

Persistent Foundation
9th Annual Report

FY 2017-18



Let's work together
and be the Agents of Change



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PERSISTENT
FOUNDATION

A platform to give back to society

The idea of giving back to society is central to Persistent Systems' core values and overarching mission. As an outcome of this ideology, Persistent Systems initiated its CSR activities five years after the establishment of the company, creating the Persistent Foundation. Today, this foundation helps us uphold our mission of giving back to society.

In the beginning, Persistent Systems was associated with over 40 NGOs that addressed diverse social causes in the areas of Health, Education and Community Development. However, with time, we decided to adopt a more focused approach toward project implementation.

On March 9th 2009, Persistent Foundation was registered to institutionalize the programs rolled out under the banner of Persistent Systems' CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

The Foundation

Persistent Foundation aims to uplift and empower the needy by focusing its efforts in three thrust areas – Health, Education and Community Development. In all that we do, we seek the active support and collaboration of various government agencies, NGO partners, volunteers, donors and other stakeholders that we work with. Our areas of operation extend to all the cities in India where Persistent Systems is located, including Pune, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Goa. While the Persistent Foundation team handles operations at Pune and Nagpur, voluntary teams of Persistent employees run our initiatives at Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Goa, with true passion and integrity. As members of Persistent Foundation, each of us continually strives towards transforming our project processes to improve the quality of service and deliver higher levels of excellence in all our activities.

At Persistent Systems, all our employees have a keen awareness about social issues and care deeply about making a difference. Motivated by a strong desire to contribute to society, our employees regularly participate in the Foundation's activities as volunteers

and donors. In turn, to help these employees contribute in a way that is most convenient to them, Persistent Foundation ensures the facilitation of myriad opportunities through organized efforts.

All our programs are implemented through our partners, who are domain experts. At Persistent Foundation, we follow a strict partner selection process. Apart from ensuring that selected partners have the necessary infrastructure-related and legal compliances, we also ask ourselves:

- Does the community they work in perceive them as a trustworthy organization?
- Are they ethical while providing services?
- Do they demonstrate accountability in the work they do?
- Do they treat their stakeholders and beneficiaries with respect?
- Do they believe in a collaborative approach in addressing the community's needs?
- Do they strive to achieve excellence in what they do?

These values are not just parameters for selection; they also help us identify areas of improvement within existing programs.





Message
from the
Chairperson

As we approach the milestone of the first decade since our inception, we are happy, proud, satisfied and excited. Happy about the work we are doing for the community, proud about the success we have achieved, satisfied at the results of our efforts and excited about the challenges that lie ahead.

In these nine years, we have been able to take bigger, bolder and more confident steps towards doing meaningful and tangible work as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility of Persistent Systems. To ensure that we are on the right path, we have initiated an Impact Assessment initiative of the work done in ten years and would be releasing it next year on completion of one decade in the business of CSR.

This year our main focus was the Facial Cleft project. We are proud to state that we have been able to treat almost 800 children and help them enter the mainstream of life after facing ridicule and neglect due to their disfigurement. It is very gratifying to see these children and their families being accepted by society once again.

We have been able to make good headway in the Jaipur Foot initiative. Close to 1300 people were given artificial limbs which have made them independent, mobile and provided them with an opportunity to contribute to the welfare of their family.

This year has seen a new collaboration with BAIF. In our quest for wholistic village development, we have established livestock center through which we provide services for artificial insemination, fodder development and bio gas plant in villages where we have worked on watershed projects.

In the field of education, we have been consistently supporting almost 400 students to continue their schooling through student sponsorship program. This year, we funded a batch of 30 young women to complete a course in Nursing. We are happy to know all the nurses have been placed in various hospitals in the city. The idea that we have enabled and empowered these young women to support themselves and become independent, is extremely gratifying.

Our efforts have been rewarded and recognized! The Indian Express rates Persistent Systems as the second biggest contributor in Maharashtra in the field of CSR. We were also bestowed the B. G. Deshmukh, IAS, Award for Excellence in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by MCCIA. These recognitions always encourage and motivate us to do better and bigger and give us a sense of immense satisfaction.

All our successes and achievements are a result of the combined efforts and commitment of the Foundation team. Each member is important and his contribution significant. Funds and time committed by Persistent employees go a long way in helping us go one step higher within all our projects. The Trustees are our mentors and guides, always supporting and encouraging us. Our NGO partners are crucial in executing our projects with passion and dedication along with their expertise in their respective fields.

The next year is full of promises and hope. We plan to extend our high value projects and make them bigger. We promise to fulfil all our responsibilities with highest levels of ethics, dedication and commitment to the causes we believe in. We hope to learn from the results of the Impact Assessment report and improve our approach towards CSR.

On behalf of the Foundation team, I would like to sincerely thank you for your support and appreciation of the work we are doing.

Thank you,
Sonali Deshpande
Chairperson, Persistent Foundation

Committed to Change: Persistent Foundation Trustees



Mrs. Sonali Deshpande
Founder Trustee and Chairperson



Dr. Anand Deshpande
Founder Trustee



Mr. P. B. Kulkarni
Founder Trustee



Mr. Pradeep Bhargava
Trustee



Mr. Dilip Kale
Trustee



Mr. Sameer Bendre
CPO, Persistent Systems
Trustee (ex officio)



Mr. Sunil Sapre
CFO, Persistent Systems
Trustee (ex officio)



Capt. Kedar Paranjpye
CAO, Persistent Systems
Trustee (ex officio)

