



Annual SDG Report

A REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY'S INITIATIVES TO FOSTER SUSTAINABILITY

Office of Sustainability, Ashoka University





Prof. Somak Raychaudhury

Vice-Chancellor Professor of Physics, Ashoka University

A Note from the Vice-Chancellor

The United Nations has established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are a set of 17 global objectives to address critical issues such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. These goals provide a universal framework for achieving a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

At Ashoka University, we are fully committed to achieving these goals and our commitment is reflected in our efforts to integrate the principles of the SDGs into every aspect of our teaching, research, operations, and community engagement. We drive forward-thinking solutions through research, from advancing climate science to exploring clean energy technologies and digital health partnerships.

The academic programmes at our institution, particularly those in Environmental Studies and various fields within the Humanities and Social Sciences, are primarily designed to educate students in addressing significant global challenges such as climate change and environmental justice.

Ashoka's partnerships, such as the Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates (CMGGA) program and city knowledge clusters in India, play a key role in advancing the SDGs. Our students too have been instrumental in this progress. Through student-led Livegreen@Ashoka sustainability initiatives, our university encourages responsible consumption, climate action, and SDG awareness across various societies, showcasing its commitment to building a sustainable future.

It is my pleasure and pride to present this year's annual SDG report, highlighting the many ways in which Ashoka University has made a meaningful impact.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to our colleagues, staff, and students for their unwavering commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and fostering positive change towards a more sustainable world.



NO Poverty



END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE



Building Pathways to Financial Independence for Marginalized Communities



Partnerships

The partnership between the Spread Smile Foundation (SSF) and the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE) is dedicated to empowering underprivileged communities and advancing financial independence. Founded by Nitin Jain, a Young India Fellow at Ashoka, SSF collaborates with the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE) to uplift marginalized communities through access to healthcare, skills training, and education, employment. Flagship projects like Project Vidyafal, which focuses on informal education, and Project Kaushal Vikas, which emphasizes skills training, aim to create sustainable income opportunities for women and children. The CfE supports SSF in promoting products made by these communities, providing market access through university-organized Haats, which enhances their economic resilience. Ashoka's mentorship and strategic guidance have further strengthened SSF's impact, enabling these communities to achieve financial independence and economic resilience.

Economics Discussion Paper Series



Research

Biswajit Banerjee, Professor of Economics, in his economics discussion paper "Life Satisfaction and Inequality in Slovakia: The Role of Income, Consumption and Wealth" analyzes the influence of self-centered inequality and community-centered inequality measures on subjective well-being (SWB). The evidence indicates that both types of inequalities are important considerations for SWB. The paper concludes that the absolute levels of income, consumption and wealth all have a significant positive effect that remains robust even after the inclusion of self-centered and community-centered inequalities in the regression equations.

Similarly, Bipasha Maity, Assistant Professor of Economics, in her discussion paper "Socio-Economic Intra-Household Identity Distribution of and Consumption in India: A Structural Approach", used a collective household model and a new structural estimation methodology. They estimated the intrahousehold resource shares of individual members in both rural and urban India and found that men's and children's per-capita intra-household resource shares are higher in urban compared to rural areas, while the opposite is true for women.

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Women's Economic Independence through Energy Entrepreneurship



Partnerships

Ashoka Centre for People-Centric Energy Transition (ACPET), is advancing efforts to end poverty by fostering financially sustainable enterprises in local communities. A notable initiative is the *Energy* Transition Entrepreneurship Program for Women, developed in collaboration with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). This program includes a Climate School that equips informal sector women workers with skills in energy transition entrepreneurship. Through this initiative, 72 young women entrepreneurs from Gujarat and Rajasthan receive specialized training, enabling them to create climate-resilient businesses that support their financial independence. ACPET's ongoing mentorship further assists these women in developing their startup ideas, providing the resources needed for longterm success and economic self-sufficiency.

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Graduate Course: Economics of Agricultural Transformation



A course on "Economics of Agricultural Transformation" looks at economic development through the lens of food and agriculture. It offers a powerful framework for understanding economic development outcomes.



2 ZERO HUNGER

END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION, AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



Exploring Sustainability in Agri-Food Systems



The course "Agri-Food Systems and Sustainability", taught by Anita Pinheiro, Visiting Faculty in Environmental Studies, delves into the sustainability challenges of global agri-food systems. Using case studies from both the Global South and Global North, students critically examine key topics such as the Green Revolution, bio-nanotechnologies, fisheries, and dietary transitions toward plant-based proteins. The course emphasizes the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of these issues, aligning them with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Enhancing Breastfeeding Practices Through Behavioural Science



"The Strengthening Adherence to Early Initiation of Breastfeeding and Exclusive Breastfeeding" project focuses on improving infant nutrition and health in rural districts of Uttar Pradesh by enhancing breastfeeding practices. Led by CSBC, the initiative uses behavioral science to identify barriers, cultural norms, and household dynamics that influence breastfeeding behaviors. The research highlights the importance of transforming Early Initiation of Breastfeeding (EIBF) into a well-supported, intentional practice. In partnership with government stakeholders, CSBC is designing, implementing, and evaluating tailored interventions to improve community health outcomes.

Social Identity and Childhood Stunting in India



Research

In her paper, "Stunting and Social Identity: Revisiting the India–Africa Comparison" Ashwini Deshpande, Professor of Economics, examines why childhood stunting rates are unexpectedly higher in wealthier India than in Sub-Saharan Africa—a phenomenon termed the "Indian Enigma." Her analysis brings a new perspective by exploring how social identity contributes to this issue, revealing stark disparities in stunting rates among children from different social groups in India. Notably, 27% of upper-caste Hindu children experience stunting, compared to 40% among marginalized scheduled castes and tribes, underscoring the critical impact of social inequities on childhood nutrition and health outcomes.

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Political Ecology of Food

Teaching

A course taught by Amita Baviskar, Dean, Faculty and Professor of Environmental Studies and Sociology and Anthropology, delves into the political ecology of food, examining its journey from farm to plate and its cultural significance. It explores the connections between land-based resource well-being and human and non-human life. Through this course, students gain insight into evolving agrarian systems and the complex interplay between food access and social inequalities. The course addresses issues of identity, taste, health, and ecological impact through the lens of food.

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Addressing Food Security and Price Volatility



Akshi Chawla, Director of the Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA), in her article "Tur-nomics: Prices of India's favourite dal heat up" writes that Tur (Arhar) dal, a staple in Indian households, has seen prices surge recently, especially in southern regions. Unseasonal rains and crop disease have led to significant supply shortages, prompting the Indian government to increase imports and release buffer domestic production With stocks. heavily concentrated in key states like Maharashtra and Karnataka, weather disruptions have worsened the situation. In response, the Indian government has adopted measures including releasing buffer stocks, easing import restrictions, and imposing stock limits to stabilize prices and ensure availability. This research underscores the importance of understanding agricultural supply chains and climate impacts to address food supply challenges, enhance resilience, and promote sustainable agricultural practices

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Seed Stories for Sustainable Urban-Rural Food Systems



Dr. Aniket Aga's documentary "Seed Stories" delves into the Niyamgiri mountains in Odisha, where Dr. Debal Deb and his team work to conserve over a thousand rare rice varieties. Through a 45-minute exploration, the film sheds light on the risks posed by monoculture practices, genetically modified crops, and agrochemicals, which threaten biodiversity and the sustainable practices of Indigenous communities. Blending ethnography with environmental journalism, Seed Stories engages deeply with issues of food security, ecological integrity, and community empowerment. By screening the documentary in regional languages, the project aims to foster awareness and resilience among farming communities, ultimately encouraging sustainable agricultural and urban food systems that honour biodiversity and socioeconomic justice.

Exploring Child Neurodevelopment and Nutrition:



Project COINCIDE, led by Professor Poornima Prabhakaran, Director of the Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART) at the Trivedi School of Biosciences, and funded by the DBT India Alliance Team Science Grant, addresses challenges of critical the suboptimal neurodevelopment and poor mental health in India through a team science approach. It will generate evidence on the effects of multiple co-occurring exposures on neurodevelopment and child mental health beyond the first 1000 days. This research will explore how nutrition, psychosocial factors, and environmental exposures influence cognitive and mental health outcomes from early childhood through adolescence. By studying diverse populations in rural North and urban South India, the project uncovers links between childhood conditions and mental health disorders, providing critical evidence to inform targeted interventions. The project will contribute to a comprehensive framework for improving nutrition and fostering optimal developmental outcomes across childhood stages.

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Prof. Poornima Prabhakaran, Director **Centre for Health Analytics Research** and Trends (CHART), **Trivedi School of Biosciences**

The Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends at the Trivedi School of Biosciences has conducted pioneering research on topical issues of relevance in India including air pollution and heat and impacts on population health. Its multidisciplinary team conducts large epidemiological studies across India. A strategic focus on nutritional and socio - environmental determinants during early childhood has the potential to influence child growth, mental health and cognitive development. Project COINCIDE aims to investigate this in children across two study cities.







ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES



Ashoka Centre for Well-Being



The ACWB is a university centre that offers counselling and psychological support to students, staff, and faculty at Ashoka. Focusing on preventive, clinical, and promotional factors, it seeks to combat the onset of mental health problems and advance informed behaviour change. The centre serves as a resource to offer its expertise to various other institutions - Bar and Bench, Youth for Sustainability India and National Progressive School Council to name a few. ACWB through its webinars, workshops and training serves as a resource to other departments of the University such as the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), Centre For Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP), Admissions Team, Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates Programme (CMGGA), Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality (CSGS) and Office of Outreach.

Click to Visit ACWB's Website \longrightarrow



Advancing Population Health Research at CHART



The Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART) builds a robust evidence-based repository on population health issues through interdisciplinary research. Its multi- disciplinary team includes public health experts, epidemiologists, biostatisticians, social scientists, and specialists in environmental epidemiology, geospatial analysis, health economics, and nutrition. CHART's current large-scale research studies address air pollution, nutrition, psychosocial factors, and climate change, focusing on their impacts on health across ages. Using AI-based modeling, CHART develops exposure metrics and dashboards for future research. The center also supports policy development for national and regional governments, promotes capacity-building in research and advocacy, and collaborates internationally to provide training for early and mid-career researchers, fostering the next generation of scientists.



Prof. Anurag Agrawal, Head-Koita Center for Digital Health, **Dean-BioSciences and Health Research**, **Trivedi School of Biosciences**

In its very first year, KCDH-A has developed a reputation for interdisciplinary understanding and application of digital technologies for better health. From history to data science, KCDH-A educational courses try to provide a broad based understanding of where we are and the path to where we want to go. It is encouraging to see successes in attracting extramural funding for Health-AI by our young team."



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Digital Transformation of Health Care



Partnerships

The Koita Centre for Digital Health at Ashoka (KCDH-A) is advancing the field of digital health through pioneering research and education aimed at creating a new generation of digital health leaders and innovators. With a unique interdisciplinary approach, KCDH-A's programs explore forward-looking technologies like digital twins and the broader digital transformation of healthcare. In line with this mission, KCDH-A collaborates globally, notably through initiatives like the Digital Transformations for Health Lab (DTH-Lab). DTH-Lab, co-led by Professor Anurag Agrawal and Professor Ilona Kickbusch, was established in 2023 to implement recommendations from The Lancet and Financial Times Commission on Governing Health Futures 2030 and focuses on value-based, digital-first health systems to address digital health inequities, youth-centered healthcare models, and public trust in health data.

KCDH-A with partnership with Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine (JHUSOM) in Baltimore, enables small breakthrough grants, cofunded to support joint research between Ashoka faculty members, including Dr. Rintu Kutum and Professor Debayan Gupta, alongside Johns Hopkins researchers. This initiative fuels pioneering research to tackle complex health challenges, exploring digital health innovations such as digital twins and new approaches to health equity.

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Graduate Course: Anthropology of Mental Health

Teaching

A course on "Anthropology of Mental Health" taught by Bhrigupati Singh, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sociology. The course familiarises students with current debates and older and newer literature in the anthropology of mental health, through which one learns ways of thinking about subjectivity, selfhood, the history and emergence of particular diagnostic categories, the cultural valences of scientific categories and their modes of translation into new contexts. Students also engaged in other ways of understanding such experiences, for instance through forms of religion, from the vantage point of families and institutions, and the varied ways in which suffering and healing are experienced in the contemporary world.

Advanced Course on Health Economics



Teaching

An advanced "Health Economics" course, taught by Dasgupta, Associate Professor of Aparajita Economics, delves into key topics and recent research, covering health capital, the link between health and economic development, demographic change, health behaviors, and healthcare market structures. The course also addresses current policy debates, enhancing students' skills in econometric techniques and causal inference research designs.

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Is India Going Through an Opioid **Epidemic?**



In one of his articles, Bhrigupati Singh, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, asks: "Is India going through an opioid epidemic?" High opioidrelated mortality rates are reported in many parts of the world including Canada, the UK, Australia and Mexico. Does this epidemic extend beyond American shores? This article has attempted to outline both macro and micro perspectives through an overview drawn from quantitative and qualitative work undertaken on how the opioid epidemic in India is unfolding across regions, genders, and within particular low-income urban neighbourhoods in Delhi. It also highlights the need for appropriate and accessible care including outpatient treatment facilities that need to be urgently expanded.

