

" Innovative Approaches to Integrating Nutrition with Occupational Safety & Health: Driving Results for a Healthier Workforce"

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL): India

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) has prepared a business case on Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) for the International Labour Organization (ILO), illustrating the potential for incorporating nutrition into Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) through RIL's successful workforce nutrition initiatives. Although nutrition is often overlooked, it plays a critical role in workforce well-being, and Reliance's proactive efforts demonstrate how private sector involvement is essential in tackling malnutrition. While the company has not yet integrated nutrition into its Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) framework, Reliance has implemented several nutrition initiatives within the company. The primary objective of this case study is to explore how nutrition can be strengthened as a component of OHS, using Reliance as a reference for corporate-led nutrition efforts.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), a Fortune Global 500 company and India's largest private sector enterprise, is a diverse conglomerate with operations spanning retail, digital services, media and entertainment, oil-to-chemicals, oil and gas exploration, and new energy. With a workforce of over 300,000 employees and a vast operational footprint, the company prioritizes workplace health and safety as a core value. RIL has implemented workplace risk management strategies for occupational health and safety hazards to prioritize workers' health and safety. The approach includes risk assessment for hazard identification and quantification, risk mitigation through a hierarchy of controls, and is supported by technology-driven process innovations and a consistent focus on worker wellbeing. As efforts to reduce workplace hazards evolve, other health determinants, such as nutrition, are gaining greater attention.. Findings from OSH reports indicate that while workplace health and safety policies are well-established in many private sector companies, nutrition remains a missing component. Addressing this gap is crucial, and companies like Reliance, with their malnutrition reduction efforts, can serve as a case for learning for broader private sector action.

For this reason, the company has launched various well-being initiatives, including R-Swasthya, the Diabetes Control Mission, Body Mass Index (BMI) reduction, and Hypertension management. Additionally, RIL promotes healthier diets by offering nutritious meal alternatives, sugar-free snacks and drinks, and customized meal options.



Linking Nutrition to the overall Employee Well-Being Framework – We Care

The company has focused its work on a comprehensive approach to employee well-being, transcending business units, geographies, management levels, and work profiles to embody its 'We Care' philosophy. To bring this vision to life, the company conceptualized its employee well-being initiative using a Five-petal framework (R-Swasthya), representing the physical, mental, social, financial, and spiritual aspects of well-being. R-Swasthya embodies a holistic approach by integrating existing services and special initiatives with innovative technological solutions. This is reflected in the practices followed by the Reliance team, as the Reliance Medical Services and Human Resources divisions led its implementation, working closely with both internal and external stakeholders across all aspects. Internally, teams from Medical, Human Resources, Corporate Services, Corporate Communication, worked together at Reliance Corporate Park to drive this initiative forward.

One notable example is the establishment of a Corporate Medical Services division, which provides leadership and guidance to the health based initiatives crosscutting across the businesses and workplace sites. Capacities across the Medical Services have been enhanced for comprehensive services' delivery with the addition of Public Health Specialist, Nutritionist, Psychologist & Psychiatrist, Exercise Specialist to the team of Occupational Health Physicians, Industrial Hygienist and Emergency Physicians

