RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY WELFARE

Corporate Village Adoption and Resident-Perceived Development: Evidence from Vardoli, Panvel, Maharashtra

Shiv Pardeshi, Rakesh Bhanushali, Darshan Shirsath, Rajat Gera, Bhojraj Shewale

Amity Business School, Amity University Mumbai, Mumbai, India

Published November 2026

Abstract

Private-sector participation in rural development has grown in India since Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 made corporate social responsibility (CSR) spending a legal requirement for qualifying companies. One form this participation takes is village adoption, in which a company commits to a single village and works on several fronts over time rather than making one-off donations. This paper examines one such case: Vardoli, a village in Panvel taluka of Raigad district, Maharashtra, adopted by the Wadhwa Group. The development programme covers road improvement, water support, local employment, a police post, street lighting, a mobile network tower and medical-support camps. Using direct observation, eight geo-tagged photographs and a nine-question structured questionnaire administered face to face to twelve residents and workers on 14 August 2026, the study asks how the people who live around these improvements experience them. Responses were scored on a positive-response index (Yes = 1, Somewhat = 0.5, No = 0). Roads and street lighting scored highest (91.7 per cent each), followed by the network tower (83.3), the police post (79.2) and employment (70.8). Water support and medical-support camps scored lowest (66.7 each). Nine of twelve respondents said overall quality of life had improved and none said it had not. The weaker scores had different causes: uneven delivery by locality and season for water, limited reach and perceived leakage of better posts to outsiders for employment, thin visible staffing for the police post, and low awareness of dates and venues for medical camps. The findings suggest that residents value most what is physical, shared and used daily, and that the next phase of any adoption should concentrate on maintenance, communication and local hiring. Because the sample is small and purposive, the results are indicative, not statistically representative.

Keywords: village adoption; corporate social responsibility; rural development; community perception; Panvel; Vardoli; capability approach; participatory appraisal

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

India's population remains largely rural, and the quality of village life depends on a small set of basic assets: a motorable road to reach markets and hospitals, a dependable water supply, safe public spaces after dark, a working mobile connection, access to health services and, above all, a way to earn a living close to home. The Government of India has long worked on these through schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (rural roads, launched in 2000), the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (village adoption by Members of Parliament, launched in 2014) and the Jal Jeevan Mission (household tap water, launched in 2019).

Public effort alone cannot close every gap. Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 requires qualifying companies to spend at least two per cent of their average net profit of the preceding three years on CSR, and Schedule VII lists rural development, health care, sanitation, drinking water and livelihood enhancement among the permitted areas. This has allowed private companies to play a more active role in the places where they operate.

This paper studies one such case: the development of Vardoli village in Panvel taluka, adopted by the Wadhwa Group, a Mumbai-based real-estate developer whose Wise City township signage is visible along the Mumbai–Pune Road on the approach to the village. The study does not evaluate the company's accounts or spending, to which the authors had no access. Its purpose is to learn, through observation and conversation, how residents and workers around the improvements experience them.

1.2 Problem statement and rationale

Corporate village adoption is usually described from the sponsor's side, through press releases, brochures and expenditure figures. Far less is known about how beneficiaries perceive the individual components of a multi-part programme, which components they value most, and where they feel gaps remain. Without that information, a sponsor cannot tell whether effort is being directed to the things that matter to residents. Vardoli offered a practical setting for asking this question: it lies close to the authors' own campus area, it has a visible, multi-part programme whose elements can be seen on the ground, and the programme combines physical infrastructure (roads and lights), safety (the police post), connectivity (the tower), livelihood (employment) and welfare (water and medical camps), so that very different kinds of improvement can be compared with one another.

1.3 Research objectives

The study pursued six objectives:

1. To observe and document, through direct visits and geo-tagged photographs, the development initiatives carried out in Vardoli under the Wadhwa Group's village adoption.
2. To assess, through direct conversation with residents and workers, whether each initiative has improved their daily lives.
3. To compare the initiatives with one another and identify which is most valued and which least.
4. To examine whether the programme as a whole has improved overall quality of life in the village, in the opinion of respondents.
5. To identify gaps and suggest practical ways of strengthening and sustaining the programme.
6. To develop the team's skills in field research, respectful engagement with the community and responsible documentation.

