

IMPACT

Insights & Inspiration for Social Innovation

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CSR 2.0: New Perspectives





Save the date

UNITED NATIONS VIRTUAL FORUM ON RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Asia and the Pacific

New Challenges and New Approaches

9-11 June 2020  Online

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON

Organised by the National Environment Agency, Singapore, the biennial **CleanEnviro Summit Singapore (CESG)** serves as a global networking platform for thought leaders, senior government officials, regulators and policy makers, and industry captains.

Held from **5 to 9 July 2020**, the fifth edition of the event is built on the theme '**Towards Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Cities**', and will deep-dive into five key areas:

Waste Management – Singapore has developed an advanced and integrated waste management system that minimises land use and maximises resource recovery. In working towards our vision of a Zero Waste Nation, Singapore launched the Zero Waste Masterplan in 2019, mapping out Singapore's key strategies to build resource, climate and economic resilience. This involves moving away from a linear take-make-dispose economic model to one that is circular – through sustainable production and consumption, and transforming waste into resources.

Cleaning – The provision of cleaning services is essential to ensure a clean and liveable environment in developing and/or developed economies. To augment the cleaning landscape, innovative solutions such as autonomous robotics, artificial intelligence and green cleaning standards will improve cleaning efficacy, efficiency and productivity, and provide more opportunities for businesses to collaborate locally and internationally.

Pest Management – The pest management industry is continually progressing with increasing emphasis on integrated pest management and technology, to deliver more effective and sustainable pest control solutions. In the digital economy, customer needs and regulatory requirements are changing significantly, putting pressure on companies to transform into a knowledge industry in order to thrive in a new business and regulatory environment.

Sustainable Energy – In an increasingly carbon constrained world, there is a need for energy transition. The energy transition journey would require the right policies and low-carbon technologies, such as in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Pollution Control – In the face of rising demands for pollution monitoring, smart systems can multiply pollution control resources to deliver enhanced capabilities, allowing for real-time analysis of environmental qualities. Adoption of these systems can facilitate reliable and proactive tracking, and timely measures against environmental issues.

Participants will experience in-depth discussions as well as the sharing of global best practices through the Clean Environment Leaders' Summit and the Clean Environment Convention. The inaugural Youth Environment Leaders Forum offers young leaders the opportunity to connect and exchange ideas with their peers. The sessions aim to facilitate the exchange of practical and scalable solutions to address environmental challenges, including those caused by climate change. In addition, exhibitors at the City Solutions Singapore Expo and Innovation Pitch will showcase the latest innovations in environmental technology and solutions.

Click [here](#) to register.

For more information on CESG 2020, please email info@cleanenvirosummit.sg.





19 ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE SDGs

CSR conferences are planned with a focus on SDGs, but are there any other programs? In partnership with communities and development agencies, private companies are chalking out their own SDG strategies. Nandhini Shanmugham zooms in to find out more from the experience of three organizations.



34 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS DO WHAT'S GOOD: R.A. MASHELKAR

iMPACT sits down with Ramesh Mashelkar, former Director of Scientific and Industrial Research to understand how he works within the context of corporations and civil society, public policy, and much more.

PHOTO CREDITS

Cover caption: Over 3,000 people, 95% women, work in Turkmenbashi Tekstil Kompleksi - the biggest textile company in Central Asia.

Cover photo by: Asian Development Bank - General Photos: Turkmenistan album Graphics, stock photos by flaticon.com, freepik.com, Pexels and Unsplash



24 CSR 2.0: WHAT ARE CORPORATES LOOKING FOR?

The framework of the CSR-NGO partnership is evolving, as corporates get more involved with social change. This could mean a shift in the way NGOs consider the relationship, writes Sulagna Datta.



Director General of the Council of
social transformation can occur
organizations, its intersection with

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41 BRINGING WOMEN WITHIN NETWORK COVERAGE AREA

Drawing on Gram Vaani's experiences, Vani Viswanathan suggests asking a few basic questions to ensure that your ICT for Development project listens to, and accurately represents, women's voices.

Dear reader,

Hope you are safe and well.

The world is in a crisis of gargantuan proportions. As of April 1, worldwide death tolls from COVID-19 are expected to reach the millions. It's the world's great public health emergency of modern times. The government, healthcare systems, and civil society, all have to work in tandem to, as the new word to enter our vocabulary goes, "flatten the curve."

But is that enough? There is some evidence to show that social distancing measures will not help immunity, and the best way to deal with the pandemic is to develop herd immunity, or, as an article in ScienceNews titled "When will the coronavirus pandemic and social distancing end?" suggests, "The fastest way to herd immunity would be to let the virus burn through the world's population unimpeded."

Everyone is waiting to see how this will all pan out. Will weather and heightened exposure to viruses help a country like India? Will the fact that it is an archipelago help the Philippines? There is so much we don't know about the virus, and we are actually fighting blind.

As always, the disadvantaged are most severely affected, with uncertain wages and unclear directions. Countries that treat the epidemic primarily as a health issue are missing the point: it's a much larger livelihoods issue, with billions of people held hostage by the virus and in some cases, by their own government. Governments need to build bridges with civil society, and work with them to reach out. CSOs have the reach and trust of those who need most help.

Amidst all of this is a concern that many in the social sector have confessed, especially organizations with thin budgets: Will this mean that their cause will not be supported as well this year? Must they scale back their projections? Will already scarce funding decrease? The truth is that we don't know, but if this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that nothing can be fought alone. The world is one family, or as ancient Sanskrit texts say: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

This issue, on CSR, might help allay some of those concerns. It may provide you with a new lens to consider partnerships with corporations, who have pledged their support to the fight against COVID-19 in myriad ways.

Stay well, dear reader. This too, shall pass. And we will emerge stronger for it.

Warm regards,



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EVENTS

As the COVID-19 situation across the world is still developing, some of these events might move online, or be cancelled. Please check the web site for the latest information.

- 1 Impact Summit 2020** 
May 20
Glasgow, Scotland
FutureX
www.impact-summit.org
- 2 The Responsible Business Summit Europe 2020**
May 26-28
London, United Kingdom
Reuters Events
events.ethicalcorp.com/rbs
- 3 Engage for Good 2020** 
May 27-28
Austin, Texas, U.S.
Engage for Good
conference.engageforgood.com
- 4 Social Innovation Summit 2020**
June 2-3
Washington, D.C., U.S.
Landmark Ventures
www.socinnovation.com
- 5 UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development**
June 2-4
Berlin, Germany
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
en.unesco.org/events/ESDfor2030
- 6 2020 UN Ocean Conference**
June 2-6
Lisbon, Portugal
United Nations
www.un.org/en/conferences/ocean2020
- 7 Africa Shared Value Leadership Summit**
June 4-5
Kigali, Rwanda
Shared Value Africa Initiative
www.africasharedvaluesummit.com
- 8 AVPN Conference 2020** 
June 8-12
Singapore
Asian Venture Philanthropy Network
conference.avpn.asia
- 9 Sustainable Brands Istanbul'20**
June 9-10
Istanbul, Turkey
Sustainable Brands
sb.surdurulebilirlik.com.tr/sb20istanbul
- 10 BEYOND 2020**
June 9-11
Gothenburg, Sweden
Chalmers University of Technology
beyond2020.se
- 11 Leaders Summit 2020**
June 15-16
New York, U.S.
UN Global Compact
www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/events/1744-leaders-summit-2020
- 12 Future Food Tech Summit 2020**
June 23-24
New York, U.S.
Rethink Events Ltd
futurefoodtechnyc.com
- 13 DISES 2020**
June 23-25
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Council for Exceptional Children
rads560.github.io/dises/events.html
- 14 Unlocking Capital for Sustainability 2020**
June 30
Singapore
Eco-Business
events.eco-business.com/events/unlocking-capital-for-sustainability-2020
- 15 International CSR & Sustainability Summit 2020**
July 3
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Enterprise Asia
enterpriseasia.org/area/ics





16 The 3rd International Corporate Volunteering Conference
July 7-9
 Madrid, Spain
 Voluntare
www.voluntare.org/iii-congreso-internacional-de-voluntariado-corporativo

17 Asia Human Capital Development Conference 2020
July 9
 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 ATCEN
atcen.com/asia-human-capital-development-conference

18 FIA Food for the Future Summit 2020
July 10
 Singapore
 Food Industry Asia
fiasummit.org

19 6th World Conference on Women's Studies 2020
July 27-29
 Colombo, Sri Lanka
 The International Institute of Knowledge Management
womenstudies.co

20 Sustainable Packaging Asia Pacific Summit 2020
July 30-31
 Shanghai, China
 Duxes Information & Technology PLC.
www.duxes-foodbeverage.com/package-aps/backup.html

21 The 3rd International Conference on Future of Education 2020
August 6-7
 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 The International Institute of Knowledge Management
futureofedu.co

To include your event in this section, please email details of the event, in the format above to editor@asiango.org

From the region:

INDIA 

Changes in budget leaves NGOs frustrated


The Indian budget, presented on February 1, recommended sweeping changes in laws related to non-governmental organizations, of which India had an estimated 3.3 million in 2010.

