



Social & Relationship Capital

Airtel has built and nurtured strong relationships with its stakeholders including **customers, communities, governments, distributors, and suppliers**. Our differentiated offerings, customer-centric service excellence, commitment to inclusive growth, and ethical and transparent operations have earned us their trust and support. We partner with the government to help realise the national aspiration of a ‘Digital India’ and **transform legacy communication systems to serve citizens better**. The strength of our social partnerships and stakeholder relationships is crucial to our ability to meet the needs of a whole new generation of customers.

This section includes

- Enhancing customer experience
- Corporate citizenship
- Sustainable supply chain management
- Community development

SDGs impacted



Enhancing customer experience

The relationship between Airtel and its customers is driven by a single sentiment – Customer Obsession. For us, customer service is a given and should be done. However, Customer Obsession goes beyond and is about what we must and will do. We have heavily invested in the last three years to develop high-speed networks and enhance customer experience exponentially.

In FY 2020-21, we decided to take our Customer Obsession to the next level. ‘ZERO Questions’ is often thought of as an impossible, utopian idea. However, we also know that the closer we get to ‘Zero Questions’ from customers, the happier they will be. As a part of our mission to deliver best-in-class experience to customers, we launched a first-of-its-kind campaign ‘Open To Questions’ in 2020 to encourage our customers to raise all their questions for Airtel. We promised to address every query that came in. A report from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRA) shows that between September 2020 and February 2021, two in every three new mobile customers chose Airtel over other networks. More than 25 million customers joined our network during this period testifying to the success of our Customer Obsession-driven growth strategy.

Processes

We have designed robust processes to enhance customer experience and simplify access to our services to help customers connect and engage with Airtel seamlessly. Our Quality Management System adheres to TL-9000 standards, a telecommunications sector-specific ISO 9000 standard. The framework guides our product and service distribution networks to comply with defined customer service quality standards. Our universe of channel partners adheres to established standards and service level expectations across the value chain. Regular customer service quality management workshops and training programmes are conducted for distributors, retailers and other channel partners, in addition to audits to ensure customer service quality.

We rolled out new tools and processes to handle the related rise in customer requests for help as we saw a surge in demand for digital services through the pandemic. We have an expansive agent led customer service network and physical outlets to handle our customer service requests. Additionally, we have empowered our customers to seek resolution to their queries through responsive and scalable self-care facilities.

56%

Reduction in customer complaint calls over FY 2019-20 (across all businesses)

#airtelThøks

EXCLUSIVE REWARDS PROGRAM

Airtel Thanks

An exclusive programme for our valued customers which brings them rewards, perks and privileges through the Airtel Thanks app available on the Play store. This loyalty programme provides benefits like enhanced data speeds, data rollover facilities, access to premium services like Wynk Premium, ZEE5, Reader's Club on Juggernaut, online security, and device insurance.

During FY 2020-21, we have enhanced the Airtel Thanks app and other web platforms to accelerate the resolution of customer complaints. With support in 10 regional languages, the app allows users to transact with Airtel through all digital payment modes. The app is built on a microservices framework that uses an in-house codebase and is hosted on Airtel data centres to ensure customer data privacy.



One Airtel platform

This platform tracks the customer lifecycle from onboarding to integrated billing and is serviced by one dedicated customer care number. The platform has digitised the billing experience of our customers with the 'One Home One Bill' functionality on the Airtel Thanks app allowing users to view billing details for Mobile, Broadband and DTH services and download their bills.

Users can pay multiple bills digitally on the app through a self-assisted single click.

Additionally, users have the power to add and pay for entertainment platforms such as ZEE5, Amazon Prime Video and Disney + Hotstar subscriptions to their One Airtel bills.

Broadband digitisation

Broadband customers can now enjoy superfast onboarding through digital payment and electronic-Know Your Customer (KYC) compliance. We offer assured installation within four hours of order confirmation. Customers can digitally access features like change plans, pay bills, view data consumption, etc.

These services and others like revamped international roaming facilities, elimination of zero price point VAS, VoWiFi calling, and ducting have significantly reduced customer complaints and enhanced satisfaction.