1.4 Research questions

RQ1. Which components of the Vardoli development programme do residents perceive as having improved their daily lives, and to what degree?

RQ2. How do perceptions differ between visible, one-time infrastructure and service-based initiatives that depend on continuing delivery?

RQ3. Which single initiative do residents regard as most beneficial, and do their choices follow their ratings?

RQ4. What gaps and risks do residents identify, and what low-cost measures could address them?

1.5 Scope and contribution

The scope is limited to (a) first-hand observation of the visible initiatives in and around Vardoli and (b) a short structured questionnaire of nine questions put to a small purposive sample. The study does not audit expenditure, does not verify the technical quality of construction and does not claim to represent the whole village. Its contribution is modest but concrete: a transparent, replicable resident-perception assessment of a multi-component private-sector village adoption, with a simple comparative index, an explicit separation between what the authors observed and what respondents reported, and a set of practical recommendations that follow from the gaps identified.

2 Conceptual framework and literature

2.1 Rural development in India

Rural development means improving the economic and social well-being of people who live in rural areas, particularly those with lower incomes. India's approach has moved over the past decades from a narrow focus on agricultural output towards a broader view that includes infrastructure, health, education, connectivity and local employment. Roads are often described as the first step because they connect a village to markets, schools, hospitals and jobs. Drinking water and sanitation follow, as they directly affect health and the time, especially of women, spent on daily chores. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 reflect the same breadth, and several are directly relevant to the initiatives studied here: Goal 3 (good health and well-being), Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

2.2 CSR and the village adoption model

India was among the first countries to make CSR spending a legal requirement. Under Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013, companies above prescribed thresholds of net worth, turnover or profit must constitute a CSR committee and spend at least two per cent of their average net profit of the preceding three years on CSR activities, and rural development projects are an explicit category under Schedule VII. The Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 give this obligation its operating detail.

Village adoption is one way of organising such spending. Instead of spreading money thinly across many small donations, a company or foundation commits to a particular village and works on several fronts over a number of years. Its advantages are visibility, continuity and the ability to link different improvements, for example a new road with street lights and a police post. Its risks are equally clear: dependence on a single sponsor, uneven attention to different needs, and the possibility that maintenance lapses when the initial project phase ends. These advantages and risks frame the analysis in Sections 5 and 6.

2.3 Three lenses for understanding impact

Participatory appraisal. Robert Chambers' work argues that outsiders should "put the last first": the views of people who live in a village are a legitimate and necessary source of evidence about whether

a project is working. His account of participatory rural appraisal supports the study's decision to rely on conversation with residents and not on official figures alone.

The capability approach. Amartya Sen treats development as the expansion of what people are actually able to do and be, such as travel safely, earn a living, stay healthy or stay in touch, and not merely as a rise in income or a count of structures built. A road matters not because it exists but because it lets a patient reach a hospital or a worker reach a job. The questionnaire was therefore phrased around benefit and change ("has it improved…?") and not around the existence of a facility.

Outputs, outcomes and sustainability. In project evaluation it is common to distinguish outputs (what was built or delivered), outcomes (what changed for people) and sustainability (whether the change lasts). The field visit could observe outputs directly, gather indications of outcomes from residents, and form only a limited view of sustainability, since the village was seen at one point in time.

2.4 Criteria for a good village adoption

From this reading, the authors drew five working criteria against which findings are later discussed. A village adoption is likely to be most effective when it (i) is based on the community's own priorities, (ii) combines infrastructure with livelihood and welfare, (iii) communicates clearly about what is being provided and when, (iv) makes arrangements for maintenance after construction, and (v) is open to feedback.

3 Study area and the development programme

3.1 Vardoli, Panvel

Vardoli lies in Panvel taluka of Raigad district, Maharashtra (PIN 410221), at the foothills of the Sahyadri range, at approximately 18.97° N, 73.20° E. The area is in transition: older houses with tiled and tin roofs stand close to new roads, planted roadsides, scaffolding for new buildings and township signage. Panvel has grown rapidly as part of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, helped by new road and rail links. Such growth brings opportunity but also pressure on land, water and local services, which is one reason a structured village development programme can matter.

