

Transforming lives

OFFICE OF VALUES AND CULTURE

Corporate Social
Responsibility Report
2022-23

ust.com



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S T

Report approach

The UST Annual Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report 2022 (Financial year April 2022 - March 2023) attempts to present the CSR related projects and initiatives for community development, executed by the associates through volunteering efforts and/or with non-profit organizations that the company has partnered with.

The Annual CSR Report 2022 represents the organization's commitments towards social transformation during and post the pandemic. The report highlights the efforts made to continue the support towards the initiatives in the area of education, health, livelihood and environment.

We have extended our mission "Transforming Lives" to our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), to facilitate the implementation of impact based social development solutions.

The reporting approach of the Annual CSR Report 2022, is aligned with The Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 and Schedule VII and UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs) at India and Global level.

UST has a presence in 30 countries with 42 operating and 34 delivery centers and is involved in community initiatives in major locations that we are present in. This Annual CSR Report 2022 covers significant and scalable initiatives executed during the year in some of our larger locations in India (Trivandrum, Bengaluru, Kochi, Chennai, Hyderabad and Noida), APAC (Malaysia and Manila), the USA (South Bay, Boston, San Jose) the UK (London), Europe (Poland), and Australia.

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Leader's message

The company should be socially responsible and use most of the wealth created to help people less fortunate than ourselves. We should be involved in something higher than ourselves.

G. A. Menon (1931–2003)
Founder Chairman, UST



Giving back to the society is a duty that gives meaning and purpose to everyone at UST. The need to ensure the community and the world around us is safe and well is a natural instinct nourished by our organization's values. It is this commitment that drives our community initiatives globally.

The last few years, world events affected our lives in unimaginable ways, but also offered opportunities to help each other meaningfully. Besides having a direct impact on those affected by the pandemic, through medical supplies and care initiatives, the volunteer efforts of our employees have transformed

the lives of more than 3,00,000 people around the world. I'm happy and moved to observe that UST's volunteer engagement programs have increased considerably, highlighting our employees' passion in serving the community. This past year, there has also been a deeper engagement in the community at the rural and tribal level.

Additionally, we have been able to organize long-term sustainable initiatives in education, livelihood, health, and disaster relief, given that our collective future is built on sustainability and mindful programs that protect our world. Building a sustainable future for our customers, employees and the world around us ensures we are committed to our core values of Humility, Humanity and Integrity. Ever since we founded our organization, we have been committed to transforming lives and have recognized the value of sustainability in this mission. Sustainable transformation, thus, becomes key to achieving our goals. Adopting a long-term view of meeting our needs without depleting natural resources, protecting the interests of everyone, are all part of this strategy.

As a result, UST is focused on aligning our community-based environment projects with the organization's commitment to net zero and ESG. At the same time, none of these efforts would be truly meaningful without inclusivity. In the past year, we have concertedly increased our initiatives around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. As part of this, there have been programs to increase gender diversity, to empower women, and to enable individuals who are differently abled.

Creating a brighter tomorrow is our collective goal and technology is the most satisfying tool in this pursuit. Our associates use their creative genius and technological prowess to fuel innovation and bring about positive change in society. Their willingness to lend a helping hand and invest their time to care for others inspires me every single day. This selflessness has not only contributed to the welfare of our community but also nurtured our resilience and perseverance. It is a reminder that our end goal is not just to live our lives, meeting our everyday needs, but to help others and be of use to the world. Being aware of our individual responsibility and living up to it helps us tackle every crisis with courage.

As we pursue our purpose, we continue to grow in strength, one step closer to a better tomorrow, at a time. Together, we continue to care. Together, we make a difference.

Thank you,

Krishna Sudheendra
Chief Executive Officer



If last year our focus was on resilience and rebuilding, this year, as we continue to forge ahead in the wake of the debilitating after-effects of COVID-19, devastating natural as well as man-made disasters – from floods to the continuing Ukraine war – we acknowledge the value of patience.

The year 2022-2023 saw us taking time out to deepen and strengthen our relationships – with our volunteers, our community groups, our non-profit partners, as well as other stakeholders. We concentrated on nurturing and strengthening ongoing initiatives, while exploring new avenues to invest in education,

livelihood, health, environment and disaster relief. The long-term negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education continues, and we scaled up our education initiatives, with an additional focus on digital infrastructure. Larger budgets were allocated to create digital environments both for learning and livelihood. Being a leading tech company, we do believe in the power of technology to engineer better futures!

As we immersed ourselves in the service of our communities, mainly at rural and tribal levels, we gratefully recognized the amazing domino effect of our work. Today, we see more and more volunteers proactively connecting with their home villages to bring about change within their communities. Our CSR verticals, especially education, livelihood, health and environment, are becoming more horizontal as the effects of our initiatives spread out, blurring the outlines between focus areas. Projects are beginning to take lives of their own, with many of them converging. Our environment projects are providing livelihood to tribal and villagers, our education initiatives are giving us a fresh crop of enthusiastic interns who are getting hired and trained by our teams to work for UST, interventions for women and people with disability cut across all verticals, touching lives, transforming them. Stories of change bring our efforts into full circle, inspiring our volunteers to work even harder in their communities.

It has been a very rewarding year indeed!

As our engagement within communities deepen, we seek to bridge gaps between humans and the environment too. Integration of our CSR responsibilities with UST's larger business goals have helped us create a sustainable and responsible organization. Since our commitment to our communities has always transcended any mandated structure, it is crucial for us to integrate ESG factors into what we already do in CSR. Our community-based environment projects align naturally and seamlessly with our Net Zero commitment and ESG goals. Here too, we are guided by our core values – Humility, Humanity, and Integrity.

I'd also like to briefly mention our 5 major milestones this year. UST CSR touched a total of 89,000+ lives; supported the education of 42,500 children; 750 people with disability were impacted; 30,000+ trees were planted; our colleagues put in over 30,000 volunteering hours.

And, as always, we continue to work steadily towards our mission of Transforming Lives by creating sustainable environments, inclusive societies, and opportunities for all.

Sunil Balakrishnan
Chief Values Officer

Our values

OUR CORE VALUES



Humility

We will listen, learn, be empathetic, and help selflessly in our interactions with everyone



Humanity

Through business, we will better the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves



Integrity

We honor our commitments and act with responsibility in all our relationships

Our core values, **Humility, Humanity** and **Integrity** emanate from the vision and wisdom of our founders. These values guide our company, serving as its cultural cornerstone.

Living the values: UST integrates its core values into all aspects of its operations and activities. This has engendered a unique culture which is embedded in the company. Providing the foundation for action through the organization and making us one of the best technology and digital services companies on the planet.

The Office of Values and Culture (OVC): Set up in the year 2019, the OVC manifests the company's commitment to integrate business and ethics into our everyday work.

The three pillars of the OVC:

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- Values and Culture
- Colors of UST (Employee Engagement Framework of UST)

The mission of the OVC is to sustain, strengthen and scale our values globally. We will ensure that the three pillars that constitute the OVC will drive its mission through volunteer-based initiatives across geographies and verticals. Ensuring our customers and communities experience our values in compelling ways.

Office of Values and Culture (OVC)





Social commitment – strategy and approach



Volunteer engagement

80% of UST associates are actively engaged in social commitment initiatives with a sustained approach



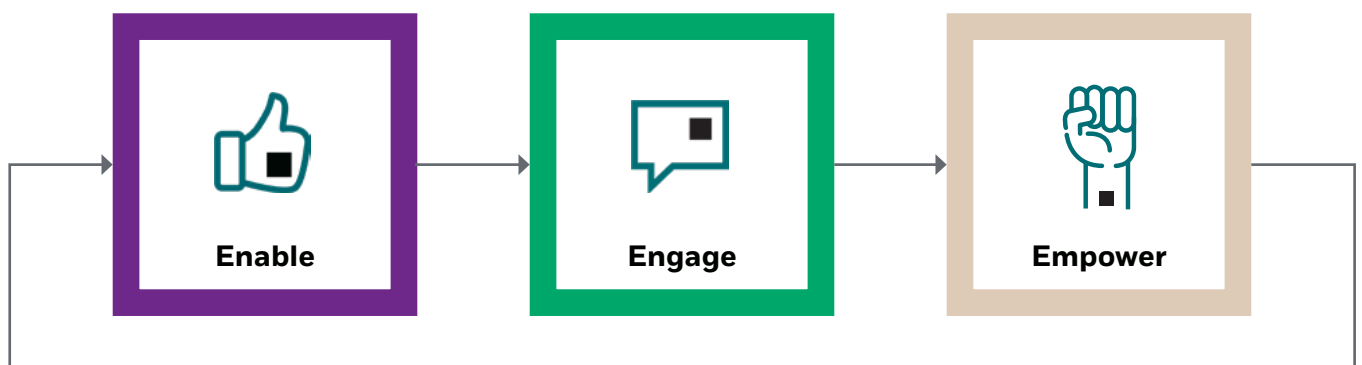
Inclusive approach

Focus on vulnerable communities (women/ children/disabled and discriminated)



Long term impact and sustainable solutions

Need based and outcome driven social initiatives



Creating shared value for the organization while building a better world

Corporate Social Responsibility is "the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large." Globally, CSR aims both to examine the role of business in society and to maximize the positive societal outcomes of business activity. CSR initiatives at UST are a natural extension of our core values. Since the organization's inception in 1999, societal initiatives have been integrated into business operations and have promoted community development, displaying the organization's dedication to the triple bottom line of business: Profit, People, and Planet. At the National and Global framework level, the UST CSR focus areas are aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals* 2030 and Schedule VII activities of (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014.

