

**Launch of The India Food Banking Network, IFBN, Planning Forum**

**17<sup>th</sup> of November 2009, New Delhi, India**

**An Initiative By**



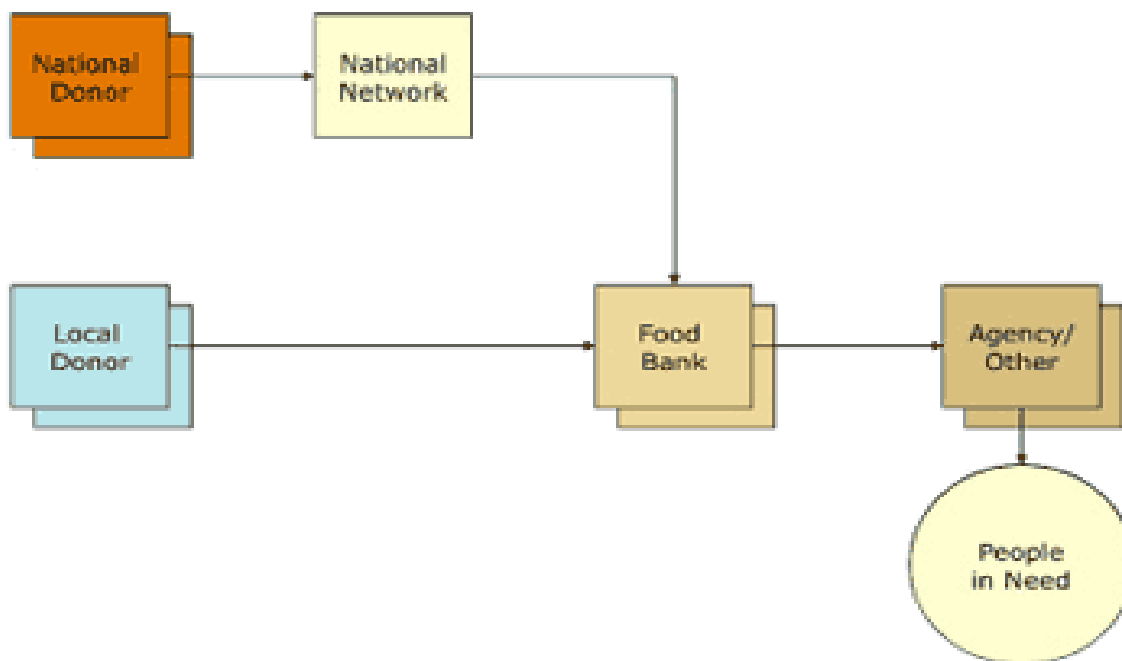
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The India Food Banking Network, IFBN, Planning Forum launched by Dr. Sam Pitroda, Chairman – India Food Banking Network, Chris Rebstock, Vice President – The Global FoodBanking Network, Governor Scott McCallum, CEO – Aidmatrix Foundation, V.N Gaur CEO – Food Safety & Standards Authority of India and J K Sinha, Member, National Disaster Management Authority, India was sponsored by Cargill as an effort to augment food security with the establishment of a food banking system to support thousands of feeding programs that already exist throughout India and to help develop new programs where they are needed.

India Food Banking Network is a system that will move food from donors to the people who need it the most and engage all sectors of society towards this effort. This food banking system will feed millions of people each year, and become a vehicle for building public awareness about hunger and nutrition, and serve as a powerful voice that drives policy decisions and initiatives that impact the food security of individuals and communities.

The Food Banking Networks are a nonprofit distribution enterprise that serve the communities directly. These acquire donated food—much of which would otherwise be wasted in terms of excess production, damaged packaging or market driven reasons — and make it available to people directly through a network of community agencies. These agencies include school feeding programs, community feeding programs, institutional feeding programs, substance abuse clinics, after-school programs and other nonprofit organizations.



With this aim to feed the hungry and cater to nutritional needs, the launch laid emphasis on how to engage committed institutions, organisations, companies and individuals to lead the Planning Forum under the guidance and Chairmanship of Dr. Sam Pitroda. This is to invite and engage institutions, organisations, companies and individuals to work on the structure and to share experiences on how to move forward and create a design for the IFBN business plan to establish Food Banks within the structure of The India Food Banking Network.

**Governor Scott McCallum – CEO, Aidmatrix Foundation** delivering the welcome speech spoke about solutions that help match the waste that goes out everyday in India – that should go to those who are hungry and come up with solutions that can match the access to the food.