3.2 Components of the programme

Seven components were identified for study.

1. **Road improvement.** The Mumbai–Pune Road, which provides the broader approach, and Thakurvadi Road, which leads into the village, are surfaced roads with kerbs, median markings and planted verges in the portions visited. Better roads typically reduce travel time and vehicle damage, ease emergency access and open the area to employment and commerce.
2. **Water support.** Part of the welfare component. Because water arrangements are largely inside homes, wells, tanks or pipelines that could not be inspected during a short visit, this component was assessed only through residents' accounts.
3. **Employment for village residents.** The programme is reported to have created work connected with construction, upkeep and security services around the township and project area.
4. **Police post.** A police post stands on Thakurvadi Road near the village, intended to improve security, speed up response and give residents a nearby point of contact.

5. **Street-lighting poles.** Poles have been installed along the internal road leading towards the village, improving visibility and the sense of safety after dark, especially for women, children and shift workers.

6. **Mobile network tower.** A tower provided by Indian Bull Limited stands near the road. In villages a nearby tower often separates patchy from dependable connectivity, which matters for emergency calls, digital payments, schooling and work.

7. **Medical-support camps.** Camps associated with Indian Bull Limited bring basic screening and consultation to residents who might otherwise have to travel to a clinic or hospital.

4 Research design and methodology

4.1 Design

The study is a descriptive, cross-sectional field assessment combining direct observation, geo-tagged photography and a structured face-to-face questionnaire. A structured instrument was preferred because the aim was to compare initiatives with each other, and spoken administration was preferred over written forms because many respondents were at work and a brief spoken exchange was more natural. The topic and the choice of questions were approved by the faculty mentor before fieldwork began.

4.2 Sample

The sample was purposive and small, chosen to reflect different roles in and around Vardoli: residents of different age groups, small shopkeepers and vendors, labourers and farm workers, homemakers, a young person and security staff on duty near the police post. Twelve individuals answered the full questionnaire.

Table 1. Profile of respondents.

Parameter	Count
Total respondents	12
Gender	8 male, 4 female
Age group (18–30 / 31–45 / 46 and above)	4 / 5 / 3
Security/site workers	3
Shopkeepers/vendors	3
Farm/daily labour	3
Homemakers	2
Youth/student	1

4.3 Instrument

The questionnaire had nine questions asked in the same order to every respondent. Questions 1 to 8 were closed questions answered on a three-point scale (Yes / Somewhat / No) and covered, in turn, roads (Q1), water support (Q2), employment (Q3), the police post (Q4), street lighting (Q5), the network tower (Q6), medical-support camps (Q7) and overall quality of life (Q8). Question 9 asked the respondent to name the single initiative that had benefited the village most, from the seven

components or "other". Respondents could add comments to any answer. Each question was phrased in the same way for each initiative so that answers could be compared.

4.4 Fieldwork

The field visit took place on 14 August 2026. The team began along the Mumbai–Pune Road near the Wadhwa Wise City signboard and then moved onto Thakurvadi Road towards Vardoli. At each point of interest the team stopped to observe and photograph with a GPS Map Camera application that records coordinates. During the visit the team spoke with residents and workers met on the way, including security staff on duty near the police post. Each conversation lasted five to ten minutes. During conversations one member led, another recorded key points and the third handled photography, with roles rotated.

Table 2. Locations covered during the field visit.

Location	Focus
Mumbai–Pune Road	Approach road; Wise City signage; roadside lighting
Thakurvadi Road, village core	Existing settlement and road
Thakurvadi Road, internal road	Road with lighting poles and planted verges
Thakurvadi Road, police post	Police post
Thakurvadi Road, tower	Mobile network tower
Thakurvadi Road, roadside enclosure	Fenced utility enclosure
Near police post	Conversation with security personnel
Vardoli	Conversation with a local resident

4.5 Analysis

Closed answers were tallied by hand at the end of the visit. For comparison, a positive-response index was calculated for each initiative: the number of Yes responses plus half the number of Somewhat responses, divided by the number of respondents and multiplied by 100. For roads, for example, (10 + 0.5 × 2) ÷ 12 × 100 = 91.7 per cent. Open comments were grouped by theme. Because the sample is small, the analysis is descriptive; the index is a simple comparative tool and not a precise measure of satisfaction.