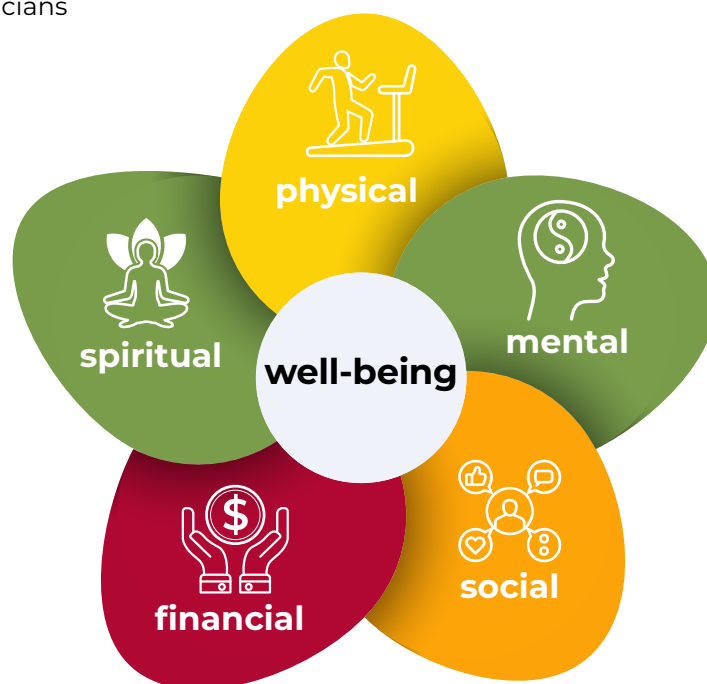


Figure 1: Reliance's Five Petal Framework

Recognizing nutrition as a cornerstone of employee well-being, the company also launched initiatives to promote healthy eating habits and enhance workplace nutrition. This involved curating a diverse selection of nutritious food options in employee food canteens and food courts while ensuring food safety, quality, affordability, and convenience for employees. One of the flagship initiatives at RIL was the development of the "Healthy Thali" – a nutritionally balanced meal designed to be rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, with a low glycemic index, offered to employees at an affordable price. Additionally, the company introduced unique offerings such as salad bars and hydroponic demo microgreen capsules¹ at select campus food courts, ensuring employees have access to healthy meal choices every day.

¹ **Hydroponic Demo Microgreen Capsules** are self-contained units for growing microgreens hydroponically. They are used for **gardening and demonstration**, ideal for beginners, schools, or small-scale farming. Once grown, the **microgreens are harvested for eating, providing essential nutrients**.

Linking Nutrition to Employee Health

Employee health is integrated within the organizational culture of the company. The Corporate Medical Services division has three focus areas for health: preventive, promotive, and curative care. Curative care includes emergency health services, accident management, and other medical interventions. Under preventive & promotive care the major focus is upon prevention of workplace health conditions and infectious diseases, NCD management and essentially, maintenance of work life balance. The company has designed various initiatives in collaboration with health practitioners to accompany employees through their health disorders and provide medical nutrition therapy and personalized diet charts. Regarding NCD management, several programs have been created to support employees, such as:



Figure 2: Programs under NCD Management

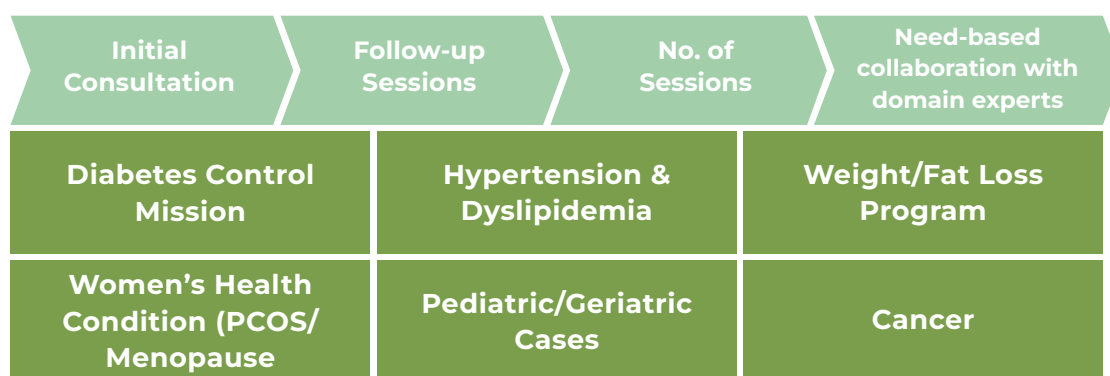


Figure 3: NCD Management process at Reliance Industries

Additionally, as India has a detailed set of guidelines for periodic medical examinations (PME) of workers in factories, RIL rigorously follows these mandatory health checks for its employees in manufacturing plants. Going a step further, RIL extended PME coverage to all employees and their spouses and customized the list of tests based on an employee's age, exposure, and other relevant factors. Follow-ups on PME results are planned to ensure corrective actions and counseling in cases where abnormal health parameters are detected.