Next-gen Airtel stores

Our ambition to 'win customers for life' is the motivation behind the next-generation retail stores. These stores were conceived to foster engaging conversations in a warm and welcoming ambience. The new stores have an open and minimalistic design and utilise several state-of-the-art digital technologies to create an enriching experience for customers.

Digital customer acquisition (eCAF)

This solution improves the Airtel activation process, leveraging Optical Character Recognition (OCR). It allows our front-end teams to automatically fetch customer details by matching the customer photograph taken at our service outlets with the verification document. This 'green channel' has ensured minimal validation effort at the backend and reduced activation cost, time and complexities.

Decision Tree

Decision Tree is a tool that streamlines customer queries and complaints through effective prediction and diagnoses. It offers resolutions after evaluating relevant information from various businesses and channels. Automation in Decision Tree has helped advisors eliminate the need to use multiple applications to extract information for a single query.

Products

We are obsessed about finding and solving our customers' problems and constantly launch new products and services to enhance our customer experience. When the pandemic made WFH, e-learning, online entertainment, and digital payments the new norm, it led to an unprecedented surge in demand for high-speed data, office-like environment at home, and simple and safe communication solutions. We introduced enterprise-grade solutions Airtel@Home and Airtel BlueJeans to help our customers. When our customers needed one single point of contact with Airtel for all their needs, we came out with One Airtel and Airtel Enterprise Hub.

When we found that our business customers were facing challenges related to privacy, experience and technical issues as they were using multiple platforms to service their customers, our solution was Airtel IQ, a cloud-based

omni-channel platform for customer engagement. To address the need of all businesses, especially the smaller ones, to scale up their operations and requirement for a reliable partner to provide end-to-end digital solution, we came up with our innovative, secure and scalable AWS cloud solutions to become their one-stop shop.

With increasing digital adoption, cyberattacks became a threat to infrastructure and data protection and so we responded with Airtel Secure to help them stay safe. When the businesses needed carry out multi-channel, consent-based and privacy-safe promotional campaigns in the face of increasing regulation, we launched Airtel Ads.

Please refer to the Intellectual Capital on Page 84 of the report for more details on product and services launched during the year.



Engaging our customers in our product journey

We seek feedback from our customers to improve our products and services continually. We deploy the Net Promoter Score (NPS) model to determine the level of customer satisfaction. This method is designed to capture the likelihood of customers to recommend Airtel's products and services to others.

Airtel Customer Advisory Board

Airtel is co-creating its product innovation roadmap with its customers. We invest in understanding their changing needs and tailor offerings to give customers what they want and need. The Customer Advisory Board counsels Airtel on relevant issues, emerging needs and technology trends. We incorporate such inputs to better align our innovation and offerings journey to customer requirements.

Brandwatch

Brandwatch is a service used by Airtel to study customer behaviour and derive insights to improve its products and services. Brandwatch products are used to mine digital conversations around various brands and categories to spot trending consumer behaviour and perception towards brands. We seek customer reactions and responses through SMS, web-based surveys and Out Bound Dialers. Analytical tools are deployed to mine and translate consumer data into actionable business insights.

Customer data privacy protection

At Airtel, we collect, process, and analyse large amounts of data to understand our customers better and deliver superior products.

As we develop these products, we stay mindful of the potential risks of data privacy in our operations and the value chain. Safeguarding customer privacy and ensuring data security across our operations, business and supply chain lines is a key focus area for Airtel. We have defined robust policies and processes to address this risk effectively.

Airtel's privacy policy (Bharti Airtel Information Privacy Policy) aligns with the Information Technology (IT) Rules 2011 and best practices of industry and GDPR. It provides management direction and support to assure the privacy of personal information collected by Airtel. The policy ensures that collection, processing, retention, dissemination and destruction of personal information are in accordance with appropriate laws, regulations and contractual obligations.