Persistent Foundation Team



PUNE CORE TEAM

Arti Dandavate
Yogita Apte
Rushikesh Barsawade
Vaibhav Nikam
Anaya Netanrao

Admin Team

Amol Undre
Anil Wadhwa
Jitendra Dhadve
Bharat Lele
Tukaram Bhosale
Hanumant Dighe
Sachin Budhkar
Vidyadhar Purandare
Prakash Limaye
Prakash Niphadkar
Rupesh Pansare
Sagar Gawade
Ravindra Dighekar
Arvind Indalkar
Sanjay Choudhary
Tejas Bhasme
Dattatray Prabhune
Amar Thakur

Finance Team

Nayana Bhandari
Saket Rajurkar
Rajiv Bapat

Corporate Secretarial Team

Amit Atre
Madhav Oak
Chandrashekar
Sahastrabudhe

NAGPUR TEAM

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Akshita Vyas
Suraj Manekar
Yogesh Joshirao
Abhijeet Deshmukh
Divyapratap Singh
Hemant Moharil
Atul Khandalkar
Yogesh Karmarkar
Roopesh Verma
Supriya Chatterjee
Aditi Baitule
Parimal Nimbalkar
Vijay Dharmik
Shailesh Wadhankar
Shyam Dhanotiya

GOA TEAM

Vincent Flor
Amey Shikerkar
Yajnesh Rai
Carol Pereira
Shweta Raiker
Namrata Sardesai
Poornima Kole
Prabhav Thali
Sueellen Madeira
Pooja Dabholker
Prabhav Gaunekar
Nidhi Teli
Vibhuti Sawant
Nishit Sardesai
Pooja Shirwaikar
Nadia Fernandes
Jasmira Fernandes
Anusaya Vadji
Jasmira Fernandes
Omkar Prabhu
Sruthi P
Prajyot Parab

BENGALURU TEAM

Shylaja Narahari
Asim Kumar Mandal
Sanket Barve
Prakash Pun
Byasadev Nayak
Phani Muppatty
Prashanth S
Vinothkumar
Gunasekaran
Krishna Halder
Nanda Pattanashetti
Arpitha K

HYDERABAD TEAM

Vijesh
Raja
Durgapaavan
Kishore
Bhoopathi
Ishita
Swaraju
Ramakrishna
Vishnu
Vamsi
Munish



Flagship Programs

Persistent Foundation's Flagship Projects address issues that need immediate attention and intervention and that are high on impact.

In the year 2016-17, Persistent Foundation has adopted three (3) existing high-impact programs as Flagship programs, from each thrust area.



Flagship Program - Education

"Kiran" Girls' Scholarship Program – A ray of light for underprivileged girls

Female education is a crucial stepping stone to women empowerment and overall economic development. The 'Kiran Girls' Scholarship Program' launched by Persistent Foundation, provides opportunities to underprivileged girls who wish to pursue further studies in Computer Science and Information Technology, while transforming them into educated, confident, skilled and highly employable young women. Implemented across five locations of Persistent Systems in India, this program offers a scholarship of INR 40,000 to 40 selected students every year, with continued financial support until graduation. Currently, 163 girl students are benefitting from this scholarship.

Mentorship is an integral part of the program. These scholars are mentored by Persistent employees, while a residential mentoring program is conducted twice a year in Pune and Bengaluru, in order to educate the students on current technological advancements and ensure that they are industry-ready. Every year, we organize Summer & Winter residential sessions in the month of May and December for 2nd and 3rd year students. In addition, seminars, panel discussions on emerging technologies & hands-on training are a part of the course. Students are also given the opportunity to participate in conferences and seminars. Last year, students had an opportunity to attend the Microsoft

Research Summit at Hyderabad, the ACM Conference at Nagpur, and IUCAA in Pune. Persistent Foundation takes care of all the arrangements and travel logistics for the students.

Students Speak

"This was the first time in my life that I have travelled outside my home city of Hyderabad. It was an amazing experience for me!"

- **Triveni, Hyderabad**

"I have never travelled alone by train before! I was nervous initially, but I had a wonderful time and feel much more confident about myself now!"

- **Pooja, Goa**

In this way, the Kiran Girls' Scholarship Program provides opportunities and much-needed exposure to these young girls, helping them gain in confidence and all-round personality development.

"The ACM conference at Nagpur was a wonderful opportunity facilitated by Persistent Foundation. Scientists like Martin Helman, the founder of public key cryptography, Moshe Vardi and Robert Tarjan were panel members. I learnt so much about how scientists think out-of-the-box. The journey and hostel accommodation were also excellent. We learnt a lot and enjoyed ourselves tremendously too! I came back with a new positive attitude towards life, as a learner. Thank you so much, Persistent Foundation, for giving me such a great opportunity."new positive attitude towards life, as a learner. Thank you so much Persistent Foundation for giving such a great opportunity."

- **Punam Ghule, 4th year student, Pune**

Flagship Program - Health

Facial Cleft Surgeries – Spreading Smiles, Creating Awareness!



Cleft lip and cleft palate are birth defects which are also known as orofacial clefts. Cleft lip and cleft palate occur when facial tissues do not fuse correctly during the first trimester of fetal development. These disorders can result in problems with feeding, speech, hearing and frequent ear infections. They could also affect an individual's self-esteem, social interactions and behavior. Adolescents with cleft palate/lip are at a high risk for developing psychosocial problems, especially those relating to peer relationships and appearance.

Every year, 35,000 children in India are born with a cleft lip and palate. What's worse, 1 in 10 of these children do not survive up to their first birthday. (ABMSS)

This condition is curable with surgeries, while undergoing speech therapy can play a big part in rehabilitation. However, patients from lower socio-economic backgrounds suffer the most because of a lack of access to information and treatment.

Moreover, because of the social stigma attached to this condition, it becomes difficult to identify patients who need treatment.

To make a difference in the lives of people born with cleft lip and cleft palate, Persistent Foundation decided to support Facial Cleft surgeries in FY 2012-13 in Pune. In FY 13-14, the program was extended to Nagpur. In FY 16-17, the Foundation started supporting Facial Cleft surgeries at all the locations in India, including Pune, Nagpur, Bengaluru, Goa and Hyderabad.