Ethics

Verbal consent was sought from every individual before conversation and before any photograph. Respondents were told the interaction was part of a university project, that participation was voluntary and that they could skip any question. No names, phone numbers or addresses were recorded. The team stated clearly that it did not represent the Wadhwa Group, Indian Bull Limited or any government body and could not make or promise any service. Photographs of individuals were taken only with agreement.

Findings

What the authors observed

Eight geo-tagged photographs document the visit. The Mumbai–Pune Road at the approach is a well-surfaced two-lane carriageway with a painted centre line, kerb markings, roadside street-light poles and a planted verge, with Wadhwa Wise City signage on the left. In the older village core on Thakurvadi Road, low houses with tiled and tin roofs stand against the Sahyadri hills, the road is paved and wet from monsoon rain, and the contrast between old settlement and new infrastructure is evident. The internal road is lined with young trees, planted medians and kerbs, with lighting poles at regular intervals. The police post is a metal cabin with a blue signboard, partly hidden by roadside trees and shrubs and showing signs of weathering. A lattice mobile tower rises behind trees near the road, with a building under construction beside it. A fenced utility enclosure was also documented, but its function could not be confirmed and it is not used as evidence for any initiative.

Two limits on this evidence matter. First, the internal road was seen in daylight, so statements about night-time visibility come from respondents and not from observation. Second, no photographs exist of water arrangements or medical camps, because these are not visible from the road and no camp was in progress on the day. Findings on those two components rest entirely on resident reports.

Question-wise results

Table 3. Question-wise responses and positive-response index (n = 12).

Q	Initiative	Yes	Somewhat	No	Index (%)	Rank
Q1	Roads	10	2	0	91.7	1
Q2	Water support	6	4	2	66.7	6
Q3	Employment	7	3	2	70.8	5
Q4	Police post	8	3	1	79.2	4
Q5	Street lighting	10	2	0	91.7	2
Q6	Network tower	9	2	1	83.3	3
Q7	Medical camps	7	2	3	66.7	7
Q8	Overall quality of life	9	3	0	87.5	–

Note: Ranks apply to the seven individual initiatives (Q1–Q7); equal scores share a rank order by table sequence. Q8 is a summary measure and is not ranked.

Roads (Q1). Ten of twelve respondents said Yes and two said Somewhat; none said No. Those who said Yes described quicker, smoother travel, particularly in the rains, and easier access to Panvel for work and medical needs. The two Somewhat answers noted that the main and internal roads were good but that some smaller connecting lanes in the older part of the village still needed repair. This is consistent with what was photographed.

Water support (Q2). Six said Yes, four Somewhat and two No. Positive respondents said availability had improved and supply was more dependable. Those who answered Somewhat felt the benefit varied by locality and by season, with summer still difficult. The two negative responses came from residents whose own households had not seen a change. Water was one of the two lowest-scoring initiatives, and there is no photographic evidence against which to cross-check what respondents said.

Employment (Q3). Seven said Yes, three Somewhat and two No. Respondents who said Yes knew of residents working in construction, site upkeep and security or support services. Those who said Somewhat or No felt the number of jobs was limited relative to the number of people seeking work, or that some better-paid positions went to people from outside the village.

Police post (Q4). Eight said Yes, three Somewhat and one No. Respondents valued a police presence close by and said it made them more comfortable, particularly for women and for those returning home late. Those who said Somewhat or No mentioned that the post is not always visibly staffed, which corresponds with its weathered, partly overgrown appearance in the photograph.

Street lighting (Q5). Ten said Yes and two Somewhat; none said No. Respondents said walking after dark was easier and that lights reduced worries about accidents and about animals on the road. The two Somewhat answers said a few stretches were still dim or that some lights were at times not working.

Network tower (Q6). Nine said Yes, two Somewhat and one No. Positive respondents said calls were clearer and mobile data had become dependable enough for payments and messaging. The respondent who said No reported weak signal inside their own home, and Somewhat answers said coverage depended on the operator and on location within the village.

