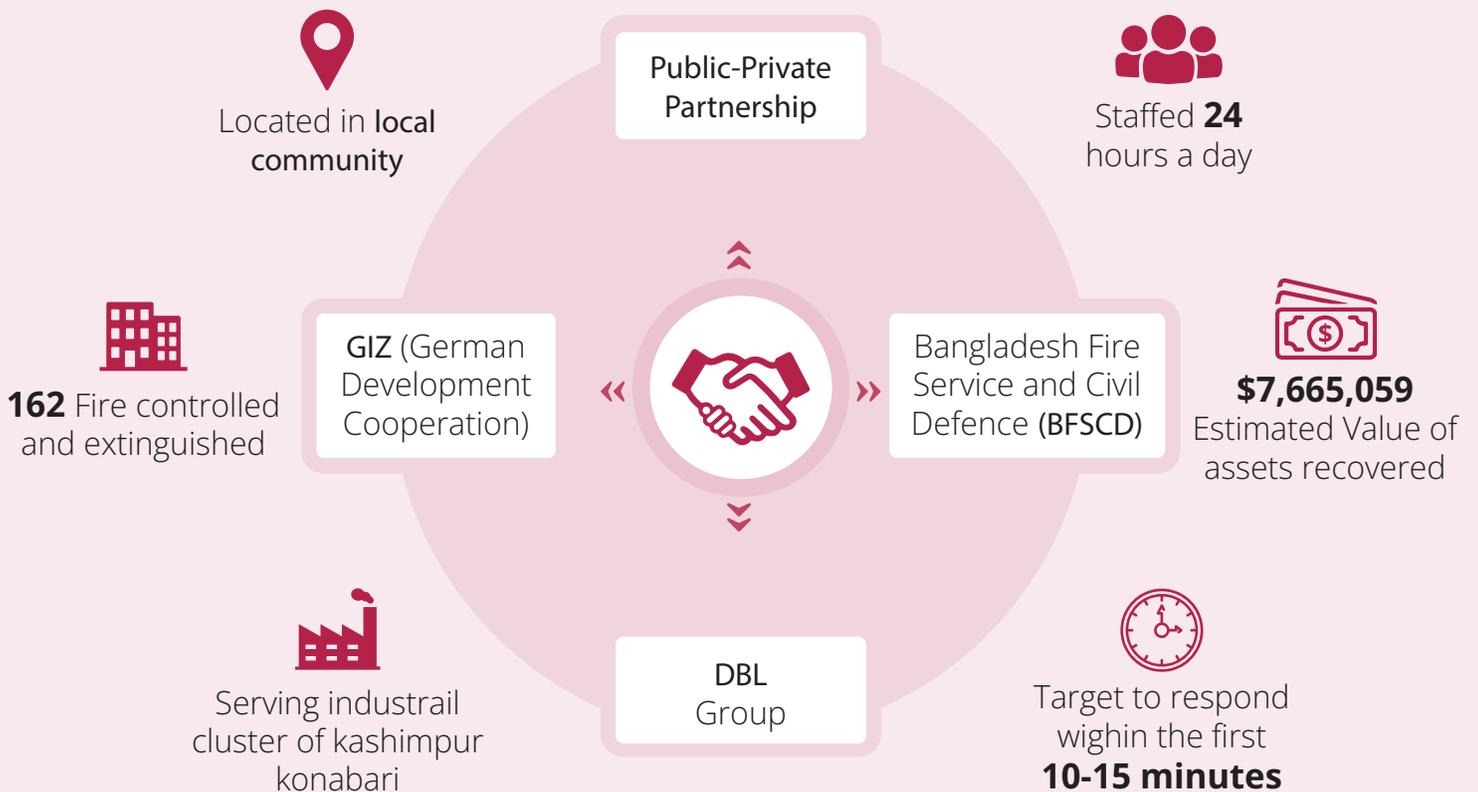
”

COMMUNITY



We believe that together with the collective effort of our employees, customers, business partners and other stakeholders, we can create real and long-term changes for the betterment of the community and the environment. This impact can be extended from the livelihood of our employees to the development of the society where we conduct our business.

MINI FIRE STATION



ROLES OF PARTNERS



COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS



DBL continues to hold Community Knowledge Exchange Programs in the different communities where DBL's operations are taking place. These programs focus on a wide variety of issues that DBL has learnt through the "People" programs (Chapter 2), including the following.



238

Participants in different topics



27

Environmental issues



22

Maternity protection & breastfeeding



53

Fire safety through social dialogue



40

Women empowerment



36

Reproductive health



30

Financial literacy



30

Personal hygiene for women

COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUPPORT



As part of endorsing the need for achieving SDG-4: Quality Education in Bangladesh, DBL Group has been involved with multiple initiatives. A four-storied building has been constructed by DBL for Hatimara School and College. Computers with audio-visual systems were installed to equip the college auditorium with the latest classroom facilities. The building can accommodate about 1,000 students. DBL also donated 100 sets of benches to Sardagonj Government Primary School to accommodate 300 students. A renovation of an existing building in the school has also been done to further facilitate the students.



INDUSTRY-BASED TRAINING CENTER



With a vision to establish a Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Center in the industry cluster, the Industry-based Training (IBT) Center was initiated in DBL's spinning factory complex. The Center has already developed training modules and the curricula: these have been submitted to the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) for accreditation. The BTEB is a government board which is responsible for regulating, developing, and certifying technical education throughout Bangladesh.

An overview of the activities of the IBT Center is shown below.

FEATURES OF IBT



Summary of Industry Based Skill Development Training Matin Spinning Mills Ltd:



Duration of SEIP* project:
Oct 2019 to Dec 2020



250 workers trained Up
(**196** female, **54** male)



Access of community
people for skill training



Productivity
increased by **19%**



Workers migration
decreased by **3%**



Rejection
decreased by **43%**

*Skills for Employment Investment Program

COMMUNITY HEALTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



150

community people were provided free treatment and blood grouping in 2019

To further focus on SDG-3, Good Health and Well-Being, DBL is continuing with Community Health Development Programs in the different communities where DBL's operations are taking place. Children, women, men, and the elderly of the community visit to take free treatments.

COMMUNITY BEAUTY PARLORS: "LOOK GOOD, FEEL GOOD"



DBL has also formed a partnership with the NGO Shishu Polli Plus. A Beauty Parlor was set up in the local community of Tepirbari, Mawna. The facility was inaugurated on 19 June 2018 by Ms. Trisha Silvester – Chair of Trustees of Shishu Polli Plus and the Head of Sustainability of DBL Group. DBL is bearing the rent and utilities expenses. For the female workers of DBL Group, Shishu Polli Plus is providing special discounts on the different beauty treatments provided by the parlor. DBL has also collaborated with Ha-Meem Beauty Parlor in the Joydebpur community. All the workers of DBL are receiving a flat 50% off from the different services in these parlors.

OTHER INITIATIVES



3,800 saplings planted in the local community since 2018



Discussion session with community to prevent harassment of women, mugging and substance abuse



Involved with UNICEF for improving community education and sanitation systems

WAGE AND ITS IMPACTS



ENTRY LEVEL WAGE

DBL Group always abides by the minimum wage as set by the government. The levels of wages are a common standard for the industry regardless of gender or area of operation: this is constant throughout Bangladesh. Each worker is recruited in one of seven grades (apart from trainees). For all grades, DBL pays at a higher rate than the minimum: experience is also considered in relevant cases – the lowest grade usually comprises people with little or no prior experience. The surplus amount depends on the amount of prior experience the recruit has.