He thanked Dr. Sam Pitroda who is an instrumental driving force behind the India Food Banking Network (IFBN) initiative providing the entrepreneurship and policy leadership with the effective implementation expertise on technology solutions that will help in making a difference. He further thanked Chris Rebstock who has initiated food banking networks in many parts of the world and enabling the process in India, JK Sinha, for the the knowledge leadership in India in his work of Disaster Relief and V.N Gaur as a thought leader and guidance towards the IFBN initiative on the critical area of Food Safety.

Addressing the Inaugral address, **Dr. Sam Pitroda – Chairman of India Food Banking Network**, started with highlighting his association with The Global FoodBanking Network, GFN, that started over two & a half years ago and how he was touched with the effectiveness of The Global FoodBanking Network, GFN with their experience and commitment with their desire to enable Food Banking in India. He highlighted how GFN group was deeply engaged in South Africa and thereafter, started exploring India at the government, public sector, private sector, NGOs and many works that are already underway in India, specially related with the Mid Day Meal programmes. He was delighted that in the last two years, collectively we have all able to crystallise our thoughts and commitment to working on eradicating hunger in India. Here emphasis was laid upon how hunger affects individuals, communities, institutions and nations in many different ways, directly as well as indirectly and how it has far reaching implications on Health – productivity, efficiency, security, safety and how hunger is to be eradicated specially in the era of technology.

He further emphasised that because of technology, life span is increased, infant mortality has decreased, productivity in transportation, communication and in many other sectors have improved and accesses has increased but at the same time there are a billion people in this world that go hungry. He stated that it is time to really use technology in a very different way to handle problems related to hunger and that's where he feels that GFN bringing its expertise from many continents, countries related to logistics, information technology, management, organisations, and structures can contribute a lot towards eradication of hunger in India.

He said that lot of good work is already going on in India and many institutions and organisations are committed to this path. Further noting that the Launch of IFBN Planning Forum will lead to interactions with each other to learn about innovative solutions & opportunities. Focusing on the growth, he notes that it is critical as we are growing in India at 6-9% and this growth must percolate down.

Our government is committed to inclusive growth and we cannot take pride in inclusive growth if we cannot eliminate hunger. Stating that we have enough surplus food, enough capacity to grow more food; at the same time many of our people in the country go hungry he went on to mention that a lot of this has to do with logistics, information systems, knowledge, and delivery. With his personal interest in Information Communication Technology Infrastructure for public services, he highlighted that he strongly believes that ICT will have a significant role to play in eliminating hunger.

He stressed on the point that we can collectively go out to the nation and say that we will indeed eliminate hunger in India together by 2020 highlighting that the tools that we have today provides the opportunity of even more hope then ever before.

He noted that the growth we look for should result in inclusive growth and growth for the people at the bottom of the pyramid and must eliminate hunger for millions of the people in our country. He invited all to work together for the India Food Banking Network with a hope to begin this journey together and help eradicate hunger in India by 2020 he concluded the inaugural address..

*Chris Rebstock, Vice President – The Global FoodBanking Network* on the overview of Food banking in General and context on what GFN is doing:

### **Why Food Banking?**

### **Why is it a viable tool in fighting food security in any part of the world/ community?**

He sighted the following reasons on the need of Food Banks and why it is a viable tool to fight food security in India:

- Hunger Kills and it is the No. 1 cause of death in the world.
- No country, community or state can have a healthy & functional society when its members are hungry or under nourished. They can't learn, they can't be productive and can't contribute to the development of a healthy society when they are malnourished which is preventable.
- The world produces a lot of food that gets thrown away ever year and there are lots of reason why that food doesn't make it to the people who need it. That is the surplus food, unsaleable food that food banking is designed to capture and re-channel for those who are in need. Food Banking is establishing an infrastructure within a country to capture the surplus and unsaleable food that exists in the country.
- Food Banking helps to resolve and avoid duplication of efforts put in by the government, NGOs, Corporates.
- Food Banking is scalable. It can operate in a small community as a small operation or as a whole national network with hundreds of communities around the country where each food banking is very different from the next but all operating under the same course of principles and same course of operating

standards and working towards effective implementation in their own communities even though the needs of that community are different. This is adaptable.

- This is not competitive with the food industries.
- The systems that are set up in food banking infrastructure are designed in such a way that it protects the donor from ending up in competition with himself by having his product channeled out illegally and coming back into the underground marketplace and competing with them.
- Very tight controls over the receipt, the handling and distribution of the products. It ensures that the donated products are going to take care of the people who are not in the donors' market place and therefore not establishing competition with donors.