These proposed changes, which seem to be aimed at greater clampdown on NGOs, has social sector professionals worried. Many in the field have characterized the changes as Draconian and aimed at intimidating the sector.

Some of the changes include a mandatory renewal of registration of all NGOs every five years (when it was in perpetuity earlier), a similar renewal for exemption under various sections of the Income Tax Act, and mandatory disclosure of donors who claim exemption under the Act.

Noshir Dadrawala, chief executive of Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy, said that this was a pattern to this clampdown. "Year after year, these amendments are creating a very disabling and discouraging legal regime for NGOs to function," he said in an article in Scroll.in.

Pushpa Aman Singh, founder of Guide Star India, suggested that instead of making NGOs apply for fresh licences every five years, the government should automatically renew registered organisations that filed their income tax returns regularly.

NGOs have been holding consultations across the country to help with presenting their recommendations to the Indian Government. 


PHILIPPINES 

Child rights NGO cries for fair juvenile justice

NGOs working on child rights and youth welfare recently protested the government's decision to decrease the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) from 15 to 12. They said that the move was a "short-sighted solution" that will mainly affect disadvantaged children. While the Philippines has crafted a detailed Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act and was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), this move has been flayed by UN agencies while many point to the fact that the MACR of countries like Singapore stands at 7 years. 

BANGLADESH 

Social development NGO bags title of World's Best

Bangladesh-based BRAC has retained the title of the World's Best NGO of 2020 by NGO Advisor, an independent Geneva-based media organisation, for the fifth time in a row. BRAC, which works in 11 countries including the Philippines and Nepal, comes at social development from several angles: direct programs, social enterprises, social impact investing, and education. BRAC has been hailed as a model for self-sufficiency, as it is reported to generate 80% of its own budget through social enterprises that include a dairy, a handicrafts collective called Aarong, and poultry businesses, in addition to an internet service provider, and a university. 

Help stop the spread of COVID-19

STAY AT HOME

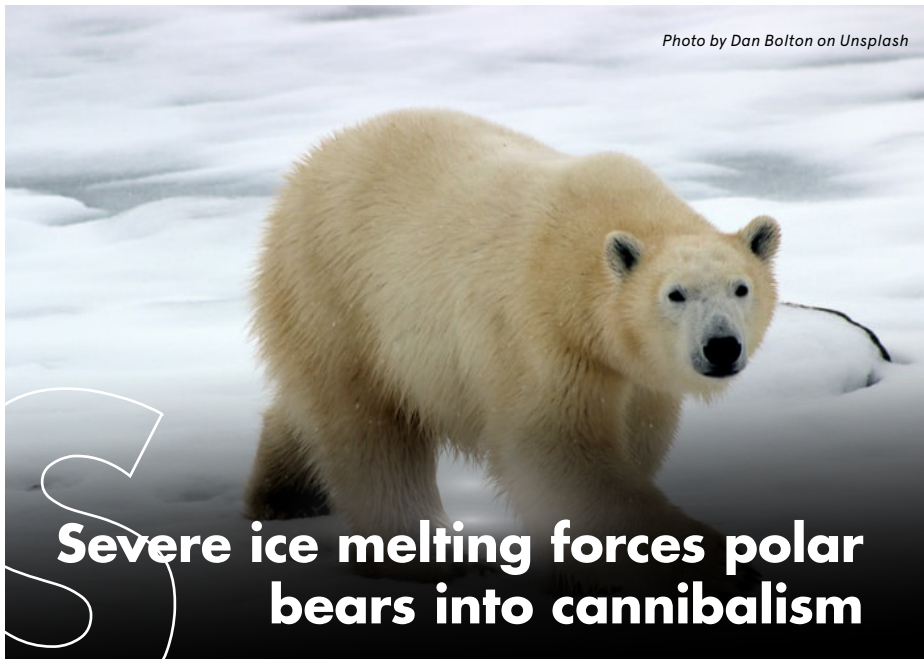
We know that staying at home for a prolonged period can be difficult, frustrating and lonely. Here are some tips to look after your well-being while staying at home.



Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, Stay at Home, Save Lives.



The Big Picture:



Increased human activity and ice thinning are threatening the habitat of polar bears, forcing them to feed on each other, a new report says.

According to Ilya Mordvintsev, senior researcher at the Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution in Russia, while cannibalism is a part of polar bears' natural behavior, such cases used to be rare, until recently.

Mordvintsev noted the increase in human interference in the Arctic has resulted in severe ice thinning and degradation of polar bear hunting grounds, particularly in the Gulf of Ob, which is now a popular route for ships carrying liquefied natural gas. [i](#)

Millions of people are at risk of famine as massive swarms of locusts continue to pester parts of East Africa and South Asia, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

In Kenya alone, the UN agency has estimated 70,000 hectares of infested land—the worst outbreak ever recorded in the country in 70 years. In Pakistan, the government had declared a national emergency prompting countries such as China to send pesticides to combat the plague.

An average locust swarm can eat around the same amount of food as about 2,500 people. Climate experts point to frequent cyclones as the culprits leading to the massive locust swarms and warned local authorities that the number could grow by up to 500 times by June if torrid rains persist. [i](#)



If you're too focused, you'll stop innovating. But if you're too innovative, you'll lose your focus and won't get anything done.

Tan Hooi Ling, *Co-founder of Grab Holdings Inc.*

Sinéad Burke,

Irish writer, broadcaster, and activist known for fighting inclusivity in design and fashion at the World Economic Forum 2018. Burke is a little person

So much of my challenges were not because of a [genetic] mutation but caused by lack of creative thinking by those in power.

My generation has failed to respond properly to the dramatic challenge of climate change. This is deeply felt by young people. No wonder they are angry.

UN Secretary General António Guterres

On the school strikes

This outbreak is a test of solidarity – political, financial and scientific. We need to come together to fight a common enemy that does not respect borders, ensure that we have the resources necessary to bring this outbreak to an end.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General of the World Health Organization on the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak.

Change depends on ordinary people who have the courage to say, 'Enough is enough and no more.'

Kumi Naidoo

Human rights activist and the first African head of Greenpeace International

If all you're doing is casting stones, you're probably not going to get very far.

Barack Obama

Obama Foundation Summit 2019

Maybe somewhere we derailed a little bit, where we thought making money is the real goal of the economy, where the real goal is to live happily here all together.

Feike Sijbesma,

CEO and chairman of the Managing Board, Royal DSM on the future of capitalism at the World Economic Forum 2020



Helping Entrepreneurs Succeed in South East Asia



START Malaysia is a fast growing, hyper local social enterprise dedicated to building the startup & entrepreneurial ecosystem in the southern region of Malaysia. Since 2014, we've been working with various industry stakeholders in and around Johor's urban areas.

The aim is to promote world-class entrepreneurs & companies and showcase the capabilities of the business ecosystem of the southern region of Malaysia through BaseConf 2020 as well as other activities including education & developing entrepreneurs and supporting & accelerating high-potential startup companies.

Join our newsletter or follow us to get more updates and check out our Johor Startup Ecosystem Report, a free to download comprehensive study that includes all of you need to know about the technology startup ecosystem in the southern region of Malaysia and the industry outlook.



From left: CEO & Co-Founder of START Malaysia, Feng Lim, CEO of Iskandar Investment Berhad, Datuk IR. Khairil Anwar, Johor State International Trade, Investment and Utilities Committee Chairman Jimmy Puah and Chief Executive of Iskandar Regional Development Authority, Datuk Ismail Ibrahim at the launch of the 2018 Johor Startup Ecosystem Report held at Iskandar Space, Medini.



Download 2018 Johor Ecosystem Report



@STARTcoMY



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SDG Tracker Series: FEEDING THE UNFED

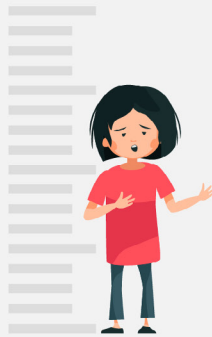
In the second part of our Sustainable Development Goals Tracker Series, we reveal the ugly truth on food security is the world being fed enough? Are countries faring well in solving the nutrition crisis?

OVER
821 M

People are expected to be suffering from **CHRONIC UNDERNOURISHMENT**

BRIGHT SPOT:

World hunger has fallen from **14.8%** ₂₀₀₀ ↘ **10.8%** ₂₀₁₆



Globally, approximately

149 M

Children under 5 suffer from **STUNTING**.

BRIGHT SPOTS:

The number of stunted children in 2018 was **9% lower** than the 165 M in 2012

Among all regions, Asia had the largest reduction in stunting prevalence with only **23%** ₂₀₁₇ (down from **38%** ₂₀₀₀)

Each year,

20.5 M



Children are born **UNDERWEIGHT**, with the majority occurring in lower-middle income countries.

BRIGHT SPOTS:

Over the years, progress has been made in certain countries toward reducing cases of low birth weights in babies.

