ASCEND
ISO 9001 & 14001:2015 Certified

CONNECTING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2022-2023

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ABOUT THE REPORT

This report provides information on the progress of our ESG 2022-2023 commitments. The report shows our areas of action, strategies and uncompromised dedication to ourselves, Investors and operations across environmental, social and governance dimensions.

REPORTING BOUNDARY & PERIOD

The Sustainability Report covers information from April 01, 2022, to March 31, 2023, on business operations and ESG performance. The report follows the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards.

ASSURANCE

The management has reviewed the performance of all our key Indicators to ensure the integrity and quality of our reporting. In addition, TUV India Private Limited conducted an independent assurance audit on our sustainability disclosures. The "Independent Assurance" statement issued by TUV India Private Limited also forms a part of this report.

REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The company has referred to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In FY 2022-23, Ascend Telecom recorded yet another highly productive year consistent with our track record, built on the passion of our employees and the trust that our customers continue to place in us. Despite headwinds, sustainability continues to define our business strategy and growth. Ascend Telecom has been shaping a sustainable climate and work culture, aligning with leading organizations. Our sustainability commitments have made an incredible impact on our business.

Leading Ascend for the past 11 years, since 2012, the initial focus was to build upon our ability to harness the diversity of the Ascend Team, a committed group of talented individuals from an incredibly diverse range of professional backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives. The Leadership team is fully committed to helping our people prosper, grow, and fulfil career ambitions as we strengthen our commitment to sustainability. We have also been accelerating our efforts to ensure that employees bring their best selves to work in a conducive and supportive environment.

We recognize the importance of climate change, and our programs aim to mitigate climate change through energy-efficient solutions, renewable energy, and reducing diesel-related greenhouse gas emissions. I am proud of the innovation and differentiation demonstrated by the team that has made Ascend Telecom a preferred business partner, fueled by the ideas and expertise of our brilliant teams. Be it the effective assessments of Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance, and understanding of the physical risks of climate change, our teams have been partnering with clients to create impactful tools that vastly improved our sustainability achievements.

Delivering on commitments

In 2022, we further strengthened our materiality to align with long-term sustainability targets. We remain committed to a strong program to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our partnership with leading socio-environmental collaborations with our partners across all regions.

We continue to improve our focus on areas with potential for further growth, increasing diversity, equity, equality & inclusion in our workforce, improving employee well-being and career progression, and showcasing the sustainability impacts of our work with Employees, customers, and business partners.

We are proud to be a Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards Community member and an early adopter of the revised Universal Sustainability Standards. This Report 2023 is presented as our communication on progress and an annual disclosure to stakeholders on progress made. As the report shows, we pledge our commitment, long-term Plan, Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI), and other internationally recognized standards and initiatives.

As we believe in adopting the best practices to evolve and innovate the way we conduct our business, it is clear that our dedication will continue to steer us and guide us in the path of achieving the highest standards of sustainability year after year.

Dr. Sushil Kumar Chaturvedi
Chief Executive Officer

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Since 2002, Ascend Telecom Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd is a leading Independent Tower Infrastructure Services Company that provides world-class passive Telecom Infrastructure and Allied Services to Indian Telecom Networks.

By 2010, our company was operated more than 1000 sites in five states. We then acquired India Telecom Infrastructure Limited, which had a portfolio of over 3000 sites spread out across 17 circles. Over the years, we continued to expanding our operations through organic growth and acquisitions. As of March 2023, we now operate over 8000 macro sites and 2000 micro sites, creating a balanced portfolio of tenancies from all major mobile operators.

Our teams represent professional expertise with diverse management experience in telecom infrastructure development, defence, civil, and maritime operations.

In 2022, we bagged the Top Telecom Company award from CIOLOOK and Fastest Growing Telecom Service Award from THE BUSINESS FAME.

ASCEND JOURNEY

Year	Value
2002	1000
2007	1500
2012	3864
2019	6374
2022	7440
2023	8220
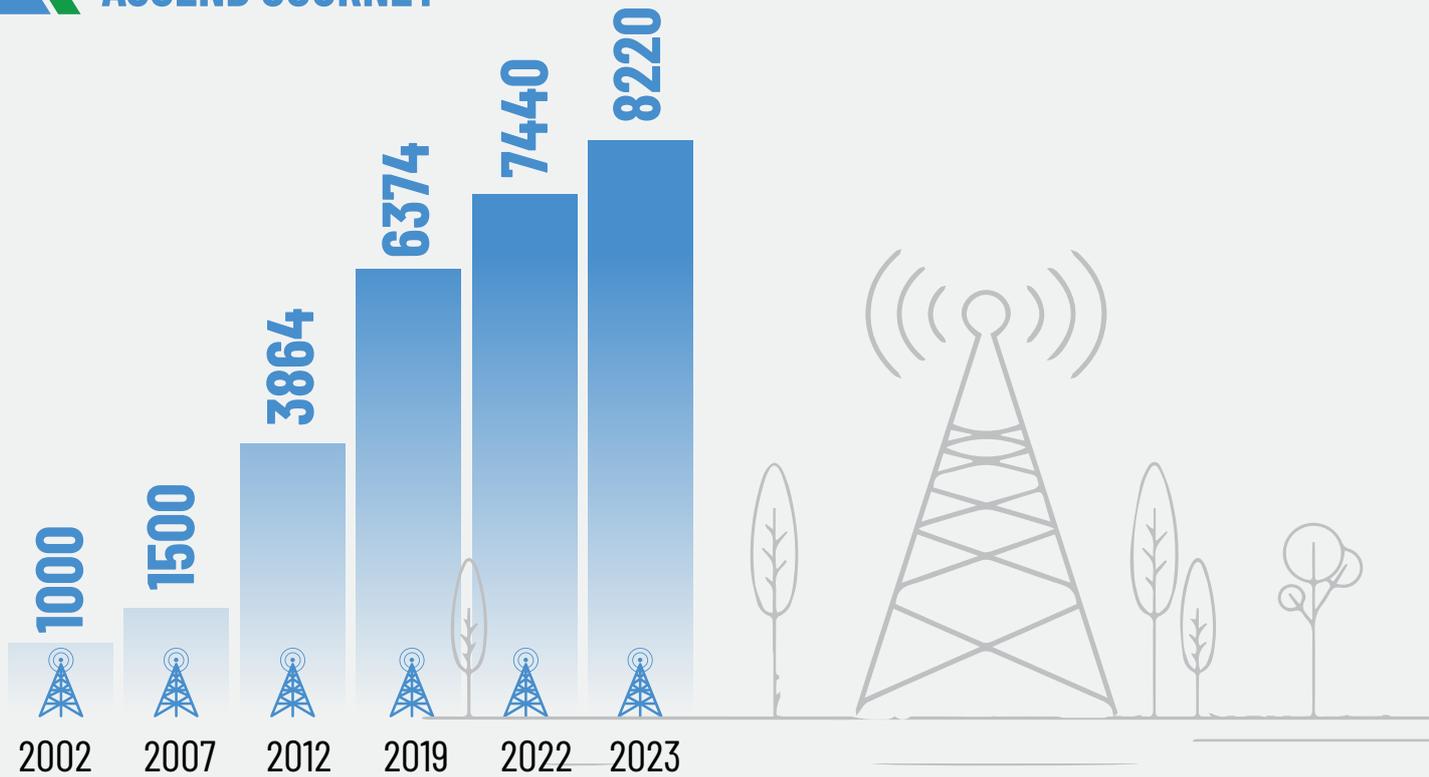
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS FY23

80%
Green Sites

100%
Statutory Compliances

90%
Employee Satisfaction Score

99.95%
Uptime

100%
ESG Code & Compliances by the supplier

93%
Customer Satisfaction Score

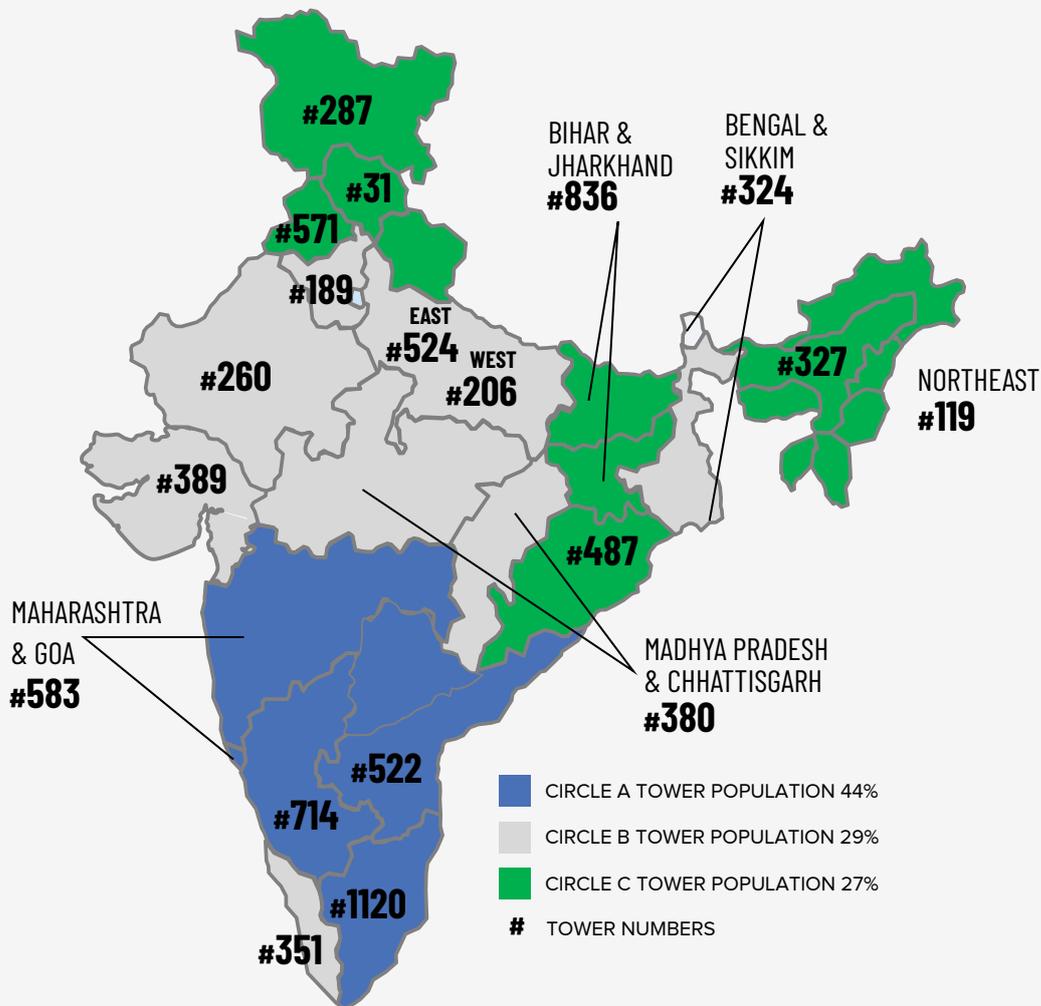**17**
Operating Circles

1.63
Tenancy Ratio

774
Model Sites

TOWER OPERATIONS

Ascend towers are fitted with battery banks, diesel generator cooling systems and fiber access to host wireline/ FTTX (fiber to the x) network Node/Hub. Our sites have an uptime of 99.95% with low energy costs. 99% of the towers are connected to the grid, and 80% are green.

