

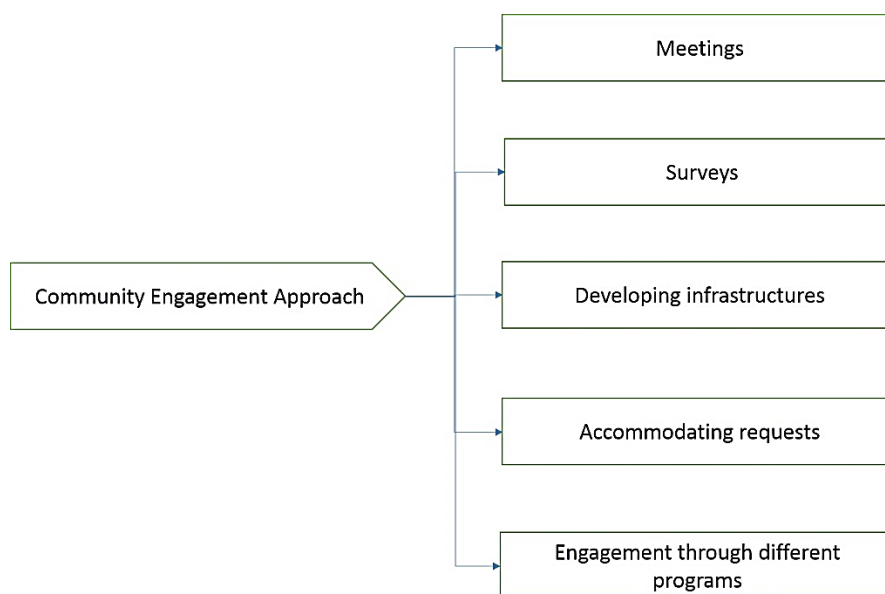
# Community Engagement and Development: Improving lifestyle

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Primitive societies flourished through collective effort and bartering, which was based on a simple “give-and-take” mechanism. Then for generations, focus was on the individual drivers of success: passion, hard work, talent, and luck. But in today’s dramatically reconfigured world, things have come to the point where success is increasingly dependent on how we interact with others. Community engagement is important because it teaches people of all ages and backgrounds compassion and understanding. The advantages of community engagement are that there are opportunities to improve and leave one’s mark on the local and the global community. The community is the best place where one’s passion can be advocated through different activities.

Random donations or activities have been futile while trying to reach out to the people living within the community. To make efforts more sustainable between the company and the community, DBL Group deployed a strategic list of programs for the socio-economic betterment of the community people. All these are addressed under the “Community” Pillar of DBL’s Sustainability Model: other pillars include People, Process, Product, and Environment. DBL’s operations are currently in the Kashimpur and Mawna regions of Gazipur, Bangladesh.

A quick overview of DBL’s community engagement approach is displayed below:



## Initiatives

### Knowledge Exchange Programs

“Knowledge not shared is knowledge wasted.”

DBL believes in sharing the accumulated knowledge and spreading the best practices we have with others. In collaboration with CARE, Community Knowledge Exchange Programs have been held in Kashimpur. These programs focus on empowering women through financial literacy such as family budget, savings, mobile banking, etc. and personal hygiene for women including the use of sanitary napkins and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). In the first two phases, more than 60 participants took part, 50% of whom were women.



### Health Programs

“A healthy worker is a happy worker and a healthy community is a happy community.”

Access to proper health care facilities is still lacking in areas like Kashimpur. For this reason, DBL inaugurated a Community Health Development Program on 30 May 2016. Children, women, men, and the elderly of the community visited to take the free treatment. More than 50 people received free prescriptions.





During the program, a woman from the community shared that her two-year old child had problems as she could not move or talk properly. Both were invited on 2 June 2016 to DBL's facilities to meet with a team from the Centre of Rehabilitation for the Paralyzed (CRP). CRP recognized that the child had a problem of Cerebral Palsy. CRP asked the mother to take her child to their Savar facility. The child is currently under treatment.

## Education

As part of endorsing the need for quality education in Bangladesh, DBL Group has been involved with multiple initiatives. A four-storied building was constructed by DBL for Hatimara School and College in Kashimpur. Audio-visual systems were installed to equip the college auditorium



with latest classroom facilities. The building can accommodate about 2,600 students. To ensure further development, Mr. Abdul Wahed, Chairman of DBL Group, took the responsibility as Chairman of the institution. DBL is focused on creating a computer lab to cater to the needs of proper IT education.

Sardagonj Government Primary School stated during a discussion with a DBL community officer that with the upcoming board examinations, the school did not have the logistics to support all its students. This school is a regional exam centre in the local ward. DBL provided benches for 300 students. A renovation of an existing building in the school has also been done to further facilitate the students.

## **Mini Fire Brigade**

The Mini Fire Brigade is DBL Group's first public-private partnership, which is in collaboration with GIZ (through the German Cooperation) and the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (BFSCD). The objective of the Mini Fire Brigade rapid response and risk reduction unit is to prevent fire in the industrial buildings around Kashimpur, Gazipur area. The unit is located outside the Jinnat Complex of DBL Group which will also serve other factories in the Kashimpur-Konabari industrial cluster. The facility will be staffed 24 hours a day with a target to respond within the first critical 10-15 minutes to both industrial fire and building collapse.

## **Upcoming initiatives**

### **Community Clinic**

In partnership with Marie Stopes Bangladesh, a Referral Clinic will be established in Kashimpur to support the provision of healthcare services responsive to individual and the community people.

### **Early Childhood Development**

In partnership with UNICEF, an Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Community Day Care Centre will be set up in Kashimpur.

## Linking with the SDGs

DBL's initiatives in community development have contributed to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and these include:



Access to affordable healthcare services

Institutional infrastructure support



Public private partnership



## Conclusion

To ensure a steady flow of information, DBL Group assigned a dedicated team to look after the local community. This initiative translated into actions taken by the company for community engagement and development in terms of economy, education, better living conditions, and so on: before the community people even asked for it. It is taken as “responsibility” rather than philanthropy; as the quote goes: “If you think that you can do good for someone, it becomes your responsibility”. And as Nelson Mandela stated:

***“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination”***