Global rates in underweight had fallen from

14% ₁₉₇₅ ↘ **9%** ₂₀₁₄ (for men) and **15%** ₁₉₇₅ ↘ **10%** ₂₀₁₄ (for women)



China went from **22ND** ₂₀₀₂

↘ **8TH** ₂₀₁₅

List of Countries with the Smallest Percentage of Low Birth Weight Babies

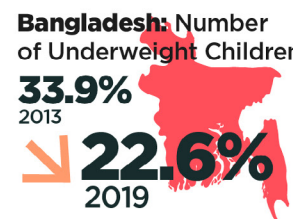
South Asia: Prevalence of Underweight Children

49.2% ₁₉₉₀ ↘ **30.0%** ₂₀₁₃



Bangladesh: Number of Underweight Children

33.9% ₂₀₁₃ ↘ **22.6%** ₂₀₁₉





ABOUT
40 M
People are **OVERWEIGHT**

OBESITY IS A FORM OF MALNUTRITION, where a person is eating huge amounts of food, but with little or no nutritional value.

BRIGHT SPOTS:

Despite the steady increase of overweight individuals in the U.S.,

State of Colorado:
The **Least Obese State**
since at least 1995
23%

VS

Mississippi & West Virginia:
The **Highest** in the Country
39.5%

84% of countries set a target to improve nutritional intake and reduce the number of overweight individuals.

By

2050



The world's farmers will roughly need to double production in order to feed an additional **2 billion people.**

BRIGHT SPOT:

Today, about **500 M** small farms worldwide, provide up to **80% of food** consumed in the developing world.



21%



of the population in 76 lower-middle countries are **food insecure.**

BRIGHT SPOT:

By **2028**, based on projected income growth and sustained low food prices, the number of food insecure people are expected to drop by

10%

According to the annual International Food Security Assessment conducted by USDA's Economic Research Service.



THE 2019 GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX Countries Performing Best and Worst in Solving World Hunger

TOP 10	BOTTOM 10
1. Belarus	117. Central African Republic
2. Bosnia & Herzegovina	116. Yemen
3. Bulgaria	115. Chad
4. Chile	114. Madagascar
5. Costa Rica	113. Zambia
6. Croatia	112. Liberia
7. Cuba	111. Haiti
8. Kuwait	110. Timor Leste
9. Latvia	109. Zimbabwe
10. Lithuania	108. Afghanistan

Sources:

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- Are we reducing hunger in the world?, The Brookings Institution, 2019
- The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations, 2019
- Hunger and Undernourishment, United Nations Children's Fund
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger Facts and Figures, United Nations
- 2019 Global Hunger Index, Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide
- Asia Hunger Facts, Hunger Notes
- 2018 Global Nutrition Report, Global Nutrition Report
- Drivers of Improvements in Global Food Security, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2018
- State of Childhood Obesity: Helping All Children Grow Up Healthy, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2019
- Trends in adult body-mass index in 200 countries from 1975 to 2014, The Lancet, 2016

In the Mooo-d for VR

A moo-point, says Joey in “Friends”, is a cow’s opinion: no one really cares! Joey’s wrong, for dairy farmers in Russia are going to great lengths to help cows think better of their fodder!

Described as a “unique summer field simulation program”, a research experiment near Moscow subjects cows to virtual reality (VR) treatment, using goggles that simulate sunny green pastures. This, they hope, will induce calmness and encourage them to munch on more grass. During the first trial, experts have recorded a decrease in anxiety and an increase in the cow’s emotional mood which, other studies have shown, leads to increased milk production. 📌



Image courtesy of Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Moscow Region



Photo by: NeONBRAND on Unsplash

What a Cool Classroom

A gas leak in a Los Angeles neighborhood has prompted schools to install air filters in classrooms, and to their surprise, test scores improved. So how does better air translate to better student performance?

In his working paper titled “Air Filters, Pollution, and Student Achievement”, New York University researcher Michael Gilraine found that with better air, math scores increased by 0.20 standard deviations, and English scores by 0.18. The elevated scores are equivalent to the effect of cutting class sizes by a third.

While poor air quality is known to cause respiratory problems, several studies have shown its effect in cognition and learning absorption. 📌

Thought Filters

Researchers from Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania may have found a way to purge nasty comments in the internet—by harnessing the smarts of artificial intelligence!

The AI algorithm works by examining the comments section on sites like YouTube to highlight positive comments, rather than blocking negative ones. Through machine learning, researchers hope to maximize the internet as a platform to uplift the disenfranchised, such as the Rohingya community, who have received constant discrimination from the Myanmar government since 2016. 📌

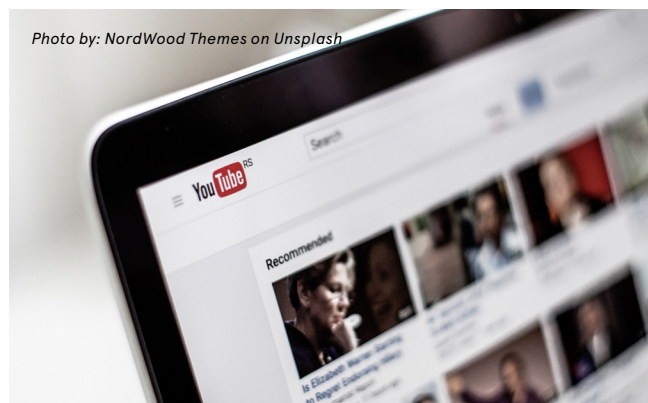


Photo by: NordWood Themes on Unsplash

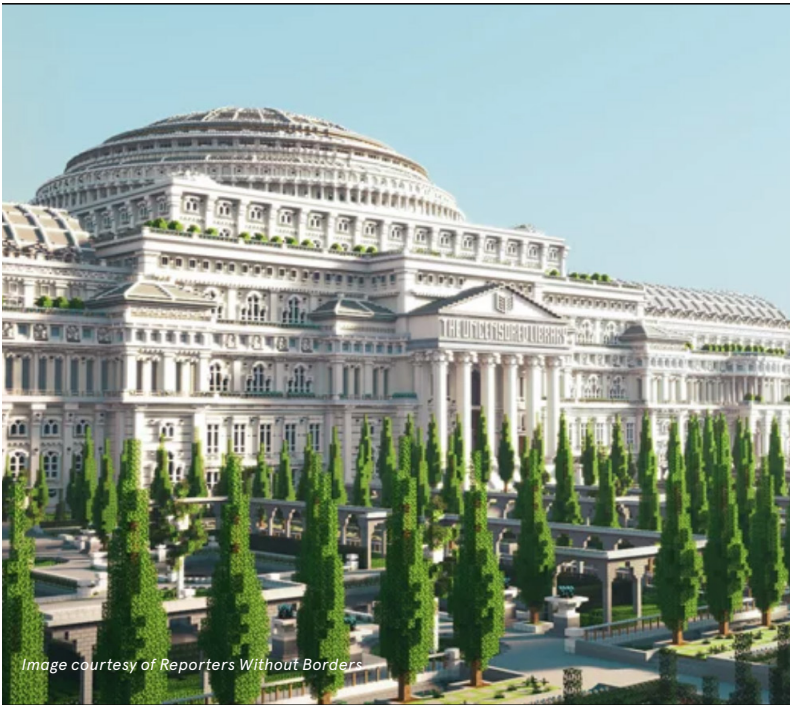



Image courtesy of Reporters Without Borders

Mining for Press Freedom

An international press freedom group has created a public library inside a block-building game to combat censorship laws.

Reporters Without Borders created “The Uncensored Library” within Microsoft’s Minecraft, which boasts several articles written by five journalists from censored countries including Russia, Mexico, Egypt, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia. The digital library was co-designed by design studio BlockWorks and creative agency DDB Germany.

Gamers simply download the game and walk their characters into the massive digital library, visit their desired section—say, the Russia wing—and read an article from grani.ru, a blocked website that reports on the country’s government protests. 

A Room for Mushroom Fashion

There’s a new challenger in the sustainable fashion industry, and it might be the most impressive one yet.

Make way for mushroom technology, which uses a tiny piece of a mushroom’s root system, called mycelium, to replicate a fabric-like material used in making clothes. The process takes about four to six weeks. Mushrooms can also regenerate, eating up the toxic materials from the waste fabric and forming a seemingly new fabric.


The magic behind the technology lies in the mushroom’s digestive system, which is capable of breaking down any toxic material. Not only does it make fabric less environmentally hazardous, but it is also affordable—as mushrooms are accessible almost anywhere. 