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Promoting Health and Inclusion Through Sports



Sports and exercise at Ashoka University are designed to create a healthy, balanced, and holistic life for our students. Special Olympics Bharat -Ashoka Chapter (SOBAC) aims to foster inclusivity by engaging individuals with intellectual disabilities in sports and recreational activities. It operates under the Special Olympic Bharat Haryana Chapter, promoting awareness and creating an inclusive sports environment.



Building Inclusive Health Coverage for a Digital Era



Research

Professor Anurag Agrawal, leading the Koita Center for Digital Health and serving as Dean of BioSciences and Health Research at the Trivedi School of Biosciences, has been at the forefront of rethinking how health coverage aligns with rapid digital advancements. In his publication, "Making Digital Transformations Work for Health: Introducing a New Consortium to Take Forward Recommendations from the Lancet and Financial Times Commission", Professor Agrawal explores how digital innovations can significantly improve health outcomes worldwide. However, he stresses that this potential can only be fully realized with a health system approach that anticipates the evolving expectations of today's digitally connected societies. This paper builds on the findings of the Governing Health Futures 2030: Growing Up in a Digital World report by The Lancet and Financial Times Commission. The paper proposes establishing a new consortium to address existing gaps, promoting a health coverage model that is inclusive, future-ready, and designed to meet the needs of diverse, digitally connected communities.

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Green chemistry focused towards energy efficiency and waste reduction



Vidya Avasare, Professor of Chemistry, introduces a sustainable and selective method for C-H alkylation and arylation of aryl ketones and non-directed arenes, offering an eco-friendly alternative to conventional Friedel-Crafts alkylation and C-C crosscoupling reactions. This innovative approach operates under mild conditions, achieving significant reductions in energy usage and waste generation and minimising metal impurities in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs). This advancement supports sustainable chemical manufacturing with broad industrial application potential. Relevant patents for this work have been filed under the Indian Patent and PCT applications.

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Advancing Pancreatic Cancer Research for Enhanced Patient Well-being



Aryya Ghosh, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, introduces an innovative network-based approach to uncover key regulatory genes in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma (PDAC), a highly aggressive cancer with few effective treatment options. Leveraging RNA-seq data and the Girvan Newman algorithm, this study maps complex protein interactions and identifies 33 pivotal gene regulators linked to PDAC progression. By targeting novel therapeutic pathways and early biomarkers, this research offers promising avenues to improve patient outcomes and advance health benefits in cancer care. Additional analyses of gene-drug interactions and transcription factors reveal critical insights into PDAC biology, highlighting new opportunities for impactful treatments that contribute to patient well-being and extended survival.

NIROGI Haryana initiative and **SEHAT program**



Partnerships

Haryana initiative, aimed at early NIROGI identification and treatment of non- communicable diseases in the Antyodaya population significantly increased screening rates, impacting 400,000 citizens. The CMGGA team began working on the NIROGI Haryana scheme in March 2023, playing a crucial role in its swift and effective implementation which ensured that more beneficiaries received timely health check-ups, enabling early detection and prevention of potential health issues.

Through the SEHAT program, CMGGAs ensured 100% screening of students in grades 1-12 for several conditions by facilitating regular, data-backed reviews.

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Chandni Wadhwani, **Project Head, Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates (CMGGA)**

"The CMGGA programme has emerged as a vital catalyst improving service delivery and transforming governance in Haryana over the past eight years. Since its inception, the programme has supported 20+ major government initiatives and driven 50+ pilot projects in Haryana across the domains of Education, Health, Livelihood, Service Delivery and beyond. CMGGA is a success story of young professionals who are passionate change-makers. By enabling socially-minded individuals to create impact at scale, the program has been central to Ashoka University's commitment to public service and its idea of giving back to society."

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Anemia Mukt Haryana



In an attempt to reduce the incidence of anemia by three percentage points, CMGGA Associates ensured 100% procurement of Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) tapes (2.5 lakh tapes in 3 weeks) in 22 districts of Haryana to help with the early identification of malnourishment in children. They also facilitated a 100% audit of Growth Monitoring Devices (GMDs) to help in the efficient procurement of GMDs for all Anganwadi centres. A baseline survey was conducted by PGIMS-Rohtak in 22 blocks covering 200+ Anganwadi centres in Haryana. Findings from the survey provide a true picture of malnutrition in Haryana and helps in designing targeted solutions.

Drivers of C-Section Deliveries



Partnerships

The Centre for Social and Behaviour Change (CSBC) conducted a detailed analysis of the drivers behind C-section deliveries in India to guide the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in developing targeted social and behaviour change communication materials. By reviewing maternal health policies, global guidelines, and relevant literature. CSBC identified complex behavioral factors influencing healthcare professionals, pregnant women, and caregivers. The findings led to a recommendation for a holistic approach to improving maternal and childbirth outcomes, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all.

Understanding how narrative persuasion can transform health behaviors



Partnerships

Ashoka Centre for Well-Being's "Mental Health for High Schoolers" initiative aims to empower adolescents during the crucial developmental phase of every child where they face numerous external pressures and internal challenges. ACWB partnered with Saraswati Senior Secondary School in Asawarpur Village, Sonipat and conducted workshops for 9th-12th grade students. Focusing on attention, focus, and confidence, these workshops aim to equip students with essential skills for their overall development, enhancing academic performance and personal growth. Similarly, another initiative, "Gatekeeper Program: First Responder Training in Mental Health Concerns", is designed to offer sensitivity training to the beneficiaries, including various student groups, resident assistants, staff, wardens, and faculty, who are first responders in mental health crises.





ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL



Making Academics at Ashoka Inclusive for Students with Diverse Needs



The Office of Learning Support (OLS) provides tailored support for students with disabilities, including visual and hearing impairments, autism, and cerebral palsy, as well as for those facing academic challenges. OLS creates individualized learning plans, offers academic accommodations, and collaborates with faculty to foster inclusive classrooms. Accessible content and STEM courses are prioritized, along with services like note-taking, exam support, and room modifications. OLS also aids students with academic difficulties through strategies for time management, prioritization, and academic planning.

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College Readiness Programme



The Office of Learning Support (OLS) hosted two successful editions of its flagship College Readiness Programme for high school students with disabilities, their families, and professionals. Each three-day virtual session provided essential information to support informed decisions about higher education and fostered inclusion. The program built a community for shared learning, creating a safe space to exchange resources. It grew into a far-reaching initiative, promoting inclusion in higher education beyond the Ashoka ecosystem.

Making Digital & Physical **Infrastructure at Ashoka** Accessible



Campus

The Office of Learning Support (OLS) at Ashoka University serves as a central hub for accessibility, collaborating with operations and other teams to make campus spaces inclusive, including initiatives like accessible shuttles. OLS raises awareness through events and workshops such as Dyslexia Awareness Month and Sign Language sessions, while also producing newsletters like the Neurodiversity Initiative. It provides cutting-edge assistive technology, like the PIAF (Pictures in a Flash) device and the upcoming Graphiti display, to support academic independence for students with diverse needs. Additionally, OLS is enhancing campus infrastructure with Braille signages and app-based indoor navigation for improved accessibility.

Student Support Services \longrightarrow

Awareness Campaigns \longrightarrow





Reena Gupta Director, Office of Learning Support

It's a well-known fact that a community thrives on education; and if it includes its every member, the progress is manifold. This is the ethos we follow at the Office of Learning Support by promoting inclusivity, equity, and accessibility for students with disabilities at Ashoka campus. The launch of this office in 2016 had challenged the status quo in higher education back then by setting up a dedicated office for the inclusion of students with disabilities including learning disabilities, neurodevelopmental profiles, and physical and sensory disabilities. Various offices, student body, and faculty community at Ashoka play a significant role in understanding and ensuring accessibility to these students, especially in the areas of campus infrastructure, accessible academic curriculum, and belongingness in residence life.

Our goal is to make learning support available to every Ashoka student with a tailored approach towards their academic strengths and areas of challenge. In the process, we encourage students to make best use of the available campus resources, define and (if needed) redefine their purpose, and strengthen their uniqueness that brings them to Ashoka.

The Future of Disability Inclusion in Higher Education: Conclave 2023



Office of Learning Support hosted a conclave, "The Future of Disability Inclusion in Higher Education", to promote inclusivity and empower students with disabilities. Bringing together government officials, NGOs, educators, and advocates, the event explored challenges and opportunities for inclusive education. Aligned with the National Education Policy, it developed strategies for more inclusive campuses and initiated plans for ongoing dialogues and a future white paper submission.

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Digital course on Academic Integrity and Ethics



Centre for Writing and Communication (CWC) launched a digital course on plagiarism and an instructive teaching guide, addressing the challenges of academic integrity in digital learning. The course equips students with tools to identify plagiarism and emphasizes critical evaluation for originality, adapting to the digital landscape's demands. CWC's document for Teaching Assistants and Fellows provides strategies for supporting students with English language needs, fostering environments through accessible inclusive materials and active participation.

Innovative Pedagogies for Lifelong Impact



Teaching

The Young India Fellowship (YIF) emphasizes experiential learning to drive sustainable change and enhance academic experiences. With the Class of 2023, the fellowship reinvigorated real-world projects, partnering with organizations such as Pratham and the Delhi Dialogue Commission to address pressing societal issues. Initiatives included joint strategy meetings, fostering collaboration among fellows and supervisors, and training in essential skills. As YIF prepares for the next academic year, it aims to deepen immersive experiences, ensuring fellows cultivate empathy and practical understanding of the world they seek to transform.

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Sharing Best Practices in Higher Education



Teaching

The partnership with the University of Pennsylvania facilitated a visit by over 20 Executive Doctoral students to Ashoka University, led by Dr. Peter Eckel. The delegation sought to understand the recent reforms under India's National Education Policy (NEP) and to explore the evolving landscape of higher education in India. The initiative highlights Ashoka's commitment to fostering global academic collaboration and exchanging innovative educational practices to enhance learning outcomes.



Dr. K VijayRaghavan **Chair, Science Advisory Council**

"Sustainability education encourages critical thinking and empowers students to address global environmental challenges. The Office of Sustainability at Ashoka University fosters the development of critical thinking and problemsolving skills. By engaging with real-world problems, students and researchers learn to analyze complex systems and devise solutions that balance environmental, economic, and social factors. Its imperative for very educational organisation to organise workshops and program segments that create awareness in this area. The collaboration between the Office of Sustainability and LGP is an important one particularly it gives the opportunity for the students to inculcate such practices and thought processes very early on."

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The Lodha Genius Programme



The Lodha Genius Programme is a pioneering effort aimed at nurturing India's gifted youth, ensuring they reach their full potential as future leaders and change-makers. Recognizing the neglect of highachieving students in traditional education systems, the initiative seeks to provide the support and resources necessary for these individuals to thrive. The programme addresses the urgent need to develop exceptional talent, which is critical for India's growth and innovation in the coming decades.

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Expanding Horizons through Online Education



AshokaX is an innovative initiative by Ashoka University designed to democratize access to highquality education through digital platforms. By offering a diverse range of online programs—both live and asynchronous—AshokaX meets the varied needs of learners while maintaining the academic excellence associated with the university. With a focus on interactive and collaborative learning, the platform utilizes cutting-edge technology to create engaging educational experiences. As AshokaX aims to extend its reach globally, it sets a new standard for online education, promoting inclusivity and empowering learners from all backgrounds.

Ashoka's Young Scholars Programme



Teaching

The Young Scholars Programme (YSP) is a valueadded initiative that empowers young students in grades 9 to 12, through a summer residential experience that exposes them to liberal arts and sciences. Through seven interdisciplinary courses, participants gain hands-on learning opportunities and exposure to Ashoka's distinguished global faculty and industry experts. The initiative equips young scholars with critical skills and knowledge, preparing them for successful academic and career paths.

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Influencing Policies on Inclusion in Higher Education



Partnerships

The Office of Learning Support (OLS) co-founded the Inclusive University Alliance (IUA) with top institutions like IIT Delhi, IIM Bangalore, and St. Xavier's Mumbai to advance inclusion across Indian higher education through shared best practices, accessible resources, and advocacy. Led by Reena Gupta, OLS is preparing a white paper from the August 2023 Conclave on disability inclusion to present to government stakeholders, aiming to influence inclusive policies. Additionally, OLS collaborates with Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, contributing to research on invisible disabilities, which was highlighted in the "Inclusive Urbanism" working papers released in August 2023.

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Conference on Writing 'Data': Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Research

The Centre for Writing and Communication integrates research closely with its teaching approach, developing resources and methods to foster interdisciplinary engagement in reading and writing across Ashoka's diverse academic landscape. As part of its ongoing pedagogical research efforts, CWC held its fourth annual conference, "Writing 'Data': Interdisciplinary Perspectives", which explored how writing mediates the interaction of Big Data within the social sciences, liberal arts, and humanities. The event included a keynote address by Dr. Avik Sarkar, Visiting Faculty at the Indian School of Business, and was chaired by Bharat Ramaswamy, Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Economics at Ashoka University. Dr. Sarkar highlighted innovative frameworks for public policy applications of diverse data types, including mobile, satellite, and employment data. Emphasis was placed on interdisciplinary research practices and the ethical complexities of engaging with Big Data in academia.