The population numbers are of exit March'23. Please see www.ascendtele.com

The country was divided into 17 circles (excluding four metros) and categorized into circles, namely A, B and C, based on the potential of the circle to generate revenue. One of the factors for segmentation is the existing and possible growth of the subscriber base, due to which big and densely populated metropolitan cities get a Circle status apart from the state they belong to.

The "A, "B, "and "C" circles cover various geographic territories of varying population sizes. "A" circles are the largest in terms of population coverage. "C' circles contain the smallest population.

EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT

In the past decade, telecom technology has witnessed rapid upgrades, spotlighting new generation products and services. Global leaders have responded to the ever-demanding landscape by implementing state-of-the-art infra designs & products to ensure adaptability and scalability to meet the changing needs.

Integrated Management System
Guides on quality & environmental aspects, policies, processes, procedures, records and compliance with ISO 9001:2015 & ISO 14001:2015 standards.

Business Continuity Management
Ensures processes and resources can operate in critical situations.

Customers Satisfaction
Annual surveys to evaluate the expectations of customers and their level of trust and loyalty to our business.

Six Sigma Principles
Ensures continuous improvement, cost saving reduces variation and eliminates causes of defects in processes by focusing on outputs that are critical to customers.

Materiality Assessment
Identify and prioritise risks most relevant to business and stakeholders.

Vendor Performance
Ensures our vendors comply with Ascend's ESG framework.

ESG GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Being socially conscious and responsible is an absolute necessity. By integrating ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) practices, we effectively address environmental and social challenges and risks, enhancing long-term sustainability while minimizing negative impacts. Our ESG consciousness fosters a people-centric vision, driving value collectively. Moreover, it enables us to make a positive social impact, engage with stakeholders, prioritize ethical governance, and unlock investment and market opportunities. Informed by our materiality assessment, we have established a robust ESG strategy that considers key risks, allowing us to concentrate on the most critical aspects.

ENVIRONMENTAL	RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES	CLIMATE	ENERGY OPTIMIZATION	WATER & WASTE MANAGEMENT
SOCIAL	CARING FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES	EMPLOYEE CARE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION
GOVERNANCE	BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN A FAIR & ETHICAL MANNER	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & GRM	RISK MANAGEMENT
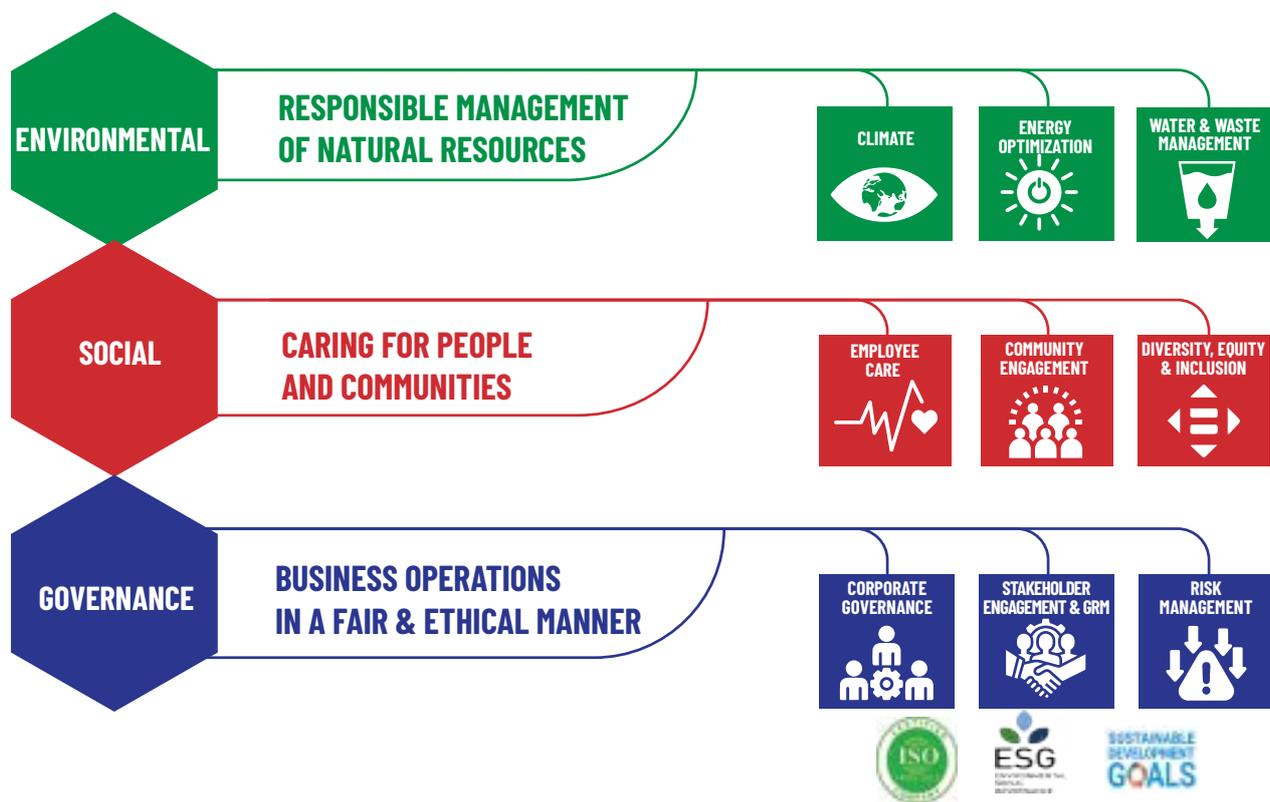
Ascend Telecom effectively manages ESG considerations across its operations through a data driven, results-focused approach. Our enhanced decision-making process reflects our commitment to tangible improvements and long-term value.

To ensure the success of our ESG initiatives, we have established a dedicated ESG committee comprising passionate ESG warriors from various departments. This committee reports directly to the Ascend Telecom Board. It includes vital members such as the Chief Sustainability Officer, Chief Technology & Energy Officer, ESG National Head, and representatives from the Investor organization.

Independent business partners are entrusted to execute special requirements and assurance audits to maintain accountability and transparency. The ESG committee diligently oversees the consistent application of our ESG approach, takes focused actions to achieve our targets, and collaborates closely with the company's business teams. Through this collaborative effort, we strive to make a positive and lasting impact on our business and the world.

The ESG committee's responsibilities include:
- Identifying and reviewing ESG issues, risks, and opportunities related to health and safety, environmental protection, climate action, operating procedures, relationships with employees, customers and suppliers and community engagement)
- Tracking ESG performance and recommending strategies for improvement.
- Reviewing statutory sustainability/ESG performance obligations.
- Evaluating and suggesting the board's endorsement of the annual ESG report.
- Providing the board with updates on relevant ESG matters.

ESG principles and objectives are central to our management's core priorities and tie directly to the company's overall success. Our functional KRAs / KPIs are aligned with ESG principles, EMS processes and Sustainable Development Goals. This approach allows us to address our activities under a unified framework comprehensively. Details are below in Annexure 2.

ESG CAPACITY

ASCEND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- ESG direction framework
- Effective implementation of ESG
- Report to shareholders and regulatory authorities

ESG COMMITTEE
- Assist the company board on ESG matters
- Guide ESG direction through the framework
- Effective implementation of ESG
- Seek expert inputs and consultation when required

CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER (CSO)
ESG NATIONAL HEAD
CORPORATE ESG WARRIORS
- Responsible for ESG oversight & accountability
- Day-to-day monitoring and implementation
- On-ground implementation, monitoring & ESG KPI reporting

FIELD FORCE
- Site-level monitoring & reporting ESG KPIs to circle offices
- Site-level response to ensure uptime
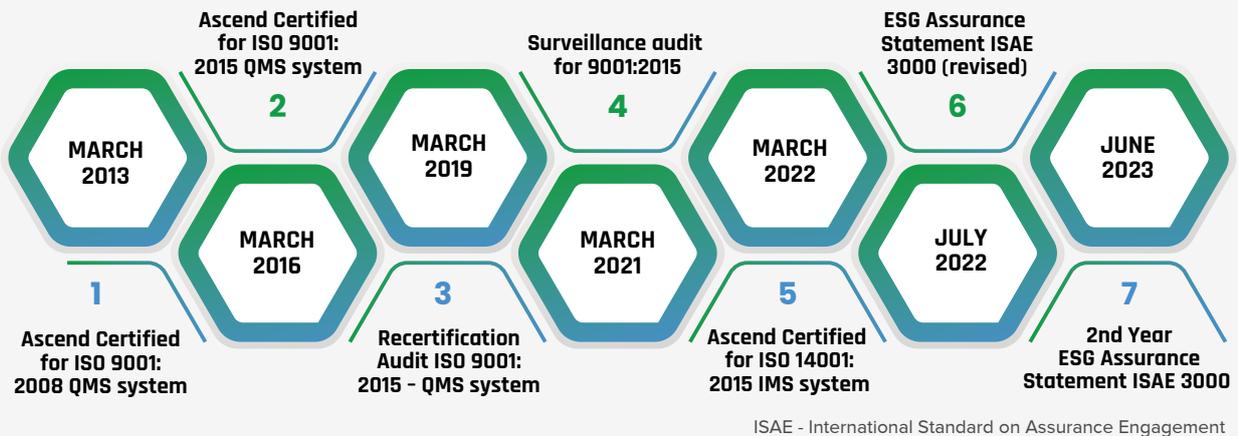- Community engagement

Ethics and integrity are the bedrock of Ascend's board. They proactively manage risk exposure and take swift actions when needed. The management team evaluates finance, environmental, governance and climate risks. The senior management assesses, addresses, and mitigates risk while the board and its committees provide insight. This approach ensures a risk-aware culture and the company's long-term sustainability.

Periodic brainstorming sessions are conducted with experts to seek opinions and constructive feedback on the following:

- Efficacy
- Design changes
- Additional skills and capabilities
- Performance
- Cost escalations
- Process deviance
- Quality gaps

ESG CERTIFICATIONS/ AWARDS

Ascend, a leading global infrastructure provider implements systems and processes per international standards and certifications in the telecommunications industry. The Quality Management Team adheres to global standards on accounting, material procurement and practices, ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, six sigma, cyber security and occupational health and safety. A list of certificates is provided in the Annexure.

