

PRESS RELEASE

HUL and DHAN partner to enhance livelihoods of 75,000 poor women *Rs.18.75 crore income generated through livelihood activities*

September 23, 2009, Madurai: Seventy five thousand poor women have benefited with an additional income of Rs.18.75 crore through a livelihood enhancement programme established by a unique corporate-NGO partnership between Hindustan Unilever Limited and DHAN Foundation.

Hindustan Unilever Limited, as part of celebrating its 75 years in India in 2008, partnered with the DHAN Foundation to enhance the Livelihoods of 75,000 poor women. This initiative of poverty reduction was in line with HUL's commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals that call for partnership for sharing resources and expertise.

The partnership through local community mobilisers helped to identify 75,000 poor women from 75 self help groups (SHG) and federations promoted by DHAN Foundation on specific themes such as microfinance, water and rainfed farming. These women were from local communities living in rural, urban, tribal and coastal regions in three states: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The mobilisers helped the women to pool from their own savings or access resources from banks and also helped them identify activities based on skills and the local market potential.

The project enabled the women to mobilize a total Rs.52.5 crore and generate an incremental income of Rs.18.75 crore in just one year. The project thus helped to increase incremental incomes by a minimum of Rs. 2000 for each of these 75,000 women in one year.

The women in rural and tribal areas have taken up various agriculture and allied activities such as land development, construction of farm ponds, purchase of farm inputs in addition to dairy and livestock related activities. While the women in coastal areas took up fish vending and processing and the women in the urban slums started small businesses including catering, handicrafts, and transport and housing services.

Speaking about the project, Mr. Hemant Bakshi – Executive Director, Sales and Customer Development, Hindustan Unilever Limited said: “We believe that enhancing livelihoods of poor women is key to ensuring sustainable development. Our partnership with DHAN and the great progress on the project reinforces our approach of shaping the sustainability agenda by leveraging partnerships. It is heartening to see that through this partnership we were able to leverage on the community platform created by DHAN and accelerate and scale up the programme to cover a larger number of beneficiaries.”

Mr. M.P Vasimalai, Executive Director, DHAN Foundation said: “Creative partnership between HUL and DHAN has unleashed sustainable outcomes of livelihood security and women empowerment thereby substantially addressing the Millennium Development Goals. It is a new way of catalyzing development of poor with concrete outcomes. The partnership contributed significantly to reinforce self-growth and development of the decentralized people federations, added value in preserving democracy and diversity.

About HUL Corporate Responsibility

HUL’s Vision is to earn the love and respect of India by making a real difference to every Indian. Our corporate responsibility strategy seeks to address HUL’s most significant sustainability impacts of hygiene, nutrition, enhancement of livelihoods, reduction of greenhouse gases and water footprint by integrating these objectives into our brands, our people and our processes.

The partnership with DHAN Foundation was among several Corporate Responsibility initiatives that were taken up to celebrate Hindustan Unilever’s 75 years of corporate journey in India. Another unique and highly successfully initiative was HUL Sankalp, under which HUL employees committed to social volunteering one hour for every day that HUL has been in India. Collectively this meant a total of 27,375 hours of volunteering in the five key areas identified by HUL during the year. HUL employees logged over 40,000 hours of volunteering over the year with one of out of three employees participating. Employee volunteering will be an ongoing initiative.

About Hindustan Unilever Limited

HUL is India's largest Fast Moving Consumer Goods Company, touching the lives of two out of three Indians. HUL’s mission is to “add vitality to life” through its presence in over 20 distinct categories in Home & Personal Care Products and Foods & Beverages. The company meets every day needs for nutrition, hygiene, and personal care, with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life.

About DHAN Foundation

DHAN Foundation is a professionally managed development institution which has been working for a little over a decade, with poor communities to improve their quality of life and reduce poverty. The Foundation believes in enabling communities to bring about significant changes in their lives by themselves. The Foundation brings in professionals from institutes of repute to work at the grassroots to bring about this change. Presently the foundation is working with 700,000 poor families spread over 10,000 villages and slums in eleven States of India. It is a pioneer in evolving new themes for addressing poverty and livelihood issues of the poor. The Foundation is working on promoting a sharing culture amongst the poor communities with whom it is working, the general public both in India and abroad, corporates through creating meaningful opportunities and partnerships.

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