Improving Teacher Uptake of Effective Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Instruction



Research

The Centre for Social and Behaviour Change (CSBC), in collaboration with Central Square Foundation, conducted a diagnostic exercise to identify behavioral and mindset barriers preventing teachers from fully adopting the NIPUN Bharat Mission goals. Based on these insights, behavioral interventions were developed to improve teachers' uptake of effective teaching practices. This report presents a comprehensive account of the intervention design and development, with an initial prioritization of barriers using the 4A framework—authority, acceptance, ability, and affect.

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Building Global Philanthropy Research Initiatives



Research

The Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP) hosted a research conference funded by the Gates Foundation and various domestic NGO partners, for in-depth discussions on the evolving dynamics of philanthropy in India. In collaboration with the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, CSIP also developed the India report as part of the Global Philanthropy Environment Index Project, providing a comprehensive analysis of the philanthropic landscape in the country.

Hands-On Science Workshop At **Community School**



Partnerships

L.S. Shashidhara, Visiting Professor of Biology (Honorary) and Sandeep Ameta, Assistant Professor of Biology, along with the students of the Department of Biology, conducted a Foldscope workshop at Umang School in Ganaur, Haryana. 20 students, 6 teachers, and 4 school visitors participated in the session, which included a lecture on size scales in nature and microscopy. Participants assembled Foldscopes and analysed samples such as mosquito wings and leaves. The session concluded with the distributing ten sets of science books and 16 assembled Foldscopes to the students and teachers for future use.



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Eco-Careers And Beyond: A Sustainability Skill Building Workshop

Partnerships

LiveGreen@Ashoka hosted a transformative twoday workshop, "Ecocareers and Beyond" that featured engaging sessions on sustainability skills, the SDGs, and insights into green careers. Participants actively mapped SDGs, analysed case studies, and developed personal action plans, deepening their commitment to sustainable practices. The workshop led to notable improvements, with participants reporting a better understanding of the 17 SDGs and a 100% increase in awareness of the skills needed for green job highlighting the opportunities, program's effectiveness in enhancing knowledge in the sustainability sector.



Saksham Haryana: Education For Quality And Inclusivity



Partnerships

The Saksham Haryana initiative, led by the Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates (CMGGA), enhances educational outcomes by ensuring 80% of students in grades 3 to 8 attain grade-level proficiency in core subjects. With Saksham Ghoshna 2.0, the program's scope widened, resulting in class 10 pass rates increasing to 65% and class 12 to 80% by 2022. During the pandemic, CMGGAs ensured continuity of learning through the Ghar Se Padhao program, which reached over 80% of students via digital platforms. Additionally, the Shiksha Mitra program engaged more than 13 lakh students, career counseling efforts provided support to 75% of students & the *e-Adhigam* initiative distributed 500,000 tablets.

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Academic Writing and Critical Skills Tailored Workshops



Teaching

The Centre for Writing and Communication (CWC) delivered 20 workshops on enhancing academic writing, critical thinking, and storytelling skills for social impact. Alongside discipline-specific sessions, CWC hosted a workshop on Storytelling in "International Development: Critical Reflections on Narrativizing Social Change", led by Vrinda Chopra, Senior writing tutor. The session explored storytelling techniques, relating personal narratives to social issues, and biases in social change storytelling.



Amrita Sen, CMGGA Rohtak, 2023-24

"I remember speaking to a few alumni before joining the program, who called CMGGA a 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunity, and I couldn't agree more. No program I know equips young professionals like CMGGA does. We get an

insider's view of the bureaucracy while bringing a fresh outsider's perspective that's been instrumental in program success. From on-ground grievance redressal to district and state level review meetings, we've been able to participate and contribute in everything. Working with every district officer has been a privilege. The mutual respect and empathy for each other's challenges and the shared goal of public service has been especially remarkable.

This journey has been truly transformative and has instilled patience and unwavering determination in me. As someone who had never even visited Haryana, I felt completely at home during my time of service. In the treasure chest of all the learnings I've gained here, the most significant one to me is thatchange takes time, and it's nowhere as simple as it appears."

Training Educators For Sustainability In Air Quality Education



Partnerships

The Delhi Effective Education and Pedagogy Cluster is one of the verticals of Delhi Research Implementation and Innovation (DRIIV), which is one of the several Science & Technology City Clusters established by the office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India. Ashoka University, an advisory member of the Delhi Effective Education and Pedagogy Cluster (DEEP-C) under the Delhi Research Implementation and Innovation (DRIIV), partnered to advance sustainable education through a focused teacher training workshop. Led by Dr. Rajni Kaushik from Ashoka University in collaboration with IIT-Delhi's CERCA (Centre of Excellence for Research on Climate Change and Air Pollution), the workshop, titled "Towards Enhancing Educators' Understanding of Air Pollution and Mitigation Measures", provided interactive lesson plans, educators with gamification techniques, and strategies for fostering air quality awareness and sustainable practices in their classrooms.

Nurturing Sustainable Futures



Partnerships

The Office of Sustainability empowered young minds of the Lodha Genius Program through a Sustainability Workshop, emphasizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and hands-on design thinking. The workshop explored themes like SDGs, COP28 insights, and their interconnections with the grade 9 and 10 students. Interactive learning methods, such as storytelling and group activities, facilitated active engagement, while participants developed problemsolving skills through citizen science projects. The program concluded with action planning, and students presented innovative solutions, with several teams earning recognition for their impactful contributions to sustainability.

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Experiential Social Impact Learning



Partnerships

CSIP provides students with transformative, hands-on learning experiences in social impact. The Rural Immersion Program, in partnership with Giving Tuesday, allows students to connect deeply with rural communities, gaining insights into grassroots impact work. Additionally, CSIP offers guided internships funded by the Gates Foundation, providing real-world exposure to the social sector. The "Unwrapping Social Sector" initiative, part of the Lodha Genius Program, engages high school students in building social consciousness and tools for social change.

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Early Childhood Education Infrastructure And Best Practices



Partnerships

Samarth Haryana, the Playway Schools initiative under the CMGGA program is transforming early childhood education by upgrading 4,000 Anganwadi Centers into interactive and enriched learning environments. Supported by CMGGAs, these centers have been redesigned with preschool kits, trained staff, and enhanced facilities, including features of building as Learning Aids (BaLA), modular kitchens, child-friendly toilets, metered electricity, and clean drinking water. The Dual Desks Initiative further strengthens classroom infrastructure, complementing the digital learning tools provided to students. Through close collaboration with village Sarpanches, CSR contributions, and District Level Early Childhood Care and Education Committees (DLECs), this initiative exemplifies CMGGA's commitment to setting a benchmark for early learning infrastructure and practices across Haryana.







ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS



Gender On Campus



Women play a pivotal role in every aspect of Ashoka University. Whether in the classroom or in administration, they are paving the way for a brighter future by presenting a new global vision.



Student Initiatives towards Gender Equality and Empowerment

Campus

The Ashoka Queer Collective enhances community engagement through solidarity, visibility, and discussions on gender and sexuality, creating an inclusive space for and amongst the Queers who live on campus, especially the ones for whom the sociocultural impacts of homophobia have been massive. Ashoka Women in Business & Leadership equips aspiring female professionals with skills, mentorship, and a strong network for career growth. The Feminist Collective organizes events to promote awareness around feminism, intersectionality, and gender issues, providing a safe environment for dialogue and mutual support among students.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao -Haryana



Partnerships

Under the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme, more than 100 FIRs are registered additionally every year after successful raids in Haryana and bordering states. This has improved the sex ratio at birth in the state from 830 in 2011 to 925 in June 2021. To strengthen the POSH Act, CMGGA has successfully constituted 1,000+ Internal Complaints Committees (ICC) and Local Complaints Committees (LCC) in the state of Haryana. These committees benefit 9,000+ women employees. The committee members and employees are being trained in all district government offices to comply with the POSH Act.

Gender Matters in World Politics



The "Gender Matters in World Politics" course, taught by Ananya Sharma, Assistant Professor of International Relations, introduces students to the analysis of global politics through the lens of gender. It examines how constructs of masculinity and femininity shape ideas around war, peace, governance, and political economy, affecting the lived experiences of men and women differently. The course explores the gendered underpinnings of traditional International Relations scholarship and highlights feminist critiques that reveal systemic inequalities, offering students a nuanced perspective on global power dynamics.

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Gender Politics 101



Offered by Malvika Maheshwari, Associate Professor of Political Science, "Gender Politics 101" investigates core questions in feminist thought and their relevance to policy and society. The course examines the value, meaning, and impact of feminist identity, addressing topics like patriarchy, performativity, and gender fluidity, alongside the intersections of caste, sexuality, and class. Through thematic sessions on power dynamics, masculinity, family, and pressing political issues, students engage with feminist theories to deepen their understanding of gender's influence on both everyday and political life in India, fostering awareness of gender equality and empowering women and girls.





Prof. Madhavi Menon, Professor of English Director, Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality

"CSGS asks questions about the world in which we live. How is gender determined? Why is it policed? What happens if its rules are challenged? These questions form the base from which we launch our programmes, workshops, and talks"

Economics of Gender

Teaching

A course on "The *Economics of Gender*" taught by Bipasha Maity, Assistant Professor of Economics, delves into economic issues impacting women and draws from fields such as evolutionary biology, feminism, and psychology. It explores topics including labor market discrimination, globalization, and societal norms, while also examining household dynamics and non-market factors like marriage and fertility. The course highlights how education, healthcare, property rights, and political representation play a role in reducing gender inequality.

Click to Learn More \longrightarrow

Women, War, and Politics: Gender in Politics and in Violence

Teaching

A course on *"Women, War, and Politics: Gender in Politics and in Violence"* taught by Dipin Kaur, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations, examines gender as a critical lens for understanding political participation in conflictaffected contexts. It challenges traditional views of men as primary decision-makers in war, highlighting the distinct experiences and roles of women, including as combatants, victims, and peacebuilders. Emphasis is placed on the militarisation of gendered bodies and gender-based violence, alongside women's economic and social roles in post-conflict recovery. The course integrates feminist concepts of intersectionality and the continuum of violence from private to public spheres.

Governing Intimacies



The Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality continues to pursue different projects under Governing Intimacies, a five-year-long research project in partnership with the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, funded by the Andrew Mellon Foundation. The project encourages new and interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, sexuality and intimacy in postcolonial societies, creating critical conversations and knowledge that would help in building more gender equitable societies.

Gender and Land, Rivers, and Livelihoods

Teaching

The course "Gender and Land, Rivers, and Livelihoods" taught by Smita Tewari Jassal, Visiting Professor, Department of Environmental Studies , explores the interdependence of land and rivers, integrating gender perspectives into discussions on agrarian societies and land rights, including issues of tenancy, sharecropping, and landlessness. The course also examines river-based communities, focusing on the impacts of shifting livelihoods, from water-based occupations to settled agriculture, and how infrastructure changes, like the introduction of railways, affected these communities.

Navigating Sex, Sexuality, and Law

Partnerships

CSGS has developed *"Mapping Sexuality in India"*, a digital archive of significant legal judgments on sexual justice. In partnership with external experts and the Young India Fellows developed *The Sexual Justice Project*, a podcast series with guests like Indira Jaising and Dr. Mrinal Satish, discussing legal intersections of gender and sexuality. CSGS also collaborated beyond Ashoka through workshops on gender sensitivity, consent and hosted diverse panel discussions on vital societal issues like same-sex marriage and the Women's Reservation Bill.

Strengthening Women's Confidence in Grievance Redressal Online



Research

CSBC examined how psychological factors—like locus of control, fatalism, and self-efficacy-affect women's consumer behavior in digital finance dispute resolution. Despite progress in India's digital financial inclusion, women face structural and social barriers hindering their access to redressal mechanisms. Through interviews and surveys in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, fear, distrust, and low confidence were identified as key barriers. The findings will inform an intervention to empower women to seek redress and independently navigate digital financial challenges.

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CEDA's Gender Data Portal



Research

A Gender data portal focused on Socio-Economic insights was launched by the Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA) to enhance India's genderdisaggregated socio-economic data landscape. This portal integrates data from key sources, including the National Sample Survey and the National Crime Records Bureau, offering new insights into gender dynamics in micro-entrepreneurship, education, crime, political empowerment, and bureaucratic representation. By providing centralized, genderfocused data, the portal helps policymakers identify intervention points and track progress in women's empowerment.

Funding for Gender Equality in India

 $\langle \nabla \rangle$ Research

In the Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy's (CSIP) Research Fellowship 2020-21, Aayushi Aggarwal, Arundhati Sridhar, and Bedotroyee Bhattacharjee authored a paper titled "Funding for Gender Equality in India: Applying a Feminist Lens". This paper mapped contemporary funding patterns for gender equality in India through desk reviews and virtual interviews with Indian philanthropies and key sector informants. They concluded that political and corporate factors mainly directed gender equality funding toward surface-level initiatives, with feminist organizing relying on trickle-down funding from broader categories like health, education, and livelihoods.

Similarly, Taranga Sriraman's CSIP working paper, "Feminist is as Feminist Funds: Debates and Practices in Feminist Funding in India", explored the challenges of securing funds for feminist causes within a largely capitalist funding environment, examining debates and potential future directions for feminist funding.

<u>Click to Learn More</u> \rightarrow



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Sneha Shashidhara, Visiting Faculty of Psychology, and co-authors with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, had built 15 best predicting questions that avoid sensitive issues to create a field tool that frontline health workers can use to identify women with a high risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) and provide the support they need. Domestic violence, especially IPV, is an important issue worldwide, especially in India.