Photo by: Damir Omerović on Unsplash

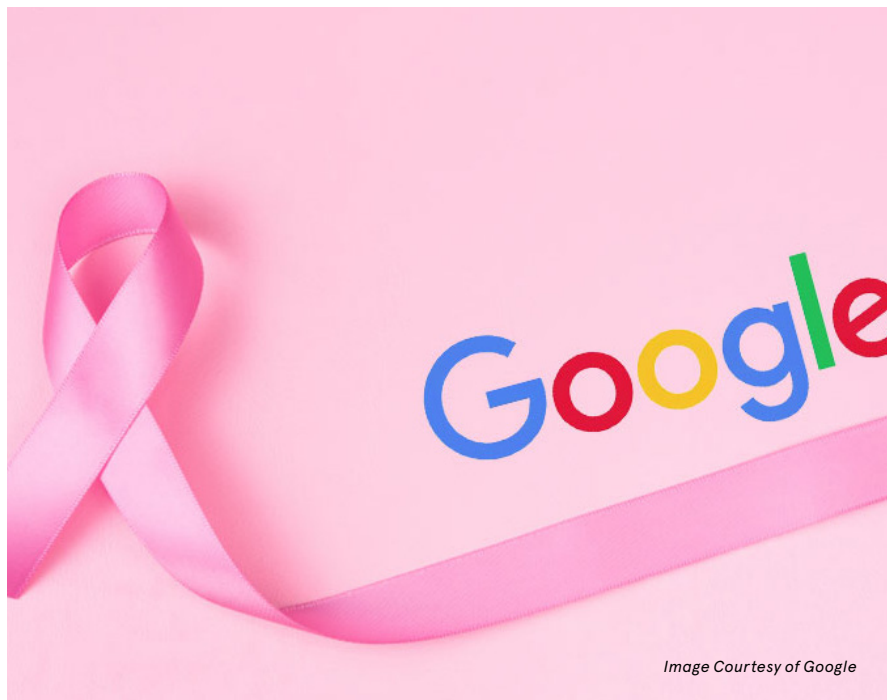



Image Courtesy of Google

Besting Breast Cancer

Artificial intelligence can spot signs of breast cancer more precisely than doctors, according to a new study published in the journal Nature.

Led by Google health, the researchers found that AI was able to reduce false positives, where tests incorrectly indicate an abnormality by 5.7% for women in the U.S. and 1.2% in the U.K. as compared to an expert radiologist.

False negatives, on the other hand were reduced by 9.4% in the U.S. and by 2.7% in the U.K. The study will be used to further explore AI's role in helping with cancer diagnostics. 


Dressed with Purpose



Image Courtesy: Vogue Italia

Vogue never runs out of style, and for their January 2020 issue, they decided to spice things up: replacing their usual fashion spreads with illustrations, in a move towards sustainability.

The issue marks the first time a Vogue magazine has gone photo-less, and features eight illustrated covers that depict clothes recycled from scrap fabric and pre-loved items.

The move follows Vogue's latest environment-focused mission statement which includes highlighting the environmental impact associated with fashion photo shoots. 

A Sip of Truth



Photo by: Takahiro Sakamoto on Unsplash

Coffee company Starbucks has unveiled its strawless lids in a bid to ditch plastics by 2020. The move was met with praise from coffee lovers, but not so much in the sustainability scene. Here's why.

It turns out the new lids actually use more plastic than their original straw-lid offering. Starbucks has admitted that their new lids are not fully plastic-free, but claims that they are made of polypropylene which are easier to recycle.


Adding to the problem are the customers themselves, who, after given the lids, still request for straws either out of habit or preference. 



Photo by Josh Appel on Unsplash

Decoding the Donor

Knowing how donors think about their philanthropy will help non-profit leaders partner with donors who really care about their cause, writes Lowell Weiss.

I have an unusual job title: philanthropic advisor. Even here in the U.S., where philanthropy is well established, most people have no idea what the title means. Here's how I explain it: I help donors—from large foundations to individual families with no staff—achieve more impact and joy through their giving. Cool job, right?

In this brief essay, I'll share what I've learned about the donors with whom I work. My goal is to help non-profit leaders understand how donors think,

so you have the best chance of forming productive partnerships with those who can accelerate your work.

I want to acknowledge up front that funders are like fingerprints: no two are exactly the same. And yet there are some important commonalities among what the Raikes Foundation calls "impact-driven donors." Understanding these commonalities is important for anyone who wants to cultivate prospective funders.

1

Learn about the donor's sweet spot. I often tell non-profit leaders that if they approach a donor who deeply cares about the specific issue you've dedicated your life to addressing, then you're doing that donor a favour by reaching out. But the reverse is true as well: If you approach a donor without knowing if there's strong alignment, it's a waste of everyone's time. So do your homework; learn as much as you can about the prospect's sweet spot. If your organization fits it neatly, demonstrate that in your inquiry. And if not, just move on. Don't twist yourself into a pretzel and distort your mission.

2

Engage donors for their brains, not just their chequebooks. This lesson is just as obvious as the first—and just as often ignored by well-meaning non-profit leaders. Engaging donors for their brains means two things. First, it means thinking about how donors' time and talent—not just their treasure—could benefit your organization. Might that donor have valuable insights about talent development, financial management, or potential partnerships? Might that donor have connections with public officials who could champion needed legislation? Second, it means helping the donor learn along with you. It's much harder to keep donors engaged in your work for the long term if all they get from you is an annual report about your successes. It's much easier if you create opportunities for them to see your work in action or even participate, on occasion.

3

Help donors understand how you gauge progress. In the words of the Hewlett Foundation's Fay Twersky, "Decide what is important for you to measure and, most of the time, funders will follow." Yes, donors are paying a lot of attention these days to "metrics" and "key performance indicators." But reasonable donors are not out to dictate what non-profits should measure, which is good because they're usually not in a position to know what's best. What my clients really want to see is that you've thought through what information is most valuable to you for determining whether you're on course to achieve your mission and for course-correcting when you're off. Whenever I encounter a non-profit leader who hasn't thought this through, I see a red flag.


4

Clarify for yourself what it actually costs to deliver on your plans and make your "ask" based on the full cost. Here in the U.S., funders routinely underestimate what it actually costs to run a non-profit. Grantees exacerbate the problem by submitting proposals that align with these unrealistic expectations. When the proposal gets accepted, the non-profit has to skimp on everything they can't call a "program expenditure"—from talent development to financial tracking to performance-management systems. This vicious dynamic has been called the "non-profit starvation cycle." So take the time to clarify your cost structure and then explain to your prospective funders. If you provide a high degree of transparency, then there's little room for funders to fear that you're inflating costs or otherwise misusing their funds.

5

Assess your organizational strengths and needs, and share them with prospective donors. Another way to keep yourself from stumbling into the non-profit starvation cycle is to make the case to funders why you need more than just program funding. And that requires taking a good look in the mirror to understand where you're excelling as an organization and where you're not. I belong to a learning community that has developed two very good (and complimentary) resources to do so.

The Performance Imperative helps non-profits understand the seven most important organization disciplines for achieving high performance. The **Performance Practice** illustrates what it looks like in real life when non-profits put each of the seven disciplines into action, and makes it easy for non-profits to assess how they're doing on each practice. If you share these kinds of insights with impact-driven philanthropists, they'll be impressed with your initiative and be much more inclined to partner with you on areas in which you need support.

Plenty of donors behave badly—demanding big results while offering small change, talking more than listening, treating grantees like contractors rather than partners. Don't waste your time chasing these donors. Invest your time in connecting with the hearts and minds of donors who genuinely care about your success and will go to bat to help you achieve it. 

It's much harder to keep donors engaged in your work for the long term if all they get from you is an annual report about your successes.

“



Lowell Weiss is the president of Cascade Philanthropy Advisors and a member of the Leap Ambassadors Community. Previously, he was a deputy director at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, a speechwriter for President Bill Clinton, and an editor at The Atlantic.



All Roads Lead to the SDGs

CSR conferences are planned with a focus on SDGs, but are programs? In partnership with communities and development agencies, private companies are chalking out their own SDG strategies. Nandhini Shanmugham zooms in to find out more from the experience of three organizations.

If you happen to climb the steps of a Yeti Airlines ATR flight, what may catch your immediate attention is not the mighty Himalayas in the background, but the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) logo on the aircraft. When it comes to SDGs, Yeti Airlines wears its heart on its, well, body.

In 2017, Yeti Airlines & United Nations Development Program (UNDP) collaborated to help Nepal meet some specific SDG indicators in the areas of climate change, poverty reduction, and gender equality. The organisation undertook a series of proactive measures in all focus areas, including advocating a gender-equal workspace and supporting

events promoting gender equality. However, it has made the most progress in the area of climate change. In 2019 Yeti Airlines became the first carbon-neutral airline in Nepal, no mean feat for an industry that produces an estimated 2% of all CO2 emissions in the world.

Yeti is not alone. Companies across the world are aligning their social responsibility initiatives to the SDGs. CSR conferences espouse the SDGs, but is it mostly a checkbox?

The 17 SDGs, which are applicable to every country, are far more comprehensive than the Millennium Development Goals they replaced, and recognise businesses as key

stakeholders to help achieve them. In today's highly globalised world, private companies can also greatly influence and build trust among a wide range of stakeholders like consumers, civil society, customers, and investors. A strong understanding of national and local priorities also seem to influence the manner in which companies are aligning with the SDGs.

