ISSN: 2455-8834

Volume:08, Issue:09 "September 2023"

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CREATING SHARED VALUE: A CASE STUDY OF ROYAL ENFIELD'S UNIQUE SOCIAL MISSION

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DOI: 10.46609/IJSSER.2023.v08i09.038 URL: https://doi.org/10.46609/IJSSER.2023.v08i09.038

Received: 10 August 2023 / Accepted: 20 September 2023 / Published: 3 October 2023

Background

There is more than enough information that states that consumers prefer and relate to companies that are committed to positive social and environmental impact, rather than just pursuing commercial gains. Most corporations across the world have embraced the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in some form or the other. The trend of "doing well, by doing good", is gaining momentum. Where corporations are embracing their social responsibilities and are drawing up plans on delivering on social and environmental parameters parallelly with their financial goals.

Royal Enfield is one such company in India that has recently redefined its Social Mission and has drawn out a road map which entails engaging with its stakeholders and other communities to have a holistic and sustainable impact. In line with the vision of its promoter, Royal Enfield engaged reputed consultants, like the **Foundation Strategy Group** (FSG), global social impact experts and **Forum for the Future**, a leading international sustainability non-profit organisation, to define its Social Mission. This case study focuses on showcasing this unique Social Mission model.

Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR in India differs slightly from the global context, though the underlying objective for both is that there are societal expectations and corporations work towards creating a positive social and environmental impact on society, while they manage their business objectives.

In the global context, CSR is seen more as a core and integrated business strategy for addressing social and environmental impacts of businesses. It aims to address the well-being of all stakeholders and not just the company's shareholders. Where philanthropic activities are only a

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part of CSR, which otherwise constitutes a much larger set of activities entailing strategic business benefits.

Globally, companies that adopt CSR have often grown their business to the point where they can give back to society. Thus, CSR is typically a strategy that is implemented by large corporations. Where often the case is that the more visible and successful a corporation is, the larger responsibility it has to set standards of ethical behaviour for its peers, competition, and industry. Many companies view CSR as an integral part of their brand image, believing that customers will be more likely to do business with brands that they perceive to be more ethical, making it an important part of corporate public relations. A great example of this is the outdoor clothing manufacturer 'Patagonia'. Thus, for the business, CSR is more self-regulation with the aim of social accountability and making a positive impact on society.

In the Indian context, traditionally, CSR was a philanthropic activity, pioneered by business families. After independence of India in 1947, these philanthropic activities focussed initially on building institutions and then eventually moved to more community related work.

However, in 2014, the Government of India made CSR mandatory to engage the businesses with the national development agenda. Laws were amended to include Section 135, of the Companies Act, 2013, which came into force from 1st April, 2014, where every company, private limited or public limited, which either has a net worth of Rs 500 crore or a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or net profit of Rs 5 crore, needed to spend at least 2% of its average net profit for the immediately preceding three financial years on CSR activities.

The Indian law states that these CSR activities are not to be undertaken in the normal course of business and must be aligned to any of the activities mentioned in Schedule VII of the Act. Activities mentioned in Schedule VII are meant to be interpreted generously and broadly allowing the organisations to operate in a socially and environmentally responsible way, to achieve business sustainability and stakeholder satisfaction. Activities allowed under Schedule VII, among others, include eradicating hunger, poverty and malnutrition; promoting education; promoting preventive health care and sanitation; generating local livelihood; promoting gender equality, empowering women; ensuring environmental sustainability, ecological balance & protection of flora and fauna; protection of national heritage, art and culture; training to promote rural sports; disaster relief; rural & slum development; etc..

Creating Shared Value

Creating shared value (CSV) is a business concept first introduced in 2006, by <u>Michael E. Porter</u>, leading authority on competitive strategy and head of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at <u>Harvard Business School</u>, and Mark R. Kramer, of the <u>Kennedy School</u> at

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Harvard University and co-founder of FSG. The concept is based on the idea that companies can do both; 'solve a social problem and gain competitive advantage'.