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Addressing barriers to women's economic participation



Partnerships

Despite progress in women's education and economic growth, India faces persistently low female labour force participation (FLFP). The Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA), in collaboration with the Bill and Milinda Gates Foundation, is examining barriers in the labour market that limit women's job opportunities and retention. Their approach includes (1) Inform, (2) Investigate, and (3) Intervene. The evidence-based strategy aims to inform policies fostering equitable work environments for women.

Gender Lens Reporting



A course on "Gender Lens Reporting" by Neha Dixit, Visiting Faculty Department of Media Studies, explores how patriarchal narratives persist in media, marginalizing diverse gender perspectives. It introduces a "gender lens" approach to analyze social and political issues, focusing on inclusivity and representation. Students learn to dissect and report gender-related stories, integrating on an intersectional understanding of race, class, and culture. Through practical exercises and fieldwork, the course aims to equip students with the skills to produce nuanced, inclusive journalism that challenges stereotypes and highlights the realities of all genders.



Economics Discussion Paper Series

Research

The economics discussion paper series explores gender equality across varied contexts. In "Female Legislators and Forest Conservation in India", Bipasha Maity, Assistant Professor of Economics, studied the impact of electing female legislators on forest cover growth in Indian constituencies, finding a 6% increase in growth where women narrowly won against male opponents. Another paper, "Gendered Transport Subsidy and its Short Run Effect on Female Employment: Evidence from Delhi's Pink Pass Scheme" by Aparajita Dasgupta, Associate Professor of Economics, examined the effect of gender-specific transit subsidies on women's workforce participation. Lastly, in "The Long-Term Effect of the Taliban Regime on Women's Age at Marriage in Afghanistan", Bipasha Maity, Associate Professor of Economics, revealed that strict gender policies under the Taliban raised the marriage age of Tajik/Uzbek women by nearly seven months, underscoring ethnic disparities. Together, these studies enhance understanding of gender, policy, and social outcomes.





ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL



Monitoring University's Water Footprint



All water requirements of Ashoka University's campus are met through the HUDA water supply system. Well-calibrated water flow meters have been installed at sources to measure and evaluate the daily/monthly water consumption. Installation of separate meters for water used in drinking, cooking, horticulture, flushing, cleaning and washing is being considered. The total volume of water used on campus in 2023 was 1,82,264 KL

Campus Sewage Treatment Infrastructure



Ashoka has two STP plants (100 KLD and 300 KLD) to treat sewage wastewater and make it fit for further use. All the wastewater generated from buildings, the dining hall, and other sources is collected and treated in our sewage treatment plant (STP) at desired parameters set up by the Central Pollution Control Board in a NABL accredited labs on a monthly basis. The STP plants use the Moving Bed Biofilm Reactor (MBBR) system, the latest technology, for the treatment of wastewater. The treated water is tested for the prescribed limits as per EP Act 1986 for pH levels, suspended solids, chemical oxygen demand, biochemical oxygen demand and oil & grease. 32,963KL water is generated from two STPs annually on campus and is reused in irrigation through the year across campus.

Improving Efficiency Of Water Use On Campus

Campus

The University is located in the northern part of India, a region that has witnessed a sharp decline in the groundwater table over the years. In an attempt to reduce its water footprint, Ashoka strives to reduce, reuse and recycle every drop of water used on campus. The wastewater from the kitchen is passed through various grease traps and is further fed into the water treatment plant. The wastewater coming from the toilet is connected to the sewage treatment plant (STP). This recycled water is further used for irrigating the lawns and green areas and cleaning the solar panels on the campus. Our housekeeping team is equipped with specialised cleaning machines that not only decrease the effort required for manual cleaning but also the amount of water required for cleaning purposes. Most taps, faucets and showers are fitted with water aerators for regulating the flow of water for efficient consumption and reduction of water wastage. Similarly, urinals run on a sensorbased water flow mechanism. The irrigation system is designed in such a way that allows us to utilise water without any wastage. Our sprinkler water system allows uniform distribution of water with high efficiency.

Dual Ion Specific Electrochemical Sensor For Detection Of Heavy Metals In Environmental Samples



contamination poses significant Heavy metal environmental and health risks, particularly due to industrialisation. The urgent need for sensitive and efficient methods to detect and quantify heavy metals in environmental samples has necessitated the development of advanced sensors. In the research paper, "Dual ion-specific electrochemical sensor using aminothiazole-engineered carbon quantum dots", Munmun Ghosh, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Et al. present a novel electrochemical sensor designed to simultaneously detect lead (Pb2+) and mercury (Hg2+) ions. This sensor offers high sensitivity, with detection limits of 3.0 pM for Pb2+ and 6.2 pM for Hg2+, amidst the presence of other metal ions. This synthesised electrochemical sensor acts as an excellent sensing probe for the selective and sensitive detection of heavy metal ions in industrial effluents.

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Jal Jeevan Mission

Partnerships

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) seeks to not only provide functional household tap connections to all rural households by 2024 but also seeks to promote holistic management of local water resources. Centre for Social and Behaviour Change is a knowledge partner on this project and their mandate is to design the evaluation strategy for the behavioural component of JJM, analyse evaluation data and recommend corrective or alternative interventions and provide strategic inputs to partner organisations working on interventions and/or communication targeted at the behavioural change in JJM.

Click to Learn More \longrightarrow

Swacch Survekshan Initiative

Partnerships

The Government of Haryana and CMGGA's Swacch Survekshan Initiative has significantly elevated cleanliness standards across its urban local bodies (ULBs). Recognized as India's 2nd Best State with under 100 ULBS in 2020, up from 10th in 2015, Haryana has seen four cities enter the top 100 list, compared to just two in 2015. Notably, Charkhi Dadri earned the 1st rank as the *Fastest Mover City* in the North Zone, while Karnal and Rohtak's municipal corporations achieved 3-star and 1-star ratings in the Garbage Free Cities assessment, respectively.

Right To Water



A course on "*The Right to Water*" offered by the Department of Environmental Studies gives the students a nuanced understanding of water rights and governance. Through key scholarship and global case studies, it addresses the right to water, water justice, and conflicts around access. This course is organised critically around five themes—including Water Governance, Infrastructures, and Movements —the course critically examines water-related issues and advocacy for justice.

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River Islands: Redefining The Anthropocene



Teaching

The Department of Environmental Studies organized the International Conference on River Islands, in partnership with Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur and Australian National University, to explore the unique, shifting geographies of river islands like the Chars in South Asia. These islands, home to millions on the socio-economic margins, challenge conventional territorial boundaries. The two-day conference gathered experts and scholars across disciplines to discuss the complexities of these hybrid geographies.

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Rainwater Harvesting



Fifteen rainwater harvesting pits have been built within the campus to recharge the groundwater levels. Through these pits, harvested water is fed into the ground, which helps in retaining the groundwater levels. Each zone has one harvesting pit with a desilting chamber. Appropriate preventive maintenance is in place to ensure these pits work efficiently.

Impact Of Decentralization On Spatial Allocation Of Irrigation Water



In the Economic discussion paper "Decentralisation and Spatial (Mis-)Allocation of Irrigation Water" Sabyasachi Das, Assistant Professor of Economics, investigates how decentralised canal irrigation management impacts the spatial distribution of water and agricultural outcomes. The findings of this research indicates that under centralised control, farmers closer to the canal over-extract water, causing misallocation. However, decentralisation, through locally elected bodies "Pani Panchayats" in Orissa, India, reduces this imbalance, leading to better water distribution and improvements in agricultural revenue and wealth for farmers located farther from the canal.







ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL



Energy Backup Infrastructure



In the event of a blackout or outage from the State Electricity Board, Ashoka's DG sets provide 100% power backup. We have a total of 5 DG sets (four 750 kVA and one 500 kVA). Adherence to all Pollution Control Board norms is ensured while operating the DG sets. DG sets are tested for carbon emission at periodic intervals in accordance with the Pollution Control Board. Over the years, the share of energy from DG sets has reduced significantly. With the increase in solar power generation capacity, we have been able to generate greener energy and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Share of Electricity through DG Sets Electricity Units for EB are based on monthly electricity board

Electricity Units for EB are based on monthly electricity board invoices





On-Campus Energy Generation



In order to reduce its carbon footprint, the University has taken several measures. Net Zero Energy Building is one of the major initiatives led by the University. Under this initiative, Ashoka plans to become self reliant in energy production and consumption.

At present, a small amount of electricity used in the operations is generated internally using renewable energy sources like solar. Ashoka has installed 893 kW of solar power panels utilising all available surfaces, such as the rooftops and car parking area to harvest solar energy. Through these panels, we are able to meet about 13% of the campus' power requirements. We are also aggressively exploring offsite solar farms for generating solar power. The government's policy of buying back the extra electricity produced through the decentralised grids has not been implemented yet, thereby leading to a delay in expanding the current solar production capacity.

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Encouraging Low-Carbon Lifestyles In Indian Cities



In addition, the "Annual Environmental Sustainability The Centre for Social and Behavioural Change (CSBC) Report 2023" highlights Ashoka's commitment to reducing energy consumption and carbon and the MacArthur Foundation launched the Low emissions through renewable energy sources, Carbon Lifestyles Programme to explore and promote efficient building designs, and minimised use of low-carbon choices in urban mobility, household diesel generators. As the campus expands, we are energy consumption, material use, and food extending these sustainable practices, including consumption. The programme aims to help India curb rising GHG emissions by encouraging low-carbon further solar installations and eco-friendly transport options like CNG shuttle bus connectivities and behaviours among individuals, households, and carpooling. By tracking Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions communities in urban areas, ensuring that consumer through GHG Protocols, we continually refine our choices and local barriers inform policies and approach to energy efficiency and work toward a programs. more sustainable future.

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Monitoring & Reducing Campus Energy Consumption

Campus

Ashoka University understands that educational development requires research significant dependence on natural resources including water and energy. Electricity is essential for the lighting of several academic and non-academic buildings, including the library, common areas and pathways, among several others. The University currently has a high dependence on the electricity supplied from external sources, such as the power plants operated by the state and private companies. At Ashoka, the electric power is supplied from Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (UHBVN). The supplied voltage of 11KV is brought down to a low voltage using step-down transformers. We also maintain a power factor at 0.99 on each EB bill to reduce the power and energy losses in the power line and transformer.

Energy Policy Efforts For Advancing Clean Energy



Partnerships

The Ashoka Centre for a People-centric Energy Transition (ACPET), in collaboration with prominent academic and knowledge partners—including the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), Mlinda Charitable Trust, TRIF, PRADAN, GRAM OORJA, CCIL, TPDDL, Sambodhi Research & Communications, and the Centre for Environment and Energy Development—aimed to enhance education quality and knowledge dissemination in clean energy. With funding support from HSBC, ACPET has focused on developing an integrated energy policy framework to guide India's transition to net-zero emissions by 2070. Additionally, projects are underway to identify how financial resources for clean energy can be strategically allocated across Indian districts, aligning with both development goals and the unique capacities of each district. These partnership efforts directly support SDGs 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7.



Vaibhav Chowdhary, Director Ashoka Centre for a **People-centric Energy Transition**

"ACPET is a young centre at Ashoka marking a notable presence of bridging the gap between academia and policy on the issue of Just Energy Transition. We are committed to make a significant impact on SDG 1, 5,6, 7,10 and 12 by focussing on decarbonisation strategies, financing energy transition, resource efficiency, critical mineral recovery, energy conservation and social nudging etc. We believe in evidence informed action research, collaboration and knowledge sharing"

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ACPET Initiatives Supporting India's Net-Zero Transition



The Ashoka Centre for a People-centric Energy Transition (ACPET) project, *"An Integrated Energy Policy* Approach to India's Net-Zero Commitments", introduced the publication "Energy Policies for India's Conversion to a Net-Zero Economy (EPIC)", led by Dr. Anil Jain in collaboration with the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP). This report outlined key recommendations to advance India's energy transition, advocating long-term policy shifts, including the formation of high-level committees to review energy subsidies, enhancement of regulatory frameworks, and promotion of competitive market efficiencies.

Another ACPET initiative, *"Transitioning Mining* Communities to Sustainable Lives and Livelihoods", examined the effects of mine closures and community-centred energy transitions on local livelihoods, well-being, and income stability. Additionally, the "Energy Transition Financing" project assessed the impact of solar micro- and mini-grid systems on household well-being and socio-economic development in aspiring districts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand.

CO2 Conversion And Capture Towards Clean Energy

Research

The Department of Chemistry focuses on affordable and clean energy, through various innovative research efforts. Vidya Avasare, Professor of Chemistry and her research group has developed computational methods to assess the CO₂ capture capabilities of covalent organic frameworks (COFs), assisting in the design of materials that effectively trap CO₂. They also use machine learning (ML) to predict the efficiency of metal pincer complexes for CO₂ hydrogenation, enabling rapid screening of potential catalysts. Another study, by Vidya Avasare, Professor of Chemistry, explores an iron-based Fe2C catalyst that efficiently converts CO₂ into valuable carbon-based products like alcohols and alkenes. Additionally, the research on dual atom catalysts (DACs) by the group focuses on using paired metal atoms to enhance the conversion of into useful compounds CO_2 through electrochemical processes. These efforts showcase the potential of advanced technologies and materials in improving CO₂ conversion and capture, supporting the clean energy objectives.