SENSITIVITY OF WAGE ISSUE



The Bandhan Fair Price Shop of DBL Group plays an important role towards the positive contribution through its product lines. Products from reputed brands such as Unilever are available for the workers at prices which are more affordable to them: hence they now have access to better quality as well as healthier products. Items include food, cooking oil, toiletries, house-keeping goods, tea and beverages, along with others, including sanitary napkins.

An inclusive business model, Bandhan was established as a strategic approach. Back in 2007-08 when the global financial crisis affected everyone, DBL decided to increase the salaries of our workers by 15%. This had a negative effect as the other industries in the cluster started to demand the same in their factories. In response, Bandhan was established which not only reduced the expenditure burden of the workers, but also prevented any unrest. Bandhan acts as an inclusive business model since it includes the



SOCIETY



LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Apart from the machinery used in the different operations, DBL procures all other products and services from Dhaka. When DBL began its operations in Kashimpur and Mawna (Gazipur), the entire area/locale was undeveloped. The progression was escalated by industries, and the locality has gone through a significant transformation. Popular local branded shops and local and global branded products are now available in the community.

DBL Group has also contributed to the economy through the following ways:



24/7 medical facilities for workers and consultation services for family members



Providing access to medicine at manufacturer's price for workers and their families



Conducting surveys to understand the needs of the community



Financial assistance to various hospitals



Contribution to educational institutions in the community

ANTI-CORRUPTION



DBL has no confirmed incidents of corruption and has not made any financial and in-kind political contributions. In addition, there have been no legal actions for anti-competitive behaviors, antitrust and monopoly practices. An always compliant organization, DBL did not incur any fines or been involved in non-monetary sanctions for non-compliance with laws and regulations. The reputation of DBL Group for lawful and responsible business behavior is of prime importance and is one of its greatest assets.

DBL Group is committed to the prevention, deterrence and detention of corrupt business practices, fraudulent activities and bribery. DBL Group has zero tolerance toward any unethical business practice. DBL Group has strictly enforced policies on anti-corruption, anti-fraud and bribery which apply to all businesses within DBL Group. The management seeks to promote the adoption of regulations consistent with the principles set out in the different company policies on anti-corruption.

It is required that all personnel:



Act honestly and with integrity and safeguard the company resources for which they are responsible



Respect customers, suppliers, and other parties to achieve DBL's objectives by conducting business in an ethical, lawful, and professional manner.

At DBL, we have an effective compliance program which includes but is not limited to, the following components:



Communicating code of conduct to employees;



Reporting and investigating any allegation of fraud, bribery, and other corrupt practices;



Appropriate disciplinary procedures for employees who are found to have engaged in such practices; and



Monitoring of the effectiveness of such controls

DBL Group and each of its businesses take the appropriate steps to ensure all its employees and those acting on its behalf:



Meet all legal and regulatory requirements governing the lawful and ethical conduct of business



Make all employees aware of their personal responsibilities and strictly adhere to this policy



Provide information to all employees and further guidance if they have any query or uncertainty regarding these requirements.

Innovation in Yarn Production



Our Spinning Mills makes use of **pre-consumer waste** to produce special yarns. This type of waste is generated from the Cutting process in the apparel manufacturing unit which are shredded using a special shredding machine in the **Spinning Mill**. The resultant fiber-like materials are then mixed with raw materials such as cotton in different proportions to form special mélange yarns. These yarns produce fabrics which consist of special shades, contributing to a new fashion trend.



CHAPTER 6



ENVIRONMENT

Environment is an integral part of our company, and we work to decrease carbon footprint, water consumption, and waste from our manufacturing processes.



“

We don't have to sacrifice a strong economy for a healthy environment.

Dennis Weaver, Actor

”

ENVIRONMENT



Environment is an integral part of our company, and we work to decrease carbon footprint, water consumption, and waste from our manufacturing processes. We dedicate ourselves in conserving energy, managing waste effectively and replenishing the environment to the best of our capacity.

PARTNERSHIP FOR CLEANER TEXTILE (PACT)



PaCT is a holistic program supporting textile wet processing factories to adapt to cleaner production. It has been established and monitored by International Finance Corporation (IFC) so that companies such as DBL can focus on climate change, resource efficiency, wastewater and hazardous chemical management. It engages with brands, government, communities, financial institutions, and other stakeholders in bringing about systematic, positive environmental change for the Bangladesh textile, including the workers and the communities of operations.

The Government of Bangladesh has set goals to shift to sustainable energy use in order to be in alignment with the SDGs. DBL Group has already transitioned into the second stage of PaCT and is working further towards SDG 6 (Clean Water, Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). To comply with PaCT II, DBL Group has installed 20 kW solar PV panels, replaced existing pumps to energy efficient pumps, installed E-flow technology in garments washing (which allows spraying of chemicals inside the washing machines), installed insulation in Exhaust Gas Boiler (EBG) surface and water feeding tanks, and taken on measures to ensure water recovery from the backwash process in the Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

SAVINGS FROM IMPLEMENTING PACT II



1,401,879
cubic meters
natural gas saving
per year



316,387
cubic meters
of water saving
per year



411
tons of chemical
saving per year

PACT II IMPLEMENTATIONS



Installation of 20 kW solar PV panel



Insulation of Exhaust Gas Boiler (EGB) surface and water feeding tanks



Replacement of existing pumps by energy efficient pumps



Water recovery from the backwash process in the Water Treatment Plant (WTP)



E-flow technology in garments washing which allows spraying of chemicals inside the washing machines

NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TEXTILE (NEST)



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



The NEST Program is designed to support a business unit's efforts to achieve long-term competitiveness, sustainability, and profitability. The focus is on reducing resource consumption and waste generation, improving chemical management, and eliminating the use and discharge of hazardous chemicals in textile production processes. The program is aligned with the Higg Facility Environmental Module (Higg FEM) requirements of the production units. The goals of the program include reduction of water, energy and GHG. This was implemented in DBL Group's Screen Printing unit, Thanbee Print World Ltd.

A summary of implementations and savings from NEST are shown below.

1. Installation of 20 KW solar power grid
2. Installation of air trigger nozzle at open air hose pipes
3. Insulation of boiler valve, EGB, and EGB header
4. Insulation of steam trap
5. Insulation of rear side of boiler
6. Tuning of burner of boiler
7. Repairing of leakages
8. Increasing reuse of ETP

SAVINGS FROM IMPLEMENTING NEST



1,521,889
kWh energy saving



32,803
cubic meters water saving

ZERO DISCHARGE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS (ZDHC)



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



The use of hazardous chemicals in the apparels and textile industries can significantly degrade nearby ecosystems if the chemicals are not managed properly. Not only are aquatic organisms at risk, but terrestrial species which are dependent on the water body for waters see significant negative impacts.

The Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) focuses on eliminating discharge of hazardous chemicals and adapting to best practices towards managing chemicals.