Governance Synergies

RIL is a good example of how a company can achieve synergies between Corporate Medical Services, Human Resources, and Corporate Communications. Together, these departments implemented targeted programs, such as healthy diet strategies, at both corporate office and manufacturing plant levels. This required close collaboration with other divisions, including plant heads and canteen committees. RIL had initially approached nutrition and employee diets in a fragmented manner until the decision was made to engage the services of a Corporate Nutritionist. This move aimed to provide clarity on healthy diets as part of NCD management and facilitate nutritional behavior modification among employees. As a result, site-based nutritionist services were introduced. These efforts were further supported through effective communication with the Corporate Nutritionist and the Lead in Nutrition and Health within the company, who visited each

plant to better understand the issues and engage with key stakeholders. This collaboration helped ensure a more structured and impactful approach to employee nutrition. Furthermore, thanks to the pioneering efforts of the first site – at Nagothane (Maharashtra, India) – which introduced healthy food options, other plants followed suit and launched key initiatives such as "Trim the Trio" to reduce salt, sugar and oil in cooked meals provided to employees.

In parallel, the company's PME (Periodic Medical Examination) process helped identify critical non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among employees and provided follow-ups on their results. This enabled employees to recognize how their food choices contributed to conditions like diabetes and motivated them to make healthier decisions. As a result, the company was able to educate its employees on better nutrition.

These nutrition education efforts were supported by the Corporate Communications team, which designed communication materials and timely, nuanced reminders. These reminders incorporated cultural preferences, festivals, and emotional aspects of eating, complementing the NCD initiatives. The coordination among the three departments was crucial in achieving these outcomes.

Additionally, thanks to the collaboration with canteen committees, some innovations and processes introduced for employee engagement included daily food safety checks, insulated tiffin boxes for desk meals, site inductions for new joiners, and intranet meal booking. This reflects an employee-centric approach that RIL implemented in the design of its nutrition programs.

Healthy Food at Work (Corporate Services, nutritionist)	Nutrition Education (Nutritionist, HR, Comms, Corporate Services)	Nutrition-Focused Health Checks (Medical services + nutritionist)
<p>Meal services across diverse setups – Corporate Hq, Manufacturing Plants and other India offices</p> <p>'Diet Thali Initiative' (Healthy Food Plate)</p> <p>Everyday healthy choices (curated menus)</p> <p>Availability of tailor-made food plates from the basket of options – linked to app-based booking</p>	<p>Offline communication – Nutrition Education Standees, posters, banners, tent cards at strategic locations, in-depth sessions by nutritionists, opportunity for personal interaction & support</p> <p>Online communication – designed posts, emailers, reminders, informative articles, blogs related to nutrition and well-being</p> <p>Active Community engagement – Extending support to spouses, and families esp. industrial townships</p> <p>Physical activity opportunities integrated at HQ with social well-being (sports, cycling, yoga, walkathons, passion clubs)</p>	<p>Task based Hazard Risk Assessment (TBHRA)</p> <p>Period Medical Examination (PME) – 100% employee coverage in plant locations, 69% in HQ and office setup</p> <p>Nutrition Counseling – post PME, identification of early diseases and specific diagnosis</p> <p>Technology-based inputs Continuous Glucose Monitoring for Prediabetes and Diabetes</p> <p>Lifestyle Diseases initiative – Diabetes Control Mission – Hypertension Control Mission – BMI intervention</p>