Medical-support camps (Q7). Seven said Yes, two Somewhat and three No. Those who said Yes had attended a camp for check-ups or basic consultation and valued the free service. The three who said No said they had not known when or where camps were held, and not that the camps were poor.

Overall quality of life (Q8). Nine said Yes and three Somewhat; none said No. Respondents described the change in terms of convenience, safety and connectivity. Those who said Somewhat said the direction was positive but water, jobs for local people and health services still had room for improvement.

Most beneficial initiative (Q9)

Roads were named as most beneficial by four of the twelve respondents. Street lighting, the network tower and employment were each named by two, and water support and the police post by one each. No respondent named the medical-support camps. Respondents who named roads said roads "open up everything else" (work, school, markets and medical care); those who named street lighting emphasised the sense of safety it brings; and those who named the tower pointed to connectivity for work, payments and emergencies. This ordering closely follows the positive-response index.

Recurring themes in comments

Comments, recorded by hand during short conversations, are summarised in the authors' own words and should be read as indicative and not verbatim. Six themes recurred. **Convenience and speed:** respondents most often described the change in terms of how much easier it had become to get around, particularly to Panvel and during the monsoon. **Safety:** the police post and the street lights were repeatedly mentioned together, as if they formed a single safety measure, especially for women and for travel after dark. **Connectivity as a daily necessity:** the tower was described not as a luxury but as something needed for payments, for contacting family and for emergencies. **Uneven benefits:** water and employment were said to have improved things for some households more than others. **Information gaps:** some respondents did not know when camps were held, and a few were unsure which organisation was responsible for which improvement. **Upkeep:** several residents wanted assurance that lights would be repaired and roads maintained once the initial work was complete.

Variation by role and situation

The sample is too small for formal breakdown, but three patterns stood out. Respondents who commute regularly, including workers and younger people, rated roads and the network tower very highly because these affect them daily. Homemakers and older respondents placed more weight on water, safety and health camps, which relate to household routines and the needs of children and elders. Security and site workers, who work close to the police post and the lighting, tended to comment on safety and employment. People valued most the improvements that mattered to their own daily routines.

Discussion

Visible infrastructure is rated highest

The two top-scoring initiatives, roads and street lighting, each reached an index of about 92 per cent, followed by the network tower at about 83 per cent. These are visible, physical, one-time installations whose benefit is felt daily and does not depend on a household's individual circumstances. Their existence could be verified directly, and respondents' answers matched what the team saw. Read through the outputs-outcomes distinction, these are the cases where the output (a surfaced road, a lamp, a tower) translates most directly into an outcome (faster travel, safer walking, dependable calls). In Sen's terms, they expand what people are able to do: reach Panvel, walk home after dark, make a digital payment. This answers RQ1 and part of RQ2.

Safety measures work as a pair, but upkeep matters

The police post (about 79 per cent) and street lighting were frequently talked about together, suggesting that residents experience them as one safety system and not as two separate facilities. The post scored lower than lighting, and the reasons given concerned staffing and visibility, not the idea of the post itself. The photograph of a weathered cabin partly hidden by vegetation reinforces this. A modest investment in upkeep, clear timings and signage could raise how visible and approachable the post feels. This is a maintenance and communication gap, not a design flaw, and it maps directly onto the fourth criterion for a good adoption (arrangements for maintenance).

Service-based welfare is valued but unevenly felt

Water support and medical-support camps, at about 67 per cent each, were the lowest-scoring initiatives, but for different reasons. For water, benefit appeared to vary by locality and season, with summer supply still difficult and two households reporting no change at all. That is a service-level problem requiring attention to delivery. For medical camps, the main reason for negative responses was lack of awareness of when and where camps were held, and not dissatisfaction with the camps. That is a communication problem which can be addressed at low cost. This distinction is the most practical finding of the study: two initiatives with identical scores need different remedies, and a sponsor reading only the headline index would not know that.

It also illustrates the structural contrast anticipated in RQ2. One-time physical installations are easier to deliver and to see than services that depend on continuing delivery, scheduling and information. The risk noted in the literature, that attention becomes uneven across different needs, is visible here in a mild form.