In 2011, a group of major apparel brands and retailers made a collective commitment to help lead the industry towards zero discharge of hazardous chemicals. Brands involved in this project are H&M, Esprit, G-Star and Puma. A "Joint Roadmap" was published in November 2011 which demonstrates the group's collaborative efforts in leading the apparel and footwear industry towards ZDHC for all products across all pathways by 2020.

THE ZDHC PROGRAM FOCUSES ON INPUT, PROCESS, AND OUTPUT CONTROLS:

INPUT

We are required to maintain 100% MRSL compliance and disclose chemical consumption in chemical module.

PROCESS

We are required to conduct chemical management audit

OUTPUT

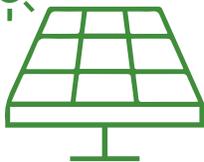
We are required to disclose wastewater test report in wastewater module.

EFFLUENT TREATMENT PLANT





RENEWABLE ENERGY USAGE



118,310

Kilowatt-hour power generated from solar panels in 2019-20

The use of renewable energy, such as solar power reduces the impact on the environment. This is because this type of power generation reduces air pollution, helps to slow climate change, reduces carbon footprint, and reduces resilience on fossil fuels; thereby often referred to as “clean” energy. In terms of business and environment both, this adoption has proved to

be quite beneficial. Thus, with aid from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and other relevant stakeholders, DBL has already researched, and is continuing to conduct research on the feasibility of using solar panels.

Rooftop solar power panels have been set up in multiple facilities which in 2019-20 generated 118,310 kWh power. Further renewable energy projects will be implemented in the coming years. Targeting 2020, DBL aimed to use up to 10% solar power for all processes: which was a highly ambitious target. Further feasibility studies are ongoing to significantly increase solar power generation.

TREE PLANTATION PROGRAM



Tree plantation benefits the environment, boosts wildlife, strengthens communities, grows the economy, and protects the future. A method of offsetting carbon emissions is by planting trees. Added trees absorb and store carbon dioxide emissions that are contributing to global warming.

Recognizing all this, DBL has already started planting trees and has goals of expanding this range throughout the years. The aimed regions include operation sites and beyond to maximize benefits to our workers, the community, and the ecosystem. A total of the 9,179 trees have been planted by DBL Group till 2020.



9,179
trees planted
till 2020

OTHER SAVING PRACTICES



Exhaust Gas Boiler
6.5 million Normal cubic meters natural gas saving in 2019-20



Stenter machine heat recovery
1,741,816 kWh energy saved every year



Hot water recovery
1,051,200 liters of diesel saving per year



Rain Water Harvesting Plant
24,820 cubic meters ground water saving in 2019-20



Condensed water recovery
3,765 tons of GHG emission reduced per year

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



DBL management is committed to manage and protect environment as an integral part of its business. The company prefers to run its businesses in a responsible, environmentally sound, and sustainable manner by implementing effective environmental policy and procedures in all the factories. Several sustainability projects relating to environmental management system have been and are being implemented.

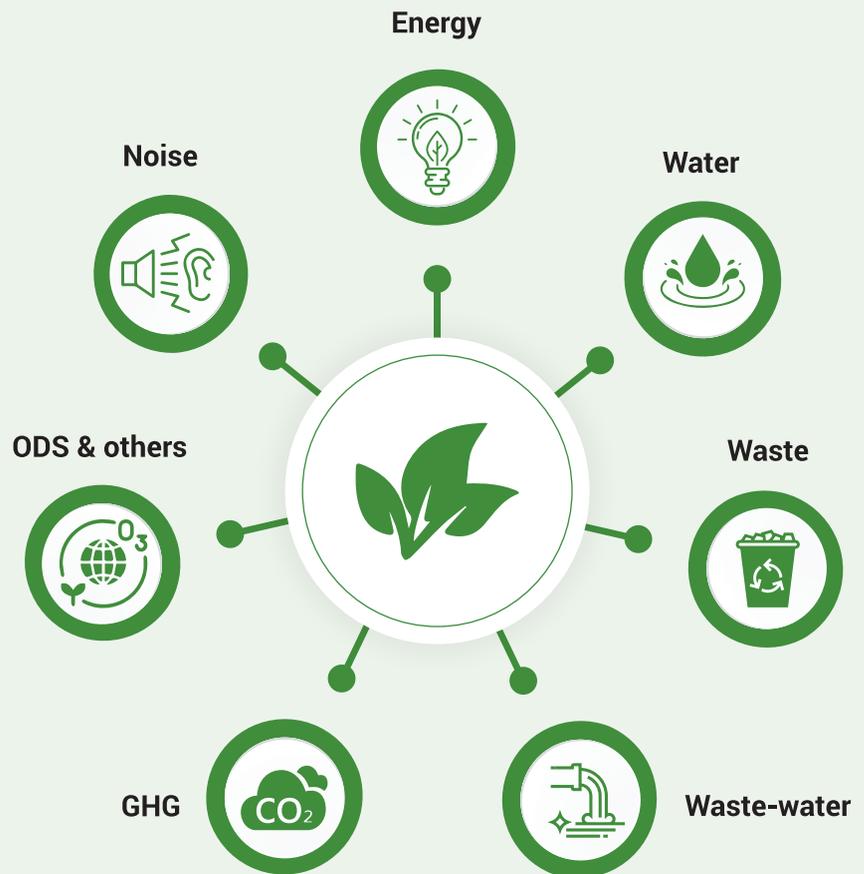
To reduce environmental footprint, DBL Group has formed a team for Environmental Management System (EMS). Standard environmental policy and Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) policy have been formulated which addresses management of the following.

These guiding activities help us address environmental challenges such as biodiversity conservation. These are given priority to ensure environmental responsibilities and continual improvement to reduce environmental impacts. As minimization of pollution is addressed, the organization can ensure sustainability of the environment as an integral part of the business.

For continuous improvement, DBL also assess performance through the Higg Facility Environmental Module (Higg FEM) of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC).

We carry out routine maintenance to ensure that effluent treatment plants and waste management systems are working at standard capacities. Suppliers for our company are also required to follow environmental standards which are verified on a regular basis. Our commitment to achieving high environmental standards encourages our buyers to hold on to good business relations with us.

We work to decrease carbon footprint, water consumption, and waste from our manufacturing process. Our dedication in conserving energy, managing waste effectively, and replenishing the environment to the best of our capacity helps us in our strive towards SDG-13: Climate Action.



EMISSIONS



Emissions include greenhouse gases (GHGs) which are emitted from the different machines used in the operations and from vehicles. This consists primarily of carbon dioxide and is calculated using IFC and GHG Protocol guidelines. From the different operational facilities, 120,728 tons of carbon dioxide emissions were recorded in 2019-20. From the transportation services, the emissions are from compressed natural gas, octane, and diesel used by the vehicles. In 2019-20, 3,386 tons of carbon dioxide emissions were recorded from the transportation services.

GHGs are related with energy production and reducing energy consumption helps with reduction of GHGs, thus contributing to minimization of climate effects.

To ensure effective monitoring and minimizing of energy consumption and GHG emission, DBL's practices include the following:

- Maintaining an energy usage inventory (e.g. energy consumption data such as gas bills, electricity bills, and fuel use in vehicles)
- Checking electricity lines, gas lines, oil tankers and generator connections
- Maintaining GHG emission inventory including direct and indirect energy consumption.