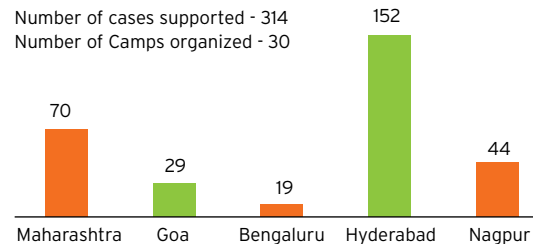
After spending six years on this initiative, we realized the need to adopt a holistic approach. The need for generating awareness, the successes of multiple surgeries and speech therapy, along with the impact seen on the lives of patients, was the driving force behind taking up this Project as a Flagship one in FY 2017-18.

Collaborations

- Akhila Bharatha Mahila Seva Samaja
- Rotary Club of Nagpur West Service Trust

Reach

Number of cases supported - 314
Number of Camps organized - 30



Challenges

- Generating awareness about the condition
- Identification of patients
- Difficulties faced in follow-up for multiple surgeries
- Difficulties faced in follow-up for speech therapy

Action

Facial Cleft Surgeries is our flagship program for 2017-18 and we have incorporated "awareness generation" as an integral part of the program. ABMSS conducts awareness camps for the identification of patients in rural areas and urban communities using banners, pamphlets and meetings in schools and anganwadis to spread awareness. Persistent Systems employees are an integral part of the program as they volunteer for the awareness camps and help in the identification of patients.

Special Feature

In 2017, a conference of surgeons, speech therapists and corporate partners was organized at Bengaluru by our implementing partner ABMSS on November 17th and 18th. Surgeons from Taiwan, Germany and UK attended the conference and shared their experiences. Aimed at driving excellence in the programs, this event showcased the collaborative efforts of all the experts working on Facial Cleft initiatives and discussed the challenges and opportunities for raising awareness.

This was Rajesh's condition when Dr. Vijay Kumar and his team first met him at a Cleft Awareness Camp in Khammam. They convinced the family to bring Rajesh to the ABMSS cleft center in Hyderabad for an operation. The surgery was a success and Rajesh's parents now face the future with strength and confidence. Next, they plan to get a palate operation done for Rajesh. This will not only put a smile on Rajesh's face, but also give him a voice to speak for himself.

In this way, the Akila Bharatha Mahila Seva Samaja (ABMSS) organization, together with Persistent Foundation, the supporting donor organization, helped bring a smile to Rajesh's face.

Case study - A second chance to smile

This is the story of little Rajesh, and how his grandmother saved his life even before he was born. During a routine scanning exam, Rajesh's mother, Kavita, learnt that her child would be born with a cleft lip. Despite the doctor's advice to abort the child, Rajesh's grandmother convinced her son and daughter-in-law to give the baby a chance to live. Rajesh's grandmother took care of him, figuring out ways to feed the tiny, underweight baby. Today, Rajesh is almost three. A shy boy, whose condition renders him unable to speak, he prefers to stay close to the grandmother who raised him.



Flagship Program – Jaipur Foot Initiative

Support to Jaipur Foot – Disability is a matter of perception.

Persistent Foundation has been supporting the Rotary Club of Mapusa, Goa, in their Jaipur foot fitment project. This year, in partnership with BMVSS (Bhagwan Mahavir Vikalang Sahayata Samittee), the Foundation initiated the project in Nagpur, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. We were able to reach 629 patients across these four locations. A minimum of two camps are organized in Goa each year, while Nagpur, Hyderabad and Bengaluru have established centers where services are provided free of cost all year round to patients.



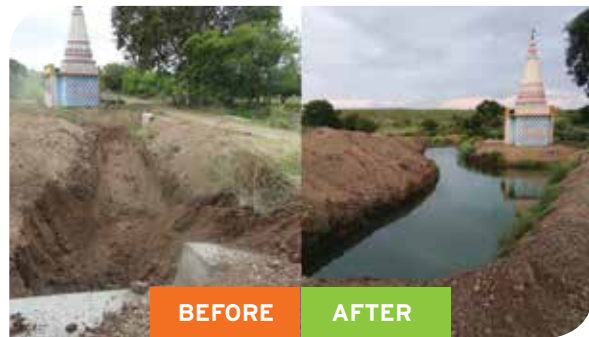
Persistent Systems employees supported a donation drive to raise funds for the cause. In all, 211 employees contributed to help support 157 patients.



Flagship Program – Community Development

Watershed Development – Little drops make an ocean

Watershed Development has been a flagship project of Persistent Foundation for the past two years. We took up this initiative in 2015, along with the Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyan of the Government of Maharashtra, to combat the worst drought Maharashtra had experienced in 40 years. The Watershed project involves the deepening and widening of streams and nullahs and the construction of cement and earthen check dams in order to conserve water.



We kickstarted the initiative in Purandar Taluka and by 2017-18, we extended it to Shirur Taluka, which falls in the rain shadow area, where the villages of Kairenagar and Jategoan receive moderate rain and Thapewadi and Phutanwadi get rain in August and September. Like any project, ours too was beset with challenges and impediments. To begin with, water would not accumulate or percolate due to the silt in the nullahs. The resultant low levels of water in the wells adversely affected the lives of the villagers. The scarcity of water for farming and even drinking made it difficult to get fodder for their livestock. The villagers could not support themselves financially as farming and dairy were their main sources of income. Without a sustainable means of livelihood, the youth of these villages were forced to migrate to cities in search of jobs.