UST's CSR strategy dovetails neatly into the Company's mission of "Transforming Lives". The UST Welfare Foundation is aligned to and works on the CSR focus areas of UST in areas of education, health, environment, disaster relief, and diversity & inclusion.

The CSR approach has evolved from a one-time philanthropic activity to the impact-based programmatic approach of implementation under each CSR vertical area. Focus is given to inclusive community development and the empowerment of women and differently-abled people.

UST Welfare Foundation follows the standard process for partnering with credible grassroots level non-profit organizations as implementation partners. UST Welfare Foundation programs also integrate with the employee engagement framework of the Company, Colors, to ensure the active participation of UST employees and contribution towards result-oriented CSR initiatives. Of our global workforce of 30,000 employees, more than 20% are actively engaged in CSR activities thereby directly benefitting communities across geographies. Established in 2015, UST Welfare Foundation, a non-profit organization, acts as a nodal body to implement CSR initiatives for UST and its subsidiaries, in India and the USA.



*The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the world's best plan to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs are a call for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle-income - to promote prosperity while protecting the environment. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, equality and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and working to preserve our ocean and forests. For more details please visit <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

Transforming lives

89,460
lives impacted



42
Project
initiatives



30
Non-profit
partners





6

States covered
in India



9

Geographies
engaged at
global locations



10,000+

Volunteering
hours

Impact FY 2022-23

EDUCATION

42,500
Lives



HEALTH

28,860
Lives



DISABILITY AND INCLUSION

750
Lives



LIVELIHOOD

850
Lives



ENVIRONMENT

30,000+
Tree saplings planted

90,000+
Medicinal saplings



DISASTER RELIEF

16,500+
Lives



Social impact programs



CSR focus areas at UST align with UN SDG and follow National CSR guidelines. CSR initiatives are planned, implemented and the outcomes measured according to the CSR policy of the organization.

Education

- Adopt a school
- Student scholarship programs
- Panchayat, village council, libraries for rural areas
- Community-based digital learning centres
- Educational initiatives for children with disabilities

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



Health

- Health infrastructure at primary, secondary and tertiary level
- Reproductive and menstrual health and hygiene
- Prevention of hunger and malnutrition
- Mental health initiatives

2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



Livelihood

- Skill based trainings and job placements
- Women livelihood and entrepreneurship
- Agricultural technology based livelihood initiative for tribal youth

1 NO POVERTY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Environment

- Conservation of green spaces and biodiversity
- Afforestation projects
- Coastal area preservation with mangrove project
- Lake rejuvenation initiatives

13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Disaster relief

- Flood and typhoon relief work
- Food and ration support to vulnerable communities
- Medical supplies (infrastructure, equipment and consumables) to health facilities and front line health workers

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Disability & inclusion

- Support for the disabled and children with special needs
- Education support to children with autism
- IT/ITES based skill development and livelihood support
- Medical assistive device for people with disability (PwD)
- Livelihood initiatives for people with disabilities

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Awards and recognition

Mahatma Award for **CSR Excellence in Community Initiative** category - October 2022



Project Management Institute South Asia Award December 2022
Project of the year contribution to community 'Transforming Lives through Education'



TMA Padosan CSR Award 2023



Indian CSR Award for the category "Best Environment Protection Initiative of the Year" - August 2022



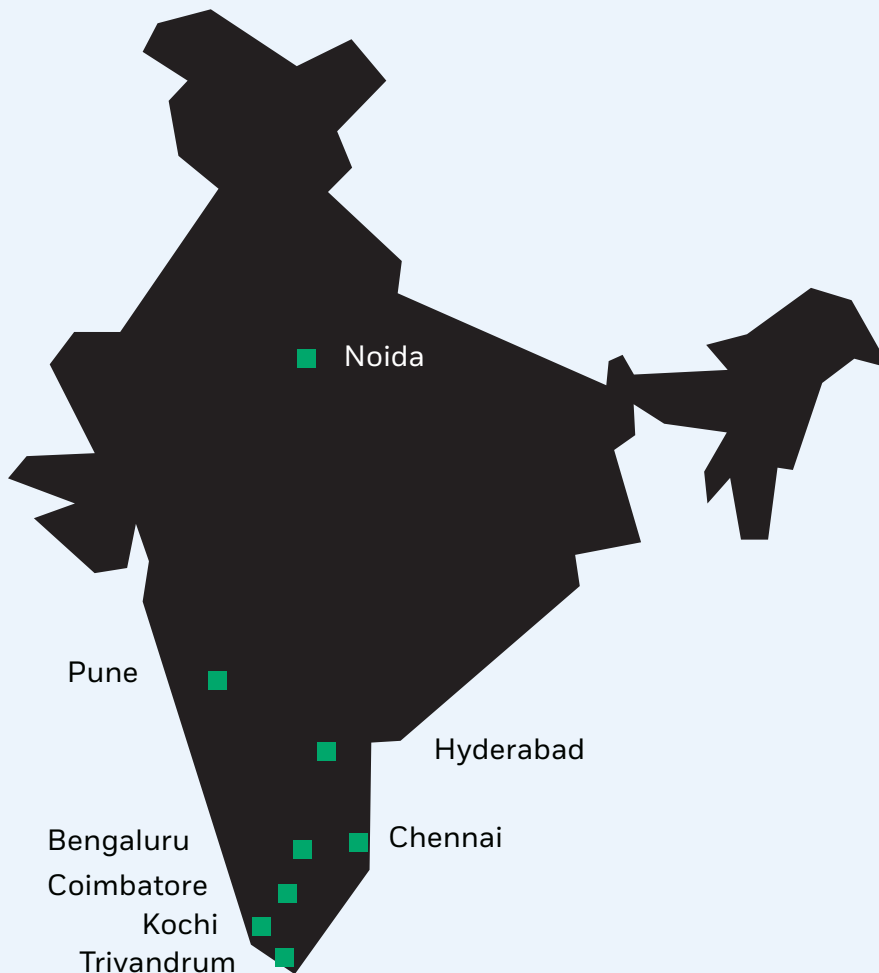
Kerala Management Association Award 2023 for "Health and Hygiene" and "Environment and Greenery"



Hyderabad software enterprise association (HYSEA) award for outstanding contribution to CSR



Extending CSR footprints: India and Worldwide





4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Education

Education is the key to a new world, a better life

UST CSR education initiatives covers 5 interventions



Adopt-A-School



Student scholarships

Digital transformation is key

The fallout from the pandemic continues. As do our efforts to mitigate the damage as much as we are able. In 2022, a large chunk of our resources went towards equipping schools and community centers with suitable technology-based education solutions. These ranged from complete digital ecosystems, including smart classrooms and computer labs to TVs in remote villages where no other media was available.

Our education programs aim at helping every child attain accessible, equitable and quality education. But they don't stop there. Our vocational training and placement initiatives equip graduates for

employment. UST offers suitable candidates an opportunity to apply and be absorbed into our organization. Other programs include soft skills training, tech seminars and the ever-popular buddy systems through which our invaluable volunteer employees mentor the students.

As always, we continue to expand our geographies, scaling up activities where necessary, sponsoring mid-day meals to encourage attendance, and increasing the number of beneficiaries in the remote locations, especially in places where the effect of the pandemic still lingers.

Panchayat,
village council,
libraries



Education for
children with
disabilities



Community-
based digital
learning centres



Impact

32000+

Students supported under the Adopt-A-School Program for continuing education

7000

Teaching and learning materials

360

Students received scholarships

1 Adopt-A-School

Adopt-A-School, our flagship education program supports 104 schools across 5 states in India and 1 school in Mexico. This is despite the challenge to develop solutions for rural/tribal students with little or no access to digital resources.

School infrastructure

Smart classrooms/
digitalization

Teaching and learning support

Pedagogy based interventions

Multi-dimensional Learning Spaces

Our Adopt-A-School program is extremely well thought out and takes into consideration all possible avenues to facilitate learning and education in Government schools including:

1.1 Infrastructure development:

- Toilets
- Classroom furniture
- Smart classrooms with projectors/
digital screens
- Computer labs
- Kitchen gardens
- Libraries
- Rainwater harvesting units
- School based sports areas/
materials



1.2 Teaching and learning support:

- Books, stationery, activity kits, school bags
- Teacher support

1.3 Development of a digital ecosystem:

- Satellite digital-based education in schools, tribal hamlets, and rural areas
- Computer labs in schools and colleges
- Laptops, tablets, and desktops with solar-powered batteries

- Computer labs with projector room and IT
- Smart classrooms with projects, screens, and audio-visual based learning material



1.4 Pedagogy-based interventions:

UST CSR has done a deep dive into education and identified truly unique and impactful projects. Our NGO partners are sensitized to the environment and times, and their teaching and learning methodologies are geared to make a positive impact on the academic performance of our children.

UST partners with India Literacy Project (ILP) to create Multi-Dimensional Learning Spaces (MDLS) for 2000+ children in 10 Government Schools in Mulbagal block in Kolar district, Karnataka (India).

1.4.1 Multi-Dimensional Learning Spaces:

This unique learning framework is based on the premise that learning should involve all the senses - visual, auditory, and experiential - and can happen anywhere and at any time. With MDLS the focus is on reading, experiential science learning and social sciences, with an emphasis on customized learning - since one approach doesn't work for all.