Click to Read Articles \longrightarrow

Hydrogen Production, Storage, And Battery Materials



Sourav Pal, Professor of Chemistry, in his research, explores sustainable energy solutions, focusing on hydrogen production, storage, and battery materials. Key efforts include developing Ru-Bis (pyridyl) borate complex catalyst to improve dehydrogenation of Ammonia Borane, investigating Mn(II) MOFs for high hydrogen storage, and using silicon-modified cyclo[18]carbon to convert nitrogen to ammonia precursors. Additionally, advanced anode materials for Li-ion and sodium-ion batteries have been studied, emphasizing two-dimensional molybdenum compounds and nitrogen nanotubes for enhanced energy storage.







PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL







Enactus drives social impact through sustainable business projects. The club creates employment underprivileged opportunities for women, empowering them to develop and market products that leverage their creative skills. Committed to responsible consumption and economic empowerment, Enactus has partnered with NGOs for projects like Swachh and Lakeer, providing marginalised communities with sustainable income sources by producing handcrafted items, including organic soaps, candles, masks, and diaries. These initiatives promote environmental responsibility, economic independence, and inclusive growth.

Neev is a community engagement club run by the students of Ashoka. They work towards providing academic peer mentorship support to students from Asawarpur village. They have also started a Women For Women programme, which provides women from Asawarpur a platform to interact and discuss pertinent issues ranging from sanitation to effective financial management. They are also working on a programme to promote small businesses in Asawarpur within the university community.

Linking Firm Size To Female **Employment In India**



Research

Kanika Mahajan, Associate Professor of Economics, in her paper "Firm Size and Female Employment", highlighted that larger firms are employing a higher proportion of women, linked to the provision of nonwage benefits such as maternity leave and childcare. Using data from India, she established a positive association between firm size and female employment. Her analysis revealed that firms with more workers and higher output hired more women, incentivized by attractive workplace amenities. The study observed a 13% increase in female employment in states with amended labor laws, accompanied by a 5% rise in firm size and 13% higher welfare expenses per employee. Importantly, these changes occurred without affecting the gender wage gap.

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Akshi Chawla, Director, **Centre for Economic Data & Analysis**

"At CEDA, SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth – remains a core area of focus (with 'Work and Wages' being one of six focus theme areas). We have made available a wide range of data related to labour force participation, employment and wages available on our data portal. Additionally, our team sifts through datasets to identify broad and nuanced trends and critical gaps in access to decent work opportunities. These analyses are not only read by a wide group of users, but have been cited and referred to by leading media, policy and academic publications.

CEDA is also undertaking a deep investigation into demand-side barriers that prevent women from accessing economic opportunities on an equal footing. We hope this work can help inform public discourse and deepen people's understanding of India's employment landscape, and that it can help shape policies that enable wider access to dignified, decent and productive remunerative work."

Visit CEDA's Website \longrightarrow

Analysing Labour Force Trends Ahead Of Assembly Polls



Research

Akshi Chawla, Director of the Centre for Economic Data & Analysis, conducted research titled *Assembly* "Elections 2023: Unravelling Patterns of Labour Force Participation in Five States". This study examined labour force and employment trends in Madhya Chhattisgarh, Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan, and Telangana ahead of their assembly elections. Findings revealed that these states exhibit labour force participation rates above the national average, along with a higher proportion of self-employed workers. While overall unemployment rates are lower than the national average, challenges persist for individuals with higher education levels, highlighting critical gaps in employment outcomes. The research contributes to promoting productive employment, inclusive growth, and opportunities for all.



Development Economics



Teaching

Hemanshu Kumar, Assistant Professor of Economics, teaches "Development Economics", a course that examines the complexities of economic development and the disparities between thriving and struggling nations. The course explores how markets, institutions, education, and group identities such as caste shape economic outcomes. Through researchbased analysis, students delve into the dynamics of inequality, the factors influencing growth, and the challenges faced by developing nations. They critically evaluate models of economic growth and assess interventions aimed at fostering inclusive and sustainable development.

Maximizing Workforce Potential



Research

Ashwini Deshpande, Professor of Economics and Founding Director of CEDA, and Akshi Chawla, Director of CEDA, discussed in their research "The Elephant is Set to Overtake the Dragon, or is it?" how India became the world's most populous country, surpassing China by July 2023. Despite this demographic shift, the transition to a larger workforce was not immediate. At current labour force participation rates, it would take India another 27 years to surpass China's workforce size. The study emphasized the need to harness India's demographic potential by prioritizing youth skill development and expanding employment opportunities, particularly for women, to drive economic growth and inclusivity.

Haryana's Workforce **Empowerment With CMGGA**



The Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam ensures equitable recruitment of contractual workers for government departments, benefiting 150,000 individuals. Through the Saksham Haryana Skills & Employment Initiative, district industrial profiles are analyzed to align ITI trades with the industry needs. By facilitating partnerships and raising awareness among stakeholders, the initiative addresses the skillsemployment gap, contributing to sustainable economic growth and better job opportunities.

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Building Sustainable Livelihoods And Inclusion In Sonipat



Partnerships

The Spread Smile Foundation, incubated by the Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE), organised a threeday Diwali Mela in Sonipat, featuring handmade products crafted by local artisans. Through sewing trainings, the foundation empowers women and young girls with skills to earn a livelihood. The foundation runs also four free "Paathshalas," providing education to over 400 students with volunteer support. They have conducted rallies to advocate for education over begging and organised legal awareness sessions to promote social inclusion. In collaboration with Lovsy Candies, a student-led startup, the foundation generates sustainable livelihood opportunities for women in Sonipat.

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Gender Gap And Wage Disparities In India's Factories



Dhruvika Dhamija, a predoctoral fellow at the Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA), in her study "How Many Women Work in India's Factories?" highlighted that women made up less than 20% of factory workers in India in 2019-20-a figure unchanged for over two decades. Additionally, 72% of women employed in industries were concentrated in just four states: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala. Unlike men, whose employment was more evenly distributed across industries, women were concentrated in a limited range of sectors. The research also uncovered a persistent gender wage gap, with women earning INR 87.06 for every INR 100 earned by male industrial workers.







BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION







Waste Management



Ashoka University has established a comprehensive management system that integrates waste composting, wastewater treatment, waste segregation, and responsible disposal across its campus. The composting facility processes 500 kg of organic waste daily, converting it to compost within 10 days to support the campus nursery, fostering a circular economy. Two sewage treatment plants using MBBR technology handle 100 KLD and 300 KLD of wastewater, repurposing it for irrigation, solar panel cleaning, and other non-potable needs. The Female Health Unit has recycled over 54,000 sanitary pads using the PadCare system, reducing landfill impact and emissions. E-waste is responsibly managed in partnership with certified recyclers and supported by a campaign with Livegreen@Ashoka, Tarang, and Attero to minimize electronic waste hazards. Biomedical waste is also managed in compliance with regulations through a government-authorized firm, underscoring Ashoka University's dedication to resource efficiency and sustainable infrastructure planning.

Innovative Synergy: The Ashoka Mphasis Lab



Research

The Ashoka Mphasis Lab, a research partnership between Ashoka University and Mphasis, highlights the synergy between academia and industry in driving innovation. With renewed funding in 2023, the lab supports interdisciplinary research in AI, Health Analytics, and Computational Modeling. Key projects include BharatSim, for scalable public sector simulations, and CHART, which enhances healthcare policy with data insights. Through initiatives like Al@Ashoka, the lab not only pushes Al advancements but also focuses on ethical considerations, preparing students for responsible engagement. Additionally, the lab's Digital Makerspace acts as a dynamic hub for experiential learning, allowing students and researchers to ideate, design, and implement tech solutions using a broad array of tools, from basic to advanced technology.

Empowering Innovation And Sustainability Partnerships



Partnerships

The Info Edge Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE) significantly contributed to fostering innovation by supporting startups and partnerships. During its yearly Summer Incubation Program, Quintinno Labs developed Quint, a portable power bank for electric vehicles, enhancing sustainable mobility. Zool Energy, founded by alumnus Gurasheesh Paul, introduced a non-fuel-based energy solution in Jammu, contributing to cleaner energy infrastructure. Its collaboration with Samsung's Solve for Tomorrow initiative empowered youth-driven projects in education and healthcare. Additionally, Suramaya Living produced eco-friendly candles, while Breathe ESG secured funding to advance sustainable reporting practices. CfE's focus on innovative, sustainable solutions was further highlighted by student Karan Kapadia's success at the India Smart Protein Innovation Challenge, promoting responsible consumption through alternative protein solutions.

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Impact Investing And Innovative Finance

Teaching

A course "Impact Investing and Innovative Finance" taught by Kartik Desai, Visiting Faculty, Department of Entrepreneurship provides a strategic foundation in innovative finance approaches that drive sustainable economic growth through industry innovation. It emphasizes impact investing while covering essential investment sectors like ESG, climate finance, and blended/social finance, which span the risk-return-impact spectrum. By exploring how these finance tools foster sustainable infrastructure, industrialization, and resilient investment, the course aligns closely with global efforts to promote inclusive and sustainable industry development, equipping students to leverage finance for long-term societal impact.

Integrated Design For Sustainable Infrastructure



By assessing environmental impacts early, the university ensures all buildings are aligned with sustainability goals. Most of the academic buildings have an eco-friendly design with open corridors. Key features like double-walled structures, shadow-based cooling, and traditional "jaali" designs minimize energy demands, while open corridors enhance natural ventilation. Air conditioning use is limited to select areas, with a maintained temperature standard of 26°C to conserve energy. Rainwater harvesting pits address water scarcity, and electric vehicle charging stations support clean transportation. As the campus expands, these practices will extend to new developments, reflecting Ashoka's commitment to building resilient, sustainable infrastructure.



Entrepreneurial Strategies For Climate Action



A course taught by Visiting Professor DVR Seshadri in the Department of Entrepreneurship, places the principle "People + Planet = Profit" at the forefront, challenging the traditional business school focus on profit maximization. This course, alongside *"Entrepreneurship and Climate Change"* taught by Ankur Sarin, Visiting Professor, Department of Entrepreneurship, addresses sustainability issues across all firm functions—business strategy, finance, operations, and more-encouraging students to adopt a comprehensive, sustainability-centered view.

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SIL: Startup Readiness And Grand Challenge



An immersive course taught by Srikant Sastri, Visiting Faculty, Centre for Entrepreneurship, designed for aspiring entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs. It offers hands-on experience in the entrepreneurial journey from ideation to MVP, focusing on product strategy, business models, and performance metrics. Students learn ethical business leadership and contemplative entrepreneurship to make informed decisions. The course culminates in a Demo Day where students pitch their ventures to investors and mentors, combining theory with practical skills for startup success.





REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES



Role Of Philanthropy In Empowering Marginalized Communities



The Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy has published research on marginalized communities. In his paper "*Philanthropy for Equitable and Inclusive* Development", Satyendra Kumar, Research Fellow and co-founder of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion, highlights the pivotal role of communityled organizations (CLOs) in amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, especially in the socioeconomic recovery following the pandemic. Additionally, another paper, "The Current Landscape of Philanthropy for Adivasi and Tribal Women at the Grassroots" authored by Nolina S. Minj, Ruby Hembrom, and Christy Nag of Adivaani, explores the role of philanthropy in empowering NGOs working with Adivasi and Tribal women, emphasizing the importance of grassroots initiatives in promoting social inclusion and gender equity.

Advancing Inclusion And Equity Through Education And Initiatives

Annual Financial Aid

Aid in Rs. Cr | Excluding PhDs

Campus

Ashoka University has embedded inclusion, diversity, and equity into its mission and operations, celebrating the diverse identities within its community. The university has offered tuition-free education to 1,700 students, with 51% of the undergraduate class of 2025 receiving need-based financial aid averaging Rs 7.12 lakh (USD 8,700), and 65% of the Young India Fellowship Class of 2023 supported through financial aid, 62% of whom were women. It has created an enabling environment for neurodiverse learners, first-generation college students, and those with disabilities, supported by 17% international faculty representing 11 countries.

Student-led initiatives like the Northeast Collective, Queer Collective, and Feminist Collective fostered cultural exchange, queer representation, and gender awareness. Programs such as *Special Olympics Bharat Ashoka Chapter* encouraged social inclusion through sports, *Kintsugi* addressed mental health, and *Ashoka Women in Business and Leadership* nurtured women leaders. The launch of *TAARIF*, India's first trans research fellowship, and support for 50 trans students, including seven in the Undergraduate Class of 2025, highlighted the university's efforts to create an equitable and inclusive academic community.

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Climate Journalism For Marginalized Communities



The *3CS Media Fellowship* offered by the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability shows a media and academic collaboration for inclusive climate journalism. Media partners The Hindu and The News Minute worked with the fellows, offering mentorship and publishing their work in print and video formats. The Ashoka Centre for Translation translated reports from regional languages into English, ensuring broader accessibility. The initiative spotlighted the impact of climate change on Dalit, Adivasi, and other marginalized communities, fostering representation and meaningful storytelling through a blend of journalistic expertise and academic support.

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Challenging Barriers To Gender Equality In Employment And Marriage



In the research paper "Women's Work, Social Norms, and the Marriage Market", Kanika Mahajan, Associate Professor of Economics, and her co-authors explore how societal expectations within marriage constrain women's participation in market work. The research uncovers a notable bias in the marriage market, where employed women are 14.5% less likely to receive interest from male suitors compared to their non-working counterparts. These findings underline the influence of traditional gender roles in limiting women's economic prospects and highlight the importance of addressing societal barriers to create equitable opportunities in both professional and personal spheres.

