



A gathering attended by 50+ corporates on Friday, 16th June 2017 at My fortune Hotel, Cathedral Road was a knowledge sharing & networking opportunity for corporates with domain experts. Past CSR trends & future CSR outlook was the theme of the event. Our aim was to help corporates understand & invest in appropriate areas so we make Tamil Nadu a better place.

Our host for the evening, Mr. Praveen Sridhar from Front Desk, welcomed the Chief Guest for the day, Ms. Deborah Robinson, Acting CG, U.S.Consul General. She addressed the gathering on how the U.S. India bilateral relationship has grown in the past years. She then moved on to talking about how the meaning of CSR is changing over the years. It's more than just writing cheques or philanthropy. It's about investing & achieving long term sustainable goals.

The keynote address for the evening was by Mr. Lakshmi Narayanan, Founder Member, UWC. He spoke about the CSR mandate in the Companies Act 2013 - Corporates have to spend 2% of their profit on CSR. In the last 5 years, there has been enormous growth in the compliance by corporates. Almost 70% increase. While public sector undertaking spend their share towards government programs, the impact is difficult to measure. Private sector undertakings on the other hand, spend on programs after detailed evaluation of the impact. Approaching NGOs like United Way who have project management expertise ensures that money is spent such that the impact can be measured.

Guest of Honour - Ms. Shilpa Prabhakaran Satish, IAS, Executive Vice Chairman, Industrial Guidance and Export Promotion Bureau, Government of Tamil Nadu. Having served as the Deputy Commissioner Education in Chennai Corporation earlier, she could relate to the increase in quality of education in corporation schools because of teacher training & classroom adoption programs done by NGOs across Chennai.



Session 1 : Going Beyond CSR

Mr. John Fleming opened the session by an anecdote - During 1980's CSR was a new concept. The fact that Corporates could pursue the bottom line & earn profit fascinated him. If one wants to learn how to be good corporate citizens, he must not look for answers in textbooks but in living examples around (i.e) from corporates with unique CSR trends.

Ms. Rajashree Natarajan from Cognizant Technology Solutions, spoke about how they prioritize and focus on the diverse needs of our country. Education is the crux of their CSR. Followed by healthcare, income & livelihood. Cognizant's OUTREACH is volunteering program with over 1,00,000 volunteers who have contributed 1.75 million hours in the last 10 years. They have adopted 160 schools across India & aim to achieve 100% pass percentage in those schools & ensure those children pursue higher studies & get good jobs. They are a team of 5 who want to impact 5,00,000 lives. Their volunteers identify credible NGOs who they ultimately partner with.

Mr. Srikanth from Ford India, directed the CSR focus on education. Their main project is Happy Schools where they concentrate on the education of students from kindergarten to 5th grade as they will be future citizens of the country. Providing good infrastructure, sanitation, safety, science labs has shown a increase in attendance rate. Their most impactful programme was the medical clinic & science lab on wheels. Their other focus areas include digital literacy providing computers to schools across India, women empowerment, environment, health & safety.

Ms. Mohanalatha from L&T Construction, Spoke about how they have been involved in providing quality education for 40 years now & health care services for over 30 years. They have a very strong monitoring mechanism. They have trained close to 28000 people in the last 4 years who work with them through sub-contractors. Under water & sanitation - They have built 100 toilets across India which has increased the attendance rate of girl child. Developing 350+ sites by increasing crop yield & ground water reserve.

The last presentation was by Mr. Giresh Mohan from ITC Infotech who pointed out that 'Making today's resources sustainable for the livelihood of the future is important.' He indicated that to bring about change are in the hands of three important stakeholders - the rural community, the social community and public and private partnerships. ITC focuses on agriculture, women empowerment & skill development. In Tamil Nadu they operate in 5 districts. Green temple is their most unique program. They convert waste into biogas & then use it for cooking in the temple kitchen.



