

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Sustainable Development

History has shown that if socio-economic development is unequal or undertaken with short term goals, it is not sustainable. Indeed, the people living today are using the world's resources as care takers for the following generations.

There are two components of sustainable development:

- 1) Reduction of inequality in socio economic development
- 2) Responsible use of natural resources so that the rate of consumption does not exceed the rate of replenishment

1.2 Inequality Challenges vs Growth Prospects in India

The President of the World Economic Forum commended India foreseeing it as a \$10 trillion economy. However it is important the advantages of this progress reaches everyone including the marginalized. Growth is good but it should be inclusive.

According to the Centre for Economics and Business Research, the Indian economy is poised to hit \$7.3 trillion by 2030 and \$10 trillion by 2035. The Indian Government has set an ambitious target of transforming India into a developed country by 2047.

India is currently one of the most unequal countries - the top 10% of population holds 77% of the national wealth. The richest 1% of the population owns 53% of the country's wealth while the poorer half has to manage with just 4.1% of the national wealth.

According to the World Inequality Report 2022, the top 10% of population holds 57% of the total national income. The bottom 50% owns just 13%. In 2024, around 64% of the total goods and services taxes came from the bottom 50% of the population while only 4% came from the top 10%.

Sustainable Development Project

Around 74% of India's population could not afford a healthy diet. India's 2023 Global Hunger Index score is 28.7 which is considered serious. India's child wasting rate at 18.7 is the highest in the report.

The Government has promoted several schemes to achieve inclusive growth. However it is recognized that the private sector plays an important role in complimenting and supporting Government initiatives.

1.3 Srivatsa Charitable Trust

Srivatsa Charitable Trust was founded in 2025 with the objective of promoting sustainable development by engaging with communities so they understand the purpose and consequence of actions. The Trust aims to identify local issues of significance, develop scientific and effective solutions, implement in a participative manner and ensure they can be replicated and taken over by appropriate entities.

The Trust seeks to complement existing ongoing initiatives by collaborating with stakeholders including Governments, corporates, other NGOs and specific affected persons. The objectives of the Trust, *inter alia*, are to

- nurture a culture of responsible citizenship and environmental stewardship
- enable sustainable development through community engagement
- promote clean and healthy living
- safeguard natural resources and plant and animal life
- uplift the downtrodden

The trustees are Mr Balajee Raghavachari and Mr Anbuselvam.

1.4 Summary of Proposed Project

With a view to furthering the stated purpose and goals, it is proposed to initiate actions in three specific areas of sustainable development. The areas are chosen for the impact in terms of

- a) simplicity, impact and replicability
- b) avoiding over crowding in cities and towns thereby reducing pressure on resources and environment and promoting equitable development
- c) Principles of dharma and Satvik philosophy that is the basis for Indian culture

Sustainable Development Project

The three focus areas of this project are

- 1) Development of farmland including gaushalas that will provide employment to people who have limited opportunities
- 2) Micro credit assistance (up to Rs 50,000 per person) for vegetable vendors in markets to help them come out of debt and provide sustainable working capital for their daily trade
- 3) Promotion of healthy diet for under nourished including milk and vegetables.

Preliminary studies have proven the gap between consumption of vegetables and milk vs supply. While the affluent sections have easy access to both vegetables and milk, the neglected and poorer sections suffer chronic hunger and malnourishment.

The Plan-Do-Check-Act approach will be used for each initiative as a pilot. On successful completion of the pilot, it is proposed that corporates take over these projects as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility goals and seek to sustain and replicate across geographies. Srivatsa Charitable Trust will continue to be available for consulting and advice.

The three focus areas are inter linked. The project provides opportunity for the unemployed to move out of cities and towns and work in the outskirts by growing vegetables and rearing livestock. They supply their produce to traders of vegetables and milk. The traders get micro credit to purchase and sell vegetables and milk and come out of debt. A portion of the produce will be made available to vulnerable sections of society like poor and marginalized communities, differently abled and widows / destitutes / orphans. Any left over vegetables will be used to make cattle food.

The pilot project is proposed to be undertaken around Chennai. On successful completion it will be replicated to other major towns of Tamil Nadu (including Puducherry) and Andhra Pradesh.

The total estimated cost of the project is Rs 205 crores for a 3 year period. This report includes information on key activities, benefits, cost break down, success factors, risk mitigation and successful hand over for sustainable impact.

