A better community

Social enterprises are displaying their solidarity with communities all over the world by channelling their efforts towards improving the lives of the less fortunate. Here's a look at the myriad of community projects under way.

9&10 Energy solutions

Discarding banana peels? Well, in some places in Uganda, they don't. Instead, the banana peels are converted into fuel called briquettes. And can salt be used to power LED lamps? It is happening in the Philippines.

17 Disaster-resilient homes

The Philippines has suffered many disasters in recent years, which have devastated homes, not to mention lives. One group wants to be able to change that by helping people build sturdier homes.

11-14 Reaching out to girls

They've been called the weaker sex. But they have aspirations, dreams and dilemmas. Sometimes, just reaching out for a talk helps. Experiments are under way to enable them to do so – through an app, in a courtyard and at times just face to face.

20 Smart sanitation

Human poo could be useful, so a scientist in Bangladesh believes. His new device collects it over a period of two years, and turns it into organic fertiliser. An added benefit: He has been able to save the region's environment too.

15&16 Healthcare for all

An assembly-line operation for eye care? An ophthalmologist in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu has decided to do just that. Forty-five million people have benefited from it. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, a low-cost, high-quality phototherapy device has been designed to treat jaundice.

18&19 Improving water supply

Imagine a technology so advanced that it can save communities in drought-hit as well as water-logged or flooded areas, and yet so simple that it can be administered by rural women with no formal education. It exists in Bangladesh and it is called Bhungroo. Alongside is a water monitoring system developed by Tokyo-based venture SenSprout Inc to prevent water wastage.

21-24 Improving incomes with technology

Technology is helping to boost incomes in some communities. A company in Greece is trying to make products from seaweed. Elsewhere, an ocean farmer is testing 3-D farming to increase fishing. Meanwhile, in Russia, experiments are on to figure out if cows are pregnant or not, faster – this is important for farmers seeking more dairy output. And in Madagascar, one entrepreneur is making fertilisers from bat droppings.

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