The policy applies to the entire operation covering all employees and business partners of Airtel who have access to the personal information of customers, employees and vendors. It is jointly owned by the Chief Information Security Officer and the legal function and approved by Airtel Management Board. The security, legal and regulatory functions within

the Company are responsible for managing the information privacy across organisation. The Privacy Grievance Officer (PGO) is entrusted with the responsibility of addressing any privacy-related grievances and complaints, undertaking investigation and assigning responsibility for their resolution.

As per Airtel's privacy policy, customers are informed of any personal information collected and the purpose of collecting the information. Further, customers are apprised of the nature of information captured and how the information is protected. They are also kept informed about the duration the information is stored in corporate files i.e. for as long as necessary to fulfil the stated purposes or for a period specifically required by law or regulation.

Airtel seeks customer consent before collecting, processing, retaining, and disclosing their data and information. Customers are informed about the process to be followed to exercise the choices available to them concerning their personal information, such as signing the consent clause or checking the opt-in box for giving consent. Further, they are also apprised of the process to withdraw consent with regard to

processing, retention, dissemination and destruction of the personal information at any later date. Additionally, they have the option to request access to the data held by the Company and if they need their data to be corrected.

Airtel has a third-party disclosure policy. In line with this policy, information may be shared with the third parties on a need-to-know basis to execute business, post obtaining consent from the customer. Airtel ensures that the third party signs a non-disclosure agreement and adheres to all applicable privacy principles and data protection regulations.

The information privacy control matrix and policy of Airtel are regularly updated to include the latest regulatory, contractual and organisational changes and ensure swift and effective implementation of privacy controls. Further, it is Airtel's constant endeavour to deploy appropriate technology, processes, resources and infrastructure for timely implementation of privacy controls that comply with the latest laws and regulations and incorporate industry best practices. Moreover, to ensure compliance with the policy, internal and external audits are undertaken, and any identified gaps and non-conformities are addressed.

All employees and temporary staff of Airtel and third parties are required to comply with the privacy policy. Non-compliance with the policy is dealt with as per the Code of Conduct. The Circle Information Security Council (CISC) recommends disciplinary actions against employees, partners or third parties involved in privacy breaches. Depending on the severity of the violation, it may even include termination of employees, change of third-party staff or termination of the contract with business partners.



Strategic partnerships

Our class-leading solutions are driving success and value for customers and accelerating their digital transformation. We are partnering with the best in the world to elevate our offerings and solutions:



To make quality education accessible to students across India, Airtel has invested in two dedicated DTH channels with Vedantu to bring affordable and quality education to millions of school children on their home TV screens. Vedantu Masterclasses DTH channels air on Airtel Digital TV at ₹4 per day. These classes offer high-impact, interactive learning delivered by best-in-class faculty, including graduates from IIT, AIIMS and others, to students from Class 6 to 12.



Airtel Digital TV and Aakash Educational Services have collaborated to provide high-quality coaching sessions to students across India preparing for entrance exams such as the JEE and NEET. The talented faculty of Aakash help students learn key concepts and solve problems through LIVE interactive classes.



As part of its integrated B2B growth strategy, Airtel has partnered with Verizon to offer secure enterprise-grade video conferencing solutions under the Airtel BlueJeans to businesses in India. BlueJeans, Verizon's enterprise-grade video conferencing service, helps people communicate and collaborate across mobile, desktop, browser and conference rooms.



We collaborated with ZEEplex, ZEE's new 'Cinema 2 Home' service for showcasing new films on TV and digital platforms. Customers can now enjoy the first-day first show of their favourite movies on a pay-per-view basis, sitting at home.



As part of its strategy to offer best-in-class entertainment to customers in India, Airtel partnered with VOOT to bring premium digital content to its customers. The content can be streamed on the Airtel Xstream platform across multiple screens – on TV over the Airtel Xstream Box or part of the Airtel Xstream Bundle, on a smartphone with the Airtel Xstream app, and on personal computers.



Corporate citizenship

Fostering entrepreneurship and employment through Airtel's rural network

Airtel's rural distribution network creates revenue generation opportunities for rural entrepreneurs including distributors and retailers who sell our products and services. The Airtel Pratinidhi programme partners with rural entrepreneurs to take our offerings to market and increase their earnings.