CSV is a management framework for creating economic value while simultaneously addressing societal needs and challenges. CSV means that corporations can improve profitability while also having a positive social impact by working on environmental issues, public health and nutrition, affordable housing and financial security and other key measures of societal well-being, etc.. Thus, CSV is an integral part of the business strategy where policies and operating practices enhance the competitiveness of the company, by simultaneously advancing profitability & business growth and improving social conditions in the communities in which it operates.

Companies can create shared value by creating societal value. There are three distinct ways to do this...

- 1. By reconceiving needs, products, and customers by meeting societal needs through their products.
- 2. By redefining productivity by instead of solely focusing on quantity and quality, utilising resources, energy, suppliers, logistics and employees differently.
- 3. By improving the local and regional business environment by improving skills and supporting institutions that affect the business.

Thus, CSV is different from CSR. While both aim to have a positive social impact, CSV is integrated with the business strategy, it places environmental and social issues at the centre of how the businesses operate. While CSR is focused on issues of compliance (as in the case in India), transparency, volunteerism and philanthropy.

Royal Enfield's Social Mission

In 2019, Royal Enfield (RE) chose to redefine its CSR activities which were, like most other corporates in India, focussed around their manufacturing plants in Tamil Nadu. The vision was to look at how RE could credibly engage its stakeholders as part of its social mission. The stakeholders involved were RE's growing motorcycle riding community which was spreading across the globe; its increasing network of suppliers and distributors and RE's employees.

RE management felt that while their legacy & ongoing CSR efforts had created meaningful impact across multiple issue areas, there was the need to define and build a brand purpose-led social mission and develop a strategic roadmap for its CSR activities, which is focused and impactful.

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RE engaged FSG to support the development of this brand purpose-led social mission. As part of the process FSG had detailed discussions with RE's internal and external stakeholders and toyed with various ideas and concepts before arriving at what RE's current Social Mission is, which is focused on supporting responsible and sustainable tourism. Where,RE has endeavoured to act as a catalyst to inspire, engage and assist people to travel responsibly by taking ownership and to consciously strive to protect and preserve pristine destinations they travel to, which is encapsulated in the call to action — 'Leave Every Place Better'

RE piloted various initiatives under this vision since 2019 and has engaged and partnered with various social – nonprofit organisations to create meaningful impact. During this time, RE increased its social footprint with several interventions, ranging from waste management, water conservation, livelihood generation, education, renewable energy solutions, rural sports, preserving the culture and heritage of India, and more.

In 2022, the company engaged Forum for the Future to help it develop a roadmap for sustainability and a vision document for 2030, which involved looking at its entire operations and value chain, including its social mission. The purpose was to analyse critical global macro trends impacting the future and explore what the future might look like for RE's operating context in the wider world.

This effort led to RE developing what it calls as its RE-BALANCE strategy, where it developed a 2030 sustainability road map that entails its entire operations. Within that it has carved out an ambition for its social mission as well that states that...

"By 2030 we have significantly contributed to the protection, regeneration and resilience of ecosystems in the iconic Himalayan landscape, and of at least 100 Himalayan communities, towards driving deep, long lasting and systemic change in how humans and nature interact and thrive and have enabled 1 million members of our community globally (including riders, value chain members and others) to take action to regenerate landscapes and the communities within them".

The Himalayas

Royal Enfield has chosen to focus its efforts on the iconic Himalayan landscape of India. As the Himalayas have always been considered the 'Spiritual Home' of RE. Motorcycle riders, with their spirit for exploration have traversed this pristine region for decades. The Himalayas have been a mecca for motorcycle riders and tourists from across the world, as it offers great adventure; pristine natural beauty; diverse and friendly communities; and a rich natural & cultural heritage. No other geographic region is as unique and influences the ecology and biodiversity of India as the Himalayas. However, the majestic Himalayas are also an incredibly

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fragile ecosystem, which is significantly impacted by climate change and unsustainable development.

The Himalayas, considered the 'Third Pole', have the largest reserves of ice outside the polar regions, which is the source of major river systems. Over a billion people are dependent on the Himalaya's available natural resources for their survival and livelihoods. The region is confronted with numerous challenges related to, increasing population and pollution; forest degradation; land productivity; disaster risk; water & waste management; biodiversity loss; receding glaciers; as well as socio-economic issues that place it and communities that are dependent on it, in a vulnerable zone.

