

# A Case Study On Ambalamugal Medical Aid Society Initiative By BPCL-Kochi Refinery

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## INTRODUCTION

CSR is a concept whereby large organizations consider the interests of society by taking responsibility for the impact of their activities on customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, communities and other stakeholders, as well as the environment. As the world continues to analyze energy availability and the long-term effects of climate change, businesses too are turning their attention to an area of opportunity - reduction of carbon emissions, energy conservation and supply chain sustainability. CSR holds organizations to a higher moral and ethical standard, considering the overall interests of society in the operations of its day-to-day businesses. An approach for CSR that is becoming more widely accepted is community-based development approach. In this approach, corporates work with local communities to better themselves. For example, the Shell Foundation's involvement in the Flower Valley, South Africa. A more common approach of CSR is Philanthropy. This includes monetary donations and aid given to local organizations and impoverished communities in developing countries. Some organizations do not like this approach, as it does not help build on the skills of the local people, whereas, community-based development generally leads to a more sustainable development. Another approach to CSR is to incorporate the CSR strategy directly into the business strategy of an organization. For instance, procurement of Fair Trade tea and coffee has been adopted by various businesses, including KPMG. Its CSR manager commented, "*Fair-trade fits very strongly into our commitment to our communities.*"

Another approach is garnering increasing corporate responsibility interest. This is called Creating Shared Value, or CSV. The shared value model is based on the idea that corporate success and social welfare are interdependent. A business needs a healthy, educated workforce, sustainable resources and adept government to compete effectively. For society to thrive, profitable and competitive businesses must be developed and supported to create income, wealth, tax revenues, and opportunities for philanthropy.

## THE COMPANY

BPCL-Kochi Refinery, a unit of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, embarked on its journey in 1966 with a capacity of 50,000 barrels per day. Formerly known as Cochin Refineries Limited, and renamed as BPCL-Kochi Refineries Limited, the refinery was originally established in collaboration with Phillips Petroleum Corporation, USA.

Today, it is a frontline entity as the unit of the Fortune 500 Company, BPCL. BPCL-Kochi Refinery in Kochi, Kerala, is one of the two refineries of BPCL, with a crude oil refining capacity of 9.5 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA). The company is engaged in refining and distribution of petroleum products. It is headquartered in Mumbai, India. The refinery has been achieving MoU Excellent performance and has been recognized with various awards in areas of safety, energy conservation and environment protection. As a socially responsible corporate citizen, the community welfare initiatives of the refinery focus on developing the weaker sections of the society, particularly, the scheduled cast and scheduled tribes and people below the poverty line in important sectors like health, education, housing and women empowerment.

## CSR PROGRAMS AT BPCL

✿ **Overview :** As a socially responsible organization, the company aims to help the people enrich their lives. It helps employees or their families, also extends its scope of CSR activities to the families of those that they see beyond the glass cabins in the rustic surroundings.

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✿ **Specific CSR Initiatives** : Some of the CSR initiatives undertaken by the company are as follows:

As a corporate responsibility, today, 37 villages across India have been adopted. This includes making significant investments for nearly a decade and a half in them to make them fully self-reliant, providing them fresh drinking water, sanitation facilities, medical facilities, enhancing their income standards by imparting vocational training and agricultural innovations. However, BPCL also believes that the only medium for raising the villagers from their current state is by creating awareness and educating the young and the old. A Herculean task indeed, which BPCL recognized and thus even sought assistance from NGOs working around these centers in fulfilling its dream, which for many of the BPCL employees, still remains incomplete, on account of the large magnitude of work necessary in completion. These social activities are not only concentrated upon the neighboring areas, but have also been extended to the remote and tribal areas. In all the endeavors of the organization, a participative approach is being employed. Local people, along with the representatives of the local governments, play a pivotal role in identifying the grass root requirements in the area and extended their help in the implementation of the different schemes. Employees are encouraged to understand the local community by taking part in the different initiatives. BPCL-Kochi Refinery continuously gives priority to primary health care of the neighboring community. Various initiatives, such as conduct of medical camps, extending universal health insurance and development of health care infrastructure for community are helping many. Four different medical camps are held every quarterly, like medical camp in the tribal area during one quarterly, multi specialty camp during the next quarter, eye camp during the third quarter, and a fourth camp for the disabled. The medical camps help Kochi Refinery to understand the social needs of the people and all the camps are organized by the active participation of the volunteering employees.

The other medical initiatives taken by the company include:

✿ **Universal Insurance For The Local People** : Thousands of people in the neighborhood of Kochi Refinery belong to poor families, who find it difficult to afford medical treatment. And a score of times, the periodically done camps are not sufficient enough to cater to their needs. Hence, the announcement of a universal health insurance scheme in the union budget 2003-2004 was an opportunity for the KR to extend their support to the underprivileged.