We hire local resources as Feet on Street Executives (FSEs) and for other roles to generate employment in rural areas. We have more than 9,400 distributors and 13,000 Pratinidhis on distributor payrolls, who in turn employ over 25,000 FSEs across India. We also have 6,600 rural stores employing over 5,000 people.

Airtel has established inbound call centres in Siliguri, Guwahati, Kochi, Bhubaneswar and other places to cater to the diverse, multilingual set of rural customers. These rural call centres collectively serve millions of people and generate significant employment.

9,400+

Channel partners

25,000+

Feet-on-Street Executives (FSEs)

6,600

Rural Airtel exclusive outlets

5,000+

People employed by Rural Airtel exclusive outlets

17.87 Mn

Customers served by Airtel rural call centres



Automation to boost business continuity and efficiencies across FSEs and retailers

Auto-refill and digital collections

This solution allows retailers to order and receive stock through an automated tool without the need for manual delivery. About 60% of secondary sales in rural areas is generated through auto-refill. Retailers can pay distributors digitally via Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on the Airtel Mitra app for Auto Refill transactions.

Digital purchase of Local Area Payment Unit (LAPU)

The digitisation of LAPU assures retailers of 24X7 availability of stock. They can now purchase units from the distributors digitally through the Airtel Mitra app and pay them via UPI. Retailers can stock the amount of inventory they need,

and distributors do not have to worry about collecting their payments physically.

DTH recharge through Airtel Mitra

The Airtel Mitra app has been enhanced to facilitate DTH recharge and customer acquisition across the rural network, further expanding revenue streams for retailers.

Enhancements in DMS and Revenue app

The Airtel DMS and Revenue apps have been upgraded to allow distributors and FSEs to set up DTH connections digitally. More than 1,500 distributors have availed this service across India.

Strengthening bonds with rural partners

We are proud of the achievements and commitments of our rural channel partners and their employees. They rise beyond limitations and fight the odds to create value for Airtel and its stakeholders. We have instituted several measures to support them and their families to deepen our relationship. They remain our most crucial stakeholder to help us spread our footprint and deliver on our customer-centric commitments across the country's far reaches.



Stepping up engagement with retailers and distributors

A flagship channel engagement programme – Airtel Ratnas, runs a series of initiatives and campaigns focused on distributors, retailers and FSEs.

Anmol Ratna for distributors

We offer Group Personal Accident (GPA) insurance for distributors to offer their families financial security in the unfortunate event of accidental death or permanent disability. On the International Women's Day, Circle leadership felicitated our women channel partners for their exemplary contribution to Airtel and society.

Yuva Ratna for FSEs

Our frontline workforce's dedication to deliver the highest standard of services to our customers despite the pandemic was truly commendable and inspirational. All our frontline heroes were covered by GPA insurance and COVID hospitalisation cover during the pandemic. This year, we also provided them with a life insurance policy in the event of death due to COVID. Airtel leadership recognised their 'going beyond the call of duty' attitude through special appreciation letters along with gift vouchers.

Airtel scholarships

We offered child education scholarship to recognise and encourage academically meritorious children of Airtel distributors and retailers. We also launched a program 'Airtel ki Laadli' for the girl children of our rural distributors to motivate them to study and release their dreams – deserving children were awarded with Lenovo tabs.

Partnering with Government to drive development and e-Governance

Airtel is partnering with communities and government regulatory bodies to upgrade their legacy systems. As cities move towards mass adoption of connected technologies and applications, Airtel is helping build smart cities and providing solutions for a better tomorrow. We have been at the forefront of all significant initiatives run by the Government of India.



VSAT connectivity provider

With close to 49,000 VSAT sites deployed across India, Airtel is the only telco to offer integrated and reliable VSAT services for Defence, NHAI and many rural Common Service Centres responsible for agriculture and e-governance of health and education.

State-wide area network: SWAN 2.0

An integrated Structured Wireless-Aware Network (SWAN) solution comprising 885 Points of Presence (PoPs) with MPLS bandwidth was designed to connect state, district, block and tehsil headquarters to facilitate e-governance. This infrastructure ensured secure delivery of government services digitally to citizens over a Closed User Group Network. Services delivered on the network included filing applications for pensions, registration for employment, issuing birth and death certificates, and renewal of ration cards.