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2021-22 2022-23



Poonam Devi Housekeeping Staff

"I've been working with Ashoka for over five years. The people (seniors, staff and students) at the University treat me like family. They have stood by us in times of need. When I have needed help at home or at the University, they extended support to me at an individual and institutional level. I want to keep working here."

Inequality In Hierarchies

Research

Sabyasachi Das, Assistant Professor of Economics, examined resource allocation within hierarchical structures where higher-ranked individuals have priority in claiming resources. He analyzed equilibrium resource shares under different donor objectives, including utilitarian and egalitarian approaches. In large hierarchies, these shares followed a geometric distribution across ranks, irrespective of donor intent. The study highlighted that efficiency was achieved when payoffs were nearly linear, especially under utilitarian or egalitarian frameworks.

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Geography, Caste, Religion, And Gendered Time Use In India



Aparajita Associate Professor Dasgupta, of Economics, in her research "Geography, Religion, Caste, and Gendered Lives: Evidence from an Indian Time Use Survey", examined the interplay of geography, caste, and religion with gendered time use in Indian households. The study found that female labor force participation did not directly correlate with gendered time allocation, revealing weak statistical links. Caste and religion emerged as significant but nuanced factors, influencing gendered time use in complex and varied ways. By highlighting regional, religious, and caste-based variations, the research sheds light on how social structures and identity markers shape gender dynamics in daily life.

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The Idea Of Equality



Bastian Steuwer, Assistant Professor of Political Science, taught *"The Idea of Equality"*, a course examining equality as a multifaceted political value. The course explored equality as a distributive ideal, addressing topics such as opportunity, misfortune, and the fair distribution of chances. It also analyzed equality as a relational concept, delving into themes like human dignity, discrimination, and caste. Students engaged with various dimensions of equality fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and principles underlying equitable societies.





MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS **INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE**



Critical Review Of Sustainability Model Of Ashoka University



Sustainable Development (SD) is the universal essentiality of present times, and universities have a critical role in implementing this initiative through their functioning, policies and practices. It is with this view that Ashoka Science Policy Initiative conducted a comprehensive study to critically review the sustainability model of Ashoka University that approaches its commitment through sustainabilityfocused courses, research, and operations. They find that since its inception, the university has implemented strategies and taken initiatives directed towards ensuring affordability and access, well-being and welfare, diversity and inclusion, as well as outreach and engagement of its community, i.e. students, faculty, and staff. The pedagogy, courses, curriculum, activities taught/undertaken at the University have been designed to promote sustainability exchanging knowledge, in communication, research and teaching.

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Bhaskar K Mishra, Vice President – Special Projects

"At Ashoka University we walk the talk on sustainability by following the best practices for the Environment such as Rain water harvesting, using grey water for irrigation, recycling food waste for compost, and EV Vehicle charging.
We measure in-house, Campus AQI, and compare with our surroundings through CPCB portal, and take active steps to mitigate the same such as overhead sprinklers, tree washing, subsidised masks for students, faculty and staff, and FOC for all outsourced staff. We also impact through diet influencing by jaggery, and gooseberry availability during meals."

Rainwater Harvesting: Nurturing Groundwater



To combat water scarcity, Ashoka has implemented 15 rainwater harvesting pits strategically placed across the campus. Regular maintenance ensures these pits effectively recharge groundwater, and each pit includes a chamber for silt removal. By allowing rainwater to seep into the ground, campus actively contribute to maintaining groundwater levels.

Sustainable Transportation



While complex interventions like installing solar panels are critical in reducing the electricity usage, it is equally important to focus on soft interventions to reduce energy consumption. In our endeavour to move towards a greener growth path, we have adopted greener transportation alternatives to our campus. We strongly encourage our employees to carpool and use public transportation, such as the metro, and we have also implemented last mile connectivity with the CNG Shuttle service. The University has also made efforts to encourage bicycles and battery-operated cars for mobility and transportation of people and goods within the campus.





Hearing Earth Conference



Research

The Annual *Healing Earth Conference*, organised by the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability (3CS) brings together experts, researchers, practitioners, and educators to explore the intricate connections between climate change, health, and ecosystems. It has convened discussions on the multifaceted impacts of climate change on natural environments, public health, and affected communities while also focusing on emerging solutions, adaptation practices, and the challenges associated with the climate crisis. This platform is dedicated to fostering critical dialogues about the repercussions of the climate crisis on our contemporary world.

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Exploring Sustainability In The Anthropocene

Teaching

"Science, Society and Sustainability" was a course taught by Ghazala Shahabuddin, Visiting Faculty, Department of Environmental Studies, which introduced environmental sustainability in the Anthropocene, covering key ecological concepts and their application in socio-political contexts. It introduced ecological thinking, engaging students through discussions on climate justice, sustainable practices, and urban equity. The curriculum included theory lectures, interactive discussions, and a field outing in Delhi NCR. By the end, students were equipped to analyse sustainability challenges and communicate complex issues effectively.

Understanding Urban Ecosystems Through History



"The Jungle, the Spade, and the Book", is the course taught by Nayanjot Kaur Lahiri, Professor, Department of History, which explores the historical relationship between human societies and natural landscapes, focusing on urban settings like those of the Harappan Civilization. By examining the interface between humans and nature, this course provides valuable insights into the planning and sustainable management of modern cities and communities. Additionally, Professor Lahiri teaches courses in Environmental Studies, extending the analysis of historical interactions to broader environmental issues. These courses promote an understanding of the importance of preserving natural spaces within urban environments and demonstrate how historical interactions with forests and wilderness can inform current urban design practices..This perspective is essential for building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable communities that balance urban development with ecological preservation.



Clubs And Societies



The Rotaract Club at Ashoka University, as part of the global Rotary network, has been instrumental in uplifting communities through impactful service initiatives that foster social inclusivity and sustainable urban development. Partnering with the Gyan Aadhar Welfare Society, the club provides educational support to children from nursery through grade 8 in Shalimar Bagh's slum areas, helping bridge educational gaps. Through *Project* Pankh with Pinkishe Foundation, the club advances menstrual health awareness, distributes sanitary products, and promotes sustainable menstruation practices. Furthering social development, *Project* Badlaav enhances interpersonal skills among the youth in Sonipat, and *Project Saahas*, in with Agamya, collaboration supports underprivileged children with mentorship and distributes essential educational resources. Additionally, the *Ruhi Club* empowers Ashoka's support staff by offering English language training and strengthening connections within the campus community. Each of these clubs through various initiatives foster community resilience, education, and inclusivity within the university's surrounding areas.

Advancing Holistic Sustainability In Higher Education



Research

Dr. Anirban Chakraborty, from the Reaserch Development Office and Professor L.S. Shashidhara, Department of Biology emphasize the necessity for an integrated approach to sustainability within Indian higher education. While many institutions offer sustainability-themed courses, these efforts are often isolated from broader campus operations and research initiatives. In response, their team developed an indicator framework designed to assess enhance sustainability across campus and environments, focusing on interconnected social, economic, and environmental dimensions. The findings highlight Ashoka University's progress in aligning campus activities with sustainability principles, though further structured audits are recommended to reinforce and advance these practices comprehensively.

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Dr Shantanu Ganguly Director- HDFC Library

"Open Access Movement in SDG sectors is the need of the hour in India, a robust platform will reduce duplicity and enhance best practices"

Library Technology Conclave (LTC) India 2023



Partnerships

The HDFC Library, in collaboration with Informatics India Limited, organized the 7th Library Technology Conclave (LTC2023) in February 2023, centered on the theme "Evolving Library Ecosystem in the Al/Machine" Learning Landscape". The conclave served as a dynamic forum for exploring the transformative impact of AI and machine learning on modern library systems. The event featured workshops, thematic sessions, and panel discussions, attracting 164 participants from India and abroad. Keynote speakers, including Dr. Mia Ridge from the British Library, shared insights on AI/ML's impact on libraries. Prestigious academic sponsors like the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation and ICSSR supported the conclave. LTC2023 was a distinguished platform for knowledge exchange on AI/ML innovations in library systems.







ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS



Ashoka Farm Fresh



Ashoka Farm Fresh, initiated in 2016 by Vanita Shastri, Rashmi Singh, Sunita Bansal and a passionate group of wardens and students, focuses on growing seasonal organic vegetables fulfilling their love for gardening. What began with small-scale farming in thermocol boxes has expanded across various residence halls (RHs), with produce grown in the grassy areas of RH1, RH2, and RH3. The farm grows a wide range of local and exotic vegetables, all free from synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, ensuring the food is pure and fresh. The initiative also includes fruit trees and medicinal plants, promoting sustainable food practices and healthy living among students.

Methods In Ecology And Conservation Science



Divya Karnad, Assistant Professor, Environmental Studies, in her course, *"Methods in Ecology and Conservation Science"* introduces students to field methods in ecology and conservation science by involving both ecological fieldwork, lab work, and social science research methods. The course encourages students to come up with questions based on open ended exercises and seek their own answers through exploration. By the end of the course, students are equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to address ecological challenges and contribute to sustainable conservation efforts.

Sustainable Farming Practices



, Partnerships

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BLOOM was a community-based, clusterrandomized controlled evaluation of the Andhra Pradesh Community-managed Natural Farming (APCNF) program, led by Poornima Prabhakaran, Professor and Director, Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART), Trivedi School of Biosciences, in partnership with the University of Edinburgh and Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) which was funded by UK Research and Innovation Fund. The study, conducted in Kurnool and Visakhapatnam districts, aimed to assess whether the APCNF agroecology program reduced pesticide exposure and improved dietary diversity in agricultural households. Primary outcomes included pesticide exposure, dietary diversity, household income, and crop yield, while secondary outcomes focused on adult health and child growth and cognitive development. The intervention involved training in APCNF practices, with randomisation at the RySS cluster level.

Sustainable Ammonia



Vidya D. Avasare, Professor of Chemistry, in her paper "Engineered Electron-Deficient Sites at Boron-Doped Strontium Titanate/Electrolyte Interfaces Accelerate the *Electrocatalytic Reduction of N2 to NH3: A Combined DFT* and Experimental Electrocatalysis Study", explored the development of an efficient and durable catalytic system for the electrocatalytic nitrogen reduction reaction (ENRR). This innovative approach aims to sustainably produce ammonia, contributing to more efficient and environmentally-friendly methods in production processes. The research chemical promotes responsible production practices by improving catalysis systems, reducing energy consumption, and enhancing sustainability in industrial applications.

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Biodiversity Conservation Policy



Ghazala Shahabuddin, Visiting Faculty, Department of Environmental Studies, in her course "Conservation Policy in the Developing World", introduced policies related to biodiversity conservation in developing countries, considering ecological, historical, and socio-political contexts. Students learned to integrate biodiversity concerns with sustainable development and social issues. The course covered the processes of biodiversity loss, its consequences, and the political dimensions of species loss. It also critically explored conservation strategies like strict nature protection, ICDP, community-based conservation, PES, ecotourism, and wildlife laws in India. This initiative educates students on the importance of sustainable resource management and conservation practices, encouraging them to consider the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability.

Eco-Friendly Practices And Organic Farming Initiatives



The InfoEdge Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE) has taken a significant step towards sustainable practices by replacing plastic nameplates with eco-friendly name tag holders made from recycled cardboard. These products are designed in-house and crafted by industry vendor, cottage promoting а environmentally conscious production. Additionally, CfE incubated Basillia Organics & Gud Mom, founded by Shubham Oswal, which connects over 8,000 farmers to organic farming methods and provides consumers with natural, healthy products. This initiative supports responsible consumption and production and fosters sustainable agricultural practices, contributing to environmental conservation and supporting local economies.

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Divyashree A. N. PhD Scholar, Biology

"We use a lot of consumables especially to pour growth media for bacteria. These plates need to be sterile. Although one-time-use plastics are most convenient, our lab is trying to move towards glass consumables that can be recycled and are more environment friendly. We also use Glass Microscope slides for routine microscopy that is washed and recycled instead of discarding it as bio-waste."

Embedding Sustainability In Research Laboratory

[[]] Campus

Aligned with responsible resource use, the Biology Department incorporates sustainable practices in laboratory teachings, focusing on reducing and reusing materials to minimize waste. Dr. Laasya Samhita's lab, for instance, emphasizes the reuse of glassware and plasticware in experiments, instilling a consciousness towards resource efficiency among students. Additionally, this approach encourages the careful handling of materials to reduce biohazard waste, promoting responsible and safe practices in biological research while fostering sustainable resource management in scientific education.







TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

<image>

On-Campus Air Quality Management



To effectively monitor and combat the changes in the air quality of the Sonipat region, Ashoka University has been measuring PM 2.5, PM 10 and AQI (air quality index) on a daily basis. The data recorded on campus is compared with nearby locations, such as Murthal, Panipat and Delhi (Anand Vihar). The values of the nearby places are taken from the CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) site, while our data is recorded from equipment installed on our campus. The data is updated daily and monitored closely, especially as the air quality deteriorates seasonally for various reasons. Further, we ensure that the right systems, machinery and processes are in place which helps us in meeting the PCB norms and allows us to play our role in mitigating air pollution.