Table 1: Shift from Uncontrolled Diabetes to Normal/Reduced levels

Community-driven behavioral change at RIL Nagothane

As mentioned above, RIL Nagothane was the first RIL plant to introduce key workforce nutrition initiatives. At RIL Nagothane, lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and heart ailments were prevalent, particularly among an aging workforce. The team adopted a community-driven approach focused on creating awareness and behavioral nudges, including:

- **Nutritional Guidance:** A dedicated nutritionist was appointed to provide personalized consultations.
- **Healthier Food Options:** Kitchen inputs were regulated, including a 50% reduction in sugar, a 25% reduction in oil, and a 3% reduction in salt, as well as the replacement of unhealthy snacks with healthier alternatives.
- **Community Engagement:** Spouses of employees were involved in sports classes (e.g., yoga, Zumba, etc.).
- **Physical Activity Awareness:** Campaigns such as walkathons and 60-day fitness challenges were introduced.
- **Behavioral Nudges:** For instance, tea was served without pre-added sugar.

The results of these initiatives were significant, leading to a noticeable reduction in diabetes and obesity cases among the workforce (Please refer to results and outcomes). Moreover, employees and their families began proactively seeking healthier food alternatives which is evident from shift that happened overtime from uncontrolled diabetes to Normal/Reduced levels, and change in overall sugar procurement pattern in a year.

Shift from uncontrolled Diabetes to Normal/Reduced Levels (Source: Data shared by Reliance Industries)						
Year	Prediabetics (Total)	Prediabetics Enrolled (%)	Prediabetics reverted to normal (%)	Diabetes (Total)	Diabetics Enrolled (%)	Diabetes Achieving <7 (%)
2019-20	2794	93.5% (2611)	12.6% (329)	2022	97.3% (1967)	41.5% (816)
2020-22	COVID-19					
2022-23	4940	100% (4940)	34.7% (1715)	1260	100% (1260)	28% (353)
2023-24	5558	100% (5558)	24% (1335)	2372	100% (2372)	26.4% (627)

Table 1: Shift from Uncontrolled Hyperglycemia in Diabetes mellitus to Normoglycemia/ Reduced levels of Targeted HbA1C

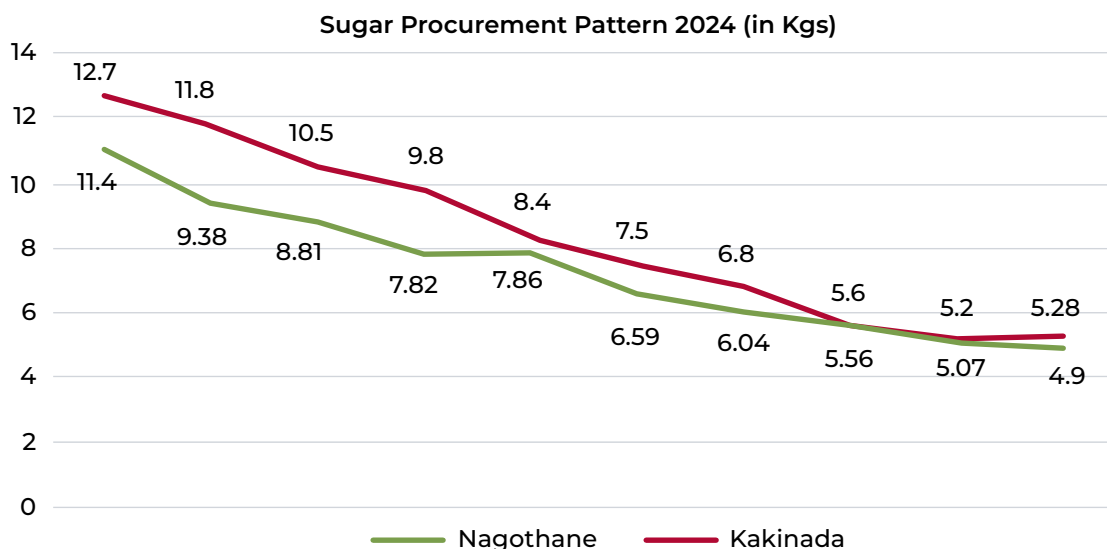


Figure 4: Change in sugar procurement pattern over a year

By fostering a culture of shared responsibility and offering choices rather than mandates, RIL Nagothane successfully shifted behaviors – proving that sustainable change happens when the community, not just the company, drives it. After getting success in pilot projects at Nagothane and Kakinada, RIL have replicated this success across organization.