Further, any change in climate over time, either due to natural variability or as a result of human activity, adversely affects local communities and threatens the livelihood of the rural poor the most.

Thus, RE chose to work in the Himalayan and with Himalayan communities in a holistic and credible manner, with the ambitious aim to partner 100 Himalayan communities by 2030, with the objective to build resilience in the face of climate change. RE intends to create sustainable living spaces and promote sustainable community practices that can be championed as success stories across the Himalayan region against the backdrop of climate change. Through these interventions, RE aims to build capabilities that will allow it to significantly contribute to the protection, regeneration and resilience of ecosystems in the iconic Himalayan landscape and of its communities.

Alongside, RE will encourage 1 million riders, globally, to actively partner in this mission of driving deep, long-lasting and systemic change in how humans and nature interact and thrive.

Royal Enfield's Social Mission – Key Initiatives

Since 2019, RE's social mission team has worked on various initiatives that focus on promoting responsible travel and enabling travellers to leave every place they visit better. Major part of RE's CSR spends have gone towards this effort, while they still continue to support some of their legacy projects around their manufacturing plants in Tamil Nadu. This has been done as part of the strategy to create shared value and engage the company's key stakeholders.

With a focus on the Indian Himalayan ecosystem and communities, RE has looked at various initiatives, stretching from the Union Territory of Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the eastern Himalayas, including the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Assam and Meghalaya.

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Some of the Key initiatives of RE's social mission are as follows...

Water Conservation

RE has partnered with **Tata Trust**, which is one of India's oldest, largest and reputed philanthropic organisations. The partnership with Tata Trust is a 3-year long programme for spring shed management of over 200 villages across the States of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and the Union Territory of Ladakh. Springs are the lifeline of the mountainous regions, supplying water for consumption and agriculture. Springs across the region have been impacted due to growth in population, unplanned construction and the impact of climate change. The focus of the project is to identify and rejuvenate traditional and natural sources of water for these communities and make them resilient and self-reliant.

This project also aligns with RE's aim to provide access to clean drinking water for the numerous tourists who visit this region. This allows the tourist to be more responsible towards their journey and helps reduce the use of single use plastic bottles, which is seen as an alternate source of clean drinking water but has huge implications in terms of waste generated.

Solid Waste Management

The Himalayas are a major tourist destination for both international and domestic tourists. Tourism has become a major source of income for the local community, however tourism has also put extreme pressure on the fragile ecosystem of the Himalaya region. Solid waste management in the Himalayas is a major issue, as it is not easy to set up systems for waste management due to issues related to the terrain, accessibility, climate and economies of scale. A case in point is the base camp of Mount Everest, which is considered to be the world's highest garbage dump site.

RE through various social organisations is setting up community led waste management systems at some major tourist destinations. These interventions are focused on managing waste and providing local livelihoods in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. The work entails doing a detailed mapping study for waste management; and setting up systems and infrastructure for collection, segregation and disposal in a responsible manner. Waste is seen as a resource, thus the project also focuses on circularity, where upcycling and recycling is planned. Education and awareness drives are also a major component of the project where tourists and local communities are encouraged to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

RE is currently working in villages around Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand, where it has engaged an organisation called **Waste Warriors** for setting up waste management systems. Here, women from various strata of society have fought and broken social stigmas and barriers to

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come out and manage waste among their community and villages. This is a unique project that has empowered these local women and provided them extra income and independence. Similar projects are also being planned in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

Supporting Local Livelihoods

Homestays

RE has been working on various projects to support local livelihoods in the Himalayan region. RE has engaged various organisations to set up homestays in Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. These homestays provide tourists an opportunity to interact with the local community and experience their unique way of life. This provides the homeowner an extra source of income and has a positive impact on the environment as it checks the mushrooming of hotels and guest houses, which is often the case. RE has supported this effort and has set up over 100 homestays, mostly in remote areas and essentially to support economically weaker households. It is also working towards providing market linkage for these homestays to ease booking for the tourist and giving good returns to the homeowner.