Airtel is the SWAN provider for six states through a high-speed connectivity framework and managed services for Government-to-Government and Government-to-citizen applications.

Public service delivery

Airtel supports the Government of India with Interactive Voice Response (IVR) solutions that help citizens access law and order units, government hospitals, PF and pension data. The service also delivers information regarding courses offered by government schools and universities.

m-Governance

Airtel partnered with government authorities to provide a mobile application platform for citizen self-service that connects them to public service departments round the clock and enhances the transparency of government processes.

Data security and business continuity

Airtel has set up a cloud-based Business Continuity and Disaster recovery site for a state data centre. The solution migrates traffic to the disaster recovery site without any data loss in the event of an operational failure at the centre.

Collaboration with the Government of Tamil Nadu

Airtel has partnered with the Government of Tamil Nadu to bring quality online learning classes to students through its digital platforms. Content from Kalvi TV – the government-operated education channel – was made available for free on Airtel Digital TV and the Airtel Xstream app for smartphones and tablets.

Airtel's video conferencing facilities for the Government of Rajasthan

The Government of Rajasthan appointed Airtel to design and implement its Video Conferencing (VC) project to bring state-of-the-art VC services to all departments, from the state to the block levels. Airtel also runs the Network Bandwidth Connectivity across the state, which forms the backbone of the VC setup.