Health & Safety at Reliance: Policy, Governance, and Initiatives

Safety has always been a top priority for Reliance, especially given its involvement in industries with continuous production processes such as textiles, oil and gas, petrochemicals, and telecom. Its operations involve handling diverse inputs and outputs across multiple transportation methods, making strong safety compliance essential. As the company expands into new sectors like retail, new energy, data centers, and logistics, maintaining high safety standards remains a key focus.

Reliance recognizes that continuous production industries may pose potential health risks to the workforce, including nutritional deficiencies that can in turn affect detoxification, toxin excretion, and overall organ function. Research suggests that poor nutrition can impair the body's ability to metabolize and eliminate toxic substances efficiently. To mitigate these risks, the company conducts thorough health assessments prior to any exposure-related activities, ensuring that workers are adequately prepared and safeguarded. Additionally, key concerns identified by plant personnel – such as working at heights (which may impact blood pressure and cause vertigo), confined spaces, heat stress, and physical exertion – are carefully evaluated as part of Reliance's comprehensive safety and wellness strategy.

For this reason, RIL Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) policy clearly states the company's safety vision and culture which is embedded in the governance structure and decision-making processes of the firm. At the Board level, the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) committee oversees health and safety concerns through quarterly presentations. Within Business Groups (such as Exploration & Production, Textile, PET, New Energy), Business and Functional Leaders are accountable for safe operations. In the hydrocarbon plants, the plant head, the safety head, process engineers, Occupational Health (OH) Coordinator, Chief Medical Officer, OH Doctor, and Industrial Hygienist, collaborate with the plant's safety committee to ensure rigorous safety standards.

Occupational Health (OH) Coordinator, Chief Medical Officer, OH Physician, and Occupational Health- Industrial Hygienist specialist, Public Health Specialist collaborate with the plant's safety committee to ensure rigorous safety standards.

Additionally, in critical business units such as Oil & Gas, Petrochemicals, and Textiles, where raw materials and processes often involve hazardous substances and complex interactions, the company rigorously works to mitigate hazards and implement process changes to enhance safety. To achieve this, Reliance has integrated technological advancements into core processes, including real-time hazard detection for leaks, machine/equipment malfunctions, and failures. Multiple safety layers have been introduced through dashboards, electronic monitoring, vibration and thermal sensors, improved ventilation, and other innovations.

Furthermore, RIL implemented two initiatives in its safety management: Task-Based Hazard Risk Assessment (TBHRA) and Change Agents for Safety, Health, and Environment (CASHE). With this spirit, Reliance is continuing its journey towards excellence with CASHE 2.0, building upon two decades of success to drive even greater impact in Safety, Health, and Environment.

Launched in 2003, the **Change Agents for Safety, Health, and Environment (CASHE)** initiative has played a pivotal role in enhancing workplace safety, promoting best practices in occupational health, and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. This year-long program selects a specific theme annually and brings together interdisciplinary teams comprising worker representatives, plant managers, process engineers, occupational health physicians, industrial hygienists, and safety professionals.

Over the past 22 years, CASHE has established itself as one of the most enduring and impactful programs within RIL. It has consistently contributed to hazard reduction, improved workplace well-being, and strengthened safety protocols for both employees and contract workers. The program's success is evident in the steady rise in identified projects and their effective implementation, reinforcing its commitment to continuous improvement and sustainability in workplace safety and health.