The key aspects of MDLS are:

- Smart/experiential classrooms
- Low-cost science lab and models for social science
- Computer skill/exposure
- Improve reading levels through a unique library program
- Teacher training, regular follow up and supporting infrastructure to empower teachers
- Inter-school competitions provide a platform for hands-on projects and cross-school learning
- Exposure and counselling within local economies and careers outside the local economies

1.4.2 Science-based pedagogy

Our society is in dire need of critical thinkers, and we hope to inculcate the spirit of exploration and

scientific enquiry in our students with the innovative processes and tools designed by Raman Innovation and Scientific Enquiry (RISE) and implemented by Raman Clubs in Government schools.

This project, supported by UST CSR initiatives through UST Welfare Foundation and implemented by ISPF, sets up and supports Raman Clubs across 25 government schools in Karnataka, reaching approximately 2,500 students. The agenda for Raman Clubs in government schools is as follows:

1. Identifying schools
2. Training Raman Club mentors (school teachers)
3. Equipping Raman Clubs with a Starter Toolkit containing essential measurement tools and selected experiment kits
4. Presenting science activity kits to every child
5. Organizing exhibitions at Raman Clubs
6. Participation in a State Level Exhibition at Bangalore



Project Ganitham

A study of over 12,000 high school students showed that only 20 to 25% understand basic math. Project Ganitham aims to bridge the learning gap among children in the Government schools and open them up to the wide world out there. Ganitham is entirely run by college students and volunteers who have undergone training. Once trained, they reach out to Government and aided schools to teach students the basics of mathematics (integers, fractions, decimals, algebra, and lines and angles). Along

with math they also teach the kids positive habit development, and do sessions on how to learn, which helps build confidence among their young mentees and makes the subject easier for them.

Volunteers benefit too. Through mentoring and student feedback, they develop communication, leadership, and team skills and break through their inhibitions.

The power and beauty of math

Math is the doorway to the development of more valuable life-skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, language, and more. Project Ganitham goes above and beyond Math and opens up new worlds to both mentors and mentees.

Students benefit...

Arjun, a 6th grade student, loves these math sessions, conducted by UST volunteers and college students. Tailored to cover the huge gap in learning left by the covid years, it helps him catch up with the curriculum. Besides, the teaching methods are far more fun and interesting!

...and so do the volunteers.

The energy of the students and the support of the staff keeping drawing our volunteers back. "I had the same amount of fear and confusion on how the teachings and handling the kids will go, until I saw those kids and the super supportive faculty of the school," says Sreerag. "The kids were super excited and eager to learn. They said the answers very loudly as to impress me (maybe!)."

Sneha too felt that these sessions helped her overcome her fears, "Being someone who feared communicating and meeting new people, Project Ganitham helped me overcome this liability."



2 Student scholarships

If you can dream it, you can do it.

The inspiring stories of 2 lion-hearted girls. Though perhaps it should be lioness-hearted!

Both girls come from disadvantaged backgrounds, both suffer from physical disabilities. Yet both have a will that transcends all obstacles and make us feel that anything is possible. UST's long-term partnership with Vidyadhan initiative, with Sarojini Damodaran Foundation helped make their dreams come true.

Between Archana and her dream of becoming a doctor lay hurdles you might think were insurmountable. Diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA), a genetic disease that progressively weakens muscles, her passion to excel forced first her classmates and teachers, then the entire Medical Board, who had rejected her thrice on medical grounds, to take her seriously.

Archana's father, a postman, ferried her to school every day. Her mother quit her job to care for her. Such loving support did not go unrewarded. Archana not only excels in studies, she sings and writes poetry as well. She's no amateur performer, having given concerts on various stages across Kerala, including at the state youth festival.

Almost 8000 followers read her posts on her social media page "immini_cherye_oridam". "Two years ago, I sang a duet with Haricharan, for the movie called Backpackers." she says, naming a well-known Indian Carnatic vocalist and playback singer, "Now I do concerts on various stages. I also published a book of 22 poems when I was in 9th standard, and now I write about various social issues and creativity."

Now in her 4th year of medicine, Archana also works as a project coordinator at a foundation for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

Our second lioness, 22-year-old Rupa Devi is the daughter of a farmer - her mother. Her father died when she was but a baby. When Rupa Devi was diagnosed with a spinal cord injury and told she would never be able to walk again, she went into a depression and completely lost her confidence.

A chance video of a para-badminton player fired up her imagination. I am going to become a professional badminton player, she thought. After that there was no looking back. Rigorous rehabilitation helped regain physical and mental strength, and soon she was determinedly playing badminton on her wheelchair.

She debuted recently, in a State-level para-badminton tournament. And won the silver! This opened the doors for selection at the Anand Kumar Badminton Academy. She has also won Gold at a national-level competition held in Bengaluru and Lucknow.

Last we heard the indomitable Rupa Devi was training for the international para-badminton tournament. We wish her luck!



Investing in education goes a long way to reduce both poverty and inequality and verily, gives the highest returns. UST CSR offers scholarships for higher education to meritorious students from economically- disadvantaged families through 2 programs:

2.1. Vidyadhan

A pan India project from the Sarojini Damodaran Foundation, provides ongoing support for needy and academically bright students across Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Maharashtra. In keeping with our vision of holistic development, our volunteer teams work directly with each scholarship student to train them on life skills, as well as mentor them on careers in Information Technology. This increases their employability quotient and makes them better equipped for job placements.

Vidyadhan-UST partnership has impacted 306 students (176 girls, 130 boys) since its inception. Out of whom, 227 students now have jobs, and the remaining 79 students have opted for higher education. Students from the Vidyadhan project have also been placed through UST's campus selection process in 2021.



2.2. G. A. Menon Scholarship through UST Welfare Foundation

The Covid 19 crisis shattered the dreams and ambitions of many a student. Education for those whose parents/caretakers lost their jobs to the pandemic suddenly became a luxury.



The worst affected, of course, were the girls. After all, for them education was optional. The G.A. Menon scholarship was launched to bail out affected students. In keeping with our policy, we focused more on the female gender.

These scholarships were offered directly through our foundation, through which we supported 55 students, from primary to higher education.

3 To learn to read is to light a fire, to spark imaginations

The number of children visiting our 20+ libraries in the rural areas of South India - Gubbi Panchayat, Karnataka, and Madurantakam Panchayat, Tamil Nadu have grown to over 2000 in last two years.

The libraries are equipped with 500+ child-friendly color-coded English, Kannada, Tamil & bi-lingual books, career guidance kits with charts and career planners, and attendance registers for tracking children. Regular reading assessments help improve reading skills and comprehension. And yes, they are now getting better marks at schools too!

We dream of setting up child friendly libraries in every government school. For this initiative we have partnered with the local panchayats (village councils) and our NGO partner, India Literacy Project.

The project objectives:

- Child-friendly libraries for children, grades 4-10
- Career Guidance Programs for older students, grades 9-12



Stories from the India Literacy Project

Twins, Aruvi and Menaka joined the library as soon as it opened. Unlike her more confident twin, shy little Aruvi stammered and hung back from others. Constant encouragement by our facilitators woke in her the love of reading, and with it her confidence. Aruvi is blossoming beautifully now. She studies in class 5 at PUMS Vedavakkam.

It's not always so easy to bring kids into our libraries though. Specially those who need it most. Take Arul for instance. His father, a woodcutter from the Irullar tribe, belongs to one of the most vulnerable and exploited communities of South India. Our facilitators had to convince the father first. Reading, for Arul, started from the basics – recognizing the alphabet. Now in grade 5, he is still very shy, though he does participate in library activities. Wonder of wonders, his little sister has also joined us! And they both attend our library sessions regularly.

To get a child hooked on reading, first their reading levels are assessed, then they are encouraged to pick books they are likely to understand and enjoy. The books are colour coded and mapped to different levels of difficulty.

Reading opens new worlds. It is a precious gift indeed.



Like Arul, Meena too came from an extremely poor economic background. Dull and silent in the beginning, she started at the bottom. Today she is a transformed child. She cheerfully participates in all activities and has thrice been star reader of the month.

On the other hand, when Ramesh came to us he was hyperactive. He simply couldn't sit still. Although he recognized the alphabet, he was unable to read a complete sentence. Frankly he was a disruption for the others. Over the last year, reading has calmed him down. He has started participating in the library programs and his reading level has moved up.

4 No child should be left behind – especially those with special needs

Our special initiatives for disabled children unfortunately cannot change the world to an equal playing ground, but we do have the power to make their lives more fulfilling and joyous.

A large number of India's children and youth suffer from single or multiple disabilities. The challenges they face lead many of them to drop out of school early. Even if they do attend, they rarely progress beyond primary grades, ultimately leading to lower employability and poverty.

4.1 Equal opportunities, protection of rights, and full participation

UST CSR policy and programs, focused on inclusive education for those with disabilities, cuts across all our education initiatives. In addition, we support a wide spectrum of our NGO partner schools with customized teaching and learning material including braille books and tablets with braille-assisted software and non-visual desktop application for children with visual impairment/blindness, and skill training for employability and livelihood.