Srivatsa Charitable Trust

Sustainable Development Project

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2 Project Details

The project areas have been conceived after extensive research and consultation with stakeholders. They are based on actual observations in the field and interactions with people who are likely beneficiaries. The project considers how success is defined and how the completed project will be handed over for sustained long term benefits.

Vegetables and milk are perennial essential commodities appealing to all sections of the population. The focus of the project is to ensure the vulnerable sections in a geographical location benefit from access to the nutrition and wellness from vegetables and milk for wholesome diet. This will improve resistance to disease, capacity for work and upliftment in life.

2.1 Commence farming operations and gaushalas

Key activities include

- Identification and purchase / lease of farmland (ready to farm or subject to development)
- Purchase of farm animals – both milch cattle and old cattle destined for slaughter
- Engagement of people with relevant mindset and capability to manage and operate and work in the farms

Benefits include

- bringing more land under cultivation thereby producing food for growing population
- providing income generation opportunities
- easing congestion in cities by creating work in the outskirts where people can live in peace and quiet
- saving of cattle meant for slaughter giving them rest and peace in old age potential to promote organic farming

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Sustainable Development Project

Estimated Cost (Rs crores) Rs 150

Sl No	Particulars	Amount	Comments
1	Land acquisition	100	Own / lease. Title will be transferred to cooperative society on completion
2	Wage payments (3 years)	10	
3	Farm animals and maintenance	10	
4	Seeds, implements, consumables	10	
5	Operational expenses	10	Power and water
6	Storage and transport	10	

2.2 Micro credit assistance to vegetable vendors and milk distributors

Key activities include

- identification of authentic vegetable vendors in need of funds to come out of debt / manage working capital
- formal agreements and establishment of support and tracking
- ad hoc support (E.g. Bandh / rains / accidents)
- handling of spoilage / wastage / pilferage
- regulatory approvals and renewals

Benefits include

- regular and reliable supply
- transparency in pricing and profitability
- potential for door delivery to consumers
- direct farm to consumption traceability
- farm visits and fun events so consumers (including children) can interact with source of food
- breaking the debt cycle thereby providing succour to the next generation
- reduction of wastage by using vegetables as cattle feed (potential to hive off as separate vertical)

Estimated Cost (Rs crores) Rs 25 (for 3000 beneficiaries)

Sl No	Particulars	Amount	Comments
1	Survey, validation and documentation	3	
2	Working Capital funding	15	50k * 3000 beneficiaries
3	Training and counselling	3	
4	Ad hoc expenses	1	
5	Administration	1	
6	Others	2	contingencies

2.3 Promotion of healthy diet for the under nourished and vulnerable sections

Key activities include

- Identification of target sections of population – including slums, schools and old age homes
- Manage demand, supply and logistics
- Opportunities to upscale / subsidize – working people and health conscious
- End use validation and feedback
- Educate and create awareness

Benefits include

- Improvement in nutrition and building capacity for productive work
- Reduce inequality to access to health and nutrition
- Transparency in consumption

Estimated Costs (Rs crores) Rs 30

Sl No	Particulars	Amount	Comments
1	Purchase of vegetables and milk	25	3 years
2	Administration	1	
3	Logistics	2	
4	Education and awareness	2	

3 Success Factors and Risks

Success is measured by comparing income and happiness levels at baseline (start of project) and at regular annual / quarterly intervals through to the end of the 3 year period. Independent surveys could be used to establish results.

Risks include discontinuation due to fraud / medical reasons or emergence of better options. It is expected such instances can be mitigated by identifying alternative persons, by building strong ethical relationship and encourage transparent honest communication.

The project commencement is subject to the availability of the requisite approvals and funding.

4 Closure and Hand over

Before the end of 3 years, the Trust will commence efforts to engage with corporates and establish readiness to take over these projects. The Corporates will be responsible for funding and managing operations sustainably as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility budgets. However, the Trust will ensure the formation of cooperative societies to provide independent legal cover to the persons engaged in the production and distribution of vegetables and milk.

Note

All information and data are true as at the date of preparation.

This Project Report shall not be shared fully or partly without the express permission of Srivatsa Charitable Trust

Citations

World Inequality Report 2022

News Articles in public domain

Information and explanations from notes of interactions with various stakeholders

END OF PROJECT REPORT