2 Ascend Certified for ISO 9001: 2015 QMS system — MARCH 2013

4 Surveillance audit for 9001:2015 — MARCH 2019

6 ESG Assurance Statement ISAE 3000 (revised) — MARCH 2022

JUNE 2023

1 Ascend Certified for ISO 9001: 2008 QMS system — MARCH 2016

3 Recertification Audit ISO 9001: 2015 – QMS system — MARCH 2021

5 Ascend Certified for ISO 14001: 2015 IMS system — JULY 2022

7 2nd Year ESG Assurance Statement ISAE 3000

ISAE - International Standard on Assurance Engagement

We assure an alignment on the following ESG & sustainability ISO certificates from our key business partners:
- ISO 9001:2015
- ISO 45001:2018
- ISO 14001:2015

Ascend received the following awards and recognitions in FY23

KAMIKAZE — Logistics & Supply Chain Leadership Award

THE BUSINESS FAME — Fastest Growing Telecom Service Provider

INFHRA — Environmental Sustainability Award -2022

UEM — CSR Excellence Award-2022

ENVIRONMENT

At Ascend, the environment is at the heart of our commitment. We are proud of our progress in creating a sustainable telecom ecosystem. Our focus on energy efficiency, renewable sources, and responsible practices has reduced our environmental impact. Collaborating with stakeholders, we drive sustainability initiatives and adhere to international standards. We envision a greener future where technology and ecological responsibility coexist harmoniously. Together, we shape a better world for all.
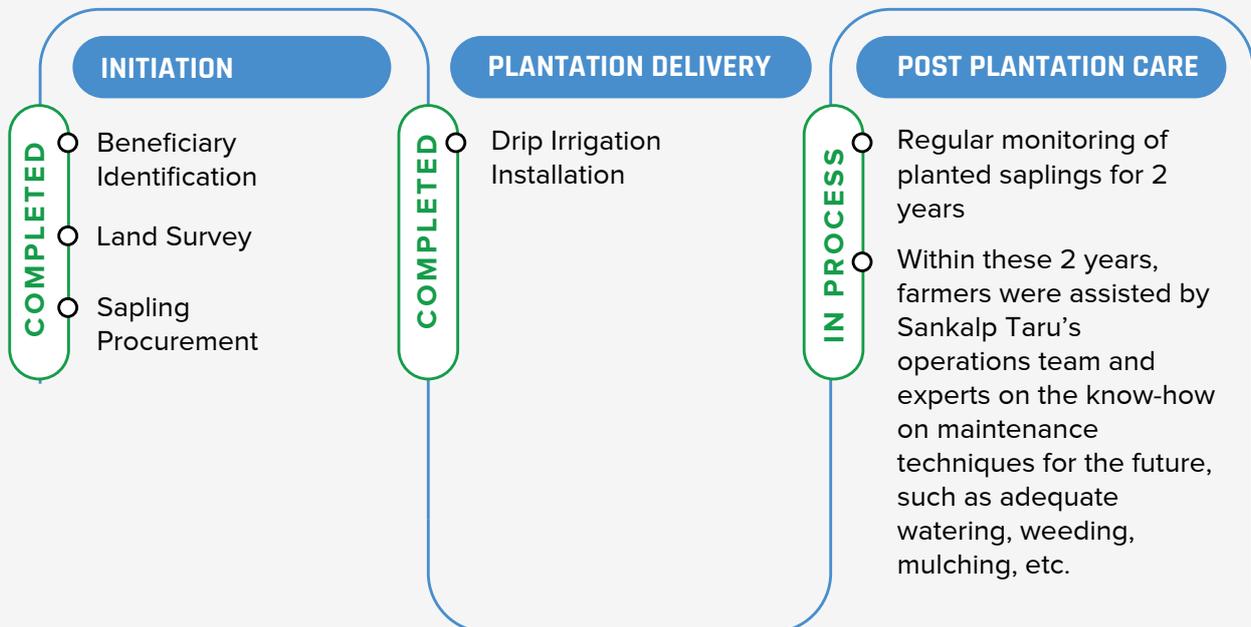
◥◣ BIODIVERSITY PROGRAM

Climate action is integral to our strategies. We prioritize clean technology in operations and solutions, minimizing our environmental impact. Through the Sankalp Taru Foundation, we launched the Rural Livelihood Support Plantation Program with farmers in nine states. By planting fruit trees through agroforestry, we reduce pollution, rejuvenate the land, and promote socio-economic growth.

PROGRAM PLAN

PLANT FRUIT-BEARING TREES TO ADAPT TO THE CHANGING CLIMATE CONDITIONS

PROVIDE LIVELIHOOD TO FARMERS AND REDUCE THE SUICIDE RATES BECAUSE OF CROP FAILURE

INCREASE GREEN COVER AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY IN THE STATES

SankalpTaru proposes a phased approach for the plantation and maintenance of 1,00,000 trees.

INITIATION

COMPLETED

- Beneficiary Identification
- Land Survey
- Sapling Procurement

PLANTATION DELIVERY

COMPLETED

- Drip Irrigation Installation

POST PLANTATION CARE

IN PROCESS

- Regular monitoring of planted saplings for 2 years
- Within these 2 years, farmers were assisted by Sankalp Taru's operations team and experts on the know-how on maintenance techniques for the future, such as adequate watering, weeding, mulching, etc.

# SDGs ASSOCIATED WITH PLANTATION MODEL

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being:
Trees contribute to our health and well-being in several ways. They absorb odours and pollutant gases and can reduce asthma rates due to improved air quality.

Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy:
Tree planting will help curb greenhouse emissions and cool the earth's temperature. It's one way to reduce energy— installation of solar panels on-site and using green energy for irrigation and other activities.
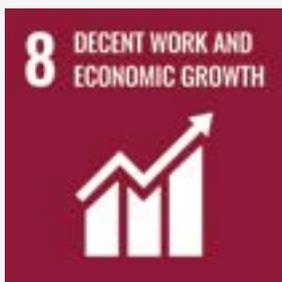
Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth:
Tree plantation will generate employment in nearby rural communities.

Goal 13: Climate Action:
Trees help to mitigate climate change by storing carbon and releasing oxygen into the air. They filter and clean the air we breathe and help prevent water pollution.

Goal 15: Life on a Land:
Trees also create a nurturing habitat for plants and animals. Many animals make their homes in trees, promoting biodiversity.

ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL IMPACT

50,000 tons
of Carbon Dioxide to be
sequestered in a lifespan

95,833 tons
of oxygen to be produced
in a lifespan

1,200 tons
of fruits to be produced
per season

600,00,000 INR
income per season for
each farmer

* The life span of a fruit-bearing tree is considered to be 20 years

STATE-WISE TREE TAGGED AND SURVIVAL RATE

Jharkhand
12,014

Andhra Pradesh
10,057

Rajasthan
11,504

Odisha
10,308

Madhya Pradesh
10,434

Haryana
10,031

West Bengal
15,428

Biswanath, Assam
12,056

Himachal Pradesh
11,299

Total: 1,03,131

Overall survival rate is 95-100%

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2480 MWh
Renewable energy generated

32,899 tCO2e
Scope 1 emissions

2184 tCO2e
Emissions avoided through renewable energy

171,659 tCO2e
Scope 2 emissions

267,716 MWh
Total energy consumed

100%
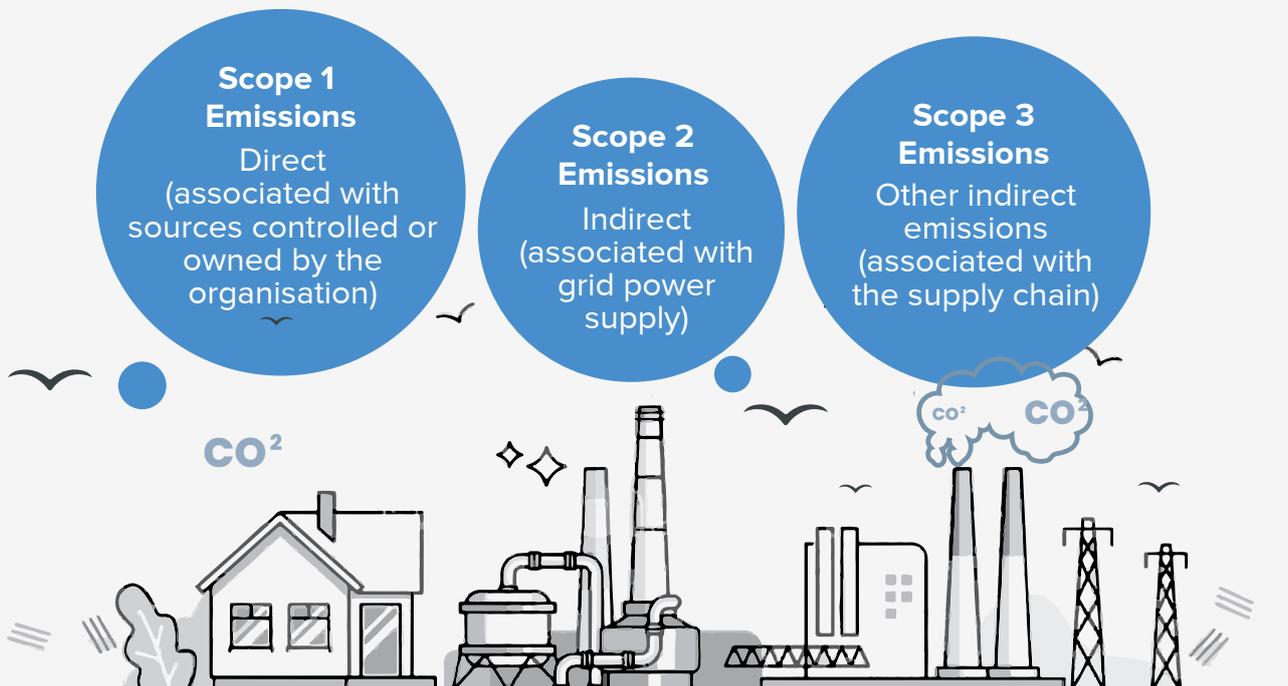Waste recycled
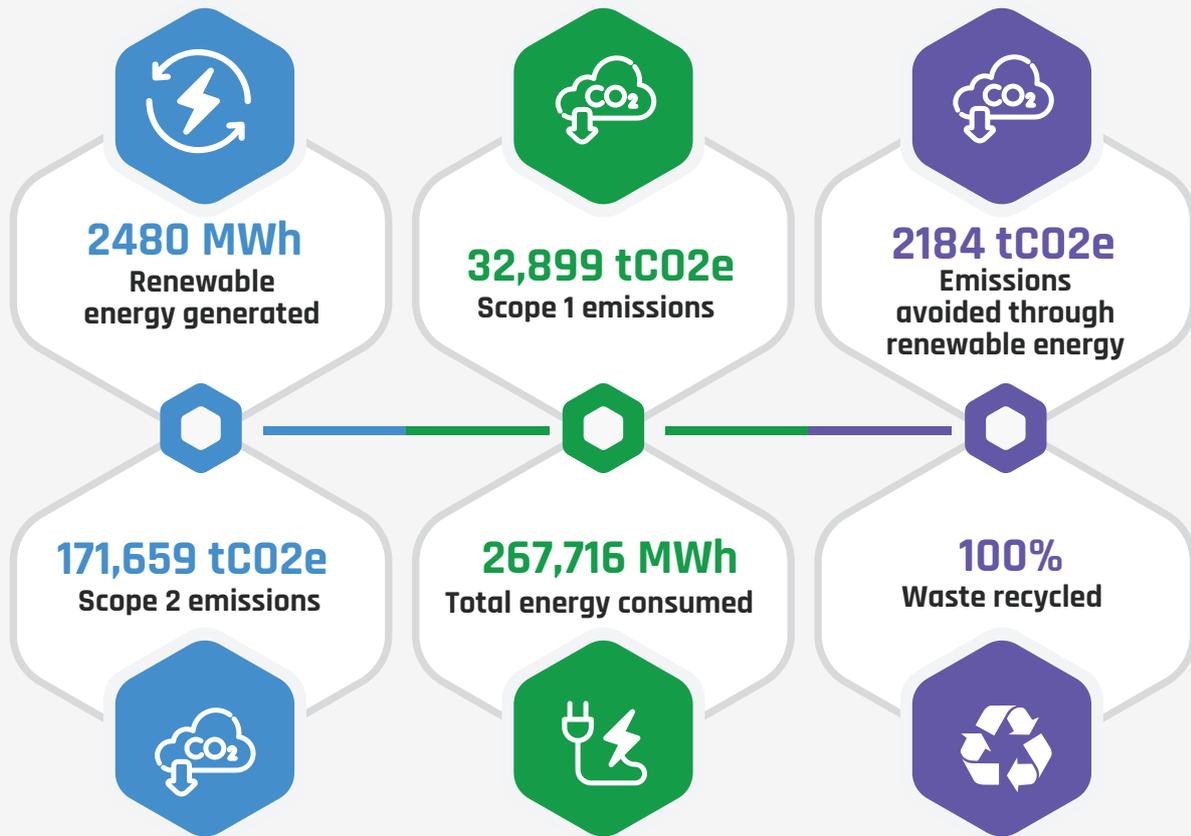
GHG EMISSIONS

Containing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions has far-reaching benefits. It mitigates climate change effects, enhances public health, boosts the economy, and preserves global biodiversity.