A project for the desilting of streams in these four villages and the construction of four check dams was undertaken in May 2017 and completed by the end of July. Fortunately, the area received good rains that

year and a sizeable quantity of water accumulated in the streams, resulting in an increased groundwater table. The farmers were able to cultivate two crops, which added substantially to their income. Water levels in the wells that normally lasted only till January will now last right up to May.

Collaborations

International Association for Human Values.

Reach

Village	Work Done
Khairnagar	Desilting of 13.42 km stream
Jategaon Khurd	4 check dams
Phutanwadi	Desilting of percolation tank
Thapewadi	Repair work of percolation tank

Population Benefitted: 3140

Land benefited (Ha.): 1452

Challenges

In addition to the challenges outlined above, we also had to adopt an empathetic, conciliatory approach while dealing with the farmers who worked in the farms adjacent to the streams. Happily, these interactions were handled amicably.

Special Feature



The village teachers were the driving force behind all the development activities in the area - these teachers worked with complete dedication and put their heart and soul into the initiative. IAHV and Persistent Foundation, in collaboration with the teachers, were able to bring people together for the cause and enlist the whole-hearted participation of the villagers in order to execute the project smoothly, within the necessary timelines.

Persistent Foundation and IAHV's humble, respectful and collaborative efforts have been instrumental in bringing about a positive change in the villages. To cite just one example, this year, instead of spending their hard-earned money on "yatras", the villagers from Phutanwadi have donated e-learning kits to the school.

Persistent Systems employees participated in a tree plantation drive at the villages near the water bodies. This will help control soil erosion and the accumulation of silt.



Education

While education is a fundamental right in India, universal access to education remains elusive and there are still many children with little or no access to basic education of a decent quality.

Persistent Foundation, through its various initiatives, aims to reach and help some of these children.



Driving change through multi-pronged activities in schools

In a bid to ensure the overall development of schools and students, Persistent Foundation is working with certain select schools, whose students come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Persistent Foundation provides infrastructural support towards benches, blackboards, science labs, libraries, additional classrooms, toilet blocks, sports equipment, musical instruments, rain water harvesting systems, solar power systems, e-learning software, and computer labs for these schools. We have seen that upgrading school infrastructure has a positive impact on student enrollment, attendance and performance.

We cover the entire spectrum from standard 1 up to graduation. We design these programs based on the specific needs of each case. The main objective of our efforts is to accelerate the overall development and empowerment of the students and transform them into well-informed, responsible citizens.



School Infrastructure

The environment in which children study plays a very important role in their education. The areas in which we have supported schools are as follows:

Type of infrastructure	No. of Schools covered	No. of students benefitted
Toilet construction	1	573
Ground	1	111
Drinking Water	1	192
Compound Wall	1	192
Building repairs	2	765
Projector	2	886
RO water purifier	1	466
Solar water heater	1	471

Solar Water Heater at a Tribal School

Gurukul Ashram Shala is a residential school for tribal children from Primary to 10th Standard. The school, with a strength of 450+ students, is located in a remote area near Nagpur. The children's day begins at 5 a.m., with a hot bath. Heating water for 450 students using traditional methods was a formidable task, which only got more difficult during the winters. The school requested Persistent Foundation to provide



a solar water heater. We installed and commissioned the heater in just two months. The children now enjoy hot running water for their baths, provided by the environmentally-friendly solar heater. A win-win all around!

Programs aimed at improving the quality of education



These student-centric programs focus on improving students' basic reading and writing skills and address the needs of adolescent students. The entire initiative is a collaborative effort that is conducted with experts. To plan intervention strategies, we brainstorm on identified needs along with our implementing partners. Following this, the implementing partners are made accountable for pre-defined targets.

1. Life Skills Education – Going beyond books

Educating children on sexuality, sexual abuse and personal development is the need of the hour. Realizing

this, Persistent Foundation conducted sessions across schools, aimed at building strong trust-based relationships with students, so that they can share their concerns freely. This turned out to be an eye-opener for many students, as well as their teachers. These workshops offered students a platform to address and solve various issues and incidents, while giving girls a much-needed forum to voice serious problems like eve-teasing.

Case study: On their way back home from school, 13-year old Rama was telling her 10-year old friend Geeta what she had learnt in Life Skills Class that day. The lesson was about good touch and bad touch. Geeta told Rama that she experienced a bad touch almost every day. Her mother having recently delivered a baby boy, Geeta was sent to live with her mother's parents. Geeta revealed that her grandfather came very close and touched her when everyone else was asleep. Her grandmother turned a deaf ear to Geeta's complaints.

Rama shared this with the counsellor, who had a one-to-one session with Geeta. With Geeta's permission, the case was discussed with her teacher and the Foundation team. The situation needed to be handled with care, as the team did not want to jeopardize Geeta's schooling. We also had to work with the teachers to follow standard counselling ethics and treat Geeta with respect.

Following the counselling session, Geeta went back home and related an incident, in her grandfather's presence, to her grandmother. She said that a visiting teacher to their school had instructed all the children on how to care for their safety. A toll-free helpline

number had been shared with all the students, Geeta explained to her grandmother, and the teacher had even demonstrated by calling the number there and then - the police were at the school in less than ten minutes. From that day forward, Geeta's grandfather stopped harassing her.

2. WASH (Water, Sanitation & Health) – When instilling sanitation practices inspired leadership skills



Last year, Persistent Foundation launched WASH – an initiative designed to inculcate better hygiene and cleanliness habits among students. What started out as a hygiene intervention soon turned into a leadership development program for students.

The second year of WASH has already witnessed significant changes across all schools. WASH clubs

have now been established in all schools and the students themselves are driving the program. By transforming the students into agents of change, we have been able to spread the message of health and hygiene far more effectively. This entire process has helped us inculcate certain values in the students such as being accountable, paying attention to sanitary conditions; being respectful towards the support staff/ housekeeping staff; collaborating with their classmates and teachers and showing them that they, too, can bring about a difference in their school.