4.2 Our NGO partners do some amazing work!

Academy for Severe Handicaps and Autism (ASHA) Charitable Trust offers education along with a comprehensive set of therapies to individuals with autism spectrum disorder. First among special schools in Karnataka for 2022-2023, by India School Rankings, ASHA has grown and developed both capabilities and expertise, as have their students, many of whom are now job-ready. Their innovative way of helping their children find employment will touch the hearts of many. But more on that in the women-empowerment section of this report!

Hope Foundation educates under-privileged children and encourages all-round development through hobby sessions, sports activities, and talent competitions. They also conduct free health-check-up camps.

Jyothirgamaya (Center for Blind children) and Gyana Jyothi Trust both empower the blind through education, braille study material, training in technology, communication, interpersonal skills, employability, and vocational skills. In fact, all the skills needed to go out into the world and make it their own.

Our focus is on continued support through education, counselling, therapies, and teaching-learning sessions of art, crafts, and music. These sessions focus on pre-school and early childhood intervention, primary education, pre-vocational training, parent training and support, guidance, assessment, and mentoring. All of which will help develop the life skills and craft training necessary to evolve into independent, self-supporting young adults.





1 NO POVERTY


2 ZERO HUNGER


3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING


Health

Help communities build a robust health care system

The pandemic not only brought to light the need for better health infrastructure, but also a more resilient population. Thus, UST CSR health initiatives this year focused on the ramping up of building infrastructure and medical equipment, in a bid to scale up public healthcare facilities, especially in rural areas.

In addition, we had initiatives for critical care support for both chronic and terminally illnesses, finance of assisted medical devices for the differently abled, home care equipment and AI-generated voice-enabled blood pressure machines, hearing aids, and more to improve the quality of life of our fellow human beings, and enable them to participate more fully in society.



Impact

750

Terminally ill patients supported for treatment

220

Disabled children/people provided with medical assistive devices

600

Adolescents/youth counseled and engaged to prevent substance abuse

480

Adolescent girls and mothers supported for nutrition and reproductive health

1 Strengthening the primary, secondary, and tertiary public health care system

Focused on the needs of individuals, families, and communities, this covers:

- a. Infrastructure development at primary health centers and government hospitals
- b. Community-based health camps in rural and tribal areas
- c. Setting up of medical equipment at blocks, districts, and state level hospitals
- d. Treatment of critically ill patients with chronic non-communicable diseases like cancer, kidney failure, degenerative diabetes, etc.



2 Eradication of hunger and malnutrition

The 2 main initiatives under this goal, the mid-day meal program and the Adolescent Girls Health Project, focus on children and adolescent girls – always the most affected members of our society at any downturn.

Program objectives

Tackling
SDG2: Zero
hunger

Better health
for the
marginalized

Community
based meals
foster rapport
and improve
social skills

Reduced
dropout in
school

2.1 Mid-day meal program

One square meal a day goes a long way in improving the efficacy of primary education in government schools. A boost in the child's nutritional status reflects in improved grades, enhanced communication skills, higher confidence levels and an increased awareness of health and hygiene. Not only does a mid-day meal bring about a positive change in the students' attitude towards studies and extracurricular activities, it also increases overall enrollment in schools.

UST Welfare Foundation in coordination with The Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF) supports 2 projects in the government schools of Karnataka & Telangana. Through this, a total of 3992 children studying in the government schools of Bengaluru, Hubli & Hyderabad received their school meals in the academic year of 2022-23. A majority of these children belong to low-income households which often cannot afford a basic nutritional meal.

Nourishing meals, inspired students



3,992 students



6,89,318 meals served



55 schools



Tribal girls are beginning to open and talk to their Cluster Coordinators about their problems. Here is how it has helped girls like Kalavathi (name changed) and Seetha (names changed). At one of our Menstrual Hygiene and Reproductive sessions, Kalavathi realized that she was using 10-12 sanitary pads a day, way above the average. Our Cluster Coordinator spoke to the parents about it, and organized an appointment with the gynecologist, only to discover Kalavathi had severe anemia, which led to more complications. Though still under medication, she is on the road to recovery.

Seetha was in 7th grade when she ran away from home with an older man. She was rescued and brought back home, but now her parents started monitoring her every movement. She was no longer trusted and felt frustrated and depressed. Naturally she was dull when she joined our community health sessions. Here she learned of the POCSO child protection act and realized how she was trapped by an older, more experienced adult. The CC had separate counselling sessions with the girl and her parents which helped in getting them into a smoother relationship. Seetha is a livelier student today and looks forward to a happier life.

2.2 Adolescent Girls Health Project

Extensive studies in Attappady reveal that malnutrition among adolescent mothers is the main cause for infant mortality in this tribal belt. Added to their lack of nutrition, they also suffer from menstrual and reproductive health problems, psychological issues and the custom of early marriage. Miscarriages and other morbidities associated with pregnancy and delivery are thus common among these under-nourished mothers.

Our tribal Adolescent Girls Health Project, as the name indicates, was introduced to improve the health and nutritional status of tribal adolescent girls through behavioral change and communication.

It was launched by UST Welfare Foundation in partnership with Swami Vivekananda Medical

Mission in February 2021, to tackle the high rate of infant mortality persisting in Attappady.

The three-year-long project (2021- 2024) extends across 60 hamlets of the Attappady district, and covers 945 adolescent girls, with a special focus on 600 adolescent girls with malnutrition parameters.

The key areas of the project are:

- Nutrition: Improve the nutritional status and food habits of tribal adolescent girls who are at high risk of malnutrition
- Sexual and reproductive health: Bring awareness among tribal adolescent girls on sexual and reproductive health, encourage them to adopt safe practices for menstrual hygiene, delay pregnancy, and prevent sexual exploitation

- c. Mental health: Increase awareness of mental health, provide psycho-physical support for tribal adolescent girls to improve their behavioral health and illness, prevent suicides
- d. Community-based support: The strategy is to engage the entire community, creating and training peer groups for dietary interventions, development of kitchen gardens, raising backyard poultry, cluster level capacity building and counselling and psycho-social support

The power of trained community-based peer support groups

It is easier for these young adolescent girls to open up to their peers during regular cluster level meeting and trainings.

Medical concerns like low Body Mass Index (BMI), anemia, irregular periods etc. experienced by young girls are addressed through this initiative. Often the solution simply lies in a better diet. We add value to the nutrition project outcomes with:

1. Kitchen gardens - Volunteers distribute seeds and biofertilizers, and now about 85% of families are recycling their kitchen waste to use in their gardens
2. Nutrimix - A highly nutritious, easy-to-use millet-based mix was developed and distributed to them. Many are now using this mix in their daily cooking

3. Backyard poultry – Many now have a more sustainable source of protein in their backyards

Along with nutrition support, counselling and training helps the girls be better informed and aware about their physical, mental and emotional health.

3 Say 'NO' to drugs

Preventing substance abuse among youth

UST continues its support for the Project VENDA, a UST-Fourth Wave Foundation joint initiative, which works primarily in Kerala to effectively contain and manage substance abuse among teenagers and young adults. We achieve this by using a range of focused activities - encouraging children to channel their energies into creative pursuits, disseminating relevant information counselling, facilitating rehabilitation, and so on.

Football is one of the main tools used to engage the teenagers. UST sponsors the VENDA Cup, an annual football tournament for school children, lets them experience a professional tournament on a standard playing field. Through the tournament, the participants are able to showcase their skills, which encourages them to aspire higher. In March 2023, 66 teams from high-risk areas competed for the VENDA Cup. 600 adolescents and youth were impacted through this initiative.



Sunil Balakrishnan, Chief Values Officer and Global head for Centers Operations inaugurated the football match event, and our UST Kochi team participated in the event.



4 Support for critically/terminally ill patients for treatment and care

A growing incidence of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) due to lifestyle changes, and growing diabetic and hypertension patients in Kerala prompted the UST Welfare Foundation to foray into CKD treatment for patients below the poverty line. Those suffering from renal failure need lifelong dialysis, unless patients can get a successful renal transplant. The costs of lifelong dialysis, investigations and medicines are prohibitive. UST Welfare Foundation in partnership with Cancure Foundation provides 1000 free dialysis to patients through this initiative, touching 250 lives.

UST Welfare Foundation also provides free medicines to 500 cancer patients through the Regional Cancer Center Trivandrum, Free Drug Bank.

4.1 Palliative care for children

Pediatric palliative care (PPC) is a specialized comprehensive care approach for children with life-threatening diseases. It should take into consideration total care of the child's body, mind and spirit, provide relief from the symptoms as well as give support to the family. Health providers must evaluate and alleviate a child's physical, psychological, and social distress, and make use of available community resources. It should be provided in all levels of health care; from home to tertiary care centers.

Palliative care for children is the active total care of the child's body, mind and spirit, and also involves giving support to the family. It should begin when the illness is diagnosed and continues regardless of whether the child receives treatment directed at the disease or not. Health providers must evaluate and alleviate a child's physical, psychological, and social

distress. Effective palliative care requires a broad multidisciplinary approach that is patient and family centered and makes use of available community resources; it can be successfully implemented even if resources are limited. It should be provided in all levels of health care; from home to tertiary care centers.

UST Welfare Foundation in collaboration with Pallium India, has set up a children's palliative care OPD at Trivandrum Institute of Palliative Sciences (TIPS), providing children and their families opportunity to visit for a more in-depth palliative care consult. The establishment of this OPD provides facility to run a weekend clinic that may be easier for families. In addition, it provides families with an opportunity to meet the team more than once a week, and to receive interventions like physiotherapy more regularly.