**J K Sinha, Member National Disaster Management Authority** during his special address spoke about the importance of Food for times of Disaster. He sighted the example of Mid Day Meal Programs, where he raised a suggestion that if we could store mid day meal standard products for schools and these be kept at locations which supply to schools for normal times and these feed in for times of disaster will be a food bank available for distribution amongst the victims of disasters.

He shared an experience of a farming community in Bihar and Bhandar where all the grains were kept for household used and where a portion were used to feed the hungry.

Emphasising on the institutionalization, maintenance and growth of Food banks he later cited the example of Food Corporation of India where food stored in FCI also needs to be fully utilized especially for times of disasters.

He concluded by agreeing with Dr. Sam Pitroda that if logistics and technology are combined and used together, it will solve the problem. A system evolves where all these produce could be utilize to feed the hungry.

**VN Gaur- CEO, The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India** the guest of honour spoke about how IFBN has filled the gap existing in India between the large food corporates and organizations engaged in reaching food to the needy.

He noted that there have been efforts at local level at several places in the country to mop up surpluses and small donations of food and distribute amongst the poor. But it is probably the first time there are so many corporate coming together in this country to launch a joint forum to pool and distribute the surplus and unsaleable products with the supply chain management expertise of Aidmatrix.

He cited an example of villages located in Nagaland where productivity is very low and there is not even a single beggar. Here he emphasized on the food banks that people were having where all those who had good crops / harvest share 10 – 15 kgs to the food bank and feed the infants, destitute and others that need food the most. He said that that food banking has been in practice in many villages and the concept of food bank creates a bridge between the waste and the needy in today's' environment.

He further noted that the survey conducted in UK has estimated that 7 million tones of food worth 12 billion Pounds is wasted annually in that country and the authority has to spend another billion Pounds to dispose off that waste. Environmental impact of these 7 million tones of waste in terms of carbon footprints is estimated to be 18 million metric tones of Carbon dioxide in one country UK only. Food Banking helps to also reduce carbon footprint by reducing production, logistics, transportation costs.

He further elaborated that according to FAO estimates; world agriculture produces 17 % more calories per person today then it did 30 years ago, despite a 70% population increase. Therefore, he says it is not a question of shortage of food or shortage of calories but it is a question about redistribution of the food which is available. The

food available in the world in terms of calories can sustain 2720 kilo calories per person per day. This figure clearly shows the dire necessity of mechanisms for the distribution of food among the people of the world and food banking can make significant contribution in correcting the imbalance with a win - win approach. He acknowledged that the establishment of IFBN will go a long way in supplementing the global effort to fight hunger and preservation of environment.

Further to this, he stressed upon some of the important characteristics of the new food regulation regime that is going to be there from next year –

- Under the new act the responsibility of the food safety has been put on the food business operator.
- It has removed the multiplicity of regulations by various ministries on food items. It is based on science and risk analysis approach towards regulations.
- Maximum transparency in decision making.
- Putting in place an integrated control system.
- A new surveillance system on food systems.
- Implementation of a system for traceability and recall.
- Strengthening of the food laboratories.
- Violation of act resulting in imprisonment for 6 months.
- Organizations engaged in food banking initiative will be bound by norms and regulations and have to be careful of the safety parameters. Presently the rules framed under the prevention of adulteration act are still enforced for few more months.

He concluded by wishing a success to the IFBN initiative hoping that it will bring a shine in the eyes of those where every meal is a struggle for survival.

***Few of the questions' raised during the Interactions were:***

- Considering the different culture and market practices what are the challenges in India?
- Linked with food banking system how are we going to safeguard against the bio technology processed food which is likely to be increasing in quantity as well as variety which is a important aspect of food banking and food safety in India.
- Cost involved in holding & preserving the stock will be borne by who as the cost will appear to be more costly than the food.
- What are the monitoring signals to be used for distribution of food?
- Lack of internal trade of food due to government regulations so how can market can play a role in distribution of food?

**Session 1 :- Innovative solutions for food security in India**

***Veena S. Rao - IAS, Retired, Secretary, Government of India and Malnutrition Expert.*** chaired the session on Food Security. She noted that primarily amongst the policy makers, program managers and several NGOs there is a blurred understanding of vital terms such as Agriculture security, food security & nutrition security though there is a very clear difference between the three of them. As defined by the world food summit, Permanent access to all food nutritionally adapted, culturally acceptable underlines a healthy and active life.

