



Arogya Parivar: healthy family in rural India

Commercial innovation to address health needs at the bottom of the pyramid

For 830 million men, women and children across India living in rural areas, the idea of accessible and affordable medicines is often as remote as their homes: an estimated 65% of India's population does not have access to healthcare.

Arogya Parivar ("healthy family" in Hindi) is a for-profit social initiative developed by Novartis to reach the underserved millions living at the bottom of the pyramid in rural India. Since launching in 2007, Arogya Parivar is proving to be both a force for improving health in rural communities and a sustainable business.

Social responsibility meets business growth

Arogya Parivar provides opportunities to expand business in an innovative and responsible way. The program offers education on diseases, treatment options and prevention as well as increasing access to affordable medicines.

- Locally recruited health educators, often local women, raise awareness about diseases and preventive health measures. They also refer sick people to doctors. Each educator covers a few villages every day, in an Arogya Parivar branded uniform, making them easily recognizable.
- Health supervisors serve as the initiative's local sales force. They interact with local pharmacies and collaborate with doctors to organize health camps where villagers can receive treatment and preventive care.
- Arogya Parivar focuses on the diseases most prevalent in rural India. By 2015, the product portfolio is planned to expand to more than 100 medicines and more than 160 individual pharmaceutical, generic and over-the-counter products to treat conditions ranging from tuberculosis and diabetes to pain and cold relief and dietary supplements.
- To be included in the portfolio, products need to be simple to use and relevant to local patients. Further, products and services are tailored to meet the needs of underserved rural populations with a low disposable income, usually earned on a daily basis.
- Arogya Parivar is a commercially-viable program. It began returning a profit after 30 months and since 2007, sales have increased 25-fold. This means that the initiative is sustainable, and Novartis has created similar initiatives in Kenya, Indonesia and Vietnam.

A marketing mix adapted to low-income populations

Arogya Parivar is a first for the healthcare industry in India, which has typically focused on the urbanized middle class with its increasing spending power. The program is based on four pillars known as the “4 As”: awareness, accessibility, affordability and adaptability.

- **Awareness:** health education meetings on hygiene, nutrition and common prevalent conditions increase disease awareness and inform the community about prevention and the importance of good health. In 2013 alone, 4.3 million villagers received health education through Arogya Parivar. The program also educates physicians through knowledge sharing and medical detailing of treatment options.
- **Accessibility:** the program ensures consistent availability of medicines and healthcare in rural settings. Strong links with more than 22,000 doctors and new distribution networks help to make medicines available in 28,000 of the most remote pharmacies. Through health camps, qualified doctors travel to rural areas to provide screening, diagnosis, treatment and preventive care. More than 450,000 villagers were diagnosed in health camps between 2010 and 2013.
- **Affordability:** providing health services and medicines close to home minimizes travel costs, which can be more expensive than treatment. Many medicines in the Arogya Parivar portfolio meet affordability needs in these markets, supplying essential medicines that are affordable.
- **Adaptability:** communications, product packaging and training are adapted to local conditions. The product portfolio is also customized based on the local disease burden. Local health educators are recruited to adapt the program to local dialects and culture.

Encouraging results and further expansion

Arogya Parivar has become an essential public health tool, operating in 10 states across India.

- The program operates across an area that is home to 70 million people, expanding their access to affordable products, improved health infrastructure and community education.
- The initiative has been replicated and adapted to local markets in Kenya, Indonesia and Vietnam.
- Arogya Parivar also provides jobs, income, and skills enhancement to the health supervisors and health educators who work on the program – opportunities that might not otherwise exist in rural India.
- Moving forward, one of the objectives is to expand and strengthen the product portfolio in India adding treatments from the National Essential Medicines list.
- Arogya Parivar is consistently recognized in global rankings and awards, such as the GBCHHealth Business Action on Health award, Award for Social Marketing from the CMO Asia Awards and was named best long-term rural marketing initiative by the Rural Marketing Association of India, India’s largest industry association.

For more information: www.novartis.com/corporate-responsibility