"If you look at the west, CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] is leaning towards addressing climate change, substance use, human rights violation and human trafficking, including migration. In Asia, especially in countries like India, in addition to these, the concerns

are to eradicate hunger, minimise poverty, ensure gender rights and equality, education for all, health, and hygiene. It will augur well if companies can lend a helping hand in improving these areas, which are also part of the SDGs, through CSR, so that whatever support extended is truly purposeful," says Hemantha Kumar Pamarthy, an independent international advisor and consultant in the development sector.

Multi-lateral approach

While Yeti Airlines continues to support NGOs as part of its CSR, the association with UNDP has added a new dimension to its commitment to drive business-led solutions and be a more socially and environmentally responsible organisation.

A sustainability consultant trained the Yeti team to calculate CO₂ emissions, identify areas and processes by which the airline could reduce the emissions and offset them by adopting the UN's Greening the Blue approach.

Umesh Chandra Rai, CEO, Yeti Airlines, credits UNDP for being "instrumental in educating the airline management and staff about the SDGs that our country had signed up for. Without their guidance we would not have been able to commence

our carbon neutral airline study. Once informed, our engineers and flight operation professionals were easily able to learn how to calculate emissions from different sources such as motor vehicles, aircraft flights etc. and identify methods, processes or areas where we could reduce our emissions."

An independent audit found that Yeti Airlines had emitted 19,665 tonnes of CO₂ in 2018 from its entire operations. This is equivalent to the amount of carbon sequestered by planting approximately 325,165 trees over 10 years.

To offset its greenhouse gas emissions, Yeti Airlines adopted a multi-pronged approach (see box).

Company-led approach

While agencies like UNDP are initiating successful private sector partnerships across the region in the island nation of Sri Lanka, Hayleys has preferred a company-led approach in its quest to contribute to the SDGs.

The Hayleys group of companies is one of Sri Lanka's oldest and biggest conglomerates, and has been implementing development initiatives under different verticals—community impact, sustainability practices, and environmental performance—for several years.



Giant Yeti Steps

- Bought more fuel efficient Ground Power Units and Ground Cooling Units
- Used electric vehicles for airport ground transport
- Phased in energy efficient aircraft (ATR72-500)
- Pilots powered up engines only after ATC go-ahead
- Installed online high res cameras along critical flight routes to make swift fly-or-not decisions
- Purchased carbon credits certified by the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change
- Painted SDG logos on its entire fleet
- Distributed SDG booklets in aircraft seat pockets



"The best way to understand the needs of the community is by directly engaging with it," says Champathi Tennakoon, Departmental Manager, Finance and Business Development, Puritas Private Limited, a member of the Hayleys Group of Companies. One such direct engagement gave rise to the company's flagship CSR project—Puritas Sath Diyawara—which provides access to safe drinking water to communities in the North and North Central Provinces where there is a high incidence of Chronic Kidney Diseases (CKD).

The project employs reverse osmosis water purification units, docking



Image courtesy of Dr Reddy's Foundation

stations and a water distribution and delivery mechanism, in addition to support through health camps and awareness sessions on agriculture and livelihood topics that have an impact on CKD.

A nominal fee of Rs. 1 is charged from villagers for the water system, provided by Puritas. The Puritas Sath Diyawara initiative has so far benefitted around 33,500 people, providing 160,000 litres of purified water per day, across 19 villages.

Does the pressure to join the SDG bandwagon alter the way companies plan & strategize their CSR? "Not necessarily. Our efforts are driven by local needs," says Tennakoon. "Given the broad SDG spectrum, our initiatives are comfortably nested under the SDG umbrella." Monthly monitoring and reporting, however, follow an SDG focus.

Philanthropy-led approach

"Companies are using SDGs as a guiding principle to chart their CSR activities and this is a very heartening sign for the development

sector," adds Aboli Abkari, Head-Partnerships, Dr Reddy's Foundation (DRF), India. DRF is a not-for-profit organisation that works, across 20 states of India, with diverse partners, to collectively solve problems in the areas of livelihood, education, health, and climate change.

In 2014, India became the first country in the world to make CSR mandatory, and since then, the country has seen a 15% increase in the share of private companies to social sector. The focus areas under CSR have been identified such that they contribute to national priorities and overlap with the SDGs.

As tempting as it maybe to cherry-pick thematic areas for CSR, companies must consider, among other factors, how best they can leverage their resources—financial, human, technological, and products—to support causes that warrant immediate attention. Because no matter what focus area a company chooses for its CSR, it is able to link it to more than one SDG.

An Oxfam paper suggests that

for more meaningful engagement with the SDGs, companies need to understand where their businesses have the greatest impact (positive or negative), align core business strategies with SDGs and work towards systemic change.

Abkari has a slightly different viewpoint. "Rather than restricting themselves to their own businesses to make a greater impact, the private sector needs to address the pressing developmental needs of the country," she says. The first step, she says, is to identify the problem one wishes to solve. For instance, if it is to improve the GDP of a country, companies must identify core sectors that need support, such as agriculture and women's workforce

"Rather than restricting themselves to their own businesses to make a greater impact, the private sector needs to address the pressing developmental needs of the country."



Aboli Abkari

Head-Partnerships, Dr Reddy's Foundation.

participation. “For a business, once this core area is identified, it needs to explore, along with NGO partners, how best it can offer solutions to positively impact GDP and also help the ecosystem,” says Abkari.

DRF’s GROW and GROW-PwD skilling programmes, meant for youth and persons with disabilities (PwDs), are actively supported by CSR funding, which has enabled GROW Youth, with 45 centres across India, to train 372,948 youth and GROW-PwD, with 29 centres, to train 16,307 persons with disabilities.

DRF’s data-driven IT platform, with 500 empanelled companies on it, facilitates placement to trained candidates. Apart from funding the skill training, corporates also support GROW through its employment engagement programme where employees, as volunteers, spend time mentoring candidates, leading to support extending beyond mere funding.

CSR is definitely a “win-win-win-win situation,” says Pamarthy, adding that it helps corporates mobilize their target audience, NGOs with funding and capacity building toward more efficient documentation and reporting, and the marginalized through the program/project itself. “Ultimately, all-round progress is envisaged across the country, even if it is in patches to begin with,” he says.

Whether through communities, UN agencies or NGOs, what is clearly emerging is the importance for businesses to collaborate with stakeholders to realise the SDGs.

“Private enterprises need both, the global expertise of agencies such as the UNDP and support from local communities, on meeting the SDGs,” says Rai.

No matter how good the intention, what is important is to ensure that the initiatives don’t remain a one-off act of benevolence. Companies are taking the “S” of the SDGs quite seriously.

Yeti Airlines, with UNDP, took its initiative forward by partnering with the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee and the Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality to tackle the waste that is being generated by the trekking industry in the Everest region. Till date, Yeti Airlines has flown down more than 50 tonnes of recyclable waste, free of cost, to Kathmandu for recycling.

Having trained persons with disabilities (hearing impaired and visually challenged), Dr Reddy’s Foundation will, in 2020, offer its GROW-PwD programme to people who are intellectually challenged.

Hayleys has its eyes set on developing data and information-centric villages to be on a par with smart cities.

As far as achieving the SDGs goes, the 2020s are being looked as the “decade for delivery.” Concerted efforts from multiple stakeholders—private companies, government agencies, NGOs and communities—will ultimately determine whether or not we hit the bullseye. [i](#)

“It will augur well if companies can lend a helping hand in improving these areas, which are also part of the SDGs, through CSR, so that whatever support extended is truly purposeful.”

“



Hemantha Kumar Pamarthy
Independent international advisor
and consultant

“Private enterprises need both, the global expertise of agencies such as the UNDP and support from local communities, on meeting the SDGs.”

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Umesh Chandra Rai
Chief executive officer, Yeti Airlines

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CSR 2.0: What Are Corporates Looking For?

The framework of the CSR-NGO partnership is evolving, as corporates get more involved with social change. This could mean a shift in the way NGOs consider the relationship, writes Sulagna Datta.



At Sattva, we've been talking about CSR 2.0 for a while now. What does it really mean?

Times have changed since corporate organizations partnered with non-profits for one-off expenses, supplying essentials, distributing books, or providing aid or shelter during disasters. Over the last few years, bolstered by the CSR law and its amendments, we've seen a transformational shift in the way corporates engage with non-profits.

Some key trends in CSR-NGO partnerships are as follows:

1. Focus on outcomes and impact:

We believe that there has been an increasing focus on outcomes, thereby prompting NGOs to design outcome-driven programmes versus operating in one-off project mode. Corporates are increasingly looking at more rigorous monitoring of their projects. Mature NGOs are now helping CSRs realize social responsibility beyond compliance for on-ground execution of their social impact vision. Board members and C-suite executives are increasingly spending time with CSR/sustainability team members beyond their regulatory functions and compliance.

Smaller NGOs are rapidly realizing the importance of monitoring systems. While building and pitching programmes, NGOs need to be mindful of exact outcomes, time to realize outcomes, indicators to measure these results and also the target number of beneficiaries. The crux of the programme is in the specifics.

