

## **Gati - Development with inclusive outlook**

Come June this year and Sikkim will be contributing another 99 Megawatt of clean energy to the national grid. Gati Infrastructure, the company responsible for development and commissioning of the Chujachen Hydro Project will be the first private company in the entire North East India to commission a power project under BOOT (Build, Operate, Own and Transfer) venture. Apart from this, Gati Infrastructure is also developing another two hydro projects - 51MW Bhasmey Hydro Electric Power Project and 71MW Sada- Mangder Hydro Electric Power Project in Sikkim.

And perhaps it also has been a venture with an intrinsically inclusive vision. With one of the director on board having spent her youthful age in Sikkim, Gati Infrastructure Limited (GIL) has proved a role model in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility. Ms Meera Madhusudan Singh, formerly alumni of Tashi Namgyal Academy and daughter of former Education Director, Sikkim Mr. Madhusudan Singh, wanted the local population also to be included in the developmental map rather than looking them as an unwanted nuisance. Her love for Sikkim and its people not only inspired for the betterment of the people, but also set an example for others to learn as to how a small effort as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility can bring about a huge change in the life of common people.

With such a clear vision and guidelines, Gati Infrastructure along with the development of hydro project, has not let the community let down. It has been able to create sustainable livelihood for the local people of Rongli for which program has been designed on the basis of locally available natural resources and need of the people. It has assisted and promoted over 43 Self Help Groups involving 432 persons who are engaged in various income generation activities from bamboo and cane crafts to wool knitting, hand made paper product, mushroom cultivation, organic farming, bee keeping, livestock management and bakery products etc.

GIL has also been instrumental in encouraging the women community to promote their own business based on capability, skill, knowledge and local resources. Apart from financial support, it has also provided skill development training support and critical input support making them self reliant and sustained.

As capacity building is an essential element of strengthening of any organization and empowerment, GIL has worked not only as a promoter but has facilitated their training to equip the members in self management and proper record keeping. This would not only ensure self sustenance but also build up confidence in them.

Apart from these, GIL also operates Community Education Centre for the children of Makaibari Bungling (Rongli Dam Site) and Mile Bhasmey, near Rangpo for standard 1 to 3 as well as for the children under the age of 6. Special emphasis is given to motivate dropouts to enroll with stress on providing joyful environment for learning with provision of fresh nutritious food for the children of Village Education Centre. Learning material is supplied by GIL free of cost to them.

Annual Sports, Childrens' Day, World Environment Day are some of the events celebrated in these village education centres every year. Health check up camps are organized quarterly for these children and medicines are distributed free of cost.

GIL also operates Adult Education Centre for local men and women of Pam Busty where twenty men and women attend this centre where learning materials have been provided by GIL free of cost.

GIL has been taking consistent steps towards creating awareness, curative and preventive health care services by way of organizing periodic Health Awareness Camp and Monthly Health Check-up Camps.

In all the health check-up camps, medicines are distributed to the patients free of cost. GIL has organized more than forty such camps where over four thousand persons with different ailment have benefited till date. Through such camp, awareness is generated on basic health and hygiene and sanitation, regarding reproductive and child health etc. In addition to Medical Officer of GIL, specialist doctors are invited for examining patients.

Gati Infrastructure Limited has also opened its avenue towards promotion of sports in the region. It has come up as a major sponsor for GVS Football Academy, Central Pandam, a coaching camp and hostel run by local NGO to train young and promising football players. As a collaborative approach between NGO & corporate house, Jerseys, track suits, boot and other accessories for 20 players were provided to them.

With such an inclusive approach of development, GIL has been able to shed the fears of being marginalized and ensured that the fruit of development reaches the community at large in a holistic manner, directly and indirectly.