EFFLUENTS



DBL Group currently has two biological Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) in the fabric dyeing facility. These ETPs are for treating the wastewater generated from the fabric dyeing and all-over printing operations. The first ETP, with the capacity of 4,000 cubic meters, was taken as a benchmark by the Department of Environment (DoE) of the government of Bangladesh. To meet the extended capacity of the dyeing process, a second of 7,500 cubic meters ETP was constructed and went into operation in November 2014. The cumulative total of 11,500 cubic meters is among the largest ETPs in the country that is under a single factory complex. DBL also constructed another biological ETP in the screen-printing facility, which went into operation in February 2016. In 2019-20, a total of 3,305,472 cubic meters of effluents were generated, which is 7% less than the effluents generated in 2018-19.// Despite growing operations, DBL Group is constantly adopting techniques to reduce the effluent discharged even further.

CDP SCORE

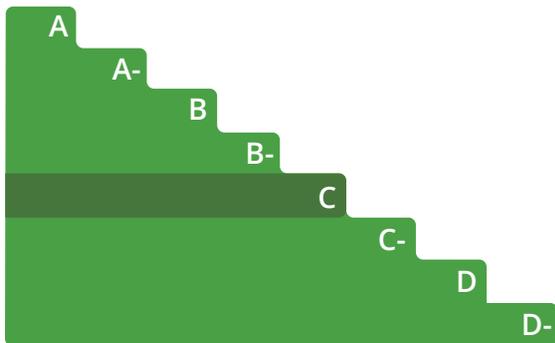


DBL Group received the score of “C” in the recently released report by the CDP, which is a score in the “Awareness” band. CDP is a not-for-profit charity which runs the global disclosure system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to manage their environmental impacts. DBL is amongst 17% of companies that reached Awareness level in the Activity Group of Textiles & fabric goods. This is higher than both the Asia regional average of D and the Textiles & fabric goods sector average of D.

CDP SCORE OF DBL GROUP



UNDERSTANDING CDP SCORE



AVERAGE PERFORMANCE



Asia



Textiles &
fabric goods



Global
Average

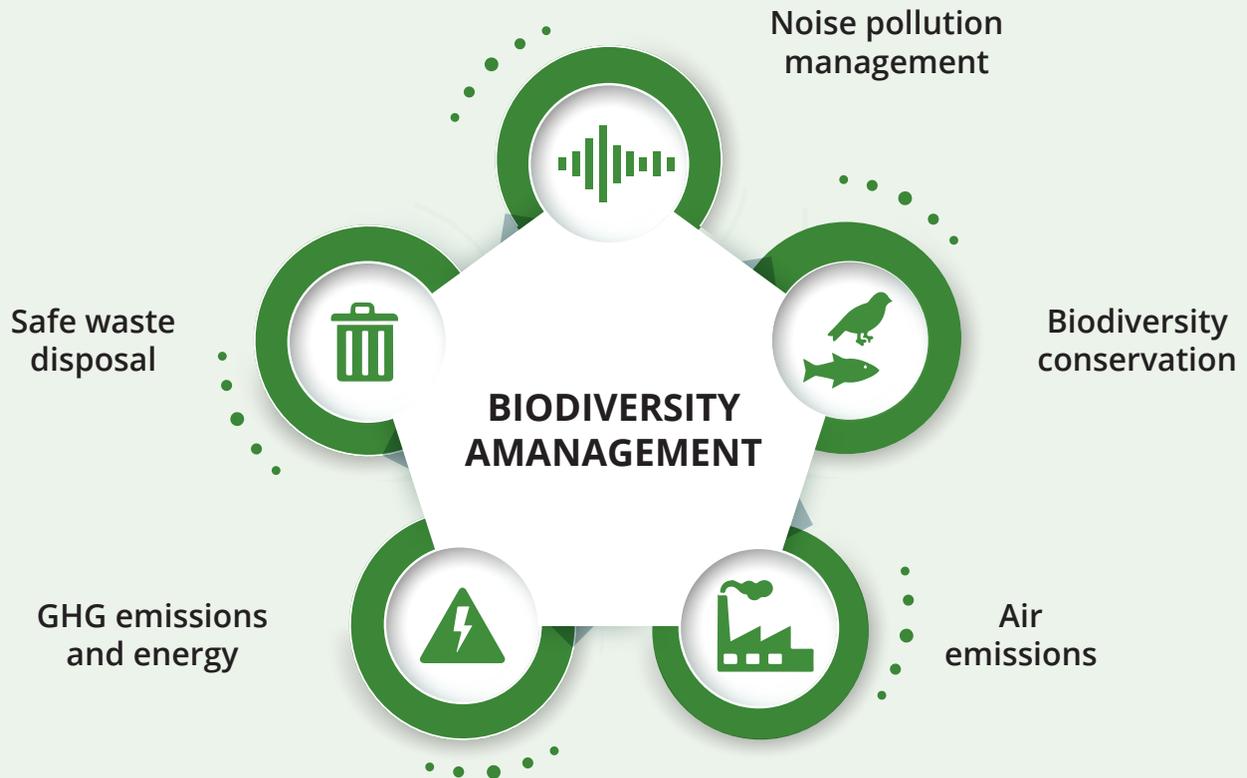
DBL Group received a C which is the Awareness band. This is higher than the Asia regional average of D, and higher than Textiles & fabric goods sector average of D.

Leadership (A/A-): Implementing current best practices
Management (B/B-): Taking coordinated action on climate issues
Awareness (C/C-): Knowledge of impacts on, and of, climate issues
Disclosure (D/D-): Transparent about climate issues.

BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT



Environmental impact assessment is done for every facility and preventive actions are taken against the possible impact. This assessment takes the following into consideration:



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ON COMMUNITY & BIODIVERSITY



To minimize the impact on communities, the industries of DBL are situated in remote locations. Potentiality, however, is still present to create negative impacts on the local communities.



These include the following:

1. Noises from machines, particularly generators, tend to reach out of the factory premises. Quality machines are procured which produces lesser noise than the inexpensive alternatives. These machines are also placed in ideal places within the facilities to reduce the impact.
2. Although Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) are present, there is dumping of the treated wastewater. Programs such as the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals are present which improves the quality of wastewater discharged. The quality of sludge produced is also equivalent to that of municipal waste, which contributes further in reducing the negative impact on the community.
3. Carbon emissions from the different machines influences the air quality and temperature of the local environment. With the goal of planting 100,000 trees by 2020, DBL has started to offset the carbon emissions within the different communities where we are operating. These trees can also be countering the increase in temperature.