She stated that 50% of our population be it men, women, children, suffer from some form of malnutrition or the other. We are now perhaps one of the most malnourished countries in the world. The situation is not improving even though the GDP is growing ; the nutritional situation is not going hand in hand.

She then asked - What is the reason that we are not able to address the problem and create any kind of impact?

The first reason she provided was that India's malnutrition is trapped and locked in an inter generational cycle which connects a malnourished anemic mother who has probably married early, has had repeated pregnancies and had low weight babies because of several factors which results to an adolescent girl who is stunted and malnourished and the same cycle of early marriage, anemic mother giving birth to yet another low weight birth baby continues. 30% of babies born in India are born under weight. She stressed that this cycle is to be broken and how to break this cycle is something that all of us have to put our ideas together and this forum will provide lot of contribution in that respect.

The other reason she gave on why we are not able to improve our nutritional status is because none of our policies publicly acknowledge that 30 % of our population is getting less than 70% of the calories required. But if one takes this figure and converts into actual people suffering from calories, protein deficit in India would be staggering. The impact of this economically is that the amount of energy required for any kind of work is very limited.

She further elaborated on some of the challenges which will be addressed at the planning forum where one of the primary task for the planning forum members is to how do we adapt the program to the large numbers that we have to address. Who are going to be the target groups? How is the system going to be implemented? She emphasized that the implementation has to be at the grassroots where 70% of the population live in rural areas. How one percolates down to the rural areas is something that needs to be thought about? How does one preempt misuse and how does one address unfulfilled expectations. If a new set of taste and a new set of demands would definitely develop and if the system or the program after creating that is not able to deliver it then what will be the repercussions of that.

She highlighted that the adaptation process is something which will signal the success of IFBN. She notes the opportunities which are enormous in IFBN is how do we salvage the waste of fruits and vegetables and perhaps other things at the primary level. It would be very logical to start in some manner from there and provide innovative primary processing facilities many of which exists for preservation and processing of such primary fruit and vegetables and it should be consumed by people who are suffering from hidden hunger or from real hunger. Also, to ensure that the consumption of these salvage / donated foods by the inter generational links. She said that IFBN could be piloted in rural areas or in urban areas and see what sort of difference that we can make for reducing malnutrition and hidden hunger.

***Chris Rebstock, Vice President – Global Food Banking Network*** here spoke about operations of Food Banking – **How Food Banking Works?**

He got down to some of the mechanics where he explained about the core functionality of Food Bank that is to establish a community asset that will receive donations of food and grocery products from the private sector, government, individuals through food drives at schools or at corporate offices. IFBN will inspect and do what ever processing is necessary to make sure that it is safe and good for distribution and then will move it out into communities to get it in the hands of the people that need it. It will be done primarily through NGOs and CBOs running programs already.

He highlighted that the food bank is only successful only when the community owns it. He said that it is not difficult to achieve as food bank does engage people from all different sectors of the society. The nature of what food bank does and the way it does puts in a position to bring people around the table that might not otherwise sit with each other.

He cited a quick example that multinational companies, domestic, local or regional companies within the country are all potential donors and the food bank responsibility is to make contact with anybody who touches food in their community at the national level all the way down to the local community level. So working through national organisations, through the IFBN and working through the individual food bank in the community and reaching out to everybody at a manufacturing level at the distribution level and at a retail level and identifying the kind of products in the supply chain that can be available and identifying mechanism to get that available products into the food bank. He emphasized that whether the food bank is providing the logistics support or the donor is providing the logistics support or a third party is providing the logistics support all these details needs to be worked out with a core integration of technology.

### **How do we put the food bank together?**

He noted that the Planning Forum launched will focus in building national networks throughout India. Various communities around the country have already started the process of creating similar kinds of forum at the local level to begin to think through the design of a food bank.

He said that the goal behind the forum is inclusion and anybody who has an interest in being part of the development of the system and particularly having an expertise that can be brought to the system will be sitting on the table. He also further mentioned that all different sectors of society are represented in this process and therefore the Planning Forum will be looking at all different functional aspects of the operation of food banks' – operations, agency services, communication, resource development, finance & administration, external partnership, government relations etc all of the things that we need in operating a successful business because food bank is a business and it is just conceived and not for profit.

He then highlighted that the Planning Forum next step is to get into initial meetings, establish and to integrate with the secretariat – Aidmatrix on how the food bank system will look like, to identify the resource base, the training needs and move towards ultimately rolling out , in cooperating the national organizations and first several local communities.