Employment: created, but limited in reach

Employment scored about 71 per cent. Respondents acknowledged that jobs had been created in construction, upkeep and security, but several felt the number was limited or that better positions went to outsiders. Seven of twelve said Yes, which is a majority, yet the Somewhat and No answers all pointed to the same two concerns: scale and fairness of access. Perceived leakage of better posts is a common concern in areas of rapid development, and it bears on the first criterion (community priorities) and the fifth (feedback). A transparent local-hiring practice and skill training for village youth would address it directly.

An overall positive verdict

No respondent said overall quality of life had not improved. Nine of twelve said Yes and three Somewhat, giving an index of about 88 per cent. The Somewhat answers were not complaints about the project's direction. They pointed to the same specific gaps described above: water, jobs for local people and health services. In other words, the overall verdict and the component scores are consistent with each other.

Priorities follow daily routines

Q9 showed that roads were most often named as the most beneficial initiative, with lighting, the tower and employment each named by a smaller number. This ordering follows the positive-response index and supports the view that physical access is the foundation on which other improvements build. The pattern by role (commuters favouring roads and connectivity; homemakers and older respondents weighting water, safety and health) supports the second criterion for a good adoption: a programme that covers several areas reaches more people than one that concentrates on a single area. That no respondent named medical camps as most beneficial is best read in light of the awareness gap and not as a rejection, since those who had attended valued the service.

Assessment against the five criteria

Table 4. Assessment against the five criteria.

Criterion	Evidence from Vardoli	Assessment
Based on community priorities	Roads, lights and connectivity strongly valued; employment and water raised as concerns	Largely met; needs a formal feedback channel
Combines infrastructure, livelihood and welfare	All three present	Met in design; delivery uneven in welfare
Communicates clearly	Low awareness of camp dates; some unsure who is responsible for what	Weakest area
Arrangements for maintenance	Residents want assurance on repair; post partly overgrown; some lights occasionally off	Not yet evident to residents
Open to feedback	No formal channel observed by the team	Opportunity

Strengths, gaps and opportunities by initiative

Table 5. Strengths, gaps and opportunities by initiative.

Initiative	What is working	Gap or risk	Opportunity
Road improvement	Surfaced roads, kerbs, planted verges; strong approval	Inner lanes need repair	Extend repairs; plan regular maintenance
Water support	Improved availability reported by half the respondents	Uneven by locality and season	Publish a supply schedule; review summer supply
Employment	Local jobs in construction, upkeep, security	Limited numbers; perceived outsider hiring	Local-hiring register; youth skill training
Police post	Valued presence close to the village	Not always visibly staffed; weathered cabin	Posted timings; routine upkeep
Street lighting	Strongly appreciated; better night safety	A few dim stretches; occasional faults	Quick-repair contact number; periodic checks
Network tower	Better calls and data	Weak signal inside some homes	Ask operator to review indoor coverage
Medical camps	Free service valued by attendees	Low awareness of dates	Advance notice on notice boards and local groups

Implications and recommendations

For sponsors and implementers of village adoption programmes, the findings suggest eight practical measures.

1. **Maintain what has been built.** A simple maintenance plan for roads, street lights and the police post, with a contact number for reporting faults, would protect the investment already made.
2. **Improve communication on medical camps.** Dates and venues should be announced in advance on village notice boards, through local groups and by word of mouth, since the main barrier appeared to be awareness.
3. **Review water supply by locality and season.** The uneven response suggests identifying which parts of the village have gained least and planning accordingly, especially for the dry months, and publishing a simple supply schedule.
4. **Make local employment more transparent.** A local-hiring register and skill training for village youth would help ensure opportunities reach residents of Vardoli.
5. **Make the police post more visible and approachable.** Clear timings, a signboard and routine upkeep would help residents feel it is available when needed.
6. **Ask the network operator to review indoor coverage** in the parts of the village where signal remains weak.
7. **Involve the village in decisions.** Periodic community meetings or a short feedback form would help the programme stay responsive.
8. **Clarify responsibilities.** Because some respondents were unsure which organisation was responsible for which improvement, a plain-language notice listing each initiative, its provider and a point of contact would reduce confusion.