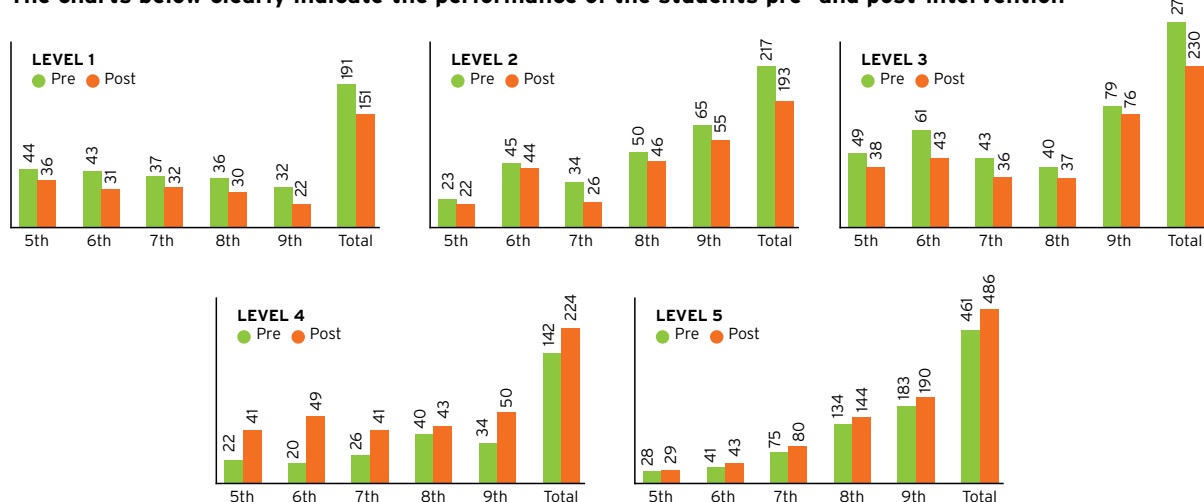
The WASH initiative gave us many reasons to celebrate - one of which was the receipt of the “Swachh School Clean School Award”, given to Hutatma Rajguru School by the Pune Municipal Corporation. This school has now enrolled for a state-level cleanliness competition.

Another heartening example is the one of Jai Bhavani school, where the school committee rejected the students' plea for dustbins. Not to be deterred, the students contributed money themselves and went ahead and bought dustbins for all their classrooms!

3. Improving reading and writing skills – Ensuring a brighter tomorrow

This project was initiated for the purpose of assessing and providing support to improve the basic reading and writing skills of students. Every week, students are divided as per their skill levels and given specific inputs for improvement. Level 1 denotes students who are unable to read all the alphabets and numerals, while Level 5 denotes those with a good vocabulary and understanding of the language.

The charts below clearly indicate the performance of the students pre- and post-intervention



At the outset of the project, we were alarmed to find that 15% of the 1284 students we assessed across standards 5 to 9, were in Level 1, while 21% fell into Level 2 (ability to read simple words and sentences, understand numbers and perform basic calculations). The data was overwhelming and established without doubt the urgent need for this project.

By the end of the year, 4% of the students had moved up from Level 1 to the next level, while 6.3 % students had moved up from level 2 to the next level. In a majority of the schools, the teachers were collaborative and eager to see the difference.

Our first batch of 10th standard students will appear for their board exams in March 2019. We are confident of seeing a significant improvement in their results.

Testimonial

“The Manthan Initiative is a great platform for the students. Under this project, in the year 2017-18, the Manthan team started a reading project by forming various groups according to the reading level of students from class 5th to 9th in our school. We have seen a difference in the students’ reading and writing skills, resulting in an improvement in their communication skills, scholastic performance etc. Due to this program, the fear of teachers that the students had has gone away and we now see friendly relations between students and teachers. The formation of groups as per levels is what is remarkable about this program. This helps to understand which child needs more attention in order to improve their reading and writing skills. I thank Persistent Foundation and the Manthan team for implementing this project in our school and bringing out such remarkable change.”

- **Teacher, Jai Bhavani School**

Along with these interventions, a doctor visits the schools on a weekly basis, an initiative that teachers find very helpful. An average of 5-6 students visit the doctor every week.

4. Student Sponsorship Program – When employees become donors

Persistent employees play a vital role in this program. Persistent Foundation’s high ethical standards and integrity have firmly established our credibility in the employees’ eyes, with the result that the numbers supporting our cause have been increasing year on year. This year, 1308 employees supported over 400 students.

While supporting the students in these schools, we realized that there were students within our own eco-system who were equally in need of help – the children of our contract employees – that is, the employees working with us as security guards, plumbers, gardeners and housekeeping staff. We have been supporting them as well for the last two years. Today, the Foundation supports 37 school-going children of contract employees.

Supporting Study Centers

Supporting students in a meaningful way doesn’t start and end at schools but must extend to providing support at home too. Study centers play the crucial role of offering much-needed assistance to students outside school hours. Persistent Foundation supports 24 study centers across 3 locations in India – Pune, Nagpur and Hyderabad. In addition to providing students support with their studies, these centers facilitate opportunities for all-round development via summer camps and study visits. As part of our volunteering program, Persistent employees, as well as members of their families visit these study centers and engage with the students by teaching them English and Maths and conducting recreational activities.

5. CPU Donation Drive – Making schools future-ready

Our CPU Donation Drive aims to equip schools and NGOs with the digital facilities needed to keep pace with a fast-changing world. Through this drive, we have donated 790 CPUs, 97 laptops and 267 monitors across Maharashtra.

6. Nursing Course Program – Offering female students a new lifeline

The objective of this program is to provide access to vocational and skill-based courses like nursing, enabling beneficiaries to become financially independent. Every year, about 30 students complete this course. All of them get jobs with salaries ranging from INR 7000 to INR 9000 per month.