Session 2 : A pragmatic approach to CSR : Panel Discussion

Ms. Shyamala Ashok, Executive Director UWC set the context for the panel discussion and introduced the moderator Mr. Amardeep Devadason.

Mr. Amar in turn introduced all panellists to the stage.

1. Ms. Jaishree Damodaran – Education
Secretary Trustee,
Agaram Foundation.
2. Mr. Joss Brooks – Environment
Director,
Pitchandikulam Forest Consultants.
3. Mr. Sugata roy – Children
Communication Specialist,
UNICEF-TN and Kerala.
4. Mr. P. Kuganatham - Health
Consultant,
Infectious Diseases-SIMS.

Amar to Jaishree: What is the logic behind working with Government schools?

Jaishree :Today more than 73% of the student population study in Government schools. The conversion rate to higher education from the 73% is only 10%. While 27% study in private schools, the conversion rate their for higher education is 90%.

Amar to Jaishree: Is the support given by the Government not sufficient as the necessity of the NGOs increase in Government schools?

Jaishree: No, Government plays a vital role but it is the corporates and the NGOs that can take it up to next level. Multiple forces are a better hand.

Amar to Sugata: Children are the core focus of CSR as they are future. Could you elaborate in the other sections.

Sugata: Children are of 44% of the total population and hence needs to be prioritised. Most of the GDP losses are because of the various factors affecting children like 6% loss due to water & sanitation, 5% loss due to Malnutrition and 7% loss due to child abuse, thus it becomes a business case to invest in. The difference has to be made till the bottom line.

Amar to Joss: Could elaborate on the great work done in Adyar Punga and hoe did it come together??

Joss: It started 50 years ago when the vision to make it a better place.It needed lot of effort and support from various people like government, small communities and people around it. Improvement done step by step and the result is dynamic from before. Emphasised that it a wetland thus the work done should be done upstream. Necessity to bring in more ECO clubs and Environment Centres for future betterment.

Amar to Kuganatham: Where does the healthy environment start to play an important role?

Kuganatham: There are 3750 slums in chennai which are almost 150 years old. Need to implement slum health programs. In the last 20 years, the birth rate are 1,30,000 & death rate are 75,000 - 80,000. 28000 - 30000 deaths are due to non communicable diseases. Around 10% due to cancer based diseases. Any development in the city

needs to focus on the slums as they are more health issues and diseases from those places and more people reside in there. Around 7,00,000 people come from north east, do not have any medical insurance. Also there are around 34 canals in Chennai. Polluting those are the major source of diseases.

Amar to Jaishree: How about implementing Environment centers joss talked about in schools?

Jaishree: Entry points to community would definitely be schools. And what is communicated to students would be reflected without a doubt.

Amar to Jaishree: As much as are teachers necessary would a Gardner be required to develop the society?

Jaishree: Every school needs to have a gardener to make the students understand the necessity of trees and plants. It is also to bring light upon the society's betterment in which they are living. Hiring gardeners to train teachers should be a part of the outreach program.

Amar to Sugata: What as an industry should we do for child rights and enlightenment?

Sugata: Work place - No child labour - No tolerance in child abuse . Market place - Stereotype advertisements. Communities we operate in - Health, nutrition & sanitation

Amar to Kuganatham: Elaborate on the community health & CSR.

Kuganatham: Community health has been mostly lost because of the irresponsibility of the responsible people. The community is to be focused on the following areas: School Health Program- Deworming 7,00,000 children every year, Night Shelters for beggars, Residential school for slums, Rehabilitation centers.

Mr. Sugata had one request to corporates & that is to come forward & partner with UNICEF to protect youngsters from cyber crime & bullying.



Mr. Amar wrapped the session saying development is in the hands of 4 pillars. The Government who wants to make a change. NGOs who are making changes, Industries & ultimately the community. It's not just Corporate Social Responsibility but the emphasis is on Social responsibility which should be a part of all our DNAs.