GHG EMISSIONS ARE CLASSIFIED INTO THREE SCOPES:

Scope 1 Emissions
Direct (associated with sources controlled or owned by the organisation)

Scope 2 Emissions
Indirect (associated with grid power supply)

Scope 3 Emissions
Other indirect emissions (associated with the supply chain)

■ EMISSION MANAGEMENT

Addressing the climate crisis begins with responsible management of our business operations. By reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to grid supply, we not only improve our bottom line and cut operating costs but also enhance employee productivity with minimal impact on the ecosystem. Our initiatives to mitigate GHG emissions include:

01

GRID SUPPLY IMPROVEMENT:
Successfully achieve higher average grid requirements by removing inefficiencies from our systems and reducing emissions. Our efforts have allowed us to meet over 90% of our energy requirements through the grid.

02

INTELLIGENT STORAGE SYSTEMS:
We utilize diverse chemistries, such as Lithium-Ion cells, to achieve the highest energy density, minimal landfill waste, and lead processing. We store surplus power efficiently by employing intelligent algorithms, resulting in minimal losses. Moreover, our appropriately sized battery banks allow us to adapt to varying site conditions without unproductive redundancies.

03

DIESEL GENERATORS:
Through rigorous monitoring and strict controls on measuring diesel consumption in litres per month per KW, we have resulted in a significant reduction in diesel consumption by 6.8% over FY22.

04

OTHER GREEN INITIATIVES:
Implementing natural draft chimneys and replacing air conditioners in more than 3500 sites and non-DG model sites has substantially reduced power and energy demands.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

In the telecom infrastructure industry, energy components entail high operational costs. However, our dedication to excellence is evident in our pan-India cell site uptime, which stands at an industry-leading 99.95%. To ensure seamless and efficient operations, we have entrusted a single service partner with expertise in solar energy solutions, technology, and IT/software tools to manage our pan-India operations. This strategic approach allows us to maintain top-notch services while optimizing energy consumption and costs.

ENERGY SUPPLY SCHEMATIC

Telecom infrastructure is one of the highest energy consumers. Ascend provides secondary and tertiary support systems on sites to ensure uninterrupted energy availability, battery storage and diesel fuel. As a result, we ensure consistent quality grid supply in our regional locations. Ascend guarantees continuous quality power supply to customer equipment by providing intelligent storage batteries that store and release power on demand with the highest conversion efficiency. In addition, standby DG sets bridge grid supply shortages in critical and load sites.

MONITORING & CONTROLLING

Remote monitoring devices connect every site to the Centralized Tower Operations Center (CTOC) and collects status and dynamic performance data. The data provides insight into various impacting parameters like unplanned disruptions, period of battery discharges, charging efficiencies, and DG run hours. CTOC monitoring also tracks grid consumption & payments to local electricity supply companies, customer equipment inventory and power entitlement, customer load measurements for revenue assurance and energy billing. In addition, the energy cost of servicing per kilowatt of connected power (DC Load) is a critical metric in benchmarking our energy efficiency performance.

Grid Power · **Intrusion** · **Diesel Generator Set** · **Climate Management** · **Battery Bank** · Remote Monitoring Device · **Solar PV Panels** · **Fire & Smoke Detection** · **GPRS link** · CTOC · **DC Power Supply**

Power Automation Management   **Site safety through remote management**

ENERGY OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVES

Deploy Wind Chimneys
» Optimize the air circulation naturally
» Avoid/minimize the use of AC

Optimize Generator Capacity
» Optimize Generator Capacity
» Capacity selection according to load and grid availability
» Optimum diesel consumption

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Ascend follows the Reduce, Reuse, Refurbish, Repurpose, and Recycle approach for waste management, aiming to minimize waste in landfills. We actively reduce single-use plastic and paper consumption. Proper disposal of hazardous waste, such as batteries and electronic waste, is ensured through authorized vendors. Our commitment to environmental compliance remains steadfast. In 2022, 870,390 kg of battery banks and 10,239 litres of waste DG oil generated from field operations were disposed through vendors authorized by the state pollution control board. Ascend has not identified any noncompliance with environmental laws and/or regulations.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Committed to minimizing our water footprint, we use water sensors to reduce consumption. We consumed 44.13 lakh litres, with 34.26 lakh litres at circle offices and 9.87 lakh litres at the corporate office. Water is discharged responsibly into local municipal drainage networks.

GREENING OUR SITES

In line with the CSR Act 2013 of the Government of India and regulatory requirements, we actively engage employees, customers, and stakeholders in developing green sites. Through our green initiative, we support farmer communities, ensuring increased income, reduced crop failure, and meeting nutritional demands through fruit tree planting. Moreover, our efforts enhance urban environments by adorning cities with native plants that absorb pollution and produce high oxygen levels.

SOCIAL

The social aspect of ESG for our telecom company encompasses a profound commitment to people and communities. We focus on fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce, promoting employee well-being, and upholding human rights across our operations and supply chains. We actively contribute to the socioeconomic development of our communities by supporting education, healthcare, and other initiatives that enhance their quality of life. Additionally, we prioritize data privacy and security, ensuring the trust and protection of our customers information. By addressing social issues, we aim to build lasting relationships, contribute positively to society, and create a meaningful impact in the lives of our employees and the communities we operate.

In FY 22, we achieved robust operating performance, supported by strategic and realistic employee, supplier, and community engagement policies and programs. We recognize the significance of social performance and have carefully monitored key social performance indicators, including:

115802
Community Members Benefited Through our Charitable Programs

₹19.6m
Charitable Commitments

0.19
LTIR per 2 lakh workers

0
Injuries Reported

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Our onboarding process for new employees is designed to foster a future-ready and skilful environment. The foundation program focuses on cultivating flexible skills, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) knowledge, and management capabilities. Additionally, we provide access to leadership development programs. Employees completed an average of 41 hours of training during FY22, fostering continuous professional growth.

Training Parameters	%
Technical upskilling	41%
Management Development	37%
Health & Safety	15%
Process Adherence	6%

PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Our Performance Management System (PMS) blends structured and flexible approaches to develop and manage performance. It integrates KRAs, KPIs, and contributions to organizational goals, recognizing achievements and addressing unsatisfactory performance. PMS fosters communication between supervisors and staff while identifying employee strengths for continuous improvement.

The Integrated Employee Appraisal and Review Program includes:

- Board approval of the annual operating plan
- Acceptance of employees key result areas (KRAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Periodic monitoring of performance
- Functional review through IRM (Internal Review Meetings)
- Monthly performance review of the board (MIS)
- Employee performance appraisal (PMS)

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES:

OPEN DOOR ATMOSPHERE
Discuss job-related concerns with confidentially

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT
Encourage employees to ideate, innovate and create ideas

LEARNING AND UNLEARNING
Personal and professional development, knowledge sharing and online workshops

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
Nurture employees to grow individually and professionally

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Create an atmosphere of dignity, equity and inclusion

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
No discrimination based on age, race, colour, religion, national origin, sex, physical and mental disability

EMPLOYEE CARE

Safety is our utmost priority at Ascend. We ensure safe working conditions for teams and vendors. Our Corporate Sustainability Department, Corporate Safety, Quality Management team, and ESG Committee actively monitor and control HSE performance.

Training programs provide HSE information to employees, suppliers, vendors, and contractors. Technicians and customers receive safety instructions during tower installations. Our Occupational Health & Safety Management System reinforces our commitment to a secure working environment.

- Detailed policy and implementation
- 50%-50% of management & workers participate in the quarterly held OHS committee meetings
- OHS training calendar
- Reporting major and minor accidents
- Reporting work-related incidents and employee health & safety.

■ HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

At Ascend Telecom, the health and safety of our employees is of utmost importance. In our corporate offices, circles, and warehouses prioritize providing a safe and healthy work environment for all, including contractors, customers, and visitors.

Key material aspects of our occupational health focus on ergonomics, health impacts, infectious diseases, food safety, and business travel safety.

Our Lost Time Injury Rate (LTIR) is an impressive 0.19 per 2.0 Lakh work hours, reflecting our dedication to maintaining a safe and secure workplace for everyone.

■ DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Ascend Telecom prioritizes fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equal-opportunity culture. Everyone is valued for who they are.

Our employee and human resource practices and policies are designed to promote respectful communication, cooperation, dignity, and respect among all employees. All employees attend and complete annual diversity training to enhance diversity awareness, reinforcing our commitment to this responsibility.

Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) performance for the reporting year ending March 23 reflects our progress: 3.37% representation for women and 1.12% for People With Disability (PWD) from permanent employees. We continue to strive for a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

We have developed guidelines for the following:

- General safety
- Excavation safety
- Other construction & Operations related work safety
- Tower erection and electrical work safety
- Prevention and management of Electrical hazards & first-aid

Table 1: Select Health & Safety Indicators

Health and Safety Indicator	Unit	Value
Health and safety training completed.	Hours / Person	5
Safety incidents	Number	0
Emergency safety drills	Number	1
Total employees	Number	270
Women in the workforce	%	2.96
Workforce below 30 years	%	5.93
Total employees hired	Number	31
Total employees resigned	Number	25
Attrition average	%	14.5

SELECT EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING INITIATIVES

PREVENTIVE HEALTH CHECKUP	**YOGA CLASSES**	**BLOOD DONATIONS**
Available for employees above 40 years with medical coverage. An accident coverage is also available to all employees	To help maintain physical and mental health	Donate blood to patients at nearby hospitals and during blood collection drives

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

At Ascend, our employees are our greatest assets. We prioritize their well-being, ensuring physical, emotional, and mental health. We foster employee welfare, safety, engagement, and productivity, promoting a healthy work-life balance.

We provide the following benefits:

- Life insurance
- Health care
- Disability and invalidity coverage
- Privilege Leave encashment & GMC
- GPA Insurance with variance in Total SI (sum Insured) and PF, ESIC as per compliance

- Retirement provision
- Stock ownership
- GMC – Group medical insurance policy & GPA – Group personal accident policy.
- Others

Parental leave
Granted as per the Maternity Benefit Act to women employees not covered under the ESI Act for a maximum of 26 weeks. The leave can be extended up to a maximum of 30 calendar days or one month for sickness/illness related to pregnancy. The extended leave would be considered PL subject to leave at credit or without pay.