32

Districts covered

400

Block headquarters

550

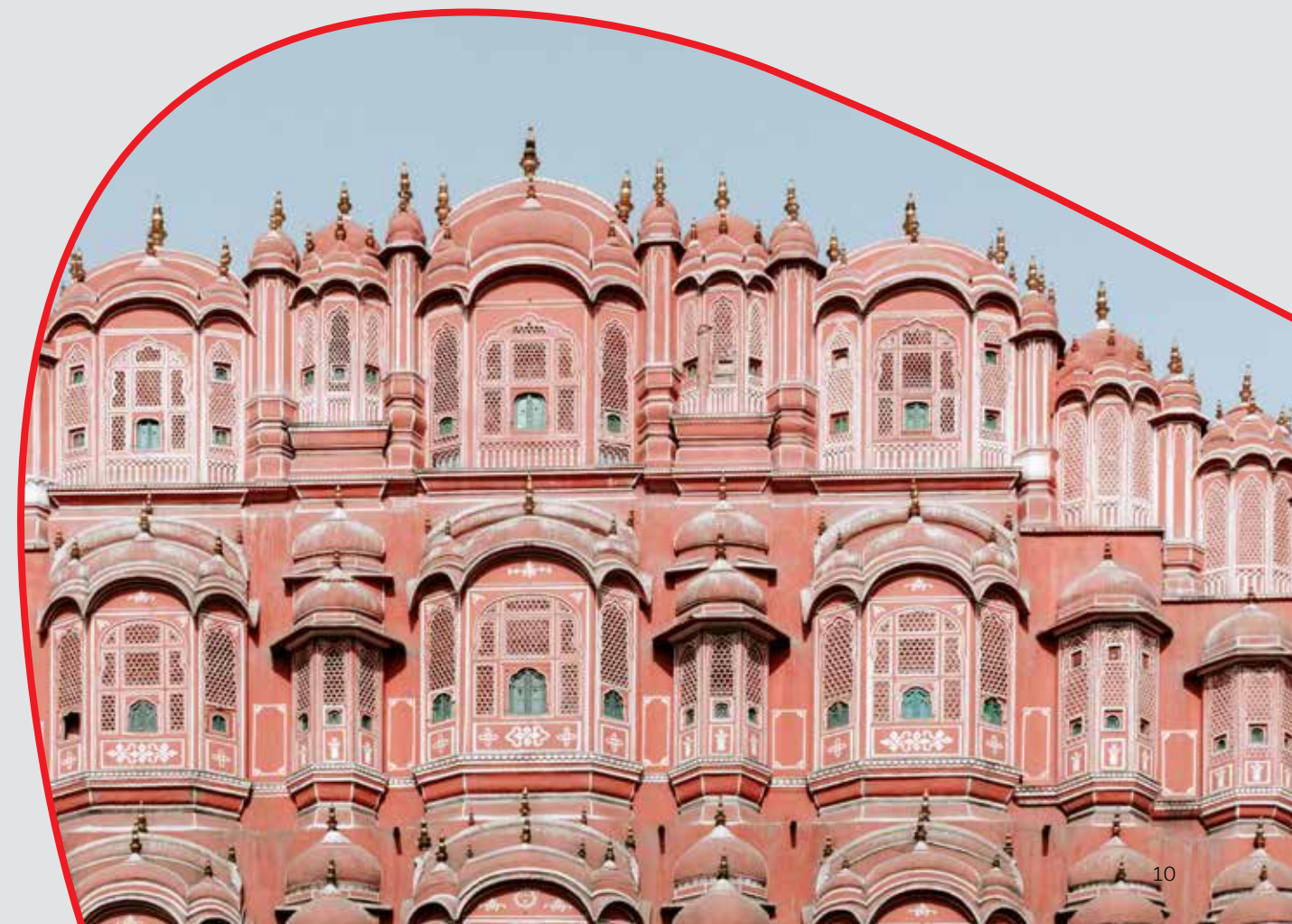
Studios

20

Conferences a day on average

130

COVID-19 related reviews conducted



Sustainable supply chain management

Airtel's commitment to operate a responsible business, led by sustainability principles and environmental stewardship extends to its partners and the entire value chain. We have instituted policies and guidelines that ensure that our supply chain enhances our ability to deliver on Airtel's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) commitments. Our supply chain partners are the critical link in our journey to provide an exemplary experience to our customers.

We encourage our suppliers to adhere to international sustainability standards such as ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 27001. Currently, more than 80% of our procurement by value from critical suppliers comes from those having at least one of these certifications. Critical suppliers have a significant bearing on our competitive advantage and market success. Airtel engaged with over 2,600 Tier-I suppliers, out of which over 170 are marked as critical suppliers (including 17 strategic suppliers) on the basis of high volume/ supply of critical components.

Airtel is a firm believer in procuring locally from India-based suppliers which constituted ~ 96% of total suppliers in FY 2020-21, accounting for ~ 89% of our procurement spend. This helps us to create value through revenue generation and employment in the ecosystem by promoting indigenous entrepreneurship and reducing the environmental footprint. Local sourcing is a strategic move to mitigate the risks of restrictive developments related to transportation, geopolitical changes and other such threats.

We have initiated several steps to increase collaboration with and retain suppliers and effectively manage our supply chain.

Engagement

We run a special event for suppliers, Airtel Conclave, to recognise their outstanding performance. We conduct ongoing training for suppliers on operational processes, including bidding, invoicing and grievance redressal.



Governance

The Contract Management (I-Certis) tool for suppliers ensures all contracts are routed through an integrated system with approved templates to reduce manual interventions. Appropriate SLAs and metrics are embedded in agreements, and governance meetings are conducted with suppliers to address any concerns or bottlenecks.

Grievance redressal

We have instituted channels to enable our partners to raise their concerns and issues with Airtel. The Code of Conduct allows business associates to report complaints, including anti-corruption, anonymously. The designated Ombudsperson administers the entire process – from reviewing

and investigating concerns raised and undertaking all appropriate actions to resolve the issue. The Ombud process is regularly monitored to strengthen its effectiveness and adequacy. Any instance of serious misconduct brought to the Ombudsperson is reported to the Audit Committee. All vendors/ partners and any person with a grievance (excluding standard customer complaints) have full access to the Ombudsperson through phones, emails or in-person meetings. Whenever necessary, the Ombudsperson's office refers matters for resolution to the Human Resources department for resolution. There is a grievance redressal portal that is monitored by Human Resource department for any complaints received.

Community development

Airtel has rolled out various initiatives to strengthen its community partnership efforts. We constantly endeavour to create value for communities by offering solutions at all levels.