Case Study: Asha (name changed upon request) was a 25-year old, destitute mother of three girls. She had studied only up to the 12th standard and had no significant job prospects. Today, thanks to Persistent Foundation, she has completed her nursing course and is financially independent.



Health

At Persistent Foundation, we focus on healthcare for children and older people; and implement programs in collaboration with Hospitals and NGOs who share our objectives. Right from the start, we decided to concentrate our energies on curative healthcare because we realized that:

- a) The cost for curative medical services was constantly increasing
- b) High-tech curative services were not free even in government hospitals
- c) Health insurance is expensive and unaffordable by most
- d) Worst of all, curative health services were inaccessible to people from the lower socio-economic strata of society.



Breast Cancer Screening Program for Women

This program, conducted along with Samavedana, is in its 8th year today. In line with new changes in its project implementation strategy, Samavedana decided to move close to the community. To this end, a walk-in clinic for any woman who needs its services was set up in Bibvewadi, Pune.



This walk-in clinic has five employees. A first-time visitor to the clinic gets detailed information about the center and the services offered. After being reassured about complete confidentiality, she is then interviewed and undergoes a first-level screening. If a lump is observed in the first screening, the patient is sent to Sahyadri Hospital for a second-level screening, mammography and pap smear. The center then works with the patient for any further treatment that may be needed. A majority of patients are detected with an infection – these cases are treated at the local clinic.

This year, 66 women were screened for the second level of cancer detection and three women tested positive. Samavedana is following up with these patients for further treatment.

Balshalyakriya – Saving life through surgeries

As the name of the drive suggests, Balshalyakriya is a unique pediatric surgical project that is held at Nagpur and that covers most surgical specialties. This is the fourth year of the camp, with Persistent Foundation having supported the initiative for the last 3 years. To date, 335 children from poor socio-economic backgrounds have been treated at this camp. This year, a total of 110 patients, ranging in ages from 28 days old to 18 years old, were treated successfully. Persistent Foundation has supported 25 high-value cases in the camp.



To ensure maximum impact and reach, we work with organizations that are trustworthy and accountable. The project is implemented in a collaborative manner, along with four organizations, each of whom bring

their expertise to the table and help make the project a success. Peedh Parai International from Houston, USA, gets the best doctors together from different hospitals across various countries; GSB Sabha, Nagpur, reaches out to donors, organizes BSM camps, provides logistical support and caters to over 150 patients and their accompanying family members for the duration of the five days of the camp; Balmitra Foundation, Nagpur, organizes screening camps in villages and connects with Primary Health Centers (PHCs). For three years, the camp was conducted at the Lata Mangeshkar hospital. This year, the camp was organized at the Government Medical College. The hospitals provide the operation theatres and support staff for the camp. Local doctors are available at the hospital for follow-up services and patients visit them as needed.

Case study: 13-year-old Saloni Mahajan had a chest deformation. She needed a rib graft and chest tube, known in medical terms as a Thoracoplasty. This is a surgical procedure that was originally designed to permanently collapse the cavities of pulmonary tuberculosis by removing the ribs from the chest wall. The resection of multiple ribs, allows the apposition of parietal to the visceral or mediastinal pleura. This surgery normally takes about six hours, but in Saloni's case, the surgery went on for 42 hours. Post-surgery, Saloni was in the ICU for a few days before she went home with her mother, walking out of the hospital, unaided. Saloni is one of the Supra Major cases that Persistent Foundation has supported.



Tackling eye health issues – Replacing problems with possibilities

Since its inception, Persistent Foundation has been committed to improving eye care. Poor eyesight affects not just a person's vision, but also their ability to function normally and productively.

Support to cataract surgeries

In the year 2016-17, we supported 1241 surgeries in Pune, Nagpur and Hyderabad, for patients ranging in ages between 40 and 84 years. 20% of the patients were in the 40 to 60-year age group, with 60% of all patients being female. 200 cataract surgeries were carried out with the support extended by 168 Persistent employees.



Support to Vitreoretinal Surgery

Rolling out this year, this initiative was kickstarted with a case at one of the hospitals that is supported by Persistent Foundation for cataract surgeries. Dnyaneshwar, a 48-year old married farm labourer and a father of two children, was advised to undergo LE Vitrectomy with Membrane Peeling + FAE + EL + SOI under local anesthesia. As the cost of the surgery was high, he did not return to the hospital. The doctor was sure that Dnyaneshwar would lose his eyesight completely if he was not treated in time. Using funds from the Foundation, the hospital offered free treatment to Dnyaneshwar and operated successfully on him. This year, seven patients with a similar medical condition were treated.

Squint Correction Surgery

A squint correction surgery camp was organized by SAKSHAM in Goa. Persistent Foundation supported 11 patients through this camp.

Mobile Medical Unit

Persistent Foundation has been supporting a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) in Goa for the last 7 years. Initially, support was extended to one village. Considering the non-accessibility of medical services in villages and poor transport services, we have now extended the support to 16 villages.

MMU does not just provide patients with medical services, but also acts as a platform where they get information related to government schemes for the elderly and, equally importantly, a platform to share their emotions and concerns.

Each MMU team comprises four people – 1 doctor, 1 nurse/pharmacist, 1 social protection officer/social worker and 1 driver. The driver, too, plays a very crucial role in the entire system. He is aware of all the major happenings in the village and works as a key resource for the team.

This year, we were able to provide support to 16 villages where 1367 unique patients were treated and 14,033 successful treatments were provided. It was observed that a majority of the complaints were related to hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, osteoarthritis and acid peptic disorders.