Paternity leave
Permitted for 3 days for up to two children shall be supported with a copy of the Medical Certificate from a Registered Medical Practitioner and the birth certificate. The employee can avail of leave within one month of childbirth.
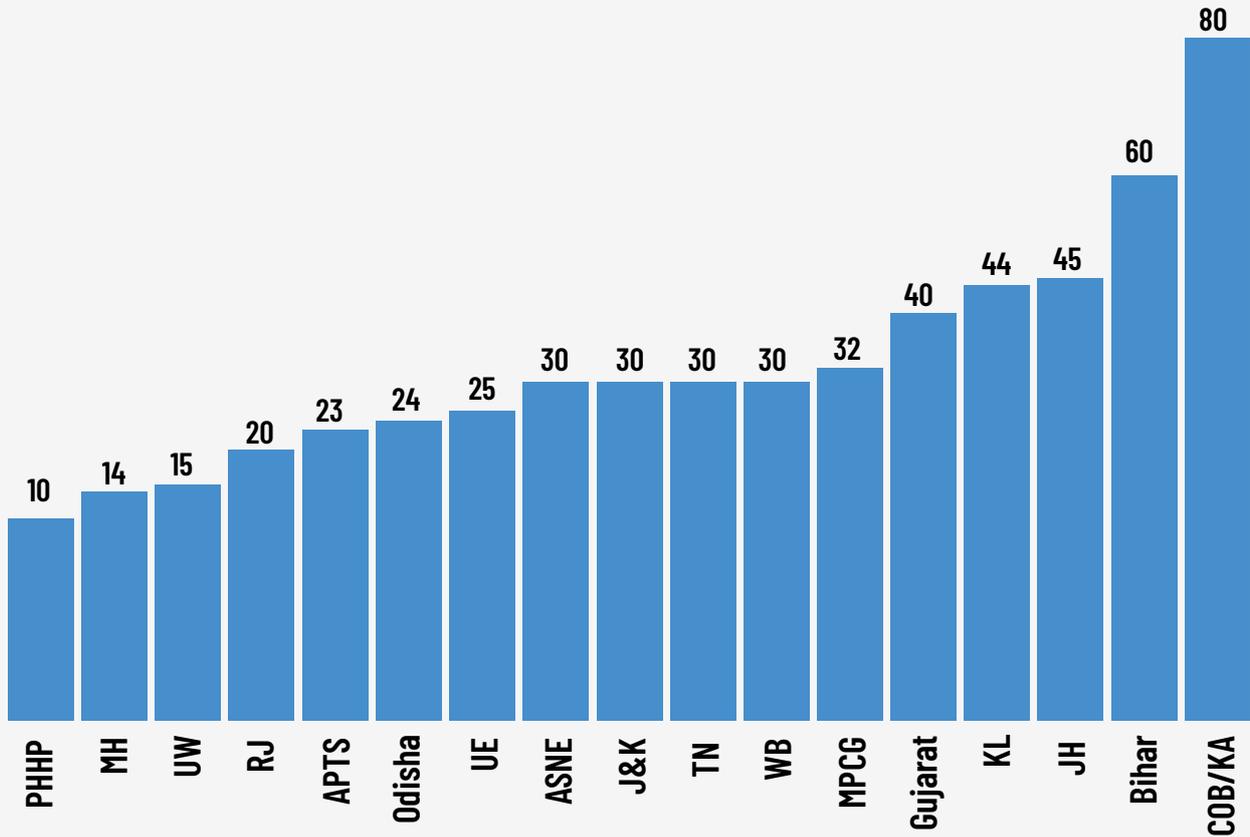
EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

Our employees are passionate about volunteering, and we actively support their commitment to creating positive change in our communities. Through our volunteering program, employees can choose to support causes close to their hearts, whether it's a local non-profit, their child's school, or our partner organizations.

LIFE SKILL EDUCATION PROGRAM

In FY23, our employees dedicated 552 hours to conducting classes in counselling and training children in decision-making and behavioural skills. These efforts were focused on primary and secondary government schools, fostering valuable life skills among the younger generation.

PRODUCTIVE HOURS SPENT BY EMPLOYEES ON LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

Category	Hours
PHHP	10
MH	14
UW	15
RJ	20
APTS	23
Odisha	24
UE	25
ASNE	30
J&K	30
TN	30
WB	30
MPCG	32
Gujarat	40
KL	44
JH	45
Bihar	60
COB/KA	80

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

At Ascend, our CSR actions are driven by the vision of "Creating a better future through sustainable choices." We integrate CSR activities with our business strategies, setting targets, allocating resources, budgets, and specific timelines to achieve desired outcomes. We have positively impacted over 115,802 direct and indirect beneficiaries thanks to our partnership with NGO implementing partners.
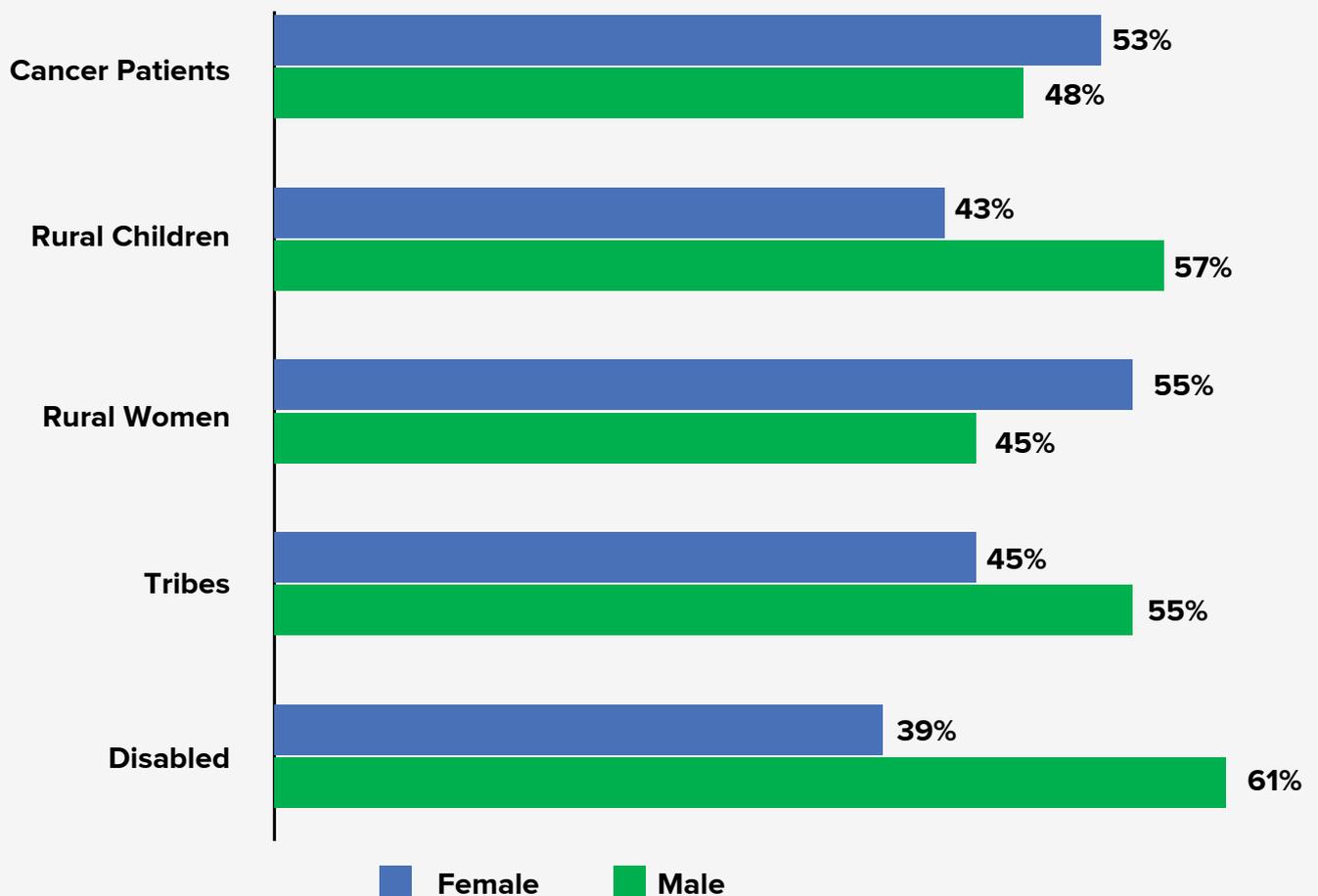
In FY23, our commitment to CSR was reflected in a significant contribution of 196 lakhs. These funds were utilized to conduct various impactful activities across all our operational states, furthering our mission of making a meaningful difference in the communities we serve.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION FOR RURAL CHILDREN

SUPPORT TO CANCER PATIENTS

ANIMAL RESCUE

CSR

TREE PLANTATION& LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

SUPPORT EDUCATION THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORT TO SPECIALLY-ABLED PEOPLE

Organization Name	Project Name	No of Beneficiaries	Male	Female
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY	GARV	212	61%	39%
SEWA BHARTI BRAJ PRADESH	ATAL (Skill Development and Children Education)	210	45%	55%
JAGANNATH CANCER AID FOUNDATION	Shelter Home for cancer patients	14080	48%	53%
CSR under Govt Schools	Improving the quality of education by providing infrastructure.	700	57%	43%
		15202	**48%**	**52%**

Note: The tree plantation program accounts for 1 lakh beneficiaries

DIVERSIFIED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Cancer Patients — Female 53%, Male 48%
Rural Children — Female 43%, Male 57%
Rural Women — Female 55%, Male 45%
Tribes — Female 45%, Male 55%
Disabled — Female 39%, Male 61%

Female Male

■ KEY CSR INITIATIVES

GARV BY ISRA

ASCEND TELECOM's sponsored project, GARV by ISRA, is dedicated to empowering disabled individuals through skill development training and livelihood support. 212 candidates, including 82 females and 130 males, have enrolled in various courses such as digital marketing, MP online, graphics designing, tailoring, and beauty parlour courses, all offered free. The programs social media presence has significantly amplified its impact, attracting other organizations interest and leading to successful MOU signings with NAV SRISHTI of Delhi and BMSS of Chhatisgarh. Moreover, a forthcoming MOU with ETO – Telangana will ensure employment opportunities for 100 women from Delhi/NCR. The collaboration with National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) has garnered recognition and appreciation for its efforts in digital education and spreading awareness about government welfare schemes. GARV is making a remarkable difference in the lives of the disabled community and beyond, exemplifying our commitment to meaningful CSR activities.

36% interested in MP Online

14% aspired to be computer operators

19% aimed to become freelancers

3% prepared for government exams

19% displayed interest in home-based stitching

3% engaged in teaching young kids

ATAL BY SEVA BHARTI BRAJ PRADESH

Seva Bharti Braj Pradesh, in collaboration with Ascend Telecom, initiated a skill development project in Village Pura Kaneria on October 1st 2022, focusing on rural people in Agra. With 210 enrollments, primarily comprising students aged 8-13 years, most beneficiaries are female. The joint efforts of Seva Bharti Brij Pradesh and Ascend Telecom have led to remarkable rural development, establishing 5 Handloom and Rug making centres along with evening classes for students. Free courses, including soft skills, dressmaking, and beautician training, are tailored to individual interests. So far, 75% of the allocated budget has been utilized, with plans to complete the rest by June 2023. The skill development centre, equipped with multiple facilities, engages volunteers from various village areas. Additionally, initiatives for a Call centre, Library, beautician services, and dressmaking centre are in the pipeline, ensuring holistic empowerment. Our sponsorship has provided essential infrastructure and services, further enriching the lives of the 210 beneficiaries enrolled, while a dedicated team of 13 members supports the operations.