### ***Munishwar Vasudev – Business Head, ADANI GROUP***

Munishwar Vasudev started his presentation on how Food Corporation was born stating that procurement was made as a state subject like Punjab, Haryana and northern states had excess food grain production beyond their consumption this was allowed to be distributed in the area where food grain wasn't there. Government advocated that FCI to be a nodal agency to make sure that food buffer is maintained for the food security. He highlighted that India as a whole became self dependent on food grain production.

He then emphasized that sensibility for work, storage and handling and transportation is where Adani Group came in. He noted that that the food grain farm production goes to its cycling motion. For three years, there is a surplus and for 1 year the production is average and the next year a drought. That average consumption is not conserved or preserved properly. While addressing the cycle, he raised the question on why can't we have a strategic preserve that could preserve for longer years.

He then concluded his presentation committing that Adani would be more than happy to contribute to IFBN at the state level & national level.

After Adani's presentation we had ***Leena Joseph, DGM of Naandi Foundation*** talking about Mid Day Meal Program and few other feeding program. She shared a very good thought with all that **“Feeding and giving grain should come from the heart”**.

She shared the incident on how Naandi Foundation took up the mid day meal program when they came to know that out of 10 school children who came from the same village where 5 of them came hungry to school due to non availability of food. Also, highlighted that 2,20,000 children in Hyderabad were to be fed when the government had approached them.

She emphasized on the point that the main vision of Naandi Foundation is to make a hunger free country adding that they provide one hot cooked meal to every child who comes to government and government aided school. Naandi Foundation is already feeding over a million children across the country.

Apart from the government aid, she added that Naandi foundation adds value to the food banks which are serving these children where they started introducing dal & soya product which is fortified with zinc, iron and folic acid.

She then shared another uniqueness of Naandi Foundation, where apart from urban areas on how they really work in the rural and tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and few other states.

She then concluded her thoughts expressing that Naandi Foundation is ready to partner with Food Banks in India and we should all start thinking of giving food to the have not's and then the world will become a hunger free place.

**Dr. Murali – Programme Officer, World Food Programme** gave the presentation of the food security session where he shared the concept of Grain Bank – The revival of old traditions.

He noted that grain bank is no new idea as rural communities have been sharing their grain products in many rural parts of India. He shared that Grain Bank is primarily at a village level and they loan the grain to the people who need and then this is recovered later when they can repay as per their capacities. These have really worked during food shortages or wherever malnutrition is a major problem. He then spoke about how way back in 1996/97 government had initiated such systems as this was thought to be a very good system which was thought to be a very good alternative of a public distribution system. Soon it was realized that there were lots of inadequacies in the system because it lacked community participation, the storage facilities were not proper, the training was not proper, monitoring and disaster preparedness among the communities to hold this and distribute was also not adequate as learnings of earlier food programs in India.

Therefore, the program started by the government didn't take off and these were implemented through tribal cooperation marketing federation and it was operational in 13 states. He then said that down the line there was a realization that they had to move ahead to revive the system and the revised scheme of grain bank was to focus in drought prone, tribal dominated and hilly regions. This was later extended to non tribal areas as many people were under below poverty line.

He further elaborated that the components of grain bank were cash & food, food comes from the ministry as one time and cash will be given by the government to the executive committee at the village level for various things like storage, rental, training, transportation, monitoring, administration, communication etc.

He then highlighted the role of World Food Program primarily involved in capacity building of the communities in book keeping, institutional management and building awareness among the community. Also to enhance the efficiency of the management of grain bank for the benefit of the community. He also notes that one of the major advantage of grain bank is that they are highly decentralized system and therefore issue of access can be easily solved if this institution is strengthened.

Before he concluded his experience sharing on grain bank he stressed upon the thoughts he had on the question raised by one of the participant - What is the impact of food, hunger and nutritional needs on climate Change? He said that Grain banks are the best option for climate change also primarily because they work as a decentralized warehouses where the spoilage is much less than bigger warehousing system. Even the transportation cost to various places bringing to a centralised system and getting it back will be reduced to a drastic extend.

The session was concluded with Veena Rao emphasizing once again on how the schemes could be up scaled and also highlighting that anything given by way of food cannot be given by way of loan or to be paid for.