Handlooms

RE is also supporting local handicrafts and handlooms in the Himalayas. Starting from Ladakh, RE is working with a women's cooperative called **Looms of Ladakh** that has been working with local artisans and herders to support work with pashmina, yak and camel wool in Ladakh. The aim of the project is to develop a cottage industry for these wool based products in Ladakh, which traditionally is the producer of the finest wool, especially pashmina (known in the west as cashmere) yet lacks the skill to develop products. RE plans to provide infrastructure, equipment, training and market linkage for these wool based products to generate local livelihood.

Green Pit Stops

RE is aiming to set up a network of what they call Green Pit Stop (GPS) across key tourist routes and at remote tourist destinations for the benefit of travellers and the local community. Purpose of the GPS is to create a point of interaction for the tourist and local community and create a unique local experience. While these GPS would provide basic tourist amenities in an environmentally friendly manner (which are clearly lacking in the remote parts of the Himalayas), they would also provide local livelihoods. The amenities provided would include a range of services like access to clean drinking water, clean sanitation facilities, waste management, mechanic service, etc.. The GPS would also 'support local', by having a café run by local self-help groups that sell local dishes and have a shop for selling local handicraft and produce. The GPS would be constructed in a sustainable manner using local material and use

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renewable energy where possible. Each GPS would have a different theme in terms of the experience they provide, as they would be designed to showcase the local culture.

Currently RE is developing several GPSs across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and the Northeast of India. One GPS has been constructed in Kharu, Ladakh which is going to be inaugurated in August 2023. This GPS aims to showcase the traditional trading that happened in this region, as Kharu was a major junction falling on the traditional silk route, connecting China to the middle east. Various local artists have been engaged to curate the museum at this GPS.

Solar Electrification

Solar electrification of remote villages of the Himalayas was one of the first projects of RE in the Himalayas. In partnership with the local administration of Ladakh, RE has electrified 30 remote villages in Ladakh, impacting over 5000 lives. Through this project, a number of these villages received electricity for the first time as they were near no grid and didn't even have any connectivity by road.

Himalayan Communities

Pastoral Communities of the Himalayas

RE has initiated several interventions to work with the Pastoral communities of the Himalayan region. These are found across high altitude rangelands (grazing areas) of the Himalayas, where they practise transhumance or nomadic_pastoralism, as they generally move between higher pastures in the summer season and lower valleys in the winter, hence they follow the fixed migratory routes between the summer pastures and winter habitats.

These are mainly nomadic or agro-pastoralists communities, who traverse some of the most remote yet pristine regions of the Himalayas. In spite of their extremely inhospitable living conditions, these communities have rich traditional practices that revolve around their livestock and pastures; strong social and cultural values; and they have an inherent respect for the local ecology that has helped their sustenance.

Impact of climate change, unplanned development, modernisation / commercialisation, tourism, political exploitation, and mismanagement of grazing rangelands are having a profound effect on these pastoral communities and forcing a shift away from the traditional practises and system of pastoral production and herding to migration to urban areas and seeking alternate sources of livelihood. The availability of alternate livelihood options with the improved connectivity, access to education and development of the tourism industry has led to changing aspirations of the younger generations

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These communities have traditionally lived off the land and their livestock. They have respected their natural surroundings and have had a negligible carbon footprint. Yet they are some of the most marginalised communities that are predicted to be disproportionately impacted due to the impact of climate change on the ecosystem on their rangelands. They are dependent on these rangelands for critical resources and livelihoods, such as water, food, livestock grazing, medicinal plants, dung, fodder and fuel wood. These rangelands are also key habitats for many plants, wild herbivores and carnivores of conservation importance. Variations in temperature and precipitation are influencing changes in rangeland vegetation, with poorly understood implications on domestic and wild herbivores. Pastoral communities dependent on rangelands and living in close proximity to wilderness need to adapt using locally appropriate and innovative measures for long-term livelihoods security, preservation of their unique culture and biodiversity conservation of their rangelands and to ensure human – wildlife coexistence.