QUALITY SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

As part of its CSR initiatives, Ascend Telecom undertook a comprehensive renovation project for three school buildings in Upparthi, Bachinati in Ramnagar, and Dudupanahalli, in Magadi. The project involved painting the entire school building, laying red oxide flooring, installing blackboards in all classrooms, waterproofing the roof, and plastering the ceiling, flooring, and other areas. We also constructed one toilet each for boys and girls with two washbasins, necessary fittings, sewage connection, plumbing works, and a sewage pit. The project also included the installation of a 1 HP water motor with essential fittings and other plumbing and electrical works with fixtures and tiling. The endeavour enhanced the infrastructure and overall learning environment, positively impacting the students and communities in these areas.

GOVERNANCE

At Ascend, corporate governance prioritizes fairness for all stakeholders, including customers, investors, vendor partners, and the community. We firmly believe that strong corporate governance builds and sustains investor trust. Our governance model encompasses our culture, policies, stakeholder relationships, and unwavering commitment to ethical practices, accountability, and integrity in managing our business.

KEY GOVERNANCE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

100%
Employees
Completed Training

100%
Suppliers Follow
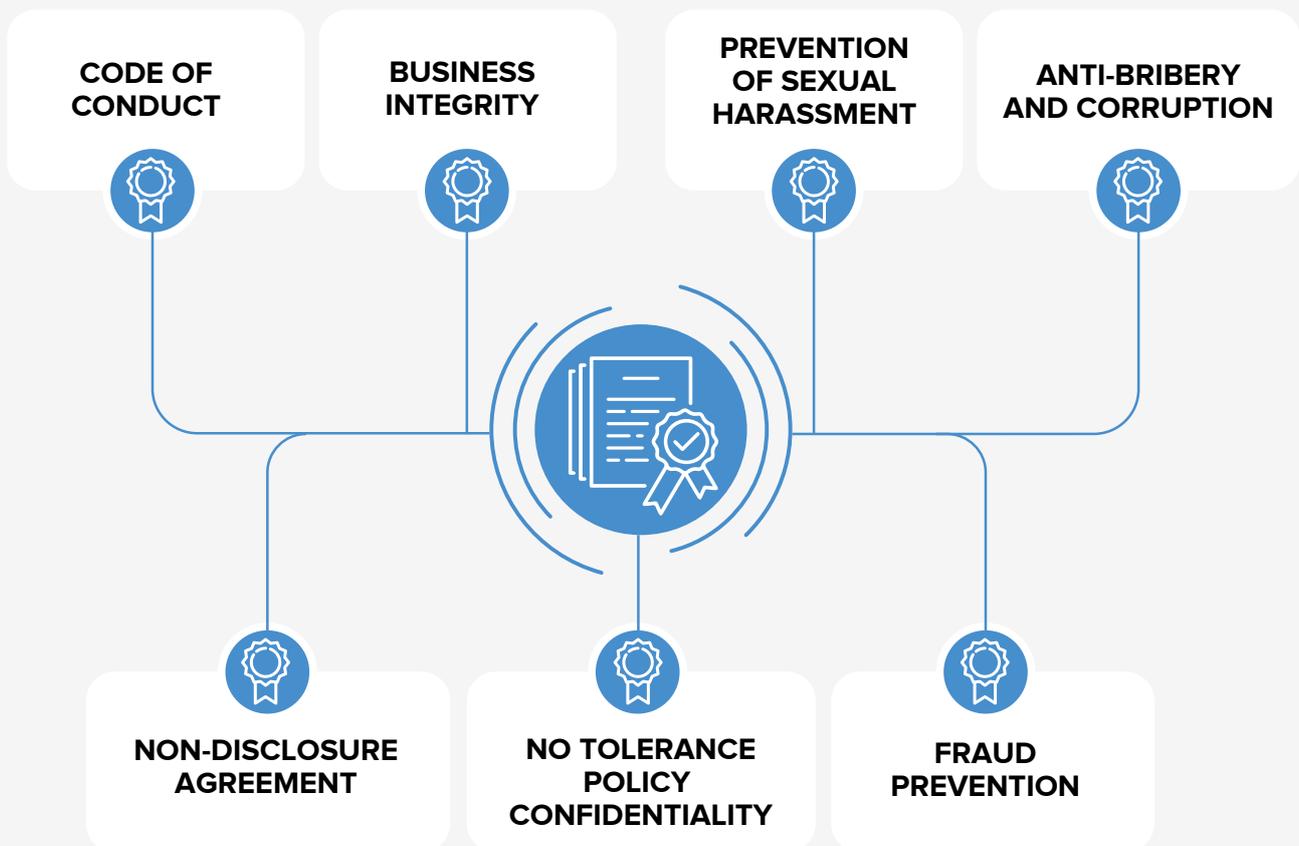Code of Conduct

100%
Sites Have Cyber
Security Framework

100%
Sites Have Emergency
Response Plans

Each Ascend board member thoroughly reviews specific policies, certifying their comprehension and committing to adhere to the set standards. Furthermore, all new employees participate in our comprehensive Code of Conduct and policy dissemination training as an integral part of our induction program.
These certifications include:

CODE OF CONDUCT

BUSINESS INTEGRITY

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

ANTI-BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

NO TOLERANCE POLICY CONFIDENTIALITY

FRAUD PREVENTION

We have dedicated committees overlooking our governance objectives:
- Whistle Blower Committee
- ESG Committee
- Sexual Harassment Redress Committee
- Grievance Redressal Committee
- CSR Committee
- Health & Staff Welfare Committee
- Anti-bribery, Corruption, and Fraud Prevention Committee
- Safety Committee

BUSINESS INTEGRITY

At Ascend, integrity, transparency, and an ethical working environment are deeply cherished by every employee. We hold a strict zero-tolerance stance against bribery and corruption. Employees are encouraged to report policy violations promptly through various channels, including our ethics committee, human resources, legal departments, and management, to maintain this commitment. Our rigorous Code of Conduct adheres to international practices and standards, guiding our daily operations and ensuring the highest ethical conduct.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ascend Telecom is committed to upholding human rights. We respect the rights of employees, communities, and all affected by our operations, adhering to international frameworks like Social Accountability. Our approach includes due diligence, aligning policies, promoting awareness, engaging stakeholders, valuing diversity, prohibiting harmful practices, providing access to remedies, and encouraging partners to follow our Sustainable Business Framework. Every Ascend employee signs this policy for implementation throughout our operations.

CUSTOMER IS OUR PRIORITY

Customer focus lies at the heart of our business. We have designed customer engagement programs at three levels, strategically aiming to enhance productivity and profitability in the long term. These initiatives reflect our unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional experiences and value to our valued customers.

- Corporate level - strategic engagements
- Zonal level - course corrections and re-aligning the business delivery structure to the evolving needs of customers
- Grassroots level - life cycle management across all customer functions

The annual customer satisfaction survey evaluates customer expectations, trust, and loyalty to our business. We maintain a satisfactory score of 90% and above YoY.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORE (OUT OF 5)

	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23
Score	4.75	4.77	4.80	4.82	4.63
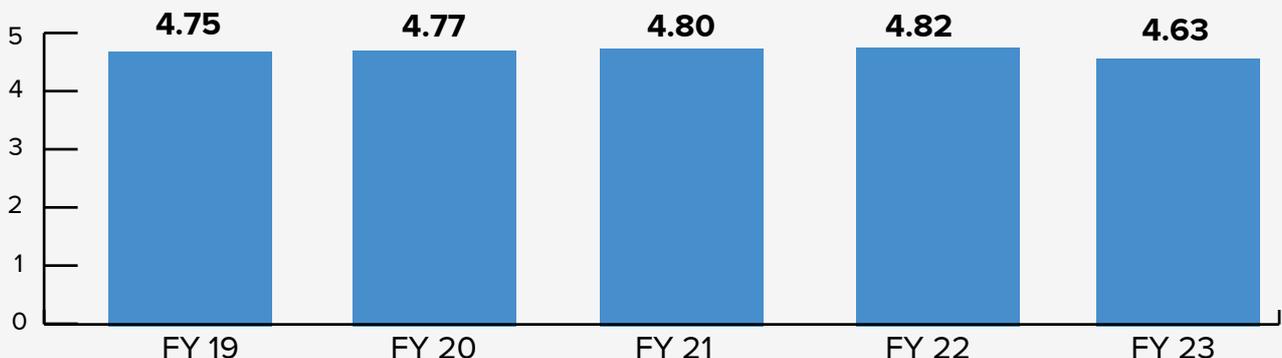
*** Industry standard:: Typically, CSAT scores from 75 to 85 are considered good, but this is context-dependent. We maintain above 90% YoY.

SUPPLY CHAIN

We prioritize responsible sourcing and supplier practices. Our suppliers engaged in construction and maintenance activities on our sites undergo a thorough assessment program. This program ensures strict compliance with essential criteria, including fair wages, the prohibition of human trafficking, forced and child labour, non-discrimination policies, anti-harassment measures, and adherence to health and safety regulations. We also ensure that all our collaborators align with the same principles, fostering a sustainable and ethical ecosystem throughout our operations.

DATA PROTECTION AND CYBERSECURITY

Information security is of paramount importance. To ensure a robust and resilient cybersecurity approach, the Information Security Committee convenes quarterly meetings to discuss strategies and address emerging issues. Additionally, all employees participate in mandatory annual cybersecurity training, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to safeguard data privacy, detect and report malware, ransomware, and other malicious software, and identify any attempts to compromise the company's information technology systems.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We believe in the power of strong partnerships to drive progress within the industry. Our collaborative team actively engages with industry associations, local non-profits, and government agencies to share best practices and demonstrate thought leadership. By working together, we aim to push the boundaries of innovation, contribute to positive change, and create a more sustainable and prosperous future for all stakeholders involved.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

CUSTOMERS

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

SUPPLIERS

EMPLOYEES

ASCEND TELECOM

CSR BENEFICIARIES

LOGISTICS PARTNERS

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS AND SERVICE PARTNERS

We participate in DIPA and NASSCOM trade associations to discuss future policies with industry members.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

We focus on supporting our broader community through volunteerism and engagement programs.

LANDLORDS

We build strong relationships with landlords through the landlord connect program.

NGOS

We work with NGOs to deliver high-quality needs-based community engagement programs.

PUBLIC POLICY

We collaborate with local government and policymakers to discuss issues and help advance policy goals.

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

We take grievances seriously, valuing fairness, justice, and equity. If an individual experiences something unfair, unjust, or inequitable, they have the right to raise a grievance. The concerned person can submit a written complaint to their manager, the grievance redressal committee, and the HR Head. We also conduct periodical connect programs to ensure continuous improvement and open communication. These programs provide a platform to address the grievances of our employees and our valued customers, vendors, and landlords.

Ascend grievances feature under the following categories:
- Management policies
- Working conditions
- Personal factors

WAY AHEAD

ESG is not just a choice but a responsibility we wholeheartedly embrace at Ascend. Our commitment remains steadfast in creating a measurable impact on the ecosystem. By building opportunities for the well-being of our planet, people, and business, we aim to foster responsible growth and prosperity. Our dedication to sustainability ensures that we contribute positively to society, protect the environment, and uphold ethical practices in all operations. We strive to thrive and flourish while nurturing a better world for future generations.

The analysis is focused on three key areas:

- ESG programs and management
- Climate action
- Environmental, Social, and Governance backed by eighty data points

Appropriate governance from the board, senior-level accountability, ESG committee and third-party data assurance proved critical to track our ESG performance. Lastly, a responsive ESG approach provided ample learning opportunities for making informed decisions.