EIM SOFTWARE



Environmental Impact Measurement (EIM) software is used specifically in the garment finishing process and it can generate the score of sustainability for the products. Identifying lacking through scores ranging from low impact, medium impact and high impact can help towards minimizing any underlying problems and thus, further sustainability plans can be taken under consideration.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



To mitigate the impacts on the environment, multiple Sustainability programs have been taken by DBL Group in all segments of DBL Group's operations. Brief explanations of these programs have been included throughout the other chapters of this report. DBL is constantly involved in resource saving and reducing emissions to preserve the environment.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT MANAGEMENT



The impacts due to transportation are managed in several ways including the following:

- Daily, weekly and monthly maintenance
- Engine servicing after running every 3,000 km or 3 months: including washing, engine flashing, changing Mobil and air filters, etc.
- Spark plug checking and replacing
- Engine valve (inlet and exhaust) clearance checking and adjusting
- Greasing moving parts to avoid friction
- Fuel filter cleaning and replacing
- Battery water level checking and recharging
- Gear box and axle gear oil level checking and replacing
- Avoid air draft using windshield/air reflector
- Motivating drivers to minimize fuel consumption, avoiding over speed, etc.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION



In alignment with SDG-12 – Responsible Consumption and Production, DBL’s initiatives are targeting the optimal use of natural resources such as water. The dyeing industry is one of the most water intensive industries and hence programs like the Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PaCT) have specific targets in reducing water consumption. PaCT began in DBL in 2013 and after concluding in 2016 has provided significant amounts of savings in water, dyes and chemicals.

The definition of sustainability encompasses social, environmental and economic performance. In cases, initiatives may be taken directly to address economic sustainability such as procuring machines with greater life span or reducing the use of raw materials by using recycled products. The indirect benefits can occur from reducing turnover and absenteeism; for the former, recruitment and training costs are reduced and for the latter, there is a direct impact on production.

AWARENESS TRAINING ON ENVIRONMENT



Environment awareness training is conducted every month for all employees relating to more general issues as well as on the production processes. All new employees, irrespective of their levels, are briefed about EHS and environmental related aspects of the organization during their induction process. Employees are also made to undergo specific training with respect to the nature of their work. Need identification for this is done by the respective heads of departments for sending staff across for internal as well as external training.

A ‘Community Awareness Program on Environment’ was also conducted on the 30th of September, 2020. 8 teachers of Shurovi Learning center were given special training so that they could transfer the knowledge to the community.

On the 10th of October, 2020, the ‘Social Dialogue on Climate Protection’ training program was organized, and this enhanced the knowledge on SDG 13- Climate Action. 20 community members attended this program.

The topics included:

- Greenhouse effect
- Causes of increasing the world temperature
- Importance of energy saving
- Importance of tree plantation
- Groundwater saving
- Protection from water pollution
- Impacts of using plastics

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATIONS



CERTIFICATION	PROCESSES
Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC)	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Screen Printing and Packaging
Oeko-Tex Standard 100	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, Yarn Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Accessories, Garments Manufacturing and Screen Printing
Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, Yarn Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Garments Manufacturing and Screen Printing
Organic Content Standard (OCS-IN)	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, Yarn Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Garments Manufacturing and Screen Printing
Global Recycled Standard (GRS)	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Garments Manufacturing, Screen Printing and Embroidery
Recycled Claim Standard (RCS)	Spinning, Fabric Dyeing, All-Over Printing, Garments Manufacturing, Screen Printing and Embroidery
ISO 14001	Fabric Dyeing, Yarn Dyeing and All-Over Printing

ENVIRONMENTAL GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS



Till now, we have had no grievances about environmental impacts since all our facilities maintain environmental compliance.

Rainwater Harvesting Plant



The **Rainwater Harvesting Plant** in our Dyeing Plant was originally designed to make use of only the water during rainfall through a multi-gate filtering system.

The challenge here was the unpredictable rainfall amount and period, although there was reduction in the use of groundwater. Now this plant has a dual role.

Earlier, the backwash water from the water treatment plants was directly released into the water bodies. This water now makes use of the multi-gate filtering system of the plant and is used directly in the production processes. In 2019-20, the Rainwater Harvesting Plant saved **24,820** cubic meters of groundwater.



CHAPTER 7



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Our stakeholders include those who are associated directly or indirectly to our businesses. DBL reserves special interest in identifying all applicable stakeholders and understanding their expectations to remain sustainable in the long run.



“

*A good head and a good heart are
always a formidable combination.*

Nelson Mandela, Philanthropist

”

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



At DBL Group stakeholder satisfaction is of very high concern to the company values and we take the matter very sincerely. Our stakeholders include those who are associated directly or indirectly to our businesses. The approach and the frequency of engagement with the stakeholders differ based on the category of the stakeholder.

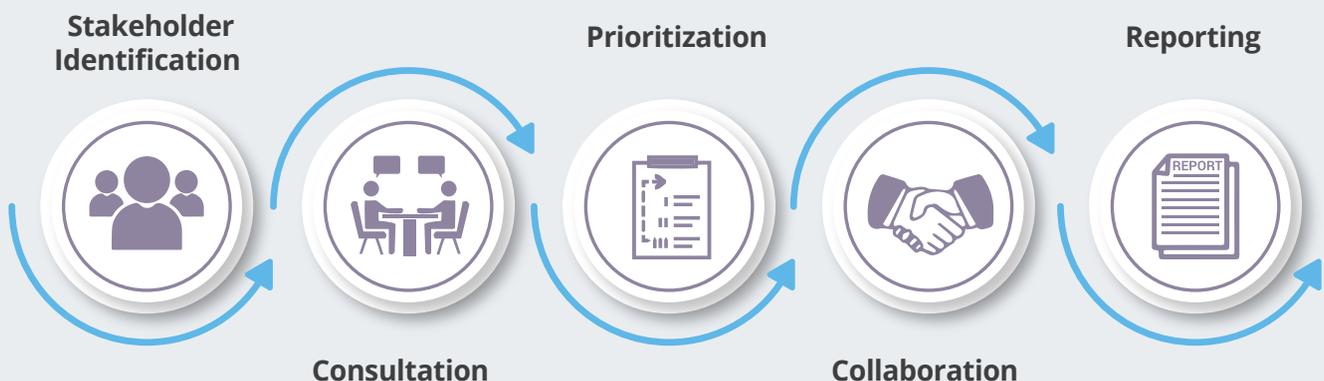
DBL Group reserves special interest in identifying all applicable stakeholders and understanding their expectations to remain sustainable in the long run. DBL Group is growing sustainably and we believe that a fully sustainable company will have all its stakeholders engaged in the key processes of the business.

All organizations and entities that have significant influence on DBL Group and those that are directly or indirectly affected by the Group's operations are considered as stakeholders. We identify potential stakeholders through the following process.