Bharti Foundation

Established in 2000, Bharti Foundation supports and implements programmes to further primary, secondary and higher education, and health and sanitation. The Foundation conducts these programmes in partnership with communities, government schools, students, youth and NGOs. We run a network of programmes to help under-served students access education. Here is an update on Bharti Foundation's programs that have been supported over years. This year, our employees have undertaken special volunteering programs virtually wherein they reached out and supported students and teachers:

- » Satya Bharti School Program
- » Satya Bharti Quality Support Program
- » Higher Education Program
- » Satya Bharti Abhiyan

4.5 Lakhs+	2,500+
Students impacted since inception	Total number of Schools
5,976	19,088
Villages impacted since inception	Teaching community impacted since inception
170 hours	2.2 Mn+
Employee volunteering in community development programs	Community members impacted since inception



Sustainable value creation for farmers through IKSL

Set up in 2007 as a Joint Venture (JV) between IFFCO, Bharti Airtel and Star Global Resources, IFFCO Kisan Sanchar Limited (IKSL) supports 53 communities across 19 states. It provides value-added services in 10 local languages to 30 lakhs subscribers. IKSL has successfully reached out to over one million rural customers, including farmers.

This collaborative initiative aims to empower Indian farmers with relevant and accurate information on agronomy, weather, 'Mandi' prices and offers, 'Ask the Expert' facilities. With a regular Airtel SIM card configured for this purpose, a farmer can access IKSL's value-added services free of cost. These help farmers make decisions that can reduce production costs, improve product quality, and increase crop production and income.

The total annual costs incurred to run IKSL stands at ₹220 million, while the total annual revenue generated is estimated to be ₹2,900 million.

IKSL offers farmers the following benefits:

- » Three free voice messages and one text SMS per day sent to farmers. IKSL's push voice content reached 2,182,418 farmers in FY 2020-21.
- » Kisan Call Centres (KCCs), a dedicated farmer helpline, caters to around 15,960 farmers. It helps them access professional help, including specialists for information related to Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Poultry, Dairy etc. KCCs answered 5,474,446 calls in the reporting year.
- » IFFCO Kisan app provides information on weather and Mandi prices, facilities to buy and sell agricultural items and runs a 'Ask the Expert' service for farmers. In FY 2020-21, the app had an active user base of 115,331.
- » Samadhan, a unique venture, started in collaboration with HCL Foundation and IFFCO Kisan, encourages rural communities to process their knowledge through a large scale Structured, Measurable, Articulated, Replicable and Transparent (SMART) plan, utilising voice calls and text messages in local languages.

757,756

337

Farmers added

Samadhan subscribers

1,026 Mn+

Voice Messages shared yearly



Response to COVID-19

We worked side by side with our customers, partners, communities and the Government to address the challenges of COVID-19, leveraging our network, technology and people. We continue to extend our support to the community and our other stakeholders as the pandemic rages.

Enhancing services for **retail customers** during the lockdown:

- » **Airtel Superheroes** – Subscribers could recharge on behalf of their friends or acquaintances utilising Airtel UPI.
- » **Help a Friend** – Non-app customers could send an SMS to their friends seeking recharge help even if their services were discontinued.
- » **Activated medical stores, Kirana stores and other essential services on Airtel.** The SHOP keyword was created to enable customers to find retailers who were open nearby.
- » Multiple tie-ups to allow customers to recharge their connections at **10 lakhs ATMs.**
- » Announced benefits worth **₹270 crores** to help **55 million low income customers** to tide over the impact of COVID-19.

Government

- » **Audio and video conferencing** solutions for various ministries and state governments.
- » **Voice services, high-capacity network connectivity and bandwidth** for COVID-19 helplines, war rooms, state data centres and Integrated Command and Control Centres.
- » **High volume SMS and Outbound dialling** services for public sector undertakings.
- » **Devices** to facilitate work from home devices for government officials in essential services.

Enterprise customers

- » **COCP Corporate Broadband** – Allowed enterprises to purchase physical devices for broadband connectivity and have them delivered to their employees wherever they were located.

→ Read more in COVID-19 response story on page 06