Comparative AQI Dashboard



Prof. Gautam Menon, Dean, Research, Director 3CS and **Professor of Physics and Biology**

Living more sustainable lives will be central to humankind's ability to cope with the impacts of climate change. Foregrounding such discussions and illuminating a way forward is a core mission of 3CS

The Centre For Climate Change And Sustainability (3CS)



3CS provides a collaborative hub to bring together members of the Ashoka University community who a collective passion for studying, share communicating, and mitigating the far-reaching consequences of future climate change on society, health, and the environment. Drawing upon Ashoka's extensive research and policy expertise, 3CS is guided by a vibrant intellectual community of committed scholars within Ashoka, as well as outside. The centre is committed to conveying the urgency of climate change and the need for sustainable practices. Using creative platforms including social media, blogs, artistic expressions, music, and podcasts, 3CS engages and mobilises support for what it does.

Click to visit 3CS Website \longrightarrow

Student Environment Ministry



The Environment Ministry works towards creating a sustainable, aware and environmentally responsible culture on campus. They carry out various social media campaigns, talks, activities and discussion sessions on campus and online to promote climate action and sustainable conservation, consumption.

Remote Sensing And GIS For Environmental Change

Teaching

The course on "Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing" taught by Meghna Agarwala, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, provides essential tools for students to analyze environmental impacts, align planning with sustainable goals, and address climate change challenges. The course covers practical skills in spatial analysis, enabling students to map water resources, assess water quality, and predict flood risks-an approach crucial for effective water management. Additionally, students learn to identify renewable energy project sites, enhancing the focus on clean energy sources, and sustainable infrastructure planning. Through remote sensing techniques, the course equips students to monitor critical environmental changes, such as deforestation and glacial retreat, fostering data-driven decision-making to mitigate climate change impacts and support ecosystem conservation.





Sourav Pal, Professor and Head of Department of Chemistry in his project focuses on the separation and adsorption of toxic gases and their transformation into value-added chemicals, showcasing the role of chemistry in addressing environmental and climate-related challenges. The research delves into the cooperative adsorption of monoxide in Fe(II) Metal-Organic carbon Frameworks (MOFs), utilizing computational density theory to uncover underlying functional mechanisms and explore methods to improve adsorption efficiency.

This work underscores the importance of molecular modeling in optimizing MOF designs for gas adsorption applications, paving the way for more effective environmental solutions. In collaboration with Reshma Jose at IIT Bombay, the project has resulted in two impactful publications, offering valuable insights into MOF-based approaches for mitigating toxic gas emissions.



Environmental Transformations Of Majuli Island



Research

Led by Mitul Baruah, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology and Environmental Studies, this research project investigates the environmental changes affecting Majuli Island in the Brahmaputra River. The island has faced significant land loss due to flooding, erosion, and climate change, leading to the displacement of its residents.

Through the use of visual anthropology, the project examines how climate change acts as a risk multiplier, amplifying existing vulnerabilities in the region. The documentary produced combines ethnography and filmmaking to capture stories of loss, innovation, and the complex relationship between humans and nature. The research aims to inform inclusive environmental policies for riverine communities in Assam and similar regions, promoting resilience and adaptation in the face of climate challenges.

One Health And The Impact Of Climate Change



This project, led by Gautam Menon, Director of 3CS and Professor of Physics and Biology, employs a One Health approach to study the interconnected health risks between humans, animals, and the environment, with a focus on soil-transmitted helminths (STH). Using data from Shillong and Vellore, it combines epidemiological and environmental research to map disease transmission patterns, incorporating remote sensing and GIS. The aim is to improve understanding and intervention strategies in endemic regions, especially where intensive animalhuman interaction and poor sanitation increase zoonotic disease risks. The findings will inform more effective STH elimination strategies and highlight the challenges of zoonotic and environmental reservoirs.

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Quantifying Teak Age To Understand The Impact Of Climate Stress



Led by Meghna Agarwala, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Ashoka University, the project examines the effects of climate change on the dry forests of central India, which are increasingly prone to fires. It focuses on the genetic dimensions of plant aging, exploring how frequent fires influence genetic and morphological aging, with significant implications for plant survival and carbon storage.

In collaboration with Dr. Modhumita Dasgupta of the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), the study employs advanced teak genome analysis to understand aging processes and their impact on carbon sequestration. Findings aim to enhance scientific knowledge and inform conservation strategies to strengthen forest resilience against climate change.

Amrit Sarovar Initiative



Partnerships

In partnership with the Government of Haryana, the CMGGA team from Ashoka University has played a pivotal role in the *Amrit Sarovar Initiative*, which focuses on the restoration and enhancement of ponds across the state. The partnership led to the successful restoration of 1,650 ponds, completed 45 days ahead of the national deadline of August 15, 2023.

Building on this success, the subsequent phases, Amrit+ and Amrit++, saw the construction of an additional 309 and 132 ponds, respectively. These phases emphasized not only environmental restoration but also beautification and long-term community sustainability. Additionally, 110 ponds under the Amrit++ phase have been monetized, generating income to further promote both sustainability and climate resilience in the region.

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Drivers Of Crop Residue Burning And Its Mitigation

ୁଙ୍ଗ Research

This study, conducted by Meghna Agarwala, Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Studies and Aparajita Dasgupta, Associate Professor of Economics, examines crop residue burning (CRB) in North India, which significantly impacts climate, weather, and public health. Conducted from 2021 to June 2023, it identified key drivers, including policy impacts, agricultural practices, and political cycles, using high-resolution mapping and comprehensive surveys. Findings revealed that the "Preservation of Sub-Soil Water Act, 2009" inadvertently increased CRB, while political factors and agricultural shifts also contributed. Despite public perceptions, CRB has risen, underscoring the need for effective, data-driven mitigation strategies to address environmental and health challenges.





CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Advancing Marine Conservation Through Knowledge Sharing



Partnerships

Ashoka University hosted a seminar titled "Marine Mammal Behavioral Ecology and Conservation Behavior" by Dr. Mridula Srinivasan, an esteemed expert in marine ecology. The event, held on 23 February 2023, the ecological emphasized and behavioral complexities of marine mammals, highlighting their unique adaptations to aquatic environments. Through engaging case studies, Dr. Srinivasan explored how behavioral ecology can inform conservation strategies, particularly the significance of social behaviors in ensuring population survival and reproduction in marine ecosystems.

Dr. Srinivasan as Special Advisor to NOAA's Assistant Secretary for Environmental Predictions and Observations, shared insights from her extensive research on marine mammals and turtles. Her role at NOAA Fisheries underscores the intersection of science, conservation, and societal impact. This initiative aligns with efforts to promote sustainable marine resource management, fostering academic dialogue on critical issues like marine biodiversity, ecosystem resilience, and conservation behavior.



Dr. Divya Karnad **Assistant Professor**, **Environmental Studies**

"Understanding and conserving the marine environment has become imperative for us to preserve any chance of adapting to climate change. From the Blue Economy to Blue Food and Blue Carbon, the marine realm is the new frontier for sustainable development and climate resilience"

Exploring Marine Conservation Through GIS And Remote Sensing



Teaching

The course "GIS1", taught by Associate Professor Meghna Agarwala from the Department of Environmental Studies, equips students with essential skills in GIS and remote sensing to address critical environmental challenges. Students learn advanced spatial analysis techniques, including raster analysis, image classification, and change detection using satellite imagery. These tools enable them to monitor and map changes in coastal and marine ecosystems, such as sea level rise, coastal erosion, coral reef degradation, and shifts in marine habitats.

Sustainability From Sea To Table



Divya Karnad, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, led the "InSeason Fish Project", which focused on promoting sustainable marine fisheries practices and raising awareness about the environmental impact of seafood consumption. The initiative encouraged diversifying seafood choices in India to reduce pressure on overexploited species and support marine ecosystem health. By highlighting endangered species such as sharks and rays and advocating for responsible consumption, the project helped shift practices among fish consumers and restaurants. Its contribution to sustainable practices was recognized with the 2023 Conde Nast Travel Award for Excellence in Culinary Conservation, reinforcing the link between food choices and environmental stewardship.

InSeason Fish stands as a beacon for holistic marine conservation, promoting sustainable fisheries, diverse seafood consumption, and heightened awareness about threatened marine species. By fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the oceans, the project sets a precedent for responsible and conscientious interactions with our marine ecosystems.





PROTECT, RESTORE & PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, **AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS**





Biodiversity And Ecosystem Management

Teaching

The "Ecology and Evolution" course provides a comprehensive introduction to quantitative research methods in ecology and evolution, focusing on experimental design, data collection, analysis, and scientific writing. It integrates practical studies using local plant and animal models to explore concepts like population dynamics, resource use, and phylogenetics. Taught by Imroze Khan, Assistant Professor of Biology, Shivani Krishna, Assistant Professor of Biology, Balaji Chattopadhyay, Assistant Professor at the Trivedi School of Biosciences. Students apply theoretical knowledge from ecology, evolutionary biology, bioinformatics, and biostatistics, developing skills to design effective sampling methods. The curriculum also covers behavioral research, highlighting observer bias and strategies to enhance data reliability.

Mitigating Noise Pollution On Campus

Ashoka University is located in one of the country's fastest urbanising regions. Rapid urbanisation has affected the climate as well as the air quality of the area. The National Highway 44 (NH 44) runs next to the University and the regular movement of heavy vehicles on it is a constant source of noise and air pollution. To address this problem, the University has planted trees along its boundary, which creates a natural barrier against dust and noise.

Impact Of Climate Change On Biotic Communities And Risks Of Disease Spillover

Research

This project led by Imroze Khan, Assistant Professor of Biology, Shivani Krishna, Assistant Professor of Biology, Balaji Chattopadhyay, Assistant Professor at the Trivedi School of Biosciences and Kritika Garg, Fellow, Biology Centre Faculty and for Interdisciplinary Archaeological Research addresses the link between climate change, habitat degradation, and the emergence of infectious diseases, focusing on zoonotic spillovers and vector-borne infections. It emphasizes the One Health and Eco Health approaches, examining interactions between ecosystems and human health. Through field studies on plant-pollinator and small mammal communities, the research aims to identify disease dynamics and zoonotic risks across varied habitats. Using environmental and risk models, the project provides insights to anticipate outbreaks, inform public health strategies, and promote ecosystem conservation to mitigate emerging infectious disease threats.

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Quantifying Forest Fires And Fire Understory To Understand Climate-Fire-Forest Composition Interaction

Led by Meghna Agarwala, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, this research project examines the critical interplay between climate, fire, and forest composition, emphasizing the need for diverse ecosystems over monoculture plantations. Utilizing remote sensing to map fire impacts, understory, and species diversity, it assesses forests' ability to provide ecosystem services beyond mere cover. Supported by grants and collaborations with WWF-India, the study spans regions in India and Nepal, focusing on factors like human-elephant conflict and climate-driven drought.

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Nature Positive University

Research

Ashoka University became a part of Nature Positive Universities, a global network of over 500 higher education institutions dedicated to promoting nature on campuses, in supply chains, and within communities. Nature Positive Universities is a partnership between the University of Oxford, UNEP Youth & Education, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, aiming to unite the fight against climate and biodiversity crises.

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Fostering Harmony Between Fragile Ecosystems And Human Interaction

Partnerships

The Department of Environmental Studies, in collaboration with IIT Kharagpur and ICSSR, organized the International Conference on "River Islands: Redefining the Anthropocene". This event brought global attention to the delicate ecologies of river islands and the challenges faced by their marginalized communities underscoring the need for focused research and policy. Through keynote addresses, panel discussions, a photo exhibition, and documentary screenings, the conference explored themes such as decoloniality, ecological vulnerability, and sustainable practices.

The Indian Plant Humanities Project

Research

The Indian Plant Humanities project, led by Sumana Roy, Associate Professor of English and Creative Writing, is creating a unique archive of plant life from the Indian subcontinent, blending creative and critical perspectives over two millennia. It documents diverse contributions, from ancient Sanskrit poetry to botanical reflections by J.C. Bose, supported by global scholars. This initiative aims to decolonize botanical knowledge, offering an alternative framework to Eurocentric views and reshaping climate change discourse.

Dr.Rajni Kaushik Head, Office of Sustainability

"At the Office of Sustainability, we envision a campus where sustainability is seamlessly integrated into every aspect of life, inspiring our community to become conscious stewards of the environment. By advancing initiatives like Project Pulp for paper recycling, Plate to Planet to reduce food waste, and sustainable infrastructure such as rainwater harvesting and composting, we're cultivating a culture of responsible consumption and resource mindfulness. Our commitment extends to raising awareness and empowering student innovations through various projects, where creative solutions for resource reduction and repurposing underscore our dedication to a sustainable future that reaches far beyond the campus."

Fauna In And Around Ashoka

Ishan Shanavas, a student of the ASP '25 batch at Ashoka University, has diligently compiled and shared his remarkable journey of exploring local wildlife in Sonipat. This captivating journey ultimately resulted in the publication of his book, titled "Fauna In and Around Ashoka University". Along with the 126 species of birds, there are 14 reptiles and amphibians, including the rat snake, a skink, and the cobra. Near and around are animals great and small that bring life to the scrub jungle and grassland that this part of northwest India is well known for: from the handsome jackal whose Latin name, the Canis aureus and the largest Asian antelope, the nilgai, which due to no persecution for centuries can be seen even on the roadside.