2. Move towards flagship projects:

Another trend that we've observed at Sattva is the consolidation of portfolios of corporates. While corporates started with multiple NGOs as part of their CSR portfolio, the focus over the last few years has been increasing brand value through consolidation of project portfolios. Corporates are moving to building and executing more strategic projects.

For example, Castrol works with truck drivers in sensitizing them through Sarthi Mitra Program for truck drivers to be a part of their eco-system for an extended period of time, moving them towards safe driving, healthy living and financial empowerment. As part of this, multiple grassroots NGOs execute Castrol's mission in across various states in India. In this approach, NGOs often join the corporates as a cluster of implementation partners executing a shared mission or goal; with the program being co-created with all stake-holders.

NGOs need to demonstrate the ability to handle projects at scale – either in terms of expertise in geographies, types of beneficiaries, or even in the chosen outcomes to address.

3. Alignment of CSR with business value:

NGOs are helping corporates co-create new inclusive business models while enabling greater proximity to, and improved understanding of, social and environmental contexts, issues, trends, and stakeholders among



underserved communities. So critical are these partnerships that according to the Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer 2019, 94% of corporates and 93% of NGOs see partnerships as becoming more important over the next three years. Some of the interesting partnerships with diverse goals and expected outcomes, highlight great opportunity for CSR-NGO partnerships towards innovation, empowerment, and impact.


For instance, IBM co-created the Traffik analysis hub platform, the first ever international data hub to facilitate the sharing of information about human trafficking across all industries and sectors built in partnership with STOP the Traffik, an NGO and a pioneer in stopping human trafficking via intelligence-led approach. Leveraging its strength in operations and processes, Genpact has partnered with Sattva in capacity building of NGOs via a fellowship model.

NGOs must be agile, and should be able to demonstrate adaptability to tweak programmes to accommodate reasonable corporate requirements.

4. Leveraging technology and systems:

While partnerships are critical for social impact, creating an integrative CSR-NGO relationship requires being prepared for a time-consuming and demanding program from both parties. India alone has more than 3.4 million NGOs, and while they know how to work with economically insecure groups and how to listen to their needs, many of them lack resources, finesse, and the right storytelling approach to get buy-in from CSRs to their proposal. In their due diligence, corporates are increasingly weeding out NGOs that lack systems.

NGOs must start to think of capacity building and systems as investments, and consider proper record-keeping, governance, and compliance as essential tools.

NGOs should be able to look at a corporate's vision and add value/co-create for partnership, rather than work only with their pre-designed programmes. They should be agile and ready to be able to adapt alongside corporate needs. Additionally, laying out roles and responsibilities, defining a milestone-based plan for outcomes and funding and most critically, have the right partnership, is instrumental for maximum impact. 

NGOs need to be mindful of exact outcomes, time to realize outcomes, indicators to measure these results and also the target number of beneficiaries. The crux of the programme is in the specifics.



Sulagna Datta is an engagement manager with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team at Sattva Consulting. She manages corporate clients in the South and leads large scale implementation of projects with a focus on education technology and grantee management.

3

tips for more successful grant applications

By Patrizia Paola Marcelo

Applying for grants is a crucial endeavor for nonprofits, social enterprises, and other actors in the development sector to gain funding for their projects, initiatives, or products. Many professionals in the development sector know that applying for (and winning) grants can be tough. One might think that putting forward their idea and hoping the funder will like it is enough. But there are some factors that grant applicants might not know about, that can make an impact to the fate of their application.

1 It helps to know more about the funder and engage with them whenever possible.

It is important to get to know the funder of the grant opportunity you are applying for and do some preliminary research on the types of projects and the types of organizations they have previously funded. This will give a good idea about whether the project you are applying is a good fit for the funder's priorities and requirements.

After knowing more about the funder and their funding portfolio, and once you have decided that your pitch is a good fit, the next step would be to engage with and establish a relationship with the funder, if possible (not all funders are open to communicating with applicants during the application process).

There are types of funders that put into significant consideration in their grant or award selection process their familiarity and trust with the applicant; this is particularly applicable to corporate foundations and family foundations, and to a lesser

extent, with government entities such as bilateral or multilateral development agencies.

What you can do before you hit Send: Establish point of contact in order to introduce your organization/enterprise and the general idea or concept to the funder, whether through e-mail, a phone call, or a personal meeting. If possible, you can go as far as asking them their initial opinion about your idea. Again, the possibility of doing so depends on the funder; what is important is your organization tries to reach out to the funder, engage, and try to build a relationship; after all, getting awarded a grant requires you to have a relationship with the funder – so imagine this as a preliminary step.



2 Your great idea/ product has to meet the requirements of the funder.

Submitting a winning grant proposal is not just about putting forward the “best” idea – it has to be the best idea in the funder’s eyes. Make sure this is reflected in the application by providing an explanation on how your idea meets their funding requirements and priorities in their given format or template. Carefully read all the requirements and stipulations that are indicated in the request for proposals or any document or announcement the funder has released. This is where engaging with the relationship with the funder comes in handy – directly communicating with them can help you clarify or even get more detailed information that are otherwise not directly stated in the call for proposals.

What you can do before you hit Send: Look up the funder’s earlier grantees, where available. Check out their web sites and see the kind of work they do. It will be time well spent.

3 Be careful about compliance with the small details.

It is not only about compelling content that will make the funder award you that grant: you must comply with the important details, particularly for funders that have stringent requirements. Things as small as font size and following the proper formats for the write-ups or budgets can make a significant impact, depending on the grantee. This is all part of tying the whole application together, and shows that you have the diligence and responsibility to follow their guidelines and restrictions in terms of budget, write-ups, etc., and eventually, in complying with the grant award requirements if you succeed in your application.

What you can do before you hit Send: Read the requirements very carefully. Prepare a Compliance Checklist that helps you be doubly sure that you comply with every detail. When in doubt, refer to point 1. Ask the grant maker whether a particular requirement is a non-negotiable.

Submitting grant applications can be difficult. Hopefully, the points mentioned above will help your organization succeed in your grant applications. Good luck! 🍀



Patrizia Paola Marcelo is a research and acquisitions associate at the ASSIST headquarters in Manila. She works on developing grant proposals for ASSIST development projects.

Corporations - Social Startups:

A Purposeful Match



When corporations lend a hand to social startups, the whole ecosystem changes for the better and everyone wins, writes Angeli Recella of Makesense.

Today, organizations are no longer assessed based solely on traditional metrics such as financial performance, or even the quality of their products or services. To thrive, businesses must incorporate positive social impact by maintaining positive relationships, not just with customers and employees, but also with local

communities and regulators. This is not simply a matter of altruism: effective corporate social responsibility efforts are critical to maintaining an organization's reputation; attracting, retaining, and engaging their employees; and cultivating loyalty among customers.

On the other hand, social startups attract consumers and great talent more and more because of their shared social values. Because of their size and nature, social impact startups can be agile in terms of finding and testing solutions for their beneficiaries. Being part of a social impact startup also brings a sense of purpose to those who work in and with them. However, the reality is that it is difficult for a social impact startup to survive long enough to scale its impact due to lack of capital and other resources.

But consider this:

What if corporations and social startups work hand-in-hand?

Makesense has facilitated and enabled partnerships between several corporations and social entrepreneurs in the past 10 years.

We learned that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not a task reserved for the Human Resources or Corporate Affairs departments. Now, more than ever, effective CSR is a competitive advantage.

Here are three main learnings that stood out in our experience:

01 Build stronger employee engagement by working on social impact projects together.

A 2017 study by Deloitte found that


- 88%** of millennials believe that employers should play a vital role in employee engagement
- 86%** say business success should be measured by more than profitability.

For instance, in 2019, Sanofi had challenges in engaging their employees and boosting employee morale. To solve this, Sanofi, in partnership with Makesense, incubated social impact startups that address health access and delivery. One of the startups from the incubation is Squeaky Clean Kids, which works to make good hygiene accessible to all

02 Businesses can test new markets by employing social entrepreneurs.

Decathlon PH wanted to open untapped market segments for sportswear and equipment. Along with the goal of empowering their advocacy to democratise sports access, Decathlon partnered with Exceptional Sports Philippines—a social impact startup that enables children with special needs to participate in sports. Together, the partnership was

76%



DoSomething Strategic's 2018 Survey of Young People and Social Change


53% young people said they have purchased

23% would consider purchasing

a brand/product to show support for the social issues the brand supported.

But perhaps even more importantly — and more costly

67%



DoSomething Strategic's 2018 Survey of Young People and Social Change

40% have stopped purchasing

27% would consider purchasing

if the company stood for something or behaved in a way that didn't align with their values.