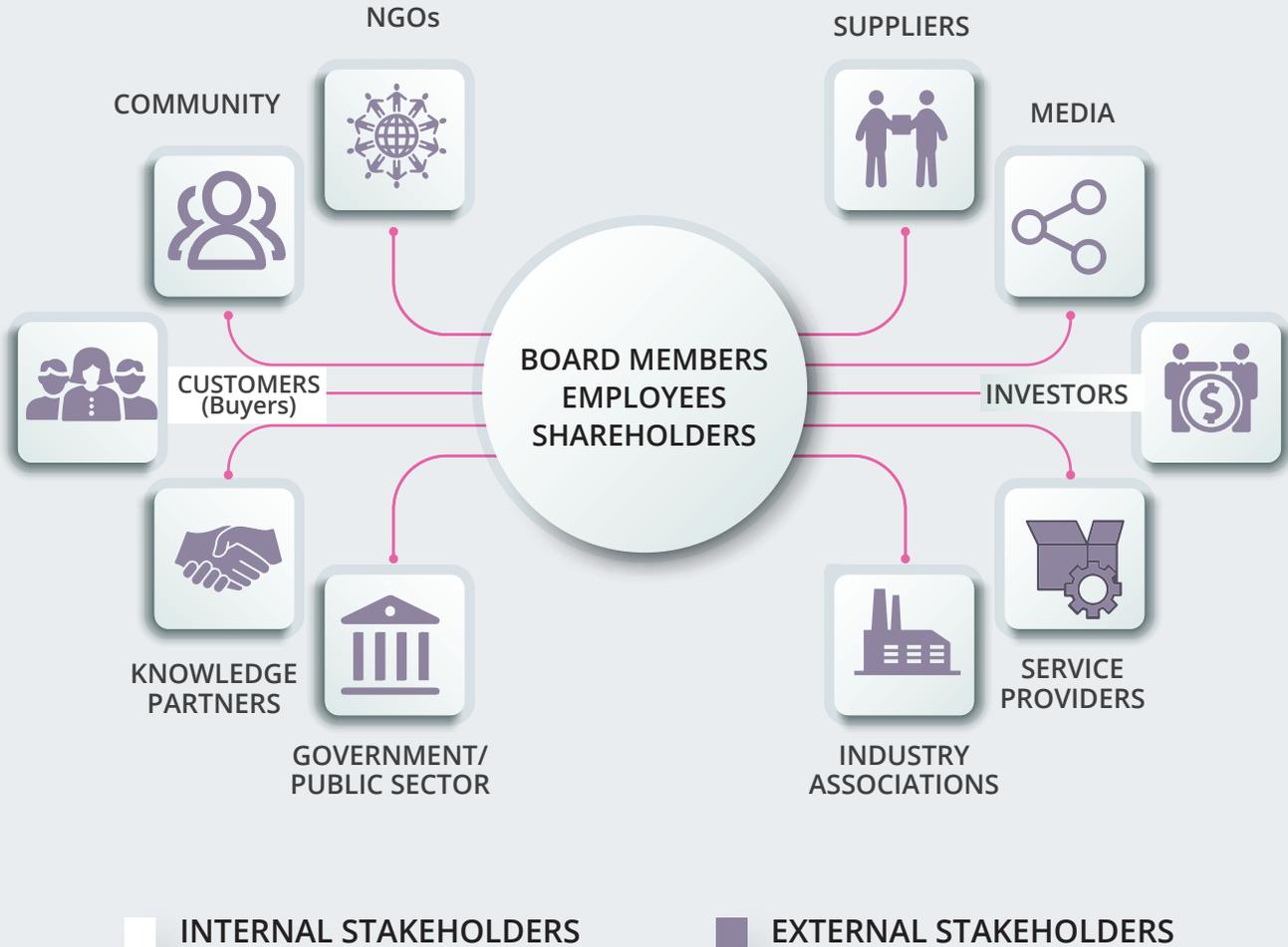
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



There is no particular frequency of engagement with the stakeholders. However, there are annual events like vendor meetings for suppliers, annual general meetings for investors and shareholders, exhibitions for customers and others. In addition, respective departments engage with their specific stakeholder groups as situation demands and on need basis.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS



COMMITTING TO INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS



DBL Group's major stakeholder group and a principal asset is the workforce. Hence, DBL reserves a special importance to creating the proper work environment for all employees. Similar attention is also given to their families. To maintain a fully energized workforce we maintain several initiatives to strengthen employer-employee bonding. Some are discussed below.

PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE (PC)



Collective bargaining agreement is not prohibited in DBL Group. To make a trustworthy relationship between the workers and the company, DBL Group has formed Workers Participation Committees. These committees constitute representatives of both the employers and the workers. Workers are highly encouraged in the forming of this committee and thus, over 50% of each committee comprises workers.

To promote mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between the employers and the workers to fulfill production targets, reduce production cost and improve the quality of products, the committees meet once every month. They are working to effectively establish privileges as well as to improve welfare services for the workers and their families. Through the PC, workers can freely contact the committees to discuss any issue.

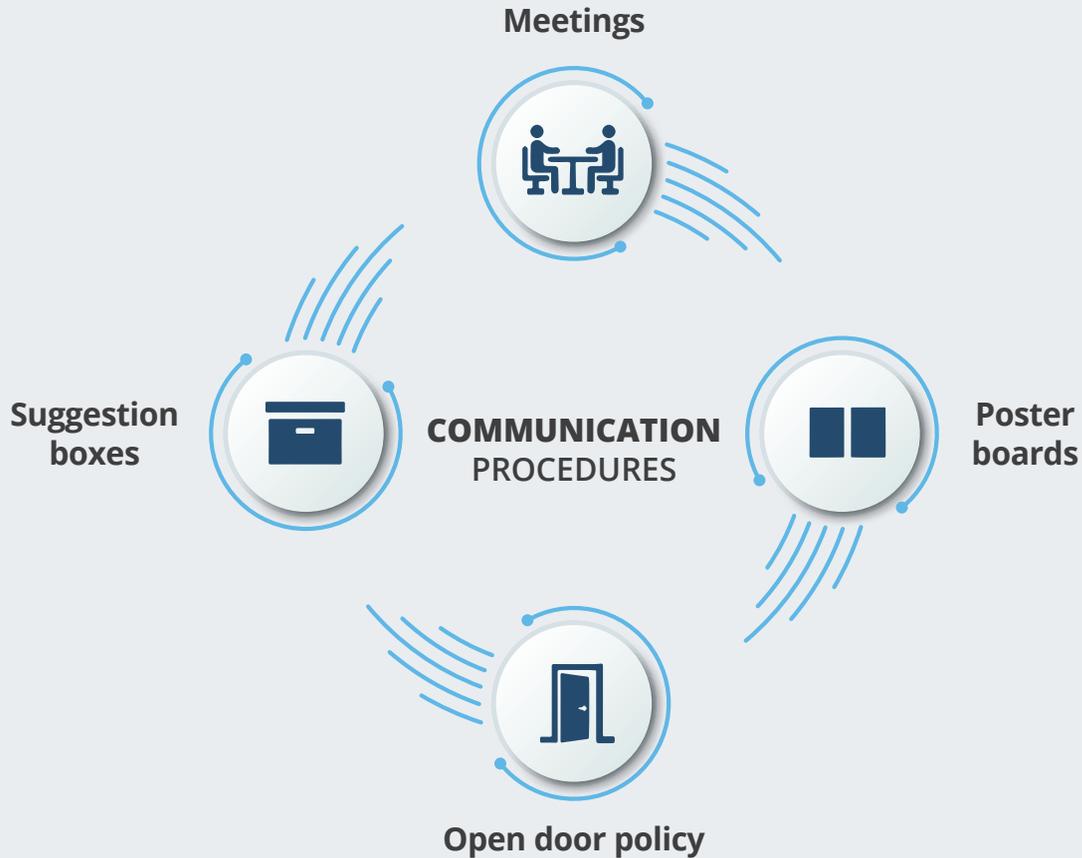
DBL Group encourages good relations between workers and managers, through hosting training covering topics, such as labor standards, leave days, working hours, wages, personal protective equipment, health and safety, environmental issues, welfare, and so on (further details are stated in Chapter 2 of this report). The committees' members are representatives of employees and top management: they were selected by each group respectively. The selection criterion has now been completely replaced through a supervised election procedure. Issues discussed include wages, benefits, working conditions, complaints, productivity, quality, health issues and even items for the Bandhan Fair Price Shop.