For policymakers, the study suggests that CSR reporting, which typically emphasises what was built and spent, would be strengthened by simple resident-perception checks of the kind used here, since these can reveal communication and maintenance gaps that expenditure figures cannot.

Limitations

The design has clear limits, which were kept in view throughout. The sample is small (twelve) and purposive, so the results cannot be generalised to the whole village and no significance testing is attempted. Each respondent was met once on a single afternoon, so nothing can be said about change over time, and no baseline data on conditions before the programme exist; respondents' statements about improvement rely on recall. Responses are self-reported and recorded by the researchers, which introduces subjectivity, and respondents on duty at work may have given shorter or more cautious answers. Some respondents assumed the team was connected to the company or the authorities, which may have encouraged politeness; the team repeated that it was a student group and that answers would not be linked to names. The three-point scale and the half-weight given to Somewhat are conventions that make comparison simple but do not capture degrees of satisfaction. The team could not inspect the technical quality of roads, water systems or the tower, could not independently confirm the operator or technical coverage of the tower, and had no access to financial or project records of any organisation. Photographs are available for five of the seven components, none for water support or medical camps. The findings are therefore best treated as hypotheses for a larger follow-up and not as settled conclusions.

Directions for future research

A fuller study could (i) interview a larger and randomly selected sample stratified by locality, gender and occupation; (ii) revisit the village at several points in the year to capture seasonal variation in water supply; (iii) observe a medical camp in progress and record attendance and outreach methods; (iv) examine water arrangements with the village's consent; (v) compare Vardoli with a similar village that has not been adopted; and (vi) add a night-time observation visit to verify lighting and police-post staffing directly. Repeating the same nine-question instrument after a year would also allow change over time to be assessed.

Conclusion

This study examined a private-sector village adoption on the ground in Vardoli. Roads, street lighting, the police post and the mobile network tower are visible, in use and broadly appreciated, and respondents overall felt the programme had improved quality of life: nine of twelve said so outright and none disagreed. Water support, employment and medical-support camps were also valued, but residents' experience of them was more uneven, mostly because of limits on reach, awareness and follow-up and not because of any rejection of the initiatives themselves.

Three points stand out. First, the effect is greatest where the improvement is physical, shared and constantly used, and smaller where it depends on regular service delivery. Second, equal scores can hide different causes, so that low-cost fixes (better communication about camps, posted police-post timings, a fault-reporting number) should be separated from service-level problems (water by locality and season). Third, sustaining the gains will depend less on building more than on maintenance, communication, transparent local hiring and continued involvement of the village in decisions.

Beyond the findings, the project strengthened the team's practical skills in planning a field visit, framing clear questions, conducting respectful conversations, documenting evidence with geo-tagged photography and analysing a small sample honestly while recognising its limits.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank their faculty mentor, Mr. Bhojraj Shewale, for guidance on the choice of topic and questions, Amity Business School, Amity University Mumbai, for the opportunity to undertake the Community Outreach Project, and the residents and workers of Vardoli who gave their time and views.

References

[1] Chambers R (1983). Rural development: putting the last first. *London: Longman*.

[2] Chambers R (1994). The origins and practice of participatory rural appraisal. *World Development*, 22(7), 953–969.

[3] Government of India (2013). The Companies Act, 2013, Section 135 and Schedule VII (Corporate Social Responsibility). *New Delhi: Government of India*.

[4] Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India (2014). Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 (as amended). *New Delhi: Ministry of Corporate Affairs*.

[5] Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. *Jal Jeevan Mission – Har Ghar Jal*. New Delhi: Ministry of Jal Shakti.

[6] Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)*. New Delhi: Ministry of Rural Development.

[7] Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India (2014). Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) – guidelines, 2014. *New Delhi: Ministry of Rural Development*.

[8] Sen A (1999). Development as freedom. *New York: Alfred A*. Knopf.

[9] United Nations (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *New York: United Nations*.

[10] Wadhwa Group (2026). Wadhwa Wise City, Panvel – project signage observed at the Mumbai–Pune Road, 14 August 2026.