ASCEND PRIORITIES FOR FY 24

ESG MANAGEMENT

01

» Strengthen and update ESG policies and management systems

» Assure ESG data by reputed third parties

SOCIAL

02

» D & I program with achievable targets and action plans

» Strengthen policies and systems to protect human rights

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ACTION

03

» Target reduction of scope 1 and 2 GHG emission

» Tree plantation

GOVERNANCE

04

» Maintain high ethical standards
» Risk management
» Adhere to applicable laws, regulations and guidelines
» Monitor Scope 3 GHG emissions and declare GHG

ANNEXURE

Ascend Telecom referred to the GRI Standards while developing the FY 2022-23 Sustainability Report. The GRI Content Index below depicts the linkage of the content of the Sustainability Report with the GRI standard requirements:

01. GRI CONTENT INDEX

Disclosure	Disclosure Title	Section Reference	Page no. reference
102-1	Name of the organization	Organization Profile	6
102-3	Location of headquarters	About the report	3
102-4	Location of operations	Tower Operations	8
102-6	Markets served	Tower Operations	8
102-8	Information on employees and other workers	Social	22
102-9	Supply chain	Supply Chain	36
102-13	Membership of associations	Industry Associations And Service Partners	37
102-14	Statement from senior decision-maker	Message from the CEO	4
102-15	Key impacts, risks, and opportunities	ESG Governance framework	10
	Section: Ethics and integrity		
102-16	Values, principles, standards, and norms of behaviour	Business Integrity	35
	Section: Governance		
102-18	Governance structure	ESG Governance framework	10
102-20	Executive-level responsibility for economic, environmental, and social topics	ESG Governance framework	10
102-21	Consulting stakeholders on economic, environmental, and social topics	ESG Governance framework	10
102-22	Composition of the highest governance body and its committees	ESG Governance framework	10
102-23	Chair of the highest governance body	ESG Governance framework	10
	Section: Stakeholder Engagement		
102-40	List of stakeholder groups	Stakeholder Engagement	36

Disclosure	Disclosure Title	Section Reference	Page no. reference
102-42	Identifying and selecting stakeholders	Stakeholder Engagement	36
	Section: Reporting practice		
102-45	Entities included in the consolidated financial statements	Organization Profile	6
102-46	Defining report content and topic Boundaries	About the report	3
102-50	Reporting period	About the report	3
102-51	Date of most recent report	About the report	3
102-52	Reporting cycle	About the report	3
102-54	Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards	About the report	3
102-55	GRI content index	GRI content index	40
102-56	External assurance	TUVi Assurance Statement	45
	GRI 302: Energy		
302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	Energy Management	20
	GRI 303: Water		
303-3	Water withdrawal	Water Management	21
	GRI 305: Emissions		
305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	Biodiversity Program	15
305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	Biodiversity Program	15
	GRI 306: Effluents and Waste		
306-4	Transport of hazardous waste	Waste Management	21
	GRI 307: Environmental Compliance		
307-1	Non-compliance with environmental laws and regulations	Waste Management	21
	GRI 401: Employment		
401-1	New employee hires and employee turnover	Table 1: Select Health & Safety Indicators	25

Disclosure	Disclosure Title	Section Reference	Page no. reference
401-2	Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees	Employee Benefits	26
401-3	Parental leave	Employee Benefits	26
	GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety		
403-1	Occupational health and safety management system	Employee care	24
403-2	Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation	Employee care	24
403-4	Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety	Employee care	24
403-5	Worker training on occupational health and safety	Employee care	24
403-6	Promotion of worker health	Employee care	24-26
403-9	Work-related injuries	Employee care	24-26
403-10	Work-related ill health	Employee care	24-26
	GRI 404: Training and Education		
404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee	Employee Development	23
	GRI 413: Local Communities		
413-1	Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments and development programs	Community Engagement	23

KRA	SDG	ISO 14001 –EMS	ESG Compliance
KRA	SDG	ISO 14001 –EMS	ESG Compliance
CSR	Goal 1: No poverty	Clause 4: Context of the Organization: 4.2: Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties	Social Governance
	Goal 2: Zero Hunger		
	Goal 3: Health and Well-being		
Tree Plantation	Goal 6: Clean Environment Goal 13: Climate Action	Clause 4.4: Environmental management System	Environmental Governance
Ascend Green campus- HR & Admin Digitization, Green Sites	Goal 15: Life on land		
ESAT score	Goal 8: Decent work and Economic growth	Clause 4.1: Understanding organization and its context	Social Governance
	Goal No 10: Reduced inequalities		
Community health check-ups, Blood donation camps and vaccination	Goal 3: Health and well-being	Clause 6.2: Environmental objectives to achieve	Social Governance
Life skills for students	Goal 4: Quality of education		
Reduce paper usage, electronic consumables & Stationaries.	Goal 12: Responsible consumption	Clause 8.1: Operational Planning and control	Environmental Governance
	Goal 13: Climate action		

KRA	SDG	ISO 14001 –EMS	ESG Compliance
Provide Clean water and sanitised office environment	Goal 6: Clean Environment	Clause 6.2: Environmental objectives to achieve	Environmental Governance
Reduce wastage of power, water, and diesel usage. Recycle wet waste and convert it into manure	Goal 12: Responsible consumption		Organizational governance
Sites with Solar panels / Wind Chimney	Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy	Clause 4.1: Understanding organization and its context	Environmental Governance
Diesel consumption in Lit per site, per tenant, per KW Units (L)	Goal 13: Climate action	Clause 10.3: Continual Improvement	
Company's Scope 1 & 2 direct & indirect greenhouse gas emissions for the reporting period. Units (Tonnes CO2e)	Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production Goal 6: Clean Environment	Clause 6.2: Environmental objectives to achieve	
OHS, EHSS and ESMS -Incidents and issues	Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production	Clause 8.2: Emergency preparedness and response	Organizational governance
Grievances Received and addressed (Anti-Corruption & Anti-bribery & Fraud Prevention issues, Whistle Blower, Sexual Harassment)	Goal 8: Decent work and Economic growth		
CSAT		ISO-9001: 9.1.2: Customer Satisfaction	
Equal Opportunity -Physically Challenged Employees		Clause 4.1: Understanding the organization and its context.	
Gender Equality – Number of Female Employees			
Buying practice			

Independent Assurance Statement

The Directors and Management, Ascend
Telecom Infrastructure Private Limited,
Bangalore, India

Ascend Telecom Infrastructure Private Limited (hereafter 'Ascend') commissioned TUV India Private Limited (TUVI) to conduct independent external assurance of non-financial information disclosed in ESG KPI (Key Performance Indicators of Ascend (hereinafter 'the ESG data') based on the principles of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards. The reporting period runs from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023. This engagement comprised "limited assurance" of Ascend's sustainability information following the ISAE 3000 (Revised) standard applied for assurance of the Report.

Management's Responsibility

Ascend has monitored the ESG data and is responsible for identifying materiality, and related sustainability issues, establishing, reporting performance management, data management, and quality. The management of Ascend is responsible for the information provided in the ESG data and the process of collecting, analysing, and reporting the information presented in web-based and printed forms, including website maintenance and its integrity. The Ascend's management is responsible for accurately monitoring and reporting the ESG data following the applied criteria so that it is free of intended or unintended material misstatements. Ascend will be responsible for archiving and reproducing the disclosed data for the stakeholders upon request.

Scope and Boundary

In particular, the assurance engagement included the following:

1. *Verification of the application of the principles as mentioned in the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, and the quality of information presented in the ESG data over the reporting period;*
2. *Review of the policies, initiatives, practices and performance described in the Report;*
3. *Review of the non-financial disclosures made in the Report against the requirements of the GRI Standards;*
4. *Verification of the reliability of the GRI Standards Disclosure on environmental and social topics by verifying sample data;*
5. *Specified information was selected based on the materiality determination and needs to be meaningful to the intended users.*

TUVI has verified the below-mentioned disclosures as per GRI Standard 2021

Topic	Indicator	GRI Disclosure
Governance	Governance structure and composition	2-9
Water	Water withdrawal	303-3
Waste	Waste generated	306-3
	Waste diverted from disposal	306-4
Emissions	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	305-1
	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	305-2
Energy	Energy consumption within the organization	302-1
Employment	Employee hires and turnover	401-1
	Parental leave	401-3
Occupational health and safety	Work related injuries	403-9
	Occupational health and safety management system	403-1
Training and education	Training hours	404-1
Communities	Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	413-1

* The electricity consumption at offices and the ware houses are based on the apportioning mechanism. The same are not monitored by dedicated metering system. The same applies to the HSD consumption. Additionally, the electricity and HSD consumption applicable to cell sites offices are not directly monitored, the same are estimated based on the reimbursement mechanism as per contract conditions.

1 | P a g e

TÜV®

Onsite Assessment was performed at Ascends Head Office and cell sites- 005333
1) *Corporate Sustainability Team - Ascends Head Office, Ascend Telecom Infrastructure Private Limited, No.3 Sangeeta Towers Michael Palya, 80 Feet Road, Bangalore - 560038 (date: 12 to 14 June 2023, onsite)*
2) *Cell sites - 005333, Bangalore (date: 14 June 2023, onsite)*

The reporting boundary is based on the internal and external materiality assessment covering data for

i. *Ascend Telecom Infrastructure Private Limited, No.3 Sangeeta Towers Michael Palya, 80 Feet Road, Bangalore - 560038*
ii. *All the towers (7073), warehouse (16) and offices (19)*

Limitations

TUVI did not perform any assurance procedures on the prospective information disclosed in the *ESG data*, including targets, expectations, and ambitions. Consequently, TUVI draws no conclusion from the prospective information. During the assurance process, TUVI did not come across any limitations to the agreed scope of the assurance engagement. TUVI is contracted by the Ascend and answerable to the Ascend's management only. TUVI verified the data on a sample basis; the responsibility for the authenticity of the data entirely lies with Ascend. TUVI expressly disclaims any liability or co-responsibility in the case of erroneous data reported or for any decision a person or entity would make based on this assurance statement.

Our Responsibility

TUVI's responsibility in relation to this engagement is to perform assurance and to express a conclusion based on the work performed. Our engagement did not include an assessment of the adequacy or effectiveness of Ascend's strategy, management of ESG-related issues, or sufficiency of the ESG data against the principles of the GRI Standards, and ISAE 3000 (Revised) standard, other than those mentioned in the scope of the assurance. TUVI's responsibility regarding this verification is in reference to the agreed scope of work, which includes non-financial quantitative and qualitative information (KPIs) disclosed by Ascend. The intended users of this assurance statement are the management of 'Ascend'. This assurance engagement is based on the assumption that the data and information provided to TUVI by Ascend are complete and true.