5 Menstrual health and hygiene

Period-shame is rooted in gender inequality. Improving menstrual health and educating girls can help break down cultural taboos and raise self-esteem.

Attapady, MDLS projects and Pourakarmika health checkups are integrated with menstruation and hygiene related interventions. Yet another effort by UST to break down the barriers that hinder the progress of our girls.

5.1 Pourakarmika health camps

The health of the municipality workers is key to the health of the city. UST Welfare Foundation, in partnership with Right to Live and a team of doctors, conducted the health screening of 1500 BBMP workers 19 wards across Basavangudi and Mahadevapura.

This advanced medical camp organized for pourakarmika workers covered:

- General examination of health
- Physical examination – for pallor, icterus, cyanosis, clubbing, lymphadenopathy, oedema
- Anthropometry – Height, Weight, Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Respiratory function – lung function test, oxygen saturation
- Body vitals – body temperature, body pressure, pulse
- Random blood sugar (RBS)
- Inoculations – Tetanus
- On-site ECG facilities



1500 BBMP Pourakarmikas screened for occupational health risks and infections. Mahadevapura, Bangaluru – December 29th, 2022 - Media release

Pourakarmikas, who keep our city clean, are prone to dangerous vulnerabilities and health risks due to a lack of timely health check-ups and precautions. "Every other day, I have severe headaches and itching on my skin. I haven't gone for a proper health check-up as I just don't have the time and money," said Jayamma, unaware of the health risks common in her line of work.

"Bio-medical waste can cause injuries and skin infections. Pricks can lead to tetanus and hepatitis. Most of the Pourakarmikas are also anemic and have lower immunity due to lack of nutritional food" said Dr. Ankita, CEO at Avant Dental Network Pvt Ltd. Understanding their needs, UST, Avant Dental Network and Right to Live worked in collaboration to conduct a Health Screening camp for BBMP Pourakarmikas in an effort to detect occupational diseases. "Under CSR activity of UST, we could cover Pourakarmikas of different wards of Mahadevapura and Bangalore South zones this year. We target to scale up the camp and cover other wards to ensure good health of all our BBMP Pourakarmikas" said Ms. Smita Sharma, Global Program Manager - CSR and Sustainability at UST.

"This time around we wanted our health program to be able to provide better and more advanced health facilities at camp sites and guide them with support for further treatments. We chose to offer tests like Pulmonary Function Test, Hearing Test, On-site ECG facility and a thorough Eye checkup – with further support for spectacles and cataract surgeries," said Dr Ankita.

Multiple camps were conducted in December at different locations, and with the final health camp on December 29th, 2022, over 1500 Pourakarmikas have been screened for potential health risks and infections. "Health camps for BBMP Pourakarmikas, in most cases, fail to meet its purpose due to lack of proper documentation and follow-up treatments. We aim to close this loop by giving proper follow-up of individual cases and required treatment to make sure our Pourakarmikas remain healthy and disease free." said TV Sridhar, Executive director at Right to Live organization.

6 Mental health related initiatives

UST's CSR volunteer teams work closely with the patients and inmates of Santhimandiram, a psychosocial rehabilitation center in Trivandrum, Kerala. Going beyond their basic needs of medicines, clothes, beds, and food supplies, to supporting infrastructure needs. In fact, UST associates visit regularly to work with mental health patients on the plantation, to distribute eco- friendly material, and organize recreational activities for the patients.



A rainbow at the end of the line

“Why do so many lost souls end up in Trivandrum?”

A chance question led our UST volunteers to discover a new way to be of service to the patients and inmates of Santhimandiram, a psychosocial rehabilitation center in Trivandrum, Kerala.

It turns out that since Trivandrum is at the end of the train line, the lost, the mentally ill and the demented are all picked up from the last station and brought to Santhimandiram. The challenge is to weed out those that are lost from those who are mentally challenged, those that have family from those that are destitute. This is difficult. Many do not speak the local language, and once in the institute they are scared and distrustful of the authorities.

UST cares

Once UST volunteers discovered this forgotten lot, they started talking to them, in Bengali, Oriya, Telugu, whichever language the patients were familiar with. Trying to wheedle out hints of where they might have come from, whether they had family who would miss them, and so on.

Pinky (name changed) used to hear voices in her head telling her what to do. Following its instructions, she found herself at the end of the

line at Trivandrum Railway Station. Bengali-speaking volunteers were roped in from UST to speak to her, but they couldn't quite place the unfamiliar dialect. In the meanwhile, her husband, a fisherman, was frantic. He reported her lost, last seen at the ashram where she worked as help. The police were combing the streets for her.

It took several sessions for our volunteers to realize she was from Cooch Behar. The voices in her head were sometimes so loud she couldn't focus on what people were trying to ask her. But how to find her family and home there? None of the volunteers had even heard of this remote city on the Bengal-Assam border.

While googling Pinky's home town, one volunteer discovered a xerox shop in Cooch Behar, with a phone number. On calling the number, the helpful shop owner explained that the town was tiny. There were perhaps 2 ashrams by the side of the river and if they gave him some time he would find out where Pinky had worked before she wandered off.

In a positive turn of events, soon Pinky's husband bought a one-way ticket (he couldn't afford a return ticket!) and landed up in Trivandrum to take his wife home.

Sometimes happiness lies at the end of the line.

7 Health care for orphanages and shelter homes

The UST volunteer teams collaborated with grassroots NGOs to reach out directly to shelter homes, orphanages, and service homes with food and ration distribution for a large number of children, women, and older adults. We reached more communities in the remote locations with the active engagement of our UST volunteers.

8 Medical assistive devices and support for people with disabilities

In any downturn, whether a health crisis like the one seen in recent years or an economic fallout, people with disability get impacted the most. Here are some of our interventions in this area:

- UST CSR volunteers engage directly with children and adults with disabilities and work with them to assess their needs, get a primary level diagnosis using consultancy services and provide customized medical assistive devices for them.
- Volunteer teams work with the UST Welfare Foundation to help provide wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs, and speech and hearing aid for children who need them.
- Specialized manual and electric wheelchairs as well as physiotherapy sessions were organized for 20 people with muscular dystrophy and spinal muscular atrophy, through Project Sahayathra, with our partner Mobility in Dystrophy (MIND) trust, Kerala.
- Our interventions to support children with speech disabilities included providing them with Oral Placement Therapy tools which enable children during speech therapy sessions and eventually lead to better oral-motor movements.



From the desk of a volunteer

“Uncle, can I work in UST one day?” the question came from a boy of 14 years who has been suffering from muscular dystrophy for the past 11 years. Nipun had visited Sambhu, as part of UST’s Touch from Heart initiative, to handover automated wheelchair especially customized to meet his needs. Sambhu is unable to move on his own. And that’s how he became part of UST’s CSR initiative, which aims at providing assistive devices to children in need. “Spending time with the less fortunate people makes us realize how blessed we are, but it also makes us feel for the struggling ones so much so that we really don’t know whether we feel happy about the meeting or quite sad about the situation that the other person is in. But I felt fortunate to be part of this program from UST”

- Nipun Varma, USSociate

- UST CSR Bangalore team equipped 200 people with medical assistive devices like above- knee prosthesis, wheelchairs, hand pads and hearing aids in Bangalore (rural and urban), Davanee, Dharwad, and Gadag, in partnership with the NGOs - Association of People with Disabilities and Samarthanam trust.
- Our interventions to support children on the autism spectrum include one-to-one therapy sessions which enable children to learn basic life skills and lead healthier lives. Our NGO partners Hope and ASHA Trust work with us on these autism initiatives.
- In Chennai, we support 50 people with severe spinal cord injuries and paralysis with customized wheelchairs, specialized beds and chairs with The Ganga foundation.



Wheeee ...lchairs: “Touch from heart” stories

Jerin’s new electric wheelchair now allows him to freely move without any external support. He worries about the 5000+ people in India who suffer from muscular dystrophy, and cannot afford the only treatment there is for this disease – physiotherapy. UST partnered with Mobility in Dystrophy (MIND) Trust to distribute wheelchairs to people who have been affected by muscular dystrophy. Like our other initiatives, we hope that this too will gather momentum over time.

Some stories from the first phase of the UST-MIND wheelchair distribution initiative.

Naveen wants to be an artist. His proudest moment? When he personally gifted his portrait of Padmabushan awardee Sri. M.T. Vasudevan Nair to the renowned author and poet himself. Today, free to move himself around, he has also freed his mother to find herself a job.

Sreejith’s mother was his only support until the wheelchair came home. Now, with a modicum of independence, he can take some of the pressure off her. And get cracking on his studies. We hope his passion for computers and graphics will open up new worlds for him, and his mother.

Lekshmi couldn’t wait to start working, and earning. She would have finished her MBA by the time this story is published. We wonder what she is up to now...

There are so many more stories we can tell. Of the beneficiaries of course, but also of the volunteers who facilitated this project. Moved to tears and laughter. Touched beyond measure because the child they helped happened to be the same age as their own, only without the same privileges.

Grateful to be part of the families of beneficiaries, and bask in their warmth, if only for a few moments. Volunteers have been transformed by this initiative too, as have those they have helped.



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



Environment



Net zero by 2040



UST is pulling out all stops to achieve net zero emissions by 2040. From becoming more efficient across our operations, services, and supply chain to upping our community-based initiatives for climate action. To become carbon neutral an organization must commit to decarbonization, either by carbon offsetting or by contributing financially to projects that decrease greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere.