[Employee] Turnover dropped by:

57%

2018 Benevity Engagement Study

in employee groups most deeply connected to their companies' giving and volunteering efforts.

through hygiene awareness campaigns and a "Buy-One-Fund-One" business model for their homemade antibacterial organic soap. Because of the alignment in collective social purpose, Sanofi employees had a strong sense of team building, pride for their employer, and engagement.

able to open up this new market segment for Decathlon through the development of the Play Kit, an affordable training module that equips parents of children with special needs (CWSN) with the resources to interact with children through sports and play. Almost a year after the partnership started, Exceptional Sports still holds sports training for CWSN within Decathlon grounds.

A recent Nielsen study found that

67%

of employees prefer to work for socially responsible companies

86%

of consumers will pay extra for products sold by companies committed to positive social impact.

A study of 22,000 investment professionals found that


78%

have increased their investments in CSR-focused firms.

Cisco is an esteemed technology firm. In the past, they have had challenges in attracting the younger generation to be part of their firm. As a solution, Cisco partnered with Makesense France to launch a program called "Tech for Good" that empowered tech innovators who were working on a social problem, while selling Cisco's innovative side to prospective hires. The program sparked a new kind of employer branding for Cisco—one that showcased how agile, open, and socially responsible they were.

Since then, a unit for strategic innovations has been created to continue the Tech for Good efforts.

Companies have a unique opportunity to make social responsibility a core part of their strategy and identity. In doing so, they can also empower and enable budding social impact startups.

The shared demographic of youth can help multiply the effect. When corporations and social startups work hand in hand, the resulting innovation leads to scaled up and sustained social good. 



Passionate about social impact, entrepreneurship, and people development, Angeli Recella is currently managing the idea-stage startup incubation program of makesense_ph.



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Image courtesy of Jollibee Group Foundation (JGF)

Goodbye CSR, Hello Responsible Business

Traditional Corporate Social Responsibility is on its way out and businesses globally are looking to be more socially and environmentally conscious, writes Priya Thachadi.

The last decade has seen a sea change in the way businesses view Corporate Social Responsibility. It is no longer about writing a cheque and maximizing shareholder value; it is also about contributing to positive social and environmental outcomes. Businesses and their leaders no longer debate whether business has a role in sustainable development, it is more a matter of how best to align growing your bottom line and being responsible.

The push for this approach has come from a few different places—consumers, who demand more social responsibility from brands; employees, current and prospective, who want to be associated with a company's values; and the Sustainable Development Goals, which have created a new way to align activities with social good.

Companies globally and in Asia have begun to implement innovative ways to create lasting impact on urgent social and environmental issues. What are some of these new opportunities?

Villgro, through our work in incubating social enterprises in India, Southeast Asia, and East Africa, has had the

opportunity to partner with corporations through many of these models. Many corporations are trying to better understand these models and find a way to address these challenges more efficiently.

Working with social enterprises:

Social enterprises are businesses that have a dual purpose of generating profits and creating social impact. Many progressive CSR strategies recognize the power in working with social enterprises in creating lasting impact. In Southeast Asia, Singapore's DBS Bank has been running the Social Venture Challenge Asia to identify and help scale these companies to create more impact. Unilever's Foundry is a platform for start-ups and innovators that facilitates business opportunities with Unilever's 400+ brands, contributing to Unilever's sustainability mission.

One of Villgro's close collaborators is the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and its foundation, which runs the largest social enterprise competition in the country to surface and support enterprises solving the most urgent

problems in the Philippines. The winners get access to the bank's various loan products. The foundation also partners with the groups' affiliate businesses (eg. retail malls) to support enterprises to access the market. Villgro has also collaborated with Oracle Netsuite and its software donation programs, which enable early-stage social enterprises move to formal internal systems.


Impact Investing:

Many corporations have also begun exploring investments into social enterprises to help scale solutions in sectors that align with their CSR strategies, through:

- Funding impact investment funds – a great example is Circulate Capital's Ocean Fund, the first investment fund dedicated to preventing ocean plastic, a new, blended financing mechanism, bringing together the public and private sectors to invest for maximum impact, created in partnership with leading corporations like PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Danone, Dow, and Procter & Gamble.
- Investing in social enterprises at the earlier stages to create solutions that can scale by partnering with incubators – who then select, fund and grow the enterprises solving issues of interest to the corporation. In India, Villgro has collaborated with partners like Accenture, Daimler, Mercedes Benz, and Hindustan Unilever who have supported social enterprises in sectors that align with their CSR focus. This support is usually in the form of capital to companies or advisory support like mentors or assistance in accounting.

Integrating sourcing with CSR strategy:

Sustainable and inclusive sourcing has become an integral part of many global and local supply chains. Some corporations have begun to support their sourcing strategy with their CSR approach – blending both business goals and creating impact. A great example of this is Philippine-based global food corporation, Jollibee, whose foundation trains farmers to become reliable suppliers to food companies.

In this new decade that has begun with a stark reminder of the urgent global issues that we need to address, corporations play a huge role in creating a dent in these intractable problems. And the only way we can ensure these companies authentically embrace this responsibility (and not whitewash it) is to demand this as a consumer, an employee, or as a shareholder. The question is: If you are not building a responsible business, then what are you doing? 

Many corporations are trying to better understand these models and find a way to address these challenges more efficiently.



Priya Thachadi is the co-founder and CEO of Villgro Philippines, an early stage impact incubator, that funds, mentors and nurtures enterprises that are building innovative solutions to transform the lives of the poor. She is also the co-founder of Unlock Impact, a social impact consulting firm.

Social entrepreneurs do well by doing good:

R.A. Mashelkar

Photo by Raghunath Mashelkar

When Raghunath Mashelkar's daughter Shruti sought to organize the belongings of her deceased grandmother, Anjani Mashelkar, she did not expect to find what she did. Tucked under her grandmother's saris was some money, and a handwritten note.

This was money that her son, Mashelkar, had given her over the years, whenever he boarded the flight from his hometown Pune to his workplace Delhi, where he was then working as the director-general of Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) India.

The note simply said, "Ramesh, you are a scientist. Use this money to do some good science for the good of the poor people." This was, as he says, "a simple but a very powerful message" and went on to become the inspiration behind the eponymous Anjani Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award.

Now in its tenth year, the award has helped ideators from different fields help bring their products to the market. From low-cost breast exams to a Day 1 dengue test, from environment-

friendly adult diapers to a machine that replaces manual scavenging, the ideas are marked not only by their innovation but by the social problem they solve, keeping in mind the purpose of the award: to do good for the people.

"The challenge was how do you create goods and services that are affordable to the poor," says 77-year-old Mashelkar, a Padma Vibhushan awardee. "And at the same time, we must recognise that the poor have aspirations for quality, for excellence. That means we had to bring together two contradictory terms. One was affordability and second was excellence."

In fact, his work is often quoted in the context of India successfully defending the opposition to the U.S. patenting basmati rice, and the wound-healing properties of turmeric. He pioneered Gandhian engineering, a concept that emphasizes doing more for less, for the good of the many. His work has been marked by a concern for the poor and a focus on indigenous innovation.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that

"What is important [for entrepreneurs] is to keep a continuous eye on trends and risk analysis based on detailed analytical studies."

“ “

his 2018 book, "From Leapfrogging to Pole-vaulting: Creating the Magic of Radical yet Sustainable Transformation," co-authored with Ravi Pandit, sets to lay out the principles that will help companies achieve just that. The book recently won the Best Business Book of the Year 2019 at the Tata Literary Festival, Mumbai.

ASSURED innovation, a framework that is also used to evaluate entries for the

Anjani Mashelkar award, focuses on the principles of A (Affordable) S (Scalable) S (Sustainable) U (Universal) R (Rapid) E (Excellent) D (Distinctive) innovations to evaluate not just the inclusivity of an idea or product but also its success.

The ASSURED model has now been adopted widely in various forums: the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation uses it for selection of technology. It is spreading to other ministries like the Ministry of Skills & Enterprises, and the Ministry of Textiles. Bombay Management Association (BMA) has set up an annual award “BMA ASSURED Enterprise Awards”, and national awards, such as Earthcare Awards, Marico Innovation Foundation Awards, and ICC-FICCI awards have used this framework as a first screen for the jury. There is even a proposal to use it in government for purchase processes and public procurement.

Mashelkar represents that brand of scientist who is determined to use science for public good. iMPACT sits down with him to understand how social transformation can occur within the context of corporations and civil society organizations, its intersection with public policy, and much more.

iMPACT: You have spoken a lot in the book about ASSURED, and how they combine to create the perfect recipe for sustainable social change. You’ve also shown how companies and products can change their ASSURED status over time. If it comes to choosing one factor over the other, do you think any one factor of ASSURED is most critical? If so, which?

Ramesh Mashelkar: Each of the elements—namely affordability, scalability, sustainability, universality, rapidity, excellence, distinctiveness—is important. They are all interrelated, though. But I suppose “sustainability” is the most crucial as it is all-encompassing too.