Verification Methodology

During the assurance engagement, TUVI adopted a risk-based approach, focusing on verification efforts with respect to disclosed KPI's. TUVI has verified the KPIs and assessed the robustness of the underlying data management system, information flows, and controls. In doing so:

1. *TUVI examined and reviewed the documents, data, and other information made available by Ascend for all disclosed KPIs (non-financial disclosures).*
2. *TUVI conducted interviews with key representatives, including data owners and decision-makers from different functions of the Ascend, during the onsite verification.*
3. *Review the level of adherence to the principles of the GRI standards.*

Opportunities for Improvement

The following are the opportunities for improvement reported to Ascend; however, they are generally consistent with the management's objectives and programme

1. *The electricity and HSD consumption applicable to cell sites are not directly monitored, the same are estimated based on the contractual arrangements between Ascend and its vendors. Ascend can take steps to improve the accuracy of the monitoring;*
2. *Ascend can increase the scope of vendor assessment by identifying the materiality based on the contemporary best practices example ISO 20400*
3. *Periodic engagement of internal and external stakeholders for materiality determination is recommended.*
4. *Ascend can expand its safety reporting by monitoring the safety performance of its vendor operations during tower commissioning, maintenance, and day to day operations.*
5. *Ascend can disclose all categories of indirect GHG emissions (refer ISO 14064-1).*
6. *Ascend may apply the SROI outcomes to evaluate the CSR projects.*
7. *The approach of application of the % contribution on monetary basis to arrive at the GHG emissions from grid electricity and diesel for arriving the Scope 2 and Scope 1 emissions needs to be changed for improving accuracy.*

Our Conclusion

In our opinion, the ESG data is reported along with referenced information providing a fair representation of the performance disclosures adequately. During the verification we have performed nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the information subject to the limited assurance engagement is not prepared, w.r.t. scope of engagement.

Disclosures: TUVI is of the opinion that the reported disclosures generally meet the GRI Standards reporting requirements.

Universal Standard: Ascend followed GRI 1: Foundation 2021: Requirements and principles for using the GRI Standards; GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021: Disclosures about the reporting organisation. General Disclosures were followed when reporting information about an organisation's reporting practices, activities and workers, governance, strategy, policies, practices, and stakeholder engagement. GRI 3: Material Topics 2021: Disclosures and Guidance about the Organisation's Material Topics GRI3 was selected for the determination of material topics and the disclosure of the material topics.

Topic Specific Standard: 300 series (Environmental topics) and 400 series (Social topics); these Topic-specific Standards were used to report information on the organization's impacts related to environmental and social topics. TUVI is of the opinion that the reported material topics and Topic-specific Standards that Ascend used to prepare its ESG-related issues are appropriately identified and addressed.

Assurance Conclusion: Based on the procedures we have performed; nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the information subject to the limited assurance engagement was not prepared in all material respects. In the context of Assurance, the following contemporary principles have been observed:

Independence: TUVI follows IESBA (International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants) Code which, adopts a threats and safeguards approach to independence. It is confirmed that the assurance team is selected to avoid situations of self-interest, self-review, advocacy and familiarity. The assessment team was safeguarded from any type of intimidation.

Quality control: The assurance team complies with the code of ethics for professional accountants issued by the IESBA, which includes independence and other requirements founded on fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour. In accordance with International Standard on Quality Control, TUVI maintains a comprehensive system of quality control including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Our Assurance Team and Independence

TUVI is an independent, neutral third-party providing sustainability services with qualified environmental and social specialists. TUVI states its independence and impartiality and confirms that there is "no conflict of interest" with regards to this assurance engagement. In the reporting year, TUVI did not work with Ascend on any engagement that could compromise the independence or impartiality of our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. TUVI was not involved in the preparation of any content or data included in the Report, with the exception of this assurance statement. TUVI maintains complete impartiality towards any individuals interviewed during the assurance engagement.

For and on behalf of TUV India Private Limited

Manojkumar Borekar
Project Manager and Reviewer
Head – Sustainability Assurance Service

Date: 26-06-2023
Place: Mumbai, India
Project Reference No: 8121560909
www.tuv-nord.com/in

Annexure

Disclosure	GRI reference	Documents assessed	Result
GRI 2-9 Governance	2-9	a. Ascend Governance Org chart b. Management Committee (Board), ESG Committee and CSR Committee	In line with GRI requirements All the policies and ESG practices are verified
GRI 302: Energy	302-1*	a) FY22-23 location wise electricity & Fuel usage working sheet. b) Corporate office Electricity Bills c) FY22-23 EB & Diesel records of offices and warehouses. d) DG CPH-Load wise data sheet & Technical specification sheet of DG. e) Solar panel installations site list. f) TRAI issued Consultation paper in 03-feb-2011	1. Energy Consumption a. Corporate Office: Energy consumption (Grid Electricity usage & Diesel usage for DGs) is verified based on the actual bills. b. Cell sites: Energy consumption (Grid Electricity usage & Diesel usage for DGs) is estimated based on the" Reference Working Document for Energy Management FY23 c. Ware Houses: Energy consumption (Grid Electricity usage & Diesel usage for DGs) is apportioned based on the area occupied in the ware house. *Note: There is a contractual agreement for compensating for electricity and diesel and the values are not monitored for Cell sites and Ware houses.* Results Total Energy consumption =2,68,053.7 MWh, of which Grid Electricity usage is 89.7% & Diesel Fuel usage is 10.3% 2. Contribution of Renewable energy = 2480 MWh based on the estimation (Installed capacity in kW * average sunshine hours/day * No. of working days).
GRI 303: Water and effluents	303-3	a) FY22-23 corporate office water bills. b) FY22-23 offices water consumption sheet. c) Guideline issued by World Health Organization - published on 28-jul-2010. d) ESG posters/pictures	1. Corporate Office: Water consumption is monitored based on the bills. 2. Circle offices and Ware Houses: Water consumption is estimated based on the apportioning basis by the reporting organization considering 45 litres water usage per person per day. Results Total water consumption is 44.13 Lakh Liters. Out of which 34.26 Lakh Liters for the reporting period for circle offices and 9.87 Lakh litres for the reporting period for corporate office. Notes No major impacts from discharge of water Water saving projects particularly sensor-based taps & putting up ESG poster displayed in offices at strategic locations to ensure appropriate and best water management practices.
GRI 305: Emissions	305-1 and 305-2	a) FY 22-23 TCO_2e Emission working sheet. b) Baseline Database for the Indian Power Sector User Guide Version 18.0 December 2022. c) DEFRA EF-2022 File & TCO_2e emission calculation parameter reference e-mail from CTO	Total Emissions= 204,806.2 MT of CO_2. a. Scope-1 = 32,907.37 MT of CO_2 b. Scope-2 = 171,898.8 MT of CO_2 Scope 1 emission - Avg. TCO2e/KW load is 1.16 Scope 1 Emission intensity is 16% of total emission from Scope 1 & 2

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Disclosure	GRI reference	Documents assessed	Result
GRI 306: Waste	306-4	a) Battery scrap details records. b) Battery Bank Scrap Invoices c) High Efficiency Battery details - FY23	Hazardous Waste 870,390.4 kg of battery banks scrapped to authorized pollution control board vendors. Non-Hazardous Waste Non-hazardous waste is not monitored. Only hazardous waste is monitored. Implemented installation of High Efficiency Battery Banks (Lithium-ion) and 2.91% of total portfolio sites are with High efficiency Batteries.
GRI 307: Environmental Compliance	307-1	a) Compliance Requirements b) Compliance Declaration c) ISO 14001 Certification Documentation	The organization has not identified any non-compliance with environmental laws and/or regulations.
GRI 401: Employment	401-1 to 401-3	a) FY 22 Hiring and Attrition Record b) 401 - 2 Employees GMC Policy c) 401 - 2 Parents GMC Policy d) 401 -2 GPA POLICY (Group Personal Accident) e) 401- 3 Parental Leave record FY22-23 f) Manpower Master - Exit March23	New employee hires and turnover Total New Hires: 31 Nos Gender: 29 Male/Female 2 Total Resigned: 25 Nos Gender: 25 Male/ Female 0 Attrition rate – 14.5 % (25/173) Benefits provided to full-time employees Employee Benefits like Group Mediclaim Policy for employee their parents as well as Group Personal Accident was assessed. Parental leave Male 2 Female 0 Returned to office i.e., 100% Return to work Organization has DEI ratio of 3.37% for women & 1.12% for person with disability (PWD) of Permanent Employees as of exit of the reporting period.
GRI 403: Occupational health and safety	403-1 to 403-10	403-1 ESG compliance declaration from suppliers 403-2 Incidence Investigation report template, OHS Guidelines, Emergency preparedness plan, Emergency Mock drill GJ circle. 403 - 4 Safety Committee, OHS Policy, OHS Training PPT, Safety meeting-minutes Ascend Telecom 403 - 3 Vaccination certificate sample copies 403 - 5 Training Calendar 21-22 403- 9 & 403-10 No such minor or major incidents reported.	Results a. Detailed policy and implementation for process b. OHS committee both management & workers are 50%-50%. Meetings are held once in a quarter. c. Training calendar is in place d. No minor or major incidents, accidents were reported. e. No instances of Work-related ill health
GRI 404: Training and Education	404-1	404 -1 Training Tracker FY22-23	Average Training: 41 Hrs Gender wise / category wise updates not furnished
GRI 406: Non-discrimination, GRI 408: Child Labor, GRI 409: Forced or Compulsory Labor	406-1 408-1 409-1	Undertaking	There were no instances of discrimination, child labor or forced or compulsory labor.
GRI 413: Local Communities	413-1	413 - 1 CSR Report FY22-23 413 - 1 CSR Report submitted to Board Mail Evidence 413 - 1 ESG Ascend Tree Plantation Report FY 22-23 new	Implementation of projects was assessed based on CSR Report during remote audit on screen.
GRI 417: Marketing and Labelling GRI 418: Customer Privacy	417-1 418-1	Undertaking	No incidents of non-compliance concerning marketing communications and no substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data.

* Refer the limitation statement on page 01

C E R T I F I C A T E

TÜV NORD

Management system as per

ISO 9001 : 2015

The Certification Body TÜV NORD CERT GmbH hereby confirms as a result of the audit, assessment and certification decision according to ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, that the organization

ASCEND TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE PRIVATE LIMITED
Sangeetha Towers # 3, 80 Feet Road,
Indira Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 038, Karnataka,
India

operates a management system in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001 : 2015 and will be assessed for conformity within the 3 year term of validity of the certificate.

Scope -

Sales, Project Management, Operation and Maintenance of Passive Infrastructure for Communication Cell Sites.

Certificate Registration No. **44 100 133321**　　　　　　Valid from **12.04.2022**
Audit Report No. **2.5-5985/2013**　　　　　　　　　　　Valid until **22.03.2025**
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Initial certification **23.03.2013**

Certification Body
at TÜV NORD CERT GmbH　　　　　　　　　　　　　Mumbai, **12.04.2022**

Validity can be verified at https://www.tuev-nord.de/de/unternehmen/zertifizierung/zertifikatsdatenbank.

TÜV NORD CERT GmbH　　　　Am TÜV 1　　　　　45307 Essen　　　　www.tuev-nord-cert.com

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IAF　**DAkkS**
Deutsche
Akkreditierungsstelle
D-ZM-12007-01-00

TÜV NORD

CERTIFICATE

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India

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Scope -

Sales, Project Management, Operation and Maintenance of Passive Infrastructure for Communication Cell Sites.

Certificate Registration No. **44 104 22393547**
Audit Report No. **2.5-5985/2013**

Valid from **12.04.2022**
Valid until **22.03.2025**
Initial certification **2022**

Certification Body
at TÜV NORD CERT GmbH

Mumbai, **12.04.2022**

Validity can be verified at https://www.tuev-nord.de/de/unternehmen/zertifizierung/zertifikatsdatenbank

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Deutsche
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D-ZM-12007-01-00

Ascend Telecom India Private Limited
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80 Feet Road, Indiranagar,
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