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES



DBL Group has established different channels to communicate with its workers: these include the following.



GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS



Apart from formal grievance procedures which are set up as per local laws, DBL Group has informal ways to resolve any sort of disputes quickly and effectively. The top management has an open-door policy and grievance boxes are provided to assist employees maintain confidentiality.

DBL Group has established several channels for workers to file complaints, including anonymous complaints. These include a suggestion box and an open-door policy. The Welfare Officers are responsible for handling complaints. The suggestion boxes are checked every Saturday and the grievances are recorded. Appropriate actions are taken, and results are reported back to employees.

External grievance mechanisms are present as well. Workers can call the “Amader Kotha” hotline (established by the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety) as well as numbers provided by some of the buyers themselves

WELFARE OFFICERS



The Welfare Officers stationed at the factory complexes oversee workers' concerns and problems and communicate with the Human Resource and other concerned departments as required. These Officers are involved with multiple tasks as shown below. Workers feel very comfortable expressing themselves to them. They handle every single case with great care and efficiency and maintain confidentiality depending on the sensitivity. Proper measures are taken immediately to resolve any concern over workplace or even workers' personal issues.

- Maintaining first aid boxes and checklists
- Dealing with complaints from workers
- Registering and providing extra care to pregnant employees
- Ensuring washroom hygiene
- Coordinating and conducting trainings
- Facilitating meetings
- Informing workers of any changes in policies

KAIZEN SUGGESTION BOX



DBL Group appreciates ideas from all workers and employees. Besides the Suggestion/ Grievance Boxes, an additional box has been included with the aim of taking in suggestions from workers that relate to improving production efficiency. This method provides a way to involve workers in the decision-making process which makes workers feel important about themselves and they highly appreciate the management for such initiative.

These boxes are referred to as "Kaizen Suggestion Boxes" and are present in all units. These boxes are green in color – as opposed to the white for the Suggestion/Complaint Boxes – in order to help users easily identify and distinguish them. Users submit their ideas in the boxes including their names in order to be identified for recognition.

All suggestions are discussed in the Kaizen Meetings held every month: the employee or worker with the best suggestion for the month is recognized with the "Kaizen Award". Some of the suggestions have even been implemented: in some cases, the best suggestion had to be chosen among the multiple good ones received. In addition to the award, the names, photos, and ideas of the accepted ones are displayed on the notice boards.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AND EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR



In addition to the Kaizen Suggestion system, efforts of our employees and workers are also recognized through another monthly recognition system: the “Employee of the Month”. In 2016, a new recognition system, “Employee of the Year” was included as well. These ideas are compiled under DBL Group’s Idea Club Sustainability program.

A huge advantage of having an employee of the month incentive is the motivation. It encourages the employees to work at their highest potential and move them towards empowerment. This is in terms of work performance as well as punctuality and attendance on the job. It promotes employees to work at their full potential without causing any adverse side effects. The Employee of the Month program is open for all employees and it gives them a feeling of fairness as every employee has an equal opportunity at obtaining this reward.

The evaluation system also encompasses suggestions provided by employees and workers that would improve working procedures. The employees and workers that win the award are provided certificates of achievements in addition to cash incentives. Moreover, their names and photos are displayed on the notice boards of the respective units in order to further motivate them to grow in their careers and for improving the company.

Since 2016-17, a total of 315 Employee of the Months have been presented.



CONNECTING WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS



DBL Group is committed to generating positive relations with external stakeholders through various non-binding initiatives which the organization subscribes and endorses. A constant communication is vital in order to ensure business sustainability: DBL recognizes and acts on this principle. The table below shows the various external stakeholders that DBL is currently involved with and how interaction is being made with each.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER	ENGAGEMENT
Buyers	Merchandizing Team, Emails, Exhibitions, Local and International Management Visits, Audits, Conferences
Community	Meetings with Local Union Councils, Surveys, Accommodating Requests, Community Engagement
Industry associations	Emails, Meetings with BGMEA, BKMEA, BTMA, Interactions with Chamber of Commerce (FBCCI, DCCI, BGCCI, JBCCI, etc.)
Government	Interaction with different Ministries of the Government of Bangladesh, Embassies, and Overseas Ministries
Media	Communications Team, Press Releases, Press Briefings, Interviews
Investors	Emails, Meetings, Visits, Conferences, Internal Relations Team
Suppliers	Marketing Team, Sourcing Team, Emails, Meetings, Audits
NGOs and CSOs	Emails, Meetings, Conferences, Workshops

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



A wide variety of activities are integrated within DBL's sustainability that promotes societal development: thus, integrating the concept of "Community" included as a branch in the comprehensive coverage of sustainability. These activities include the following:



- Health camps
- Free medical care
- Access to in-house medical centers



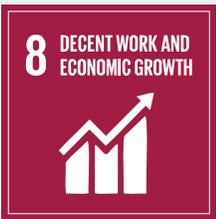
- School development programs
- Knowledge Exchange Programs



- Mini Fire Station
- Road maintenance



- Tree plantation
- Data collection



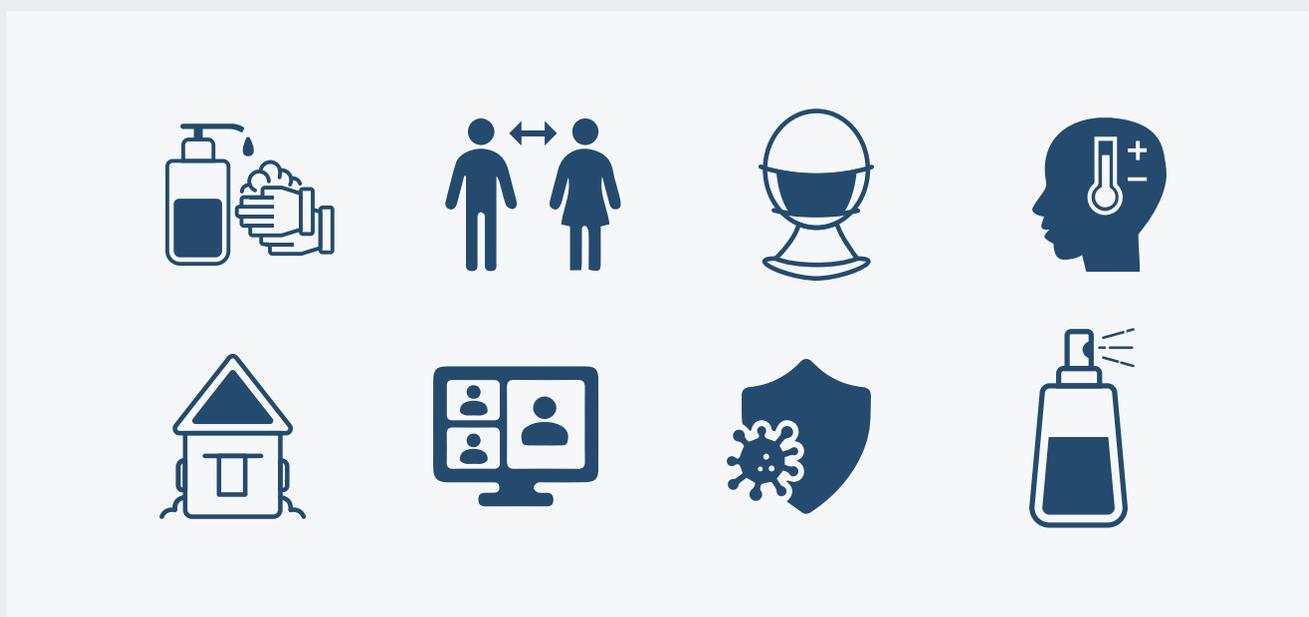
- Community surveys
- Courtyard meetings



RESILIENCE TO COVID-19



In Bangladesh, the first cases of COVID-19 were reported by the country's Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) on 7 March 2020. From 24 March 2020, all public transport, including ride-sharing services, were banned by the government of Bangladesh to stop the spreading of the unknown virus. Lockdown began throughout the country for an unknown duration.