Our emission reduction plans aligns with the Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), and enables us to create ambitious decarbonization targets to prevent catastrophic climate change. Our climate change performance is reported in the CDP and annual EcoVadis assessment for sustainability and social responsibility.

Our environmental initiatives are completely volunteers driven and led by the UST Welfare Foundation.



Impact

100 acres

Forest land preservation and conservation

30,000

Tree saplings planted

90,000

Medicinal saplings planted

UST Net Zero Mission integrates 2 main areas



Conserving and increasing green cover



Rejuvenating water sources

1 Conserving and increasing green cover

Forests breathe life into our world. They not only directly impact our health and livelihoods but also have a crucial role in tackling biodiversity and the climate crises. UST runs 3 diverse projects focussed on increasing green cover through regeneration of degraded forest land, including plantation of saplings and medicinal plants, and maintenance of existing ones.

1.1 Restoring forests, reviving life

A 3-year (2021-23) habitat restoration project with Forest First Samithi in the catchment of Rivers Kabani and Cauvery (Wayanad, Kerala) to restore the degraded forest to its former glory, is underway. This move will provide livelihood to local eco-development communities and create local stewards in conservation, fostering a healthy relationship between community and forests. The land restored is envisaged to become a biodiversity conservation plot with germplasm of 80-100 native floral species that are local to the landscape. Plantation of new saplings and releasing invasive species for Assisted Natural Regeneration is part of the project strategy.

Livelihood for local tribal youth

Several of the species conserved have the potential to support forest fringe communities with nontimber forest produce (NTFP). The project helps by training and sensitizing them on floral species identification, seed collection calendar, seed sprouting techniques, and nursery management for restoration. Once they learn of the bounty in their forests, and start earning a livelihood from it, they will be more sensitised to the value it brings.



Measured outputs

- Boundary clearance: 59 acres
- Saplings planted: 4100 saplings
- Invasive senna removed: 5.5 acres
- Planting area for new saplings: 59 acres
- Assisted natural regeneration: Cleared lantana from 2884 trees in 27 acres



1.2 Of forest wealth, traditional medicine and sustainable livelihood

By adopting alternative farming of medicinal plants, shrubs, and trees, UST also supports the livelihood of rural farmers, protecting centuries old traditional healthcare systems. In 2022, our Nature Conservation and Sustainable Livelihood project procured 75,000 medicinal saplings, for farmers, to help them set up farming beds in 10 locations in Kerala, 3 locations in Tamil Nadu, and 2 locations in Karnataka.



1.3 Miyawaki forests, the lungs of urban landscapes

UST’s carbon sequestration projects are designed to decrease global warming by creating and maintaining mini forests in urban and rural areas, pan India. The project adopts the ways of ‘Miyawaki Plantations’ and ‘Dense Forest Plantations’ that give us 10 times faster growth rate than the traditional ways of afforestation. The project also improves biodiversity by planting large varieties of flower and fruit trees that provide sustenance for insects, birds and animals. The project was implemented in 4 locations in Kerala, and 2 locations in Tamil Nadu.



Measured outputs

- Medicinal plant saplings: 99,070
- Farmers benefitted: 164
- Number of species supplied: 85
- Environmental Importance: 44
- Critically Medicinal: 77
- Critically Endangered: 33
- Total UST volunteer effort/hours: 350



Measured Outputs

- Mini forests planted: 5
- New tree saplings planted: 15,390
- Species planted: 120+
- Regenerated land: 5.2 acres
- Total UST volunteer effort/hours: 4,330
- Total count of UST volunteers: 500+
- Mini forests maintained: 10
- Tree saplings maintained: 16,542

			Methodology
#	Planting method	Saplings per Sq.m	Biomass per saplings (Kg)
1	Miyawaki	3	16
2	Dense forest	1	8
3	Semi-Dense forest	0.5	2

		Outcomes
#	Long term outcome for 2022 plantations	Value
1	Carbon sequestration per year	300 tons of CO ₂
2	Oxygen production per year	1500 tons of O ₂



2 Rejuvenating water sources

2.1 Reviving Kerala's river Nile – a cultural heritage and life source

The Bharathapuzha, or Nila, is the river Nile of Kerala. Flowing from the Anaimalai hills in the Western Ghats, the 209km (130 miles) long river originates in Tamil Nadu and flows through three districts and 11 taluks of Kerala, before joining the Arabian Sea at Ponnani in Malappuram district. This perennial river, also known as 'Peraar' in ancient scripts, has had a strong influence on the culture of the South Malabar region of Kerala.

Today, the river is endangered, exploited by the sand mining mafia, over-run by grasses and bushes. The water is no longer potable and the river is in a deplorable condition. Its tributaries have also degraded almost to the point of no return. Environmentalists are predicting dire consequences and the untimely death of this beautiful life-giving river, the muse of many in its earlier avatar. The effort required to revitalize Nila is enormous.

UST has started in a small way by planting trees along the shoreline of the riverbank of Bharathapuzha aka Nila in Thrissur/Palakkad,



Measured outputs

- Number of tree saplings planted on riverbank : 2300
- Width of planting by the shorelines : 50 meters
- Species planted (diversity) : 108
- Trees maintained (previously planted) : 3000
- Total UST volunteer effort/hours: 270

Kerala. This will prevent the erosion of the bank, recharge groundwater and rejuvenate a small part of the river and its streams, creating a habitat to improve the water and the land ecosystem. UST partners with the NGO Nila Seva Samithi for this cause.



2.2 Conserve and restore terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems - Restoration of Kolapanchery Lake, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

When UST partnered with the Environmentalist Foundation of India to restore the Kolapanchery Lake in Chennai, the lake was barely recognizable. Established by our ancestors as part of a larger water system, Kolapanchery lake was created to ensure water security for the residents of the Tiruvallur District. Encroachment and neglect combined to shrink the lake. Human settlements took over the natural ecosystem, paving way for invasive weeds and solid waste accumulation. Invasive weeds such as *Asprosopis juliflora*, *Ipomea carnea*, water hyacinth, bulrush, etc infested 30-40% of it. Excessive siltation caused the lake to dry up during the summer and used for agriculture, cattle rearing and recreation. The lake bunds were destroyed and made it difficult to determine its boundary.

This 'Science Based Water Body Restoration' Project was surveyed to understand the boundary of the lake, then weeded and desilted. Nesting islands were created to provide a safe haven for all life forms, The lake was then fenced and an embankment built to increase its storage capacity. Native trees were planted around the lake and innovative G-shaped and dumbbell shaped islands, inlet canals and trenches was created to regulate water flow. The lake was fully restored in 2022.



The project outcome shows :

- Pre-restoration depth of the lake: 3.04 m
- Post-restoration depth of the lake: 4.20 m
- Pre-restoration water storage capacity: 148 Megaliters
- Post-restoration water storage capacity: 204 Megaliters (27.61% higher)
- Number of nesting islands created: 6 islands, 2 well islands
- Length of offshore bunds strengthened: 335 m
- Length of foreshore bunds created: 540 m
- Length of dual embankments created: 875 m
- Length of protective fencing established: 1288 ft

Other achievements

- Encroached land attached back to the lake: 2029.8 m²
- Inlets created to prevent flooding: 6
- Native tree saplings planted: 80
- Volunteers engaged in the restoration: 60
- Plantation activities: 2
- Lake safari activity: 1



Before



After

2.3 Environment protection related awareness and governance


Nurturing environmental awareness among children instills a sense of responsibility for the planet. It is crucial to teach them the importance of preserving ecosystems, conserving resources, and reducing pollution. By empowering children to become advocates for environmental protection, we send a powerful message to their families and communities, encouraging the adoption of eco-friendly practices.


UST, in partnership with Environment Support Group (ESG) focuses on capacity building efforts to protect and rehabilitate lakes in Karnataka, enhancing water security and promoting democratic governance of water resources. Through workshops and engagement with local communities, positive


outcomes have already been observed, such as preventing encroachment and pollution of lakes and rehabilitating them. These initiatives have far-reaching implications for ecological revival, water, health, nutritional, and gender security, making a significant impact on the local environment.





1 NO POVERTY


8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH


10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES


Livelihood, Disability and Inclusion

Mothers know best

Gowamma was worried. Her daughter would soon turn 18 and leave the protection of ASHA autistic centre. With no experience of the world outside, how would she survive? If she had a means of livelihood, she would at least be independent. But who would care to hire someone on the autistic spectrum?

To help solve the problem of mothers like her, UST Welfare Foundation's skill development program partnered with ASHA trust (Academy for Severe Handicaps and Autism) to train and upskill autistic children and their mothers. In the 5-month handicraft training program that was conducted, they learnt to make a range of paper and cloth products, and embellish them with beautiful designs in block printing and hand embroidery.

This was just the beginning, because then rose a question: "How would they sell their products?" and another, "Who would buy them?" and another, "Who would keep track of the inventory?" And another, "Who would do the accounts?" As the questions multiplied, so too did the solutions.

UST believes strongly in making people self-reliant. As the adage goes, teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime. Thus, we have ramped up livelihood generation initiatives for the more vulnerable sections of our communities, namely women, youth, tribals and those with disabilities.

