

Impact Assessment of COVID Support Project

OXYGEN PLANTS SET-UP AT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

A Report



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OXYGEN PLANT SET-UP AT NARPATPUR, VARANASI AND AURAI, SANT RAVIDAS NAGAR, BHADOHI

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Abbreviations

CHC	Community Health Centre
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
LPM	Litres Per Minute
MO	Medical Officer
MS	Medical Superintendent
NGO	Non-Government Organization

Introduction

1.1 HDFC Bank CSR – Parivartan Program

HDFC Bank helps in transforming lives of millions of Indians through various social initiatives. HDFC Bank has a comprehensive program named as ‘Parivartan’ aiming to contribute towards the economic and social development by sustainably empowering its communities. The Parivartan program has been a catalyst in making a difference in the lives of people through its interventions in the areas of rural development, education, skill development and livelihood enhancement, healthcare & hygiene, and financial literacy. Under Parivartan, the social initiatives are delivered through various types of support provided by the bank, such as financial support provided for projects conducted by non-profit organizations across the country, funding educational and similar institutions through scholarships, grants, and promoting giving by employees by matching their contribution to social causes.

1.2 COVID Support Project

In 2021, COVID-19 second wave created a crisis and need for oxygen support as a critical life support equipment emerged as a major requirement both in private and public sector hospitals. To combat the situation and meet this requirement, HDFC Bank under its COVID Support Program under HDFC Parivartan supported two Community Health Centres in (a) Narpatpur, Chiraigaon in Varanasi District and (b) Aurai, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi. The primary aim was to provide the necessary support to the Government hospitals with limited resources as well as considering the requirements for the district in near future, in case any emergency crisis arises.

1.3 Study Objectives

HDFC Bank intended to conduct an impact assessment to evaluate effectiveness and sustainability of the programs on following parameters:

- How effective is the installation of Oxygen Plant?
- To what extent installation has benefitted the patients?
- How much geography is being covered by the CHCs for supply oxygen?
- What mechanism has been adopted for the maintenance to sustain the functioning of the plant?
- To obtain the opinion and views of the medical staff of CHCs
- To understand the challenges in the maintenance of Oxygen Plant

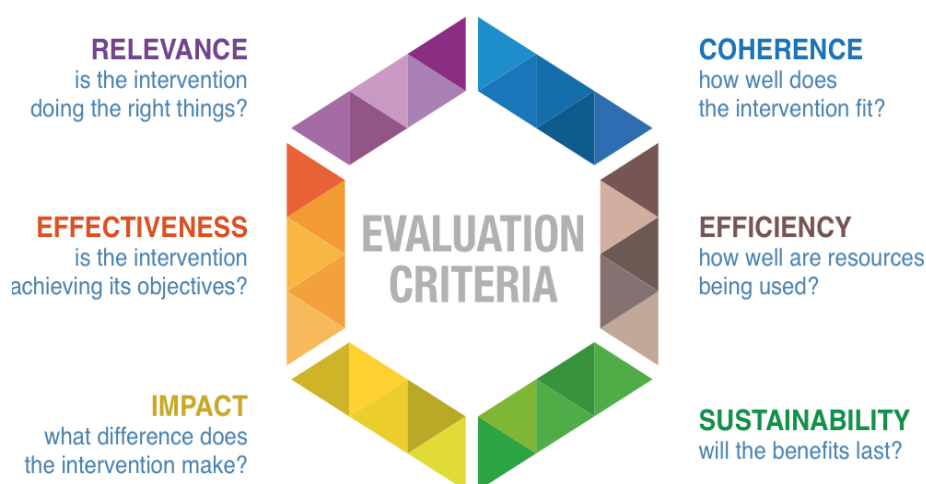
IMPACT PSD Private Limited was entrusted the task of conducting impact evaluation of the COVID Support project. The ensuing chapters provide the salient findings of the assessment.

Methodology

This chapter describes the detailed study methodology adopted for the impact assessment study including research methods used, sample size, sampling procedure, survey implementation for the data collection, data management, etc. The details on assessment framework, sample and survey implementation, etc. have been discussed in the forthcoming sections.

2.1 Assessment Framework

The standard OECD-DAC criteria¹ which is considered as one of the gold standards in evaluation has been used. This framework recommends adapting this framework, wherever feasible and applicable:



Using this framework, following questions/indicators were adopted to assess the project using the six parameters stated above in the picture. These questions were finalized in discussion with the HDFC team after pre-testing the questionnaire.