Support for Dialysis Treatment

When a patient develops end stage kidney failure, their kidneys can no longer function independently – a condition typically reached at 85%-90% loss of kidney function. Dialysis can help a person with kidney failure live longer, healthier lives, but, as a patient, this is an overwhelming decision to make, as it involves a recurring cost and impacts a person's earning capacity.

Recognizing an opportunity to make a difference, Persistent Foundation has been supporting the Seth Tarachand Ramanath Charitable Ayurvedic Hospital Trust since 2010, to help more people benefit from dialysis treatment. After working with the Trust for so many years, we have decided to take up this program as the need continues to increase. Presently, we are working with three partner organizations for this initiative in Pune, Nagpur and Hyderabad. We were able to support 184 patients and 2650 dialysis sessions in a period of 2.5 months.

Persistent employees also supported this cause through a donation drive. 218 employees contributed to support 430 dialysis sessions.





Community Development



Drinking Water Projects

Velhe Taluka, with its hilly terrain, faces water scarcity in spite of the heavy rainfall it receives. Easy access to drinking water remains a distant dream for many of its villages. Over the last 7 years, Persistent Foundation has made this dream a reality for 18 villages. With the newly constructed wells, the women of these villages no longer have to walk 3-4 kilometers to fetch clean drinking water and can put the time saved daily to far better use. This year, Persistent Foundation has built six (6) wells in all. We've also laid a pipeline up to the village water tank in Khulshi.

Collaboration

- Jnana Prabodhini
- Torana Rajgad Parisar Samajonnati Nyas Parisar

Reach

Names of Villages: Shenwad, Gelgane (Awghad Gavand)
Metpilaware (Sanaswadi), Kondhalkar Vasti, Varoti Khurd

No. of Wells Constructed: 5

Population: 824 • **Livestock:** 1600

Names of Villages: Khulshi

No. of Wells Constructed: 1

Population: 315 • **Livestock:** 1375

Special Feature

- Out of the six wells constructed this year, one well was constructed from donation received from Persistent employees.
- Touched by the hardship the villagers face and the drudgery the women undergo to get drinking water, Persistent Systems' employees helped the villager clear the rubble during the construction of the wells, by way of 'Shramdaan', three times during the year.
- IT engineers helped farmers in Velhe with much-needed manpower support for rice plantation. Groups of 30 volunteers worked in paddy farms on three occasions and completed plantation on three acres of land.

Testimonial

"Thanks to Persistent Foundation's help in providing us with a well, the women of my village have got great relief from their daily drudgery."

- Vilas Gandale, Varoti village

Land Levelling Projects

In the hilly terrain of Velhe, although the average landholding of farmers is about 1 acre, all of this land is not fully cultivable. Farming is the only source of income in these villages and every bit of cultivable land makes a difference. Land levelling was the only solution that could make the entire farm cultivable and was the urgent need of the hour for almost all

Green Energy: Solar Power Plant Project

Three years of continuous commitment to generate green energy!

Persistent Foundation has installed two solar power plants – one at the Pune Railway Station in 2015-16 and the second one at Hyderabad Railway Station in 2016-17.



the farms. However, with the meagre income from their farms, the farmer could not afford the cost of this levelling. Furthermore, over 80% of the youth from these villages had migrated to cities to work as laborers.

This is where Persistent Foundation decided to step in. In FY 2017-18, the Foundation team worked on land levelling projects in five villages. In another year, after the farmers work on the land to make it cultivable, this land will be brought under cultivation. These efforts will help improve the annual income of the farmers' families.

Collaboration:

- Jnana Prabodhini
- Torna Rajgadh Parisar Samajonnati Nyas

Reach:

- 5 Villages • 106 Farmers

The plant was inaugurated by the Charity Commissioner of Maharashtra, Shri. Shivkumar G. Dige on November 6, 2017.

Collaboration: Sunshot Technologies

2017-18 was our third year of working on solar power plants. This year, we donated, installed and commissioned a 63 kWp solar power plant at the Seth Tarachand Ramnath Hospital, a charitable hospital where Persistent Foundation has been supporting dialysis for needy patients for the last 8 years. Persistent Foundation has also committed to maintain this plant for three years.

Adopting a holistic approach in Shirur Taluka

For more effective rural community development, Persistent Foundation has adopted a holistic approach. We have been working in the area of watershed for three years and have realized that, while the availability of water is an important challenge, up-to-date knowledge about changing trends in the agro industry is equally necessary.

The aspects of our holistic approach are as follows:

Livestock Center:

Persistent Foundation decided to partner with BAIF Development Research Foundation - an organization that has evolved innovative models of micro-enterprises - to ensure inclusive development through dairy husbandry, goat production, agri-horti-forestry and sustainable agricultural production for food security and poverty alleviation.

Sr No.	Detail	Achievement	Remark
1	Artificial Insemination	472	50% chances of calf birth
2	Sorted Semen AI	28	70% chances of calf birth
3	Silage (Mur ghas) preparation training & distribution of Mur ghas bags	43	43 Bags of Mur ghas has been distributed
4	Bio Gas Technology	5	5 beneficiaries identified for installation of Bio-Gas unit
5	Exposure Visits	1	Exposure visit was arranged for the villagers
6	Vocational Training	None	To be started in 2018-19

After studying the livestock and dairy business in Shirur taluka, we decided to establish a Livestock Center that would provide four major services:

- Artificial Insemination
- Biogas technology
- Training for silage (Mur ghas) preparation
- Vocational training to 30 youth in the area of dairy management or any agro allied business

These services are provided in three villages - Khairenagar, Thapewadi and Phutanwadi.

The center was established in November 2017 and we have made significant progress in the last 5 months.

Getting people involved in the program and reaching out to the truly needy was not an easy task. A baseline survey and village meetings were some of the methods we used. The engagement of local youth mandals and CBOs (Community Based Organization) also helped in the mobilization of the community.