As we go deeper into communities, our programs begin to converge. For example, our life skills program for children on the autistic spectrum expanded to include their mothers (see story), our efforts in the areas of environment are translating to jobs as well. The mangrove and lake rejuvenation projects bring back livelihood opportunities for fishermen, while the rejuvenation of forest land and nurturing of medicinal plant gardens gives employment to local tribes.

Today, Gowamma has done a short course on entrepreneurship, also sponsored. She is part of a supportive group of mothers who have similarly challenged children. While studying the basics of business, they got in some hand-on experience by selling home-made goodies at street corners. Thus, they learnt how to plan a sale, 'manufacture' the products, price them and make a profit!

They are now ready to hire their kids and get into business. As this was going to print, they were planning to register themselves as a Self Help Group so they could avail of micro-finance to get their show on the road. We're excited for them and wish them and their beautiful children, the best!



Last year we ran 3 programs exciting projects to help women set up their own businesses and 3 sustainable livelihood initiatives for people with disabilities. Here are more details on the impactful initiatives underway this year:

1 Industrial textile printing unit for mothers of autistic children

This 5-month training and skilling program aimed at opening livelihood opportunities for both mothers and children and was conducted in partnership with our NGO partner ASHA trust. It was attended by 8 children with autism and 12 mothers.

The group learnt to make the following products:

- Paper-based products: Gift covers, gift carton boxes, gift trays, and decorations
- Fabric products: Christmas decorations, soft toys, table napkins, runners, applique work, and fabric flowers
- Art products: Clay idols

The group of 20 people were also given a stipend for the duration of the program, and help after, to enable them to sell their products through a local supply chain mechanism.

2 A stitching unit for mothers of differently abled children



From the desk of a volunteer

As part of CSR initiative, last December, our team supported Attinkuzhi Govt LP School near Kazhakuttom to set up a classroom for differently abled kids. If you recollect, it was featured in Dec, 2021 edition of Smart Connect too. Several of our associates were part of the visit and interacted with parents & teachers at the venue. It was a great opportunity for us to know more about the challenges the parents face. Our biggest takeaway was that most are unable to pursue regular jobs, specially single parents with little or

no support. The first thought that all of us had was to help them financially, but for how long? What happens after that? After multiple discussions with the CSR core team and school authorities we agreed to set up a stitching unit at school premises to support the mothers of differently abled children.

- Surya Nandakumar, USsociate

3 Basic computer training to empower women

Twenty new desktops were provided by UST Global Welfare Foundation to New IT Lab for training 80 women on TALLY and IT-based courses with the women led organization named Association for Non-Traditional Employment for Women (ANEW), Chennai.



4 Mobilization, counselling, training, and placements of people with disabilities

Twenty-five people with physical disabilities underwent a 3 months (300 hours) skill- based training in IT/ ITeS, organized with our NGO partner Nirmaan in Hyderabad (Telangana). The program included mobilization, counselling, training and placements of the candidates.

Candidates selected were in the age group of 18 to 30 years, with a basic 10th standard education, with a passion to gain entry level employment.

The counsellor team explained the various career options to help them to choose a career suitable to their skill set. The placement process included mock interviews by industry experts which helped beneficiaries improve their communication skills, answering difficult questions and to reduce student’s stress before an actual job interview.

Indicator	Achieved
No of beneficiaries counselled	25
No of beneficiaries trained	25
No of beneficiaries to be provided with employment	13

The different abilities of the trainees

Type of disability	No. of trainees
Locomotor	20
Hearing Impairment	2
Mental retardation	2
Visual impairment	1
Total	25

5 Employment opportunities at a chain of cafes for persons with disabilities

UST CSR has partnered with MITTI Café, a chain of cafes across India completely run and managed by people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Through this initiative, we helped finance their newly launched café in Whitefield, Bengaluru. MITTI Café offers experiential training and employment to persons with intellectual and physical disabilities.

UST’s collaboration with MITTI Café has the potential to empower PwD by creating a stepping stone to employment, skills development, and financial independence. It will also help spread awareness of diversity and inclusion as it aligns with UST’s vision to provide skilling opportunities for underserved communities.





Through this special partnership with MITTI Café, we hope to raise awareness of the benefits that hiring people with disabilities can have for a business. At UST, we believe that inclusion is essential to achieving our purpose of altering the lives of every person and every organisation on the earth. With this partnership with MITTI Café, we aim to help people with disabilities and give them a platform to be independent. We look forward to many more collaborations with MITTI Café for a more inclusive world.

Sunil Balakrishnan,
Chief Values Officer, and CSR
volunteer, UST



6 Livelihood support for transgenders

Social exclusion of transgender people results in limited access to education and employment, loss of opportunities for economic and social advancement and extreme vulnerability to diseases and mental

health conditions. When UST CSR offered some of them a means of independent livelihood, their outpouring of gratitude touched and silenced us all.

A stitch in time

"Receiving a stitching machine has completely transformed my life. I used to struggle to make ends meet by doing odd jobs in my village, but now I have my own small tailoring business. I am receiving a lot of orders for school uniforms in particular this season. I am so grateful for this opportunity."

Kamala, Trivandrum

"The sewing machine has been a game-changer in my life. Now, I can take on larger projects and create intricate designs more efficiently. With the increased productivity, I earn more, enabling me to secure a better future for myself and my family."

Sneha, Kollam



“The support from companies like you is a huge motivation for transgenders like us.”

Sabith, Ernakulam

“Receiving a stitching machine as a gift from the Company has helped me break free from the cycle of poverty. I come from a disadvantaged background where opportunities for employment are rare and also face stigma because I am a

transgender. However, with the sewing machine, I have been able to start my own small tailoring business, providing clothing alterations and repairs to the local community. This not only allows me to support my family financially but also gives me a sense of pride and accomplishment. I am immensely grateful to UST.”

Prema, Malappuram

Against all odds

When he lost his legs in a horrific train accident, H Madhusudhan spiralled into depression. His father, fearing there was no future for the little boy, upped and left, leaving his mother to pick up the pieces. Madhu’s mother refused to be defeated. She forced her child to leave his room and rejoin school. Soon he joined the Association of People with Disability (APD).

It was here he got interested in sports. He tried swimming, as well as running, with prosthetic legs made of bamboo and cane. His coaches encouraged him to dream bigger, and he did. Inspired by wheelchair tennis players, he started by watching them play and was soon drawn to the game. He also got himself a job at a bank, one needs to survive too!

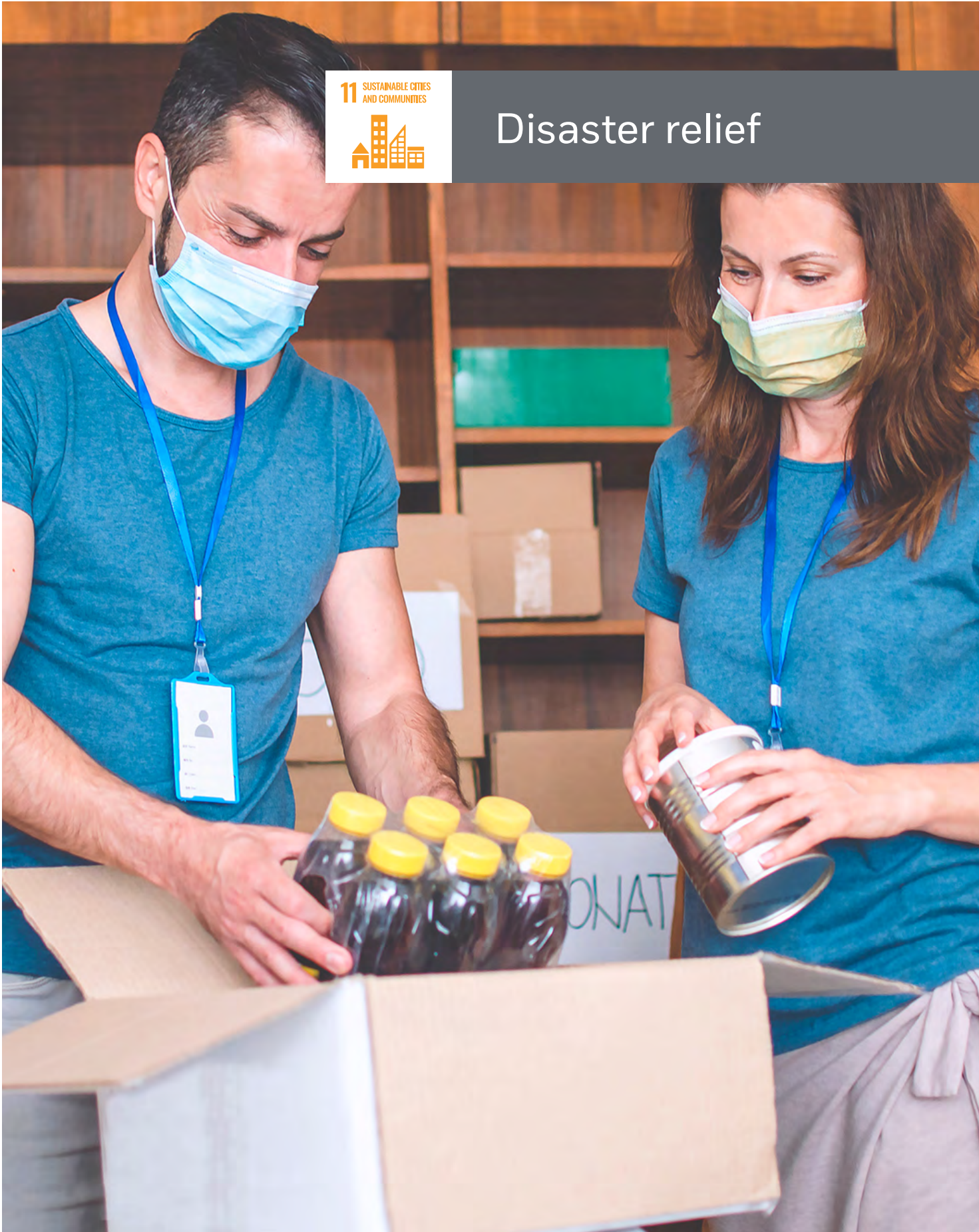
Today, Madhu has carved out a new identity for himself in the arena of international wheelchair tennis. Apart from playing Nationals in India, Madhusudhan has also played matches in Sri Lanka and Thailand. At an ITF event in Sweden, his first in Europe, Madhu felt the thrill of playing against Olympic champions Peter Vikstrom and Petter Edstrom, and winning three out of five matches against them. He has five international tournaments across four countries under his belt, and is almost ready to take on the world.