## **Session 2 :- Opportunities in Development Market Place**

**Hemanth Kumar – Vice President, CSO Partners**, highlighted the Partnership of Aidmatrix & CSO Partners for Corporate Disaster Resource Network, CDRN (<http://www.cdrn.org.in>) Initiative which provides a platform for Corporates to donate and showcase their products which are required at times of disaster for timely and effective relief.

Following the introduction on the partnership, he started his presentation on **NGO Marketplace** which is an interactive, dynamic and de mediated website, which will be launched in Jan 2010.

Some of the Key Features he highlighted were:

- A. Portal that allows to network with NGOs, Corporate Bodies, Individuals, Researchers, Policy Makers and other stakeholders, to spread awareness of work.
- B. Corporate bodies, through the profile can showcase Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives to address large audiences. They can look for NGOs for partnership using keywords and help one understand more about the quality of NGOs based on the public rating.
- C. This feature will also help corporates to publicize about details of projects for which they seek partnership with NGOs in the RFP section and it has never been easier to get the right NGOs.
- D. The product section will provide the convenient way for sourcing products responsibly and searchable by keywords and categories.
- E. Library section will allow uploading the organisations sustainability report and getting access to other corporates' report and share knowledge, accessing good practices, case studies etc.
- F. For NGOs a free web profile will be provided through which NGOs can share information of organisations. It will allow the organizations to market products and get interactive on the products for sale. Organisations' can publicize appeals like critical appeals at time of disaster and can seek support for needs
- G. Organisations can share knowledge through the library section.
- H. Opportunities section will allow the organization to advertise for human resources needs and can proactively source staff/volunteers by searching through 'individual' profiles
- I. Also allows the organization to keep abreast with the CSR opportunities and track the day to day interaction with partners.

He concluded his NGO Marketplace presentation citing the advantages:

- The power to reach out to millions of persons
- Increase the ease in collaboration
- Spread awareness about the cause you support

- Disseminate information about your organization's work

**Participating Organisations :**

National Disaster Management Authority (GOI), Global Food Banking Network, Aidmatrix Foundation, The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, CAPART, Adani Group, Naandi Foundation, World Food Programme, CSO Partners, Ernst & Young, Udyama, Hyacinth Products, Indian Council of Medical Research, Steria, Solae Company India Pvt Ltd, AIFPA, Green Hotel India, Adharshila Foundation, Adharshila Foundation, Humana People to People India, Monsanto India, HIMFED, Delhi Asangathit Nirman Mazdoor Union (INTUC/BWI), Tai Industries Limited, Manthan Foods Pvt. Ltd, Jindal Stainless Limited, Frontier Agro Industries Pvt. Ltd., Creed Agro Jain Consultants, Aquatabs, Food Processing Technology Consultancy, Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), Hira Lal Panna Lal, Indian Society of Hospital Waste Management (ISHWM), Indian Society of Hospital Waste Management (ISHWM), VIRTUOSO, Rural Education & Welfare Society, M.R.GROVER & ASSOCIATES, SLARTC, Catholic Relief Services, IGSSS, Amarchand Mangaldas, Rainbow overseas, ICRIER -Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, World Vision India, Sewa Sankalp Evam Vikash Samiti, AICPMIP, Unnati Sansthan, Images Multimedia Pvt Ltd, ECHO, AFPRO, ICRISAT, Lakshmi Nirmal Pratishthan, Sewabharti, Threes Foods Pvt. Ltd., Angaja Foundation, Maharaja Papad, Indian National Building Construction Forest & Wood Workers Federation (INBCWF), CBN Multimedia Pvt Ltd / Operation Blessings India, CABI .South Asia India, Ekgaon, Tass Enterprises, Food & Agri Consulting Services, GE, Mitra Foundation, Home Science College and Research Institute, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University - Madurai, Canadian High Commission, Amrit Foods, AVON Bakers & Confectioners, National Research Centre for Grapes, Britannia, Second International See India, Syndicated Journalist, Freelancer, Adani Agrilogistics, UNICEF, Aircel Limited, Images Multimedia, CRY, Gram Seva Trust, Steel Authority of India, CSO Partners, Dhampure Speciality Sugar Limited, Cargill, AIFPA, Institute of Rural Research and Development, Saffron Media Pvt Ltd, Welt Hunger Life Media Workshop, Wheels Marketing Automotive Pvt Ltd, Governance Now, Kalatmaik Handicrafts, Self Help Group Foundation, Harmaony, The Magazine, Enviro Consultants, Institute of Marketing & Management, Kriti Mariental India Pvt. Ltd., Qaumi Patrika

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