The economic impacts were significant with many SMEs needing to shut down or significantly reduce their operations. Larger businesses managed to change the situation, and some even grew amidst the pandemic. DBL had about 36,000 employees during the end of 2018-19. In 2019-20, it has 38,050. The revenue within the ten months of operation were greater in comparison with the entire of last year. Handling Covid-19, and at the same time growing has only been possible because of commitment, communication and collaboration among all stakeholders.

What was amazing was the resilience and bravery shown by people to build back better: whether it be the doctors and healthcare professionals, workers, employees, businessmen, and others. They started adapting to the “new normal”: wearing face masks and other protective gears and attending to their workplaces once the restrictions were lifted. The new normal also included and popularized the working from home concept, as the non-production operations and activities continued. Innovative measures were taken by companies with the vision to serve the people in general, not just the employees. These are discussed in this chapter.

SAFETY INITIATIVES



DBL's factories and offices were shut down for almost two months and the concept of working from home became more popular. Production facilities however cannot use the concept and it was important to restart work as soon as the health situation permits. When this was done, all safety measures were taken, following the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), adopting a "new normal". An overview of these is shown below.



The resilience helped DBL establish a successful control of the pandemic. Out of 38,050 employees in the entire group, only 56 cases (0.15%) of COVID-19 were found: the workers were initially isolated in facilities within dedicated places in the Medical Centers and were later sent on fully paid leaves. As soon as they had recovered and provided the relevant documentation, these employees were able to return to work in the same position and salaries.

The following link shows a video showing the different initiatives taken during COVID-19 for ensuring the safety of employees:

<https://www.facebook.com/dblgroupbd/videos/2669981116569171/?sfnsn=wa>

INNOVATION AMIDST COVID-19: NECESSITY TO INNOVATE



Although virtually all operations and occupations have come to a halt, the doctors and healthcare providers are not exempted from their duties. The heroes of tackling this virus are performing their duties every day, putting their own health and lives at risk while travelling and while treating. However, most of these Heroes of Health do not have personal vehicles and the transport services provided by hospitals are greatly limited and scarce.

Undoubtedly, the Heroes of Health are facing great challenges in going to the hospital and coming back home. DBL Pharmaceuticals Ltd, a concern of DBL Group, organized an online survey consisting of doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers and found out that there is a need for transport service for these healthcare professionals. This is when we initiated the **Crack Platoon Transport Service**.



1,796

Healthcare professionals
registered



820
Women



976
Men

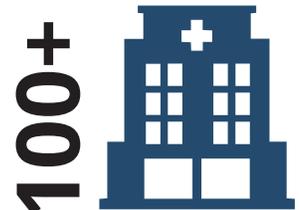


4,500+

Transportation services
provided in 30 days

Authorized by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Government of Bangladesh, the Crack Platoon Transport Service for the healthcare professionals started its journey from 1 April 2020. This initiative is for the doctors and other healthcare staff, so that they can go to their hospitals from their home quickly, safely, and conveniently amid their fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The service is completely free of charge.

The fleet comprises 40 vans and cars and 10 minibuses registered with the DGHS to pick up the healthcare professionals from their homes and drop them off at over 100 different hospitals in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. These transports are available in three shifts: at 8 AM, 2 PM and 8 PM. Apart from these scheduled shuttle services, the transports are also being provided for the professionals in case of emergency calls within the capital.



100+
Hospitals received
service

Social distancing norms are followed for seat allocation inside the vehicles. All the vehicles are sanitized after each trip. All drivers wear appropriate safety gears. To ensure safety of passengers, drivers having their full profile registered with Uber are sourced. More than 1,796 healthcare professionals have registered and everyday around 500 healthcare professionals are taking this service.

The name “Crack Platoon” was inspired by the famous guerrilla unit under the same name that had conducted a number of heroic commando operations in Dhaka during the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971. Under the supervision of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), the initiative is operated by the voluntary organization The Earth Society with technology support from Bondstein, sanitization support by Dhaka Hub of Global Shapers, fleet sourcing support from UBER and funded by DBL Pharmaceuticals Ltd., a concern of DBL Group.

“APNAR DAAKTAR” RTV LIVE ONLINE CONSULTATION SESSIONS



Sponsored by DBL Healthcare Ltd, a concern of DBL Group, the “Apnar Daaktar” initiative was hosted by RTV Online. Due to travel restrictions, people were facing great pressure in visiting their doctors, whether they are COVID-19 positive or not. DBL took a step forward so that people do not need to go to the doctors physically but can take their advice right from home.



Doctors took questions from the general audience through WhatsApp or Viber messages and Facebook comments and answered those queries. The live show was hosted for a month during the COVID-19 period. Solely managed by DBL Healthcare, the live show was shown in the virtual platform of RTV’s Facebook page.

The videos of the sessions are available on DBL Group’s Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/dblgroupbd/>

PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING SESSION



Mental health emerged to be an important issue during the pandemic and as such proper counselling was required not just for good physical health but also psychological well-being. Psychosocial Counseling sessions were arranged on 29 August 2020, implemented by the Underprivileged Children's Education Programs (UCEP) Bangladesh, gaining experience from the Workers Wellbeing Management (WWM) course of SNV Netherlands. The session focused on the following:



Psychosocial Support: showing video clips on sharing happiness; values and sources of values; positive relationships and techniques of keeping positive relationships; and psychosocial support including techniques of becoming a good Psychosocial Counselor.

Mental Stress: Psychological games on mental stress; causes of mental stress including mental stress in the workplace, home, society, and created by COVID-19; techniques of mental stress management; and relaxation process.

Psychosocial Counseling Process: video clip on "Change your world"; ethical characteristics of a counselor; ethical rules of counseling and psychotherapy; and four processes in counseling.

Motivation: Maslow's theory of Motivation (necessary motivation for the supervisors on the production floors to keep professional relationships with workers) and video clip on motivation.

Paperless Knitting operation process



An in-house system was developed by DBL Group in the **Fabric** Knitting section to convert the manual operation practices into an automated one. The manual system used enormous amounts of paper and did not have on-time and on-line information, which led to wastage and indecisiveness in the process. The new **paperless system** automates the manufacturing process operation to make effective decisions, reduce wastage, and ensure convenience. Workers are now using electronic tabs and computers to input production and operational information.



GRI Content Index

This report has been prepared in accordance with the GRI Standards: Core option

General Disclosures

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