He just needed the right equipment. UST stepped in to provide the finest customized GrandSlam X tennis wheelchair, with a pioneering carbon fibre axle, from the UK. Calibrated to his requirement, it feels almost like an extension of him. Watching him swiftly, gracefully maneuver it across the court, slamming the ball that comes at him, we silently root for him.





Disaster relief



Humanity prevails

Over 3 million people fled their homes to escape conflict in Ukraine, leaving behind their lives - jobs, belongings, and loved ones. All of UST came together to support them. Our organization pledged USD 100,000 in relief support, with our employees contributing through the pay roll in solidarity with those impacted by the war. In our efforts for war relief for refugees and the people affected in war zones, we partnered with global non-profit organizations named **Polish Humanitarian Action, Disaster Emergency Committee** and **Razom**. These relief organizations worked with UST and our volunteers to provide crucial support for food, medicines and basic sanitation supplies to those in need. USociates from UK, Ukraine and Poland put in many hours of selfless volunteering, to help distribute these much-needed essentials in refugees camps.



Natural disasters

Philippines

Super Typhoon Odette, the strongest typhoon to hit the Philippines, barreled through islands and provinces, making nine landfalls and destroying lives and livelihoods barely recovering from the Covid 19 pandemic. Our non-profit partners in Manila, helped in the coordination of groceries, food, water, clothing and hygiene items to about 12,000 victims that we supported.



Karnataka

India's IT capital Bangalore saw some of the worst floods in decades, as torrential rain hit the city, causing severe flooding in low-lying areas and shanty towns, and rendering many homeless. UST's Bangalore CSR team started the relief work for those affected in urban slums where the majority population were sanitary and migrant workers and slum dwellers. UST CSR swung into action within 48 hours, mobilizing dry ration kits, tarpaulins for damaged huts, and medical and sanitary supplies. In this relief effort, we coordinated with Gubbachi, a field-based community for better and faster distribution of material to over 4000 affected families.



Global projects



Projectors for learning in public schools, Mexico

UST Mexico CSR team gifted Prim. Jose Bresera, a public school, 10 classroom projectors to ensure a better teaching learning experience for underprivileged children. The initiative, led by our CSR volunteers' team in Mexico in January 2023, supported 285 children across all classrooms.



Gardening classes for homeless women, UK

For this project we partnered with the Marylebone Project, which provides life-changing service for homeless and vulnerable women. Giving them practical support and educational opportunities in a welcoming and secure environment. Gardening brought them joy.



Smiles on UN International Happiness Day, 2022, UK

UST Corporate Social Responsibility Team celebrated UN International Happiness Day 2022 with the Penfold Hub and Extra Care Service, part of Notting Hill Genesis Housing, Marylebone, by gifting each resident a beautifully potted rose plant with a cheering quote. The simple intent of this visit was to bring a smile on residents' faces. Volunteers spent time with residents over tea, and even celebrated a resident's birthday.



'Tis the season for giving, UK

As part of the Christmas service, UST CSR team in collaboration with Goldfinger and People's Kitchen provided a hot meal and Christmas wellbeing package with seasonal cookies, a wreath, and candles to set the mood for a special evening to our most needy neighbors.



Redecorating spaces for positive change, UK

Makeovers to the bedrooms of underprivileged children and to local youth centres transform not only these living spaces, but the lives of the residents as well. The DACL program works with pro bono interior designers, along with corporate volunteers, to paint, repair, and assemble flat pack furniture to give these spaces a full makeover. UST supports these services.

Laptops can change the lives of youngsters, Poland

It's easy for teenagers to succumb to life's difficulties. UST Poland gifted laptops to charity organization Mrowisko, to help teenagers with addictions, familial difficulties, etc. and challenge them to change their lives, not surrender to weaknesses.

The organization works with young people in difficult developmental age and runs several addiction treatment clinics through their 2 centres in Gdansk, and 1 in Sopot. The centres also organize day-to-day activities, and one-year camps for teenagers with addiction. Youngsters at the camps live there, taking classes, workshops, and doing a variety of other activities.

Volunteers bring cheer to orphanage and handicapped home, Manila

Volunteers from UST Manila came laden with groceries, baby food and hygienic items to Tahanan ng Pagmamahal, an orphanage in Pasig City where abandoned and neglected children find solace and love. They also visited the Lourdes Home for mentally and physically challenged children bringing them basic necessities like medicines/vitamins, food supplies and sanitizing/hygiene kits to support them.

Both visits ended with volunteers spending time with the inmates. Enjoying the parlor games at the orphanage and a simple play of pass the ball at the Lourdes Home.



Our CSR team

With the guidance and supervision of OVC team including Chief Value Officer and CSR catalyst, our UST CSR ambassadors are working in the volunteering capacity for the organization's CSR initiatives in major UST locations, currently in India and APAC centers. These ambassadors and leads work with the UST volunteer's team (COLOR Rose) to mobilize internal and external stakeholders for planning, implementing, monitoring and communicating our CSR initiatives.



Sunil Balakrishnan
Chief Values Officer
Office of Values and Culture



Smita Sharma
CSR Catalyst
Office of Values and Culture

CSR AMBASSADORS, UST INDIA LOCATIONS



Bengaluru
Nidhi Garg



Bengaluru
Vishwas
Shivashankar



Chennai
Karthik
Ramadoss



Hyderabad
Tirumala
Vijaykumar Pithani



Kochi
Prasanth
Subramanian



Noida
Rajan Agarwal



Trivandrum
Harikrishnan
Mohankumar
Jayashree



Trivandrum
Sofi Janet

CSR AMBASSADORS, APAC LOCATIONS



Malaysia
Hasrul Hasni



Manila
Enaflor Rivera

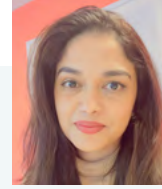
CSR AMBASSADORS, GLOBAL LOCATIONS



Bulgaria
Ina Radeva



Romania
Catalina
Teodorescu



Europe and UK
Sruthi Geetha



Mexico
Diego Orozco



USA
Natalie Renner

Stakeholder engagement for CSR ecosystem



Our non-profit partners

1	Academy for Severe Handicaps and Autism (ASHA) Charitable Trust
2	Adarsh Charitable Trust
3	Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India
4	Andhra Mahila Sabha
5	Army Wives Welfare Association
6	Ashalaya
7	Association for Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW)
8	Cancure Foundation
9	Cricket Association for the Blind in Kerala
10	Decentralise Rural Education Awareness Movement Society (DREAMS)
11	Desilva Handicap Trust
12	DESIRE Society
13	Environment Support Group
14	Environmental Foundation of India
15	Gnana Jyothi Trust
16	Gubbachi Learning Community
17	Hope - The Early Intervention Centre
18	India Literacy Project
19	Innovation and Science Promotion Foundation
20	Kote Foundation (Right to Live)
21	Mitti Social Initiatives Foundation
22	Mobility in Dystrophy (MIND) Trust
23	Nila Seva Samithi
24	Nirmaan
25	Ooruni Foundation
26	Pallium India Trust
27	Pesticide Action Network India
28	Rise UP Forum
29	Sakshama

30	Sarojini Damodaran Foundation
31	Sri Ramacharan Charitable Trust
32	Sumangali Seva Ashrama
33	Surabi Charitable Trust
34	Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission
35	The Academy of Magical Sciences
36	The Akshaya Patra Foundation
37	The Association of People with Disability
38	The Family Planning Association of India
39	The Ganga Foundation
40	Vasudaiva Kutumbakam Charitable Trust
41	V-Excel Educational Trust

Global partners

42	Bisdak Pride, Manila
43	Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC), UK
44	Goldfinger, UK
45	Penfold Hub and Extra Care Service, UK
46	Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH), Poland
47	Razom, Ukraine

For more than 23 years, UST has worked side by side with the world's best companies to make a real impact through transformation. Powered by technology, inspired by people and led by our purpose, we partner with our clients from design to operation. Through our nimble approach, we identify their core challenges, and craft disruptive solutions that bring their vision to life. With deep domain expertise and a future-proof philosophy, we embed innovation and agility into our client's organizations—delivering measurable value and lasting change across industries, and around the world. Together, with over 30,000+ employees in 30 countries, we build for boundless impact—touching billions of lives in the process.

Visit us at:

ust.com