The engagement of Persistent Systems' employees in the baseline survey was an eye opener for all those involved. Engaging in this activity made them aware of the difficult conditions faced by villagers living a mere 45 kilometers away from a developed city like Pune.

Solar Street Lamp

We addressed another initiative which arose as a need of the villages. 40 solar street lamps were installed across 4 villages, with the villagers contributing 10% of the implementation cost. The villagers will be responsible for the maintenance of the lamps. Each family that maintains a lamp also gets one in their home.





Skill Development Programs in Urban Areas

Along with the work we do in rural areas, the Foundation also addresses the need for livelihood creation in urban areas, through skill development programs.

This year, the project was implemented in Goa along with Sambhav Foundation – an NGO that has more than 600 NSDCL certified courses.

Goa being a tourist location, the course for electrician was selected since it offered more opportunities for entrepreneurship as well as employment.

One hundred individuals were trained in 4 batches. The general profile of a candidate who completed the course was male, in the age group of 25-35, educated up to 12th standard, unemployed, unskilled or partially skilled. 70% of trained candidates have found jobs and are earning in the range of INR 8000/- to INR 10000/- per month.



Enhancing environmental efforts – Tree plantation and Green Scholarship award

Our tree plantation drive is one of the most awaited initiatives of the year. This year, we have planted more than 4000 trees across four locations - Pune, Nagpur, Goa and Bengaluru. All these trees will be maintained for a period of three years.

In Pune, the Foundation is associated with an organization called the TEERE Policy Center, which has signed an MoU with the Forest Department for plantation and maintenance. One of our schools has undertaken many green initiatives such as composting and tree maintenance and has even held drawing and elocution competitions to create awareness among students. Every year, 18 green scholarship awards are given based on the students' performance in all these competitions and their score in the 'Green Exam' - a set of questions on environmental issues. Additionally, 3365 trees were planted in the school, of which 500 were jointly planted by employees and students. Every student is assigned a tree and so far, they've taken good care of their saplings!

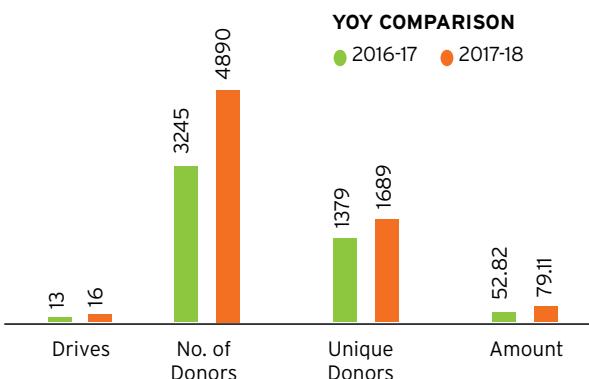
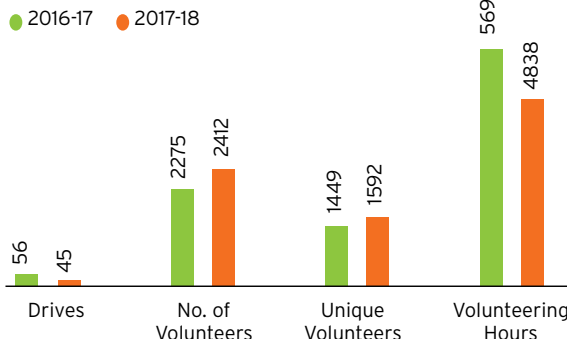
Volunteering and Donation Drives

Needless to say, none of our efforts would be possible without our team of passionate and dedicated volunteers. The employees of Persistent Systems are aware of social issues and are eager to make a difference to society. Many employees do a lot of charity work outside the organization for various causes and are keen to do more. The team at Persistent Foundation is committed to providing them with opportunities to contribute in an organized manner.

Our team of volunteers helps us run various activities while continuing their full-time jobs. Over the years, volunteers have taken the initiative to identify social projects.

The increased response to donation drives is a reflection of the trust the employees have in the Foundation's activities.

YOY COMPARISON



This year, volunteering drives were organized with a slightly different approach. Drives were planned so that our employees were offered many opportunities to engage with the project and understand how it was actually implemented. Employees conducted activities like pre- and post-assessment of the children in our study centers and conducted assessment surveys in villages. They worked alongside villagers and farmers to help clear rubble in wells and plant rice during heavy rains in Velhe. They enjoyed a game of blindfolded cricket with a team of blind players from Atmadeepam; and identified patients for facial cleft in rural communities. In our efforts for education, they had the opportunity to mentor Kiran fellows and support students of the Upay Foundation and many other such activities.

Special Feature

Cricket with a Difference: Blindfolded Cricket Match



In an attempt to sensitize people and promote para sports, Persistent Foundation organized a promotional match with Aatmadeepam Society Nagpur's Blind Cricket Team of Girls & Boys.

Persistent Foundation supported the Girls Cricket Team for their sports kit and sports material for their 1st ever State Level Championship. More than 25 employees from Persistent and 25 players of Aatmadeepam played this match together in mixed teams.

The employees were blindfolded to experience what it felt like to walk in the shoes of their fellow blind cricket members. The event resulted in creating a strong bond between our employees and the blind cricket team members.



Award and Recognition



PERSISTENT
FOUNDATION



Persistent Foundation awarded
by MCCIA for

"OUTSTANDING INITIATIVES UNDER CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE YEAR 2016-17"

MCCIA Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards 2017 were organized on September 7, 2017

Persistent Foundation was awarded the "Late Shri B. G. Deshmukh IAS,
Corporate Social Responsibility Excellence Award"



**Mrs. Sonali Deshpande, Chairperson (Persistent Foundation) receiving the award
at the hands of Dr. Phansalkar, Program Director (Tata Trust, Mumbai)**




PERSISTENT
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