✿ **Facilities For Public Health**: BPCL-Kochi Refinery has done the augmentation of the infrastructure and other medical facilities in the main public health centers like Tripunithura Taluk hospital, Ernakulam General Hospital, Aluva Government Taluk Hospital and Nettor Public Health Centre.

✿ **Developing Crematoriums**: BPCL-KR has helped in the augmentation of the crematoriums and development of new ones.

## THE ISSUE

Before the inception of the Kochi Refinery, Ambalamugal was a remote area. It was an isolated village on the outskirts of Cochin. There were very little public utilities like roads and bridges. The medical care facilities were almost absent in the surroundings. Patients had to walk long distances to consult a doctor. They had to go either to Thripunithura or Puthencruz to consult a doctor. Because of the difficulties like these, many people relied on the local doctors or local *vaid*s for all kinds of treatments. The inconvenience of traveling such long distances also kept them away from the modern allopathic treatments. The situation was the same during the initial stages of setting up the Kochi Refinery. Even though the pathetic situation at Ambalamugal was known and understood, not much initiative was taken then. It was when the manager of the refinery, Late Mr. Taylor Martin saw the death of a small girl in the arms of her mother, had the idea of a medical aid for the people of the Ambalamugal in the area close to their proximity came into existence.

## THE BIRTH OF AMAS {AMBALAMUGAL MEDICAL AID SOCIETY}

The Ambalamugal medical aid society was born in Dr. Kurian's office at the Lisie Hospital, Cochin. This happened when a mother arrived from the Ambalamugal area with her daughter in her arms, who died on the way to the hospital due to a snake bite. It was then that a great need for medical assistance in the Ambalamugal area for the less fortunate was recognized. Late Mr. Taylor Martin initiated the birth of the AMAS, Ambalamugal Medical Aid Society. In September 1965, AMAS, the Ambalamugal Medical Aid Society became a reality. It is worthwhile to mention about the founder, Mr. Taylor Martin, who without fail donated to AMAS every year. In his will, he had written that no

flowers should be placed on his dead body, and those wanting to place flowers should deposit that money in a box kept near the coffin. The money so collected be donated to AMAS for the noble cause of healthcare for the poor and needy in and around the Ambalamugal area.

## **SERVICES AT AMAS**

On an average, 50 people are treated in this institution at present every day. The needy people get free treatment at AMAS. Free medicines from the pharmacy and free clinical examinations from the well-equipped laboratory are some of the other facilities available at AMAS. The fund for AMAS is from voluntary contribution of KR employees, and contribution varies from ₹ 1 to ₹ 500 per month.

## **AMAS TODAY**

Since 1965, Ambalamugal Medical Aid Society has been serving the people of Ambalamugal substantially. The AMAS is being administered and aided by the company and its employees. Majority of the doctors who work at AMAS are the employees of the refinery, and the rest are visiting doctors. The company is planning for the addition of more doctors, and also the modernization and automation of AMAS. The present building of AMAS is being extended, and several new facilities are being added. Automated computerized equipments, including the blood counter and chemical analyzer have been already introduced.

## **STAYING IN TOUCH WITH THE NEIGHBORS**

The health and welfare of members of the communities at BPCL have an important role. They have conducted several activities for the benefit of the general public, especially those from the local area and belonging to below the poverty line category. At Kochi, multi-specialty and eye medical camps were conducted in the Ambalamugal Medical Aid Society (AMAS) in 2010. Approximately 1000 people attended the camp and received appropriate treatment. Operations were conducted on patients for major ailments like heart diseases, cancer and gynecological diseases. 29 Cataract operations were conducted, and spectacles were distributed to 270 people. The medical camp for physically challenged persons attracted people with various problems. 90 physically challenged people, including children with cerebral palsy were provided orthopedic aids like below-knee and above-knee artificial limbs, splints, crutches, wheel chairs, tri-cycles, special chairs, therapy mats and walkers. A significant amount was spent for these medical camps.

## **CONCLUSION**

BPCL-Kochi Refinery, a unit of the Fortune 500 company - Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, is set on a path of growth and development. Even as it contributes to the fuel security of the nation by producing valuable petroleum products, BPCL Kochi Refinery continuously adheres to green values and implements cleaner technologies for a better tomorrow. AMAS has become a reality and a great success in a short span of time. Its benefits have reached thousands of people and is reaching thousands of people. AMAS is not only a monument to the little girl who died in her mother's arms on the way from the Ambalamugal area to the Lisie Hospital, but is a living monument to the living people who work and contribute to its continuation.

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