

Corporate Social Responsibility – An Initiative for Rural Growth

Abhinav Parashar¹

Email Id: abyyabhi1988@gmail.com

Abstract. Rural India is considered to be one of the backward and non - progressing India. It require a proper growth structure to really call India as a developed country, alone government cannot make it developed. Hence, a corporate house and its business ideas is what work as a trigger for rural economic development in India. Today rural India is suffering from several issues like agriculture, infrastructural development, socio-economic conditions etc. Rural development in India revolves around issues related to agriculture, socio-economic standards and infrastructure. Hence, it is necessary to address the problems related to Infrastructure, Public utility services and Communication. The paper concludes that social responsibility is regarded as an important business issue of Indian companies irrespective of size, sector, and business goal. Therefore, CSR actions have positive impacts not only on development of rural community but also in their business. We have tried to reveal some lesson on CSR practices in India which can provide guidance to corporate entities for better implementation of CSR activities

1 Introduction

Undoubtedly majority of India's poorest people lives in villages and these villages are in a state of neglect and underdevelopment with impoverished people. The problems of hunger, ignorance, ill health, high mortality and illiteracy are most acute in rural areas. This is not only because of shortage of material resources but also because of defects in our planning process and investment pattern. India has the potential to meet these challenges in rural areas. However, the efforts of Governments may not be adequate to provide basic services to its citizens. It is being increasingly recognized that progress and welfare of a society is not only the responsibility of the Government alone, but many more stakeholders need to be involved to attain the development goal.

The corporate plays a major role there of being the smartest and important stakeholders of the government for just not there development, but also growth of wide spectrum of business organisations. CSR somehow is considered as a tool for returning back to society, it's a platform to bridge the gap between developed and so called undeveloped society prevailing in our economy itself.

2 Objectives of the Study

- To study the CSR status in rural India.
- To study and understand the CSR initiatives being taken by companies for rural development.
- To study the challenges faced by CSR in rural India.
- To make suggestions for accelerating CSR initiatives

3. Research Methodology

This paper is an exploratory research which is based on the secondary data collected from journals, magazines, books articles, media reports and websites. For present research six companies (private and public) was selected. For purpose of our study, we have tried to incorporate some of big business houses, pertaining to data collected.

4. CSR Initiatives taken by Indian Business Houses For Rural Development

| Company | Important Area | CSR Initiatives For Rural Development |
|--|----------------|--|
| ACC Ltd. | Livelihood | Enhance productivity and profitability, provide veterinary facilities educate farmers on improved livestock management in Lakheri, Rajasthan India |
| | Education | Project Saksham (Bargarh), Education for all(Jamul), quality education (Gagal) India |
| | Environment | Installation of reverse osmosis water System Thondebhavi Largest recycling lesson Madukkarai, Coimbatore India |
| | Health | HIV/AIDS Awareness Camp and General Medical Camp for Truckers in (Wadi), Health Care for Adolescent Girls (Chanda) Karnataka India Caring for children (Lakheri) Rajasthan |
| Chambal Fertilizers And Chemical Limited | Education | Shiksha education working in rural areas of Rajasthan India. |
| | Health | Graminarogyasewa health care program Gadepan in Kota district of Rajasthan |
| | Environment | Gram Vikas (rural infrastructure and development and environment program) Kota (Rajasthan) |
| | Infrastructure | Positive interventions in the infrastructure in Rajasthan India |
| | Livelihood | KrishiaurPashupalan agriculture and livestock development working in Kota (Rajasthan) India. |
| AMBUJA CEMENT Ltd. | Livelihood | Working in Capacity building, generation of alternate source of livelihood |
| | Education | Till date corporation reached out to 1.5 lakhs students in 10 schools across different locations in India |
| | Health | Initiated association named (APEKSHA), Reducing child mortality, HIV/AIDS awareness, stress management, etc |
| | Environment | Water management and conservation |
| NTPC | Livelihood | Income generation, Support for agriculture produce/ business, Medical/Veterinary camps for livestock |
| | Health care | Mission health on wheels initiated |
| | Environment | Initiated activities for protecting & maintaining environment and reducing pollution. Initiated & supported the measures of conservation of natural |

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| | | resources by variety of techniques i.e. recycling, reuse etc. accurate usage of renewable energy. |
| | Education | Education, vocational training, Distributed study materials, Scholarships / financial assistance to meritorious students, Adult Education, Coaching classes etc |
| HINDUSTAN ZINC Ltd. | Livelihood | Promoting Women Self Help Groups, Supported Vocational Training Colleges and Mining institutes or organizations, Implementation of agriculture and also initiated animal husbandry projects in rural areas. |
| | Education | Continue to support Vedanta BalChetnaAnganwadi Project, Child Care Centre Programs and any other similar programs Continue to support Vedanta Post Graduate Girls College, Ringus, and Continue and/or expand partnership with Vedanta foundation, Running of schools in the vicinity of our operations and other identified places. |
| | Healthcare | Eradicating malnutrition in children through use of zinc in collaboration with reputed organisations like UNICEF Build/enhance/support hospital and health projects Sanitation, drinking water facilities in rural areas. |
| | Environment | Establishing and operating of Sewerage Treatment Plant for common good, Environment projects for forestation, water conservation, beautification of lakes, green belts etc |
| | Infrastructure | Development of infrastructure and other rural development projects. |
| SHREE CEMENT Ltd. | Education | Promotion of education |
| | Health | Prosperity through health & safety, Treatment of HIV/AIDS infected patient in the Company's Dispensary without any discrimination |
| | Environment | Use of natural resources efficiently, trying to reduce noise pollution, waste and greenhouse gases, installation of Waste Heat Recovery Boilers (WHRB) |

5. Challenges of CSR

Despite several measures taken by government for the development of rural and backward people, the real challenge is the problems obstructing government from achieving success. Major challenges in rural India mainly comprise of better education, pure drinking water, good health, facilities, and of strengthened road network in area. The CSR reform helps to eradicate problems in the area as well as to take that area on path of development with the financial and social support of organizational base setup at that location. People often are unaware or illiterate about CSR initiatives, so making them aware, educate them to adopt these changes for overall development of their sector is of prime importance. Lack of clear CSR Guidelines: There are no statutory guidelines or policy directives to give a direction to CSR initiatives of firms. The CSR initiatives of companies mainly depend upon their business size and profile. It means that bigger the company, the larger its CSR activities. Lack of Consensus: There is a lack of consensus amongst implementing agencies and stakeholders regarding CSR activities. And it results in duplication of activities by corporate houses in areas of their activities and creates situation of ineffectiveness.

6. Conclusions

Even though companies are taking serious efforts for the sustained development, Is CSR really a stalking horse for an anti-corporate agenda? The reality is that CSR is not a tactic for brand building. Indulging into activities that help society in one way or the other only adds to the goodwill of a company. Rural people can become a viable market for the corporate with a developmental approach of social marketing. Organisations can launch social responsibility initiatives in order to build brands in the rural areas. The social responsibility initiatives are far more effective in building brands in rural market than the commercial advertisements.

7. Important suggestions for growth

- The company should have well trained CSR department with well qualified and experience professionals.
- There is a necessity of generating a rural community in India for its ongoing growth and development.
- The company should also conduct audit of CSR programmes to judge there continuity.
- The Government must play the role of motivator, facilitator and persuade corporate to take into account ethical, social and environmental criteria.

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ⁱ Author is B.Tech. and having interest in the areas of agricultural and rural development