	Indicators/Questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What criteria was adopted for identification of most deserving recipient for the support?
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recipient feedback on timeliness and appropriateness of the support received?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the support contributed to the immediate needs of the CHCs and district
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which Oxygen Plants have been able to provide oxygen to patients
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of this support on the lives of patients
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what ways does this infrastructure support the service delivery in future? How do the CHC or District Health Administration plan to use this infrastructure support in future?

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

2.2 Research Methodology

A mixed methods approach was adopted wherein physical verification of oxygen plants was undertaken. Additionally, in-depth interview was undertaken with the Plant In-charge or Medical Superintendent of CHC.

2.3 Sample Coverage

Both Community Health Centres at Narpatpur (Chiraigaon), Varanasi and Aurai, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi where Oxygen Plants were set-up were visited and the assessment was undertaken.

2.4 Development of Tools

A customized tool for physical verification (Check-list) as well as discussion guide for in-depth interview were developed. Both the study tools were shared with HDFC Bank CSR for feedback and approvals.

2.5 Survey Implementation

- A senior researcher from IMPACT made site visits to the Community Health Centres and undertook physical verification of the Oxygen Plants.
- Initially, contact was established with the Medical Superintendent and/or Medical Officer In-Charge to conduct the in-depth interview.
- As the last step, physical visits were made to the location of Oxygen Plants for physical verification to assess the physical condition, functionality and maintenance provisioning.

2.6 Data Analysis and Report Writing

All the collected information was collated and content analysis was undertaken. Finally, report has been prepared by senior researcher illustrating the salient findings.

Salient Findings

This chapter discusses the findings based on the site visits made to CHC, Narpatpur (Varanasi) and CHC, Aurai (Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi) where physical verification was undertaken as well as in-depth discussions conducted with the target respondents.

The findings have been discussed as per the OECD-DAC Criteria and description has been provided by its components as follows:

Relevance

The second wave of COVID-19 in March 2021 hit very hard and the medical infrastructure of the country faced a lot of challenges across government, private and non-profit sectors. Huge volume of patients in the medical institutions created shortage of hospital beds, availability of oxygen cylinders, ventilators/HFNCs and other medical supplies that led to devastating scenarios across the nation.

Government of India supported many health facilities by setting up oxygen plants to manage the oxygen crisis. Considering the emergency needs at district and block level government medical and health facilities, Central and State Governments attempted several models of partnerships such as requesting support from Corporates under CSR Initiatives, Public Private Partnerships, Donations from Public and Charitable Trusts, Autonomous bodies like Associations, Clubs and Civil Societies.

The primary and main objective was to ensure availability of oxygen supply at all levels starting from District to Block, so as to cater the patients approaching from local rural vicinity to these CHCs.

Under the assessment, it was found that the COVID Support provided by HDFC Bank has been need based. HDFC Bank was approached by the government for the oxygen plants, and it committed to supporting two oxygen plants at Narpatpur (Varanasi) and Aurai (Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi). This illustrates that locations for setting up plants was suggested by the District Health Administration in cognizance with State Government. Installation was undertaken on time when such support was required.

The Oxygen Plants were found functional at the time of assessment. At present, both of these plants operate for 2 to 4 hours on daily basis as per the demand for oxygen supply.

This established the relevance of the support grant to Community Health Centres (CHCs) in Uttar Pradesh. The most relevant feature is the capacity of oxygen plants which can cater to at least 200 patients in a year. The Medical Superintendent expressed that now CHC can easily

support local population with oxygen supply at any given point of time and CHCs are fully capacitated to meet any exigencies.

Coherence

The Medical Superintendent and Medical Officer In-Charge expressed their sincere acknowledgement for the timely support when this support was needed to get prepared to meet the demand for oxygen supply in government hospitals.

During COVID-19 pandemic phase, both CHCs were catering to huge population size and expecting higher proportion of patients to manage. The support was demanded with this premise and making the CHCs emergency ready. Both medical officials gratefully acknowledged HDFC Bank for its partnership during the difficult times.

This proves that CHCs HDFC Bank took prompt action in committing the funds. The installation of plants was undertaken in July 2021 and October 2021.