RE is aiming to focus its efforts on working with the following pastoral communities

- The Changpas and the Yak herders of Ladakh The Changpas are a spread across the wetlands of Tso Kar and Tso Moriri and rear the famed pashmina goat
- The Gaddis and Kinnauris of Himachal who are spread across the districts of Kinnaur and Lahaul& Spiti.

The aim of the project is to identify and work with these pastoral communities in a co-creative and holistic manner and help them adapt to the various climatic and socio- economic changes. Where the interventions focus on...

- Creating alternate and resilient livelihood opportunities
- Protecting, preserving and showcasing pastoral cultural practises and heritage
- Building a sense of pride within these communities and awareness about their unique way of lifestyle and their contribution towards society among other communities
- Engaging other stakeholders like the administration, tourism industry to acknowledge and appreciate this unique way of life and pastoral rights
- Using scientific measures to assess impact of climate change on rangeland vegetation and understanding impact of livestock and wild-herbivores.
- Implementing and evaluating co-designed interventions with the community to conserve the biodiversity of rangelands and their management.

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- Understanding the nuances in patterns of livestock losses and co-develop context specific interventions
- Providing market linkage and better value for produce like milk, cheese, wool, meats, etc.

RE is working with multiple partners to take this effort forward. They have engaged the **Nature Conservation Fund** (NCF) for working in the Ladakh region and **Bombay Natural History Society** (BNHS) in Himachal Pradesh, to work on scientific conservation efforts to protect the biodiversity of these rangelands and habitat, by finding a balance between the coexistent of local wildlife and livestock.

RE has also engaged **Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation** (LAMO) for working on documenting and preserving the intangible cultural heritage of these remote communities. Thus RE has adopted a very holistic approach to support these pastoral communities of the Himalayas.

Fellowships & Educational Programmes

Considering the socio-economic changes taking place in the region and to prevent locals from migration to towns and cities, RE has partnered with several organisations for skill development of local Himalayan youth. RE aims to train youth to identify and develop local entrepreneurship, for this RE has partnered to run several fellowship and skill development programmes across the Himalayas.

One key partnership of this initiative is RE's tie up with the **Dusty Foot Foundation**, which runs the Green Hub Fellowship Programme out of Tezpur, Assam. Green Hub engages underprivileged youth from the Northeasters Himalayas in an one year long residential fellowship programmes, where through the medium of videography they are trained on conservation of their biodiversity. Fellows from this programme have gone back to their remote communities and have created significant impact. There are examples of fellows protecting and rewilding their community forests, preventing local hunting, saving rare species like the Amur falcon, red panda and the Hoolock gibbon, etc..

RE also supports other programmes like winter tuitions in remote Ladakhi villages, where children have no opportunities for learning during the long and harsh winter months. This programme focuses on providing alternate learning courses for these children to develop different skills.

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Preservation of Culture & Heritage

A flagship programme of RE is its partnership with **UNESCO** to research, document, showcase and preserve some of the intangible cultural practices (ICH) of the Himalayan communities. No such project has been undertaken so far, where teams of researchers are working on identifying and documenting ICH practices of the Himalayas, which include dying skills, art forms, music, dance, cuisine, cultural ways of life, knowledge of local plants, etc.

In the first phase RE & UNESCO identified over 100 such practices in the Northeast of Himalayas. Most of these have already been documented. Work continues to identify many more of such ICH practices and extend this programme to the western Himalayas.

Rural Sports

Ice Hockey has been played in the high-altitude Himalayan region of Ladakh in a very rustic manner for years. Ice hockey has been played on frozen lakes, rivers and fields and has organically gained popularity. RE has been in discussions with various stakeholders to support and promote Ice Hockey in the region, where it aims to make Ice-hockey a mainstream sport in India. This has multiple benefits as it helps unite a region behind a sport. This also helps extend the tourist season to the winter months, which currently is focussed on the short summer months. This also helps empower the youth through sports and help develop the important life skills required to excel in their future.

RE is working with the local administration and the International Ice Hockey Federation to develop this sport. On the behest of the local administration RE has engaged international experts to develop a blueprint for developing ice hockey in the region with the vision to have a team to represent India at the winter Asian Games and then the Winter Olympics.