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Project Pulp-An Initiative Of LiveGreen@Ashoka

Research

The Office of Sustainability, through its student engagement program LiveGreen@Ashoka, launched Project Pulp—a unique paper recycling initiative dedicated to creating an in-house stationery brand from the paper waste generated by the Ashoka Community. Aligned with the principles of the circular economy, Pulp introduced its first product, the Pulp Notebook, in 2024, now available at the Ashoka University Merchandise Store.

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD **EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS**

ATLANT

NADA

Global And Local Perspectives On Environmental Justice

"Environmental Justice", an elective course taught by Mukul Sharma, Professor of Environmental Studies, examines the progression of environmental justice from local to global contexts, emphasizing its historical, cultural, and political dimensions. The course explores how systemic discrimination has influenced landscapes and how marginalized communities initiated environmental movements in the 1980s to combat these challenges. It also delves into the impact of environmental justice summits and the transboundary nature of contemporary concerns like climate change and the Rights of Nature. Through comparative perspectives, it addresses justice issues linked to gender, caste, and resource conflicts in South Asia.

Partnership With Haryana Government For Family IDs

To create a family ID for all families in Haryana, the CMGGA Associates assisted with the Parivar Pehchan Patra scheme to help the government identify low income families. Records of more than 85% families have been updated, compared to less than 40%. Local Committees were constituted to ensure verification of details. The government has started pushing welfare schemes to the most marginalized families (rather than waiting for the marginalized families to reach out and avail the schemes). Such an intervention increases awareness and ensures that each family enlists under eligible schemes. About 36,000 schemes have been sanctioned.

Civic Data For Empowerment

Research

Debayan Gupta, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, in his research project with the Isaac Centre for Public Policy, "Co-Producing Civic Engagement", discusses the limited awareness among Indian their local about representatives, citizens compounded by municipal corporation data that is often inaccessible or outdated. To address this gap, the Civic Data Project is developing a mobile application that enables citizens to access representative and ward information, along with contact details for municipal officials.

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Digitizing Government-To-Government Transactions

Partnerships

E-office, a digital workplace solution, aims to achieve a simplified, responsive, effective and transparent working of all government offices by digitizing government-to-government transactions. Successful adoption of Digitised File Management, Knowledge Management and MIS will benefit government employees, make it easier for the leadership to monitor and review the performance of subordinates and benefit citizens in the long term. With the help of CMGGA Associates, Haryana has been able to initiate digital processing of files in more than 95% of all state HQ and district HQ offices. Having trained over 25,000 government employees, over 1 lakh e-Files and 5 lakh e-Receipts have been cumulatively digitized by the users.

Platform To Track Government-To-Citizen Services

Partnerships

Antyodaya-SARAL is a one-stop unified platform to deliver and track Government-to-Citizen (G2C) services/schemes across Haryana. Under this initiative, CMGGA Associates have transformed service delivery in the state by digitising over 550 schemes. Over 3.5 CR applications have been received, 20 lakh SMS' have been sent for citizen convenience and more than 1 lakh calls have been answered through the dedicated call centre. With average citizen feedback of 4.3 on a scale of 5, Antyodaya-SARAL has received six national and statelevel awards in the past three years. Continuous interventions are being made to strengthen systems that ensure quality, ease and speed of processing applications. The project is still unparalleled in most parts of the country in terms of its scale and vision.

Transforming Social Justice Through CMGGA's One Stop Centre

Partnerships

The CMGGA (Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates) program exemplifies the successful translation of visionary policies into impactful actions, supporting over 20 major government initiatives and 50 pilot projects that align with 12 global sustainability goals. In collaboration with the Government of Haryana, the program has strengthened social justice through initiatives like the One Stop Centres (OSCs), providing critical support to women in crisis. These 24/7 centers across Haryana offer free legal, psychological, financial aid, food, and shelter, benefiting over 15,000 women to date. Despite pandemic challenges, OSC operations have grown significantly and have garnered recognition in both local and national media, as well as on social media platforms managed by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Union WCD Minister, and the Haryana Chief Minister's Office. These centers have become a vital resource for women in need, ensuring they have access to essential support and services in times of crisis.

Philosophies Of Non-Violence

Teaching

Shevchenko, Assistant Professor of Dimitry Philosophy, offers an in-depth exploration of radical non-violence theories in his course "Philosophy of Non-Violence: Jainism, Tolstoy, Gandhi". The curriculum integrates perspectives from ancient and modern thinkers to address the elimination of societal violence. The teachings of Jain philosophers emphasize extreme non-violence as a path to spiritual perfection. The course further examines Leo Tolstoy's ethical, social, and religious interpretations of non-violence, highlighting its relevance to broader societal structures. Lastly, it analyzes M.K. Gandhi's application of non-violence principles, both in his personal practices and as a cornerstone of India's independence movement, offering students a comprehensive view of non-violence as a transformative philosophy for conflict resolution and societal harmony.

Analyzing Regime Types, Warfare, And Indian Political Parties

Bann Seng Tan, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations, in his course *"Regime Type and War"*, examined how democracies and autocracies influence interstate warfare, focusing on the Democratic Peace (DP) theory, which posits that democracies rarely engage in war with one another. The course covered the history, empirical evidence, theoretical explanations, and critiques of DP research, employing quantitative methods, research design principles, and case studies. Students developed skills to critique DP literature and apply quantitative analysis to real-world cases.

Meanwhile, Rahul Verma, Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, taught *"Political Parties and Party Systems"*, exploring the essential role of political parties in Indian democracy. The course analyzed theories of party dynamics and their influence on representing societal preferences, culminating in an examination of India's evolving party landscape.

STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Koita Centre For Digital Health

Koita Centre for Digital Health at Ashoka (KCDH-A) is an interdisciplinary Centre, offering robust academic and research programmes aimed at advancing and developing a fresh perspective on Digital Health. KCDH-A partnered with Max Healthcare and MyHealthcare develop personalised to cardiometabolic risk assessment tools as well as their optimal management. They also partnered with data.org to create training modules in data science for health. The Centre is partnering with global universities and other health-groups including Johns Hopkins, Stanford, Centre for Chronic Disease Control generative AI, the areas of in health recommendations, and wearables. Through its involvement in the Digital Transformation for Health Lab (DtfHL), the Centre contributes to developing value-based approaches to health governance, focusing particularly on young people. Additionally, KCDH-A played a crucial role in the Genomic Surveillance of Sars-CoV-2 project, implementing a scalable hub-and-spoke model for sequencing labs, improving genomic surveillance capabilities, and building international research capacity. These initiatives demonstrate the Centre's commitment to fostering global collaborations that improve health outcomes and contribute to sustainable healthcare solutions.

Gitanjali Rana, Director **Office of Global Education**

"Education is the foundation of a sustainable future. By empowering students with the knowledge and skills to understand and address global challenges, we not only shape informed leaders, but also inspire global citizens committed to building a more equitable and sustainable world for generations to come."

Strategic Academic Partnerships For Advancing Global Education

Partnerships

The Office of Global Education advanced its sustainability and international collaboration goals in 2023 by signing 18 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with globally renowned institutions, including Boston University, Monash University, Trinity College Dublin, and the University of Sheffield. These partnerships facilitated crosscultural academic exchanges and provided students opportunities to participate in global sustainability initiatives. Through these collaborations, students explored innovative solutions, worked with international peers, and contributed to addressing environmental challenges locally and globally.

Centre For Health Analytics Research And Trends

Partnerships

The Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART) is advancing evidence-based research on population health through large-scale epidemiological studies across India. The center's multidisciplinary approach focuses on critical health determinants, including air pollution, nutrition, psychosocial factors, and the impacts of climate change. By utilizing AIbased modeling techniques, CHART aims to provide robust data that informs policy and enhances public health outcomes. Additionally, the center is dedicated to building research capacity through national and international collaborations, offering training opportunities to early and mid-career researchers, and contributing to the development of the next generation of health scientists. This initiative promotes knowledge sharing and fosters a global approach to tackling health challenges.

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CHAIR-INDIA

The Consortium for Climate, Health, and Air Pollution Research in India (CHAIR-India), established in May 2019, brought together exposure scientists and health researchers to address air pollution health effects. The first project, "CHAIR-India: Addressing gaps in achieving the sustainable development goals," was executed in collaboration with Karolinska Institutet, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston University School of Public Health, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, and the Centre for Chronic Disease Control. The project aimed to construct a nation-wide exposure assessment model for air pollution and ambient temperature, which could be leveraged to examine associations with a range of health and disease outcomes, building an evidence base for the health effects of poor air quality and ambient temperature on populations across India. Poornima Prabhakaran, Professor and Director, Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART), Trivedi School of Biosciences, led the project, which was funded by FORMAS-Swedish Research Agency.

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Governing Intimacies Initiative

The Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality pursued various projects under Governing Intimacies, a five-year research initiative in partnership with the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, funded by the Andrew Mellon Foundation. The project fostered new interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, sexuality, and intimacy in postcolonial societies, generating critical conversations and knowledge aimed at building more gender-equitable societies.

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Isaac Centre For Public Policy

Partnerships

The Isaac Centre for Public Policy (ICPP) at Ashoka University aimed to establish itself as India's leading public policy center, recognized for its research and ideas on Indian public policy. It focused on academic programs, policymaker-led research, and public policy events, offering interdisciplinary undergraduate and executive education programs, including modules for the Young India Fellowship. ICPP will disseminate its research, case studies, and policy briefs through workshops and thematic conferences, collaborating with other Ashoka centers. The Centre will also host an annual marquee conference that will bring together academics, think tanks, policymakers, and civil servants to address critical national issues, influence public discourse, and foster impactful dialogues on public policy.

Strengthening Good Governance Through Strategic Partnerships

Partnerships

Launched in 2016, the Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates (CMGGA) Program is a collaborative initiative between Ashoka University, the Government of Haryana, and Samagra Governance. This innovative partnership mobilizes young professionals to work across 22 districts in Haryana, aiming to enhance transparency, efficiency, and citizen-centric service delivery across various government schemes and initiatives.

The program's collaborative ethos extends beyond its core partners to include implementation alliances with organizations such as Pratham and Rocket Learning in education and the Digital Haryana Cell for improving citizen service delivery. Financial sustainability is ensured through partnerships with corporates and foundations, including Hero MotoCorp, Pernod Ricard India Foundation, and CISCO. These multi-stakeholder collaborations underscore the importance of integrated efforts in development sustainable achieving goals, emphasizing the transformative potential of partnerships in governance and public service delivery.

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Conferences And Educational Initiatives

Partnerships

The Department of Chemistry organized the Quantum Systems in Chemistry, Physics, and Biology Conference (QSCP-XXVI) in collaboration with leading institutions such as the University of Hyderabad, IISER Kolkata, the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, and the University of Rajasthan from October 14-20, 2023. This event brought together 111 participants from 17 countries, fostering global knowledge exchange collaboration and on advancements in theoretical and computational chemistry, physics, and biology. The conference explored emerging trends and future developments in these interdisciplinary fields, contributing to the global scientific dialogue.

Additionally, the Yusuf Hamied Chemistry Camp, held from January 28–30, 2023, provided an engaging three-day residential program for 9th-grade students as part of the RSC Yusuf Hamied Inspirational Science Programme. Hosted by Ashoka's Department of Chemistry, the camp hosted over 50 students from seven nearby schools, promoting early exposure to scientific inquiry and education.

Dr. Rajni Kaushik

Founding Head, Office of Sustainability

Lead, Livegreen@Ashoka Initiative Ashoka University

Note from the Head, Office of Sustainability

Reflecting on 2023, it is inspiring to see how Ashoka University continues to contribute meaningfully to a sustainable future. Through a collective focus on teaching, research, partnerships, and campus initiatives, our community remains deeply committed to fostering impactful change.

Since our last report in 2021, Ashoka University has made remarkable progress by establishing new centres dedicated to advancing research and policy aligned with India's national priorities and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Koita Centre for Digital Health (KCDH-A) is driving healthcare innovation, while the Isaac Centre for Public Policy (ICPP) and the Ashoka Centre for a People-Centric Energy Transition (ACPET) are addressing critical issues in governance, energy, and sustainability. The Centre for Data, Learning and Decision Sciences (CDLDS) has emerged as a key player in leveraging AI and data sciences for solving decision-making challenges, and the Centre for Health Analytics Research and Trends (CHART) is tackling pressing public health issues like air pollution, nutrition, and climate impacts, delivering actionable insights through AI-driven and large-scale epidemiological research. Together, these centres contribute significantly to SDGs such as Good Health and Well-being, Affordable and Clean Energy, and Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Our interdisciplinary approach is also evident in initiatives like international conferences hosted by academic departments, the Young India Fellowship Programme, focused programs for high school students like the Lodha Genius Program and Young Scholars Program, and global institutional partnerships, reflecting Ashoka's holistic vision for sustainability. Campus operations reinforce this vision, integrating renewable energy, optimising waste management, and fostering eco-conscious infrastructure. Ashoka's students have further amplified these efforts through vibrant, student-led societies and clubs that drive impactful initiatives addressing biodiversity conservation, waste reduction, and broader environmental challenges, fostering a sustainabilityfirst culture across campus.

Looking ahead, we are excited to build on this momentum, deepen collaborations, and enhance our contributions toward creating sustainable, actionable impact in the coming years. Heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders for making 2023 a remarkable chapter in Ashoka University's sustainability journey.

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

SDG REPORT 2023

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