



**Outlook India** spoke with **Mr Anup Vikal**, Chief Financial Officer, *Nayara Energy, on Project Tushti*. Excerpts from the interview:

# NAYARA ENERGY

**Building a better future for Devbhumi Dwarka district in Gujarat**



Endorsing behavioural change through technology engagements

**T**he smiling, bright faces of children amid a lush green backdrop, the neat and clean village streets, eager villagers crowding around a mobile clinic, a doctor examining a child. These small vignettes say it all – about the crucial outreach in health, nutrition and sanitation that Nayara Energy (formerly Essar Oil) is doing in Devbhumi Dwarka district in Gujarat.

Nayara Energy, which operates a 20 million tonnes a year oil refinery at Vadinar, has inked an MoU with the Gujarat Government to make Devbhumi Dwarka free from any cases of malnutrition. Along with its partners Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar and John Snow India Pvt Ltd (JSI India), the company is implementing 'Project Tushti' in 249 villages spread over four blocks in Devbhumi Dwarka.

The company is investing significant financial resources in the project that aims to ensure enhanced coordination among the ground health workers, like Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM), Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA). The region already has over 630 AWWs and 450 ASHAs, besides other frontline workers. Project Tushti also aims to ensure better convergence between the various government departments focusing on nutrition and healthcare, and increased consumption of nutritious food by children, adolescent girls and women.

Increasing nutrition levels by diversifying to a healthier crop



**Q We have heard a lot about Project Tushti that you have undertaken there in collaboration with the Gujarat government. Please tell us about that.**

India faces a very unique challenge of development paradox. While growing as one of the fastest economies in the world, it has to combat malnutrition. While the Government of India has mobilized multitude of efforts to address the country's nutritional challenges, Nayara Energy has been playing a pivotal role and therefore, in partnership with Government of Gujarat is endeavoring to make the entire Devbhumi Dwarka district under-nutrition free.

Through *Project Tushti*, we are aiming to improve the levels of nutrition across 249 villages in the district of Devbhumi Dwaraka, thereby contributing to the overall progress of the region.

In order to accelerate improvements in the region, the company is working with the implementation partners to strengthen the district's nutrition

indicators by leveraging health and wellness centres through technology and new-age mechanisms.

**Q What is the model that you have adopted for this?**

To accelerate improvements in the region, Nayara Energy is working on the model to leverage the State's existing ecosystem and infrastructure for distribution of all the diet and nutrition-related information, and actual nutrition. To strengthen the district's nutrition indicators, we are working with gram sakhis and voluntary workers.

There are a lot of behavioural changes that needs to be brought in too. Due to the nutrition habits in Gujarat, people tend to have certain nutritional deficiencies. Project Tushti is an all-comprehensive programme that is also trying to address behavioural and social changes too.

**Q How has the response to the programme been?**

The idea behind Project Tushti is that every villager (children, adolescent

girls, pregnant women or lactating mothers) is provided with preventive and curative forms of healthcare to ensure that the nutrition parameters are the highest in the state.

The Hon. Chief Minister of Gujarat runs a daily dashboard across the state to monitor the districts and their performance. Early signs of our efforts indicate that Devbhumi Dwarka is amongst the better districts in Gujarat. We will continue our efforts to make our 249 villages in Devbhumi Dwarka and 15 villages in Vadinar and nearby communities to be free of any cases of under-nutrition.

We believe we are part of a broader village ecosystem and therefore, it is our responsibility to ensure the socio-economic upliftment of the communities in which we operate. Our focus is to work with the families across three thematic areas - Health & Nutrition, Livelihoods & Education and Environment. Our commitment to the communities and the programs that we drive for them is resolute, well-governed and outcome-driven. ■