Conclusion

After understanding Royal Enfield's approach towards their business and their planned social impact it seems that it's possible to have it both ways. They have successfully shown that it is possible to serve the interests of their stakeholders — their motorcycle riders, employees, communities and the public at large. Thus, their brand purpose led social mission, based on the concept of creating shared value, seems to be working well. While the sale of their motorcycles is reaching new heights and crossing international borders, their social impact is benefiting the lives of multiple communities across the Himalayas in a holistic manner, where both are complementing the other.

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Considering the turmoil the planet is facing, especially due to the growing impact of climate change, it is essential for corporations to take a leading position and work towards mitigating and adapting to climate change. By working in the Himalayas and with Himalayan communities, Royal Enfield has taken the lead to do this. Their on-ground programmes address several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) listed by the United Nation in some form or the other, especially SDG 6 clean water and sanitation; SDG 7 affordable & clean energy; SDG 8 decent work & economic growth; SDG 12 responsible consumption and management; SDG 13 climate action; SDG 15 life on land and SDG 17 partnerships.

RE is one of only a few companies that have a focused approach to work in the Himalayas, which include the 10 Himalayan States and Union Territories of the West and the Northeast of India. Based on data from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, these States combined receive only 1.4% of the total CSR funding across the country. While a larger State like Maharashtra alone receives over 13% of the annual CSR funding (Annexure 1).

Thus, it is incredible to see the work RE is doing as part of its social mission. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with the Eicher Group Foundation and be part of the amazing journey and body of work.

Acknowledgement

In performing this case study, I would like to sincerely thank Ms. Bidisha Dey, Executive Director, Eicher Group Foundation (EGF) and Mr. Anupam Rai, Human Resources Manager, Royal Enfield Motorcycles (a division of Eicher Motors Limited) for giving me the opportunity to intern with EGF in January 2023, for 2 weeks.

I would also like to thank all team members of EGF who have given their precious time and views to help me understand this intriguing Social Mission and write this case study.

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Annexure 1
CSR Funding by States

State	CSR Spending 2020-2021 (INR Cr.)	% Contribution
Andaman And Nicobar	2.86	0.01%
Andhra Pradesh	719.81	2.75%
Arunachal Pradesh	10.58	0.04%
Assam	180.23	0.69%
Bihar	89.89	0.34%
Chandigarh	13.4	0.05%
Chhattisgarh	325.63	1.24%
Dadra And Nagar Haveli	21.98	0.08%
Daman And Diu	5.25	0.02%
Delhi	724.59	2.76%
Goa	41.92	0.16%
Gujarat	1461.6	5.58%
Haryana	550.86	2.10%
Himachal Pradesh	106.31	0.41%
Jammu And Kashmir	35.56	0.14%
Jharkhand	226.54	0.86%
Karnataka	1277.81	4.88%
Kerala	290.67	1.11%
Lakshadweep	0.01	0.00%

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375.51	1.43%
3464.81	13.22%
10.39	0.04%
17.63	0.07%
0.97	0.00%
3.57	0.01%
169.47	0.65%
578.16	2.21%
7805.03	29.78%
3491.3	13.32%
12.43	0.05%
158.46	0.60%
670	2.56%
17.28	0.07%
1174.07	4.48%
627.71	2.39%
9.29	0.04%
907.32	3.46%
160.58	0.61%
471.48	1.80%
26210.95	100.00%
	3464.81 10.39 17.63 0.97 3.57 169.47 578.16 7805.03 3491.3 12.43 158.46 670 17.28 1174.07 627.71 9.29 907.32 160.58 471.48

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Hill &Northeastern States		
Arunachal Pradesh	10.58	0.04%
Himachal Pradesh	106.31	0.41%
Jammu And Kashmir	35.56	0.14%
Manipur	10.39	0.04%
Meghalaya	17.63	0.07%
Mizoram	0.97	0.00%
Nagaland	3.57	0.01%
Sikkim	17.28	0.07%
Tripura	9.29	0.04%
Uttarakhand	160.58	0.61%
Total	372.16	1.42%

Source: Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India