Sustainability depends on several factors. First is economic. One must have a robust business model. One can’t depend on government subsidies, for instance. Second, is environmental. If it is not green, it will not be good for either industry or society. Third,

society must accept it. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), nuclear energy, onshore wind, etc. are not acceptable to many societies. Fourth is policy, regulations, etc. A sudden change, say, in emission norms, can affect sustainability if there is not enough time to adjust. Further, in a VUCA world, i.e. in a world that is described by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, resilience is important. But if you think of it, all the other elements of ASSURED fold into sustainability, if it is interpreted in broad terms.

Today, there are hundreds of solutions that are trying to solve education and health crises. For instance, there are 4574 ed-tech products in India today, and around 17,000 products globally, many of them solving the same problem, leading to resources being distributed and not concentrated. How can that fragmentation of resources be solved, and do you think that is even necessary? This is especially keeping in mind the urgency of some of the problems, especially related to Energy and Environment.

That is where, from the ASSURED framework, the D (i.e. the Distinctive) part becomes most crucial. In the 4574 ed-tech start-ups that you mention, many of them will fall out, because they will be too many “me-too”s there.

Distinctiveness is judged at different levels. Are the aspirations for local or global markets? If global, does one have IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)? If one does have IPR, then how strong it is vis-a-vis the competitor? Are we sure that as one grows, one’s IPR is so strong that it can withstand a potential infringement suit?

In short, I will say that let all these ed-tech start-ups be evaluated in the ASSURED framework. The answers will fall in 3 categories. Not viable, viable for a short time, and viable with long-term sustainability.

You mention the role that an “engaging ecosystem” plays in the success of transformational businesses. This includes public policy and in a country like India, influencing public policy seems like a tall ask from an

entrepreneur. It’s also the trickiest of the levers. How can this be best effected, in your opinion?

What you say is absolutely right. It is difficult for any individual entrepreneur to influence a change in the government policy. But when it comes to policy, there are two distinctly different aspects.

The first is for the enterprise to align with the current policy and not go beyond the limits of the existing policy regime to ensure stability.

The second is being able to anticipate the policy changes that are likely to take place in the near or the distant future. As we see around the world, policy changes take place continuously in line with the changing socioeconomic and political environment, both nationally and globally. What is important is to keep a continuous eye on trends and risk analysis based on detailed analytical studies.

As regards influencing government policy, a single entrepreneur cannot do much about it, but there are different forums which can be used to push for changes. They could be industry associations such as CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry), ASSOCHAM (Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India), etc. They could be think-tanks such as Pune international Centre,



Photo by Raghunath Mashelkar



Photo by Raghunath Mashelkar

which keeps on bringing out important policy papers, which are prepared by full consultations with diversity of stakeholders.

Also, the government creates many forums for giving voice to entrepreneurs. Let me give you a personal example. In Maharashtra, we have the Maharashtra State Innovation Society. I am the co-chairman of this body with the minister of skill development and entrepreneurship being the other co-chairman. A couple of years ago, we brought out the Maharashtra State Start-Up Policy. But before we set up the policy, we consulted all the start-ups to understand what were their pain points. The policy was designed to take care of the pain points. For instance, one of the pain points was that for every start-up it was difficult to win a tender, which required minimum years of experience for the start-up. So we created a special work order process for the start-ups. To create a further driver, for public sector enterprises, we made it mandatory that at least 10% of their procurement should be from the start-ups. We started giving work orders to these fresh start-ups for assigned tasks with government bodies and this has created enormous benefit by giving the start-up a speedy start.

With your experience with the Anjani Mashelkar awardees, what do you think social entrepreneurs need right now? What are their personal and systemic bottlenecks preventing them from reaching their vision as presented in their PPTs?

I would highlight 4 things. First is capital. Our normal venture capital will not work, since it tends to sometimes be “vulture” capital, with a focus on short term profitability. They require patient capital, sometimes not loans but grants, may be from trusts and foundations or even from CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funds. I have myself helped some start-ups get funds through such instruments. Second, they do require mentorship, as the journey from idea to impact requires guidance on both speed and direction but also patience and perseverance. Third, support from conducive public procurement policy, such as what the Maharashtra Government has done, will help them with a good and confident start. Fourth, now that tools like ASSURED are available, they can use them for continuous self-assessment to ensure that they will not fall short in any of the critical elements at any time in their journey and they will have assured success.

What role do awards and recognition such as the Anjani Mashelkar award play for emerging social entrepreneurs?

Over and above recognising fantastic Indian innovations, the award presents an opportunity to spur and fuel innovation for the benefit of the most disadvantaged sections of society resulting eventually in their inclusion into the mainstream. It also has another equally important aim: to sensitize other innovators about the problems faced by some sections of society and to

urge them to use their talents to solve problems that “need to be solved” and not those that “can be solved”.

Though the monetary reward is a humble Rs. 1 lakh, the Anjani Mashelkar Foundation and its trustees go over and above to help winners—from mentoring young start-ups to connecting them with the who’s who of the business and policy world. I personally take them under my wing and spread the word about them and their impressive achievements wherever I travel across the world. Audiences are astounded globally when I share such Indian innovation stories with them—not just because of the innovation, but also because of the empathy and grit displayed by innovators in equal measure.

How do you see the future of social transformation vis-à-vis NGOs and social entrepreneurs? Do you think that NGO activities must eventually give way to social entrepreneurship, keeping in mind free-market economics?

I don’t think it is “this or that”. It will be “this and that”. In other words, NGOs and social enterprises will co-exist, as both have a distinct role.

Social entrepreneurship combines a market orientation with a social purpose, generating both financial and social revenues. To me, this is “doing well by doing good.”



Bandicoot Kerala Cleaning
Photo by GenRobotic Innovations

NGOs, on the other hand, are focused on doing good, but they depend on external grant funding. Facing the reality of dwindling grant funding, many NGOs are looking at enhancing their sustainability, diversifying their income success, and becoming less dependent on external

funding, with all the vulnerabilities associated with it in this VUCA world.

I do feel that social enterprises will deliver social good with greater speed, scale, and sustainability. However, at the same time, we require NGOs who

can act as neutral umpires with open minds, who are not radical activists, who promote “development without destruction” and who work with great purpose, perseverance, and passion. 📌

Working in S.T.E.P.: The Katraj Zero-Garbage Ward Model, Pune, India

“In our book, we have shown the prowess of interdependence of four key levers—Social engagement, technology, economic model, and public policy. We call them STEP. This is what is required for transformational ideas to get transformed into real impact on the ground,” says Ramesh Mashelkar.

The model worked to make a ward (division of a municipality or corporation) nearly zero-garbage. But how did it work?



Social engagement:

The populace was initially indifferent to waste segregation. Over 1900 individual volunteers, 10,000 corporate volunteers and the Janwani, a not-for-profit

organisation in Pune collaborated to conduct over 1200 social engagement and awareness initiatives, from distributing bins for waste segregation to door-to-door awareness campaigns to street plays and rallies.



Public policy:

The project was run in partnership with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC). Successive mayors of the city supported the drive, and key comparators actively participated in its vision and implementation. The city administration took practical steps to get the project going, Janwani helped PMC prepare by-laws for sanitation and waste management, resulting in laws mandating waste segregation at source, and composting facilities.



Technology:

A bird's-eye view of the model might make the role of technology almost invisible. However, through GPS systems to optimize collection routes, mobile apps to monitor “chronic spots”, and grievance redressal apps, technology was at the root of the model's functioning.



Economics:

The model made perfect economic sense with a payback period of three to five years. The model required citizens to pay a user fee. In case of shortfalls, a tipping fee was calculated based on output of waste disposal, instead of waste collected. 📌

The Power of Six:

1. She Who Steers the Wheel

Who runs the world? Girls! Thanks to Swayam, an initiative by CEAT India Limited with a mission to promote gender equality, women can now pursue a career in the male-dominated industry of driving. Training also includes self defense and first aid to help them better respond to unsafe situations.



2. Love Who You Love

Pride marches are a place for the LGBTQ+ community to strut their colors loud and proud, but not everyone gets to enjoy it due to fear of discrimination and even violence. Google's answer is harnessing the magic of technology to spread the magic of love—enter the #PrideForEveryone campaign, a virtual reality experience that brings a montage of pride marches across 25 countries to those who cannot march in person.

3. Saving the Fintastic Fishes

The Mahseer is a group of species of freshwater fish found in Arunachal Pradesh who are about to face the brink of extinction. In an effort to save the fish, electric utility company Tata Power has launched a sustainable program which involves the participation of its employees and customers, and the public at large, to encourage responsible fishing, as well as investing in a state-of-the-art breeding facility.



CSR Campaigns that Build a Better World



4. Playing In Peace


What if children around the world, especially in conflict-stricken areas can live and build a better future for themselves in harmony? This is what IKEA Foundation have dreamed of in their 'Let's Play for Change', a campaign in partnership with UK-based NGO War Child which created safe spaces for children to read and write, play, and gain knowledge.

5. We Clean The City

Residents of Pune in India have long battled the problem of waste management. To solve the city's litter woes, Adar Poonawalla came up with the Clean India Initiative and since 2015, they have invested in high technology vacuum trucks and road sweepers to pick up trash from the streets