The **Task-Based Hazard Risk Assessment (TBHRA)** was introduced at Reliance in 2018, following the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) model. It maps employee hazard exposure against occupational exposure limits (OEL) and is supplemented by ambient monitoring for specific hazards such as noise and air quality. Employee data is stored in the Health Management System and linked to workplace surveillance, PME, and task allocation. TBHRA tracks job positions, critical tasks, and exposure levels to factors such as chemicals, noise, vibration, and heat stress, enabling plant managers to assign tasks based on workers' threshold limit values (TLVs) to ensure safety.

Together, the team conducts a series of internal discussions, plant walkthroughs, TBHRA recommendations, and other processes to select a project aimed at hazard reduction or workplace improvement.

Opportunities for Integrating Nutrition in Health and Safety (OSH + N)

The emphasis on employee well-being and health and safety for RIL has translated into diverse initiatives for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment. The adjoining graphic shows key existing company interventions in the areas and their intersections. Organizational culture was seen as critical for prioritizing health and safety. The cross-cutting nature of thematic areas and positive influence of synergies through the cross-functional governance systems was evident in stakeholder discussions. Some initiatives are specific for hazard mitigation and worker safety, while others focus on health and nutrition. In the current operating system, using TBHRA and PME, the individual health risk areas are identified and NCD management pathways executed with a prominent role accorded to nutrition.

Results and Outcomes

Successes in initiatives such as R-Swasthya, the Diabetes Control Mission, BMI reduction, Hypertension management, and mental well-being have highlighted the company's commitment to fostering a healthier workplace and providing a solid foundation for further improvement in employee health initiatives. The adjoining figures A and B show impact of the digital therapeutics pilot for Diabetes Control Mission on key parameters such as HbA1C, Blood Glucose and blood sugar (pre-post meals).

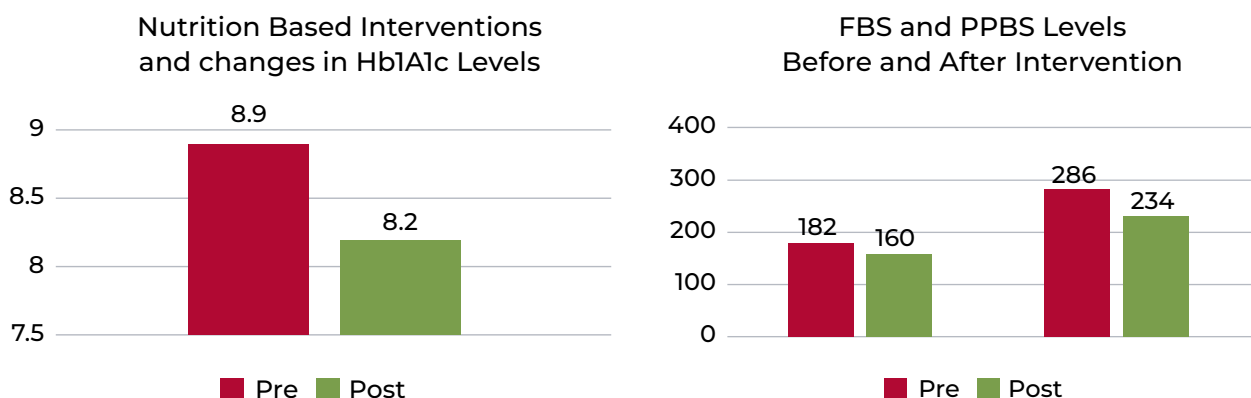


Figure 5: Nutrition based interventions and changes in HbA1C levels

Figure 6: FBS and PPBS Levels Before and After Intervention

Source: Data shared by Reliance Industries Pvt Ltd

The RIL case study serves as an excellent example of how a company, through strategic coordination, has successfully implemented workforce nutrition programs despite the challenges posed by a country with diverse cultural preferences.

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