Efficiency

To understand the efficiency of HDFC Bank support that contributed to the immediate needs during the COVID-19 phase, the CHC officials were further posed with the questions to know how the support contributed to their work. First of all, respondents at both the CHCs managed to provide support to patients post installation of plants. Though the requirement of oxygen supply declined after some time, but both CHCs are the prime source for their geography in meeting out the demands during the emergency situations. Both CHCs are at the distant locations within the districts.

Effectiveness

CHC officials were asked to share how many patients were supported during COVID-19 phase, since installation of oxygen plants. In all, both the CHCs, considering the remote location, could manage around 70-80 patients during the COVID-19 pandemic phase. On an average, 8-10 patients per day were supported for 4-5 days and then 1-4 patients per day within next 30 days period. Later, emergency diminished, and demand reduced drastically. Currently, there is no urgent requirement and oxygen support is required for 2-3 patients in a month. The reason for low footfall was people taking their severely ill patients to the district level either at Government District Hospital or Super Specialty Hospitals.

Further enquiry was made to know the current requirement and respondents reported that oxygen plants are being kept functional to ensure availability of oxygen every day to meet any requirement raised to CHCs. Both the plants were found with all readiness and provisions of oxygen supply during the crisis.

Sustainability

Sustainability, specifically in Government systems, has always been an issue which HDFC Bank support has managed successfully. Initially, the servicing support and repair management was undertaken by the suppliers who did the installation.

Later, both CHCs have got new vendors from the CMHO office for the service and repair maintenance. These two vendors undertake servicing twice a year (bi-annually) and CMHO office does the monitoring of these oxygen plants.

In both CHCs there is no dedicated position available for the operation of oxygen plants and one of the CHC staff (usually Ward Boy level) has been given charge for the operations as s/he has been provided with the training on Operations and Maintenance (O&M).

Staff at both CHCs were found to be aware that HDFC Bank has supported with such a needful investment for critical patients needing oxygen support. All staff members expressed their satisfaction with the type of oxygen plant provided by HDFC Bank with all needful provisions such as sensors and automation, etc.

In terms of operations, oxygen plants are functional since its installation. Both CHCs also have oxygen plants in the nearby CHCs to meet out any emergent situation if in case plants do not work for 1-2 days due to maintenance issue.

Suggestions for Future

Respondents had a perception that the CHCs must have a technical person for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for its future readiness. At Narpatpur (Varanasi), Medical Superintendent reported power supply issues and raised the demand for silent generators or solar operation panel for power supply.

Physical Verification

Particulars	Oxygen Plants	
	Narpatpur (Varanasi)	Aurai (Bhadohi)
Quantity	1	1
Compressor	EL Gi - EG22	EL Gi - EG22
Refrigerator Dryer	EL Gi - EG22	EL Gi - EG22
High Pressure Compressor	Mark	Mark
PSA/Oxygen Generator	MEDOX 3000	MEDOX 3000
Production Capacity	250 LPM	250 LPM
Availability	Yes	Yes
Currently Functional	Yes	Yes
Overall Condition	Excellent	Excellent
Operations & Maintenance	Available	Available
Servicing Process	Serviced bi-annually	Serviced bi-annually
Warranty Status	Under warranty	Under warranty
HDFC Branding	Yes	None

Support at a Glance

Oxygen Plants at Community Health Centre – Narpatpur, Chiraigaon, Varanasi



Oxygen Plants at Community Health Centre – Aurai, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi



Conclusion

The assessment of oxygen plants clearly established the effectiveness of the COVID project support provided by HDFC Bank to government health facilities in Varanasi and Bhadohi districts. The HDFC Bank support has made both CHCs future-ready for oxygen supply and availability in the future and ability to manage the emergent situation.

With respect to efficiency and impact, the HDFC Bank support has provided benefits to more than 80 patients during the COVID phase and 2 to 3 patients per month across the last year. This proves that HDFC Bank support has not only benefitted the patients during COVID second wave but also provided an opportunity to CHCs to establish their readiness for managing future demands for oxygen supply either at the district level or nearby geography.

HDFC Bank support could provide an opportunity to CMHOs in both the districts in establishing the credibility and trust among patients in terms of service provisioning such as oxygen availability even at the block levels. Moreover, CHCs do not charge and provide medical care to all the patients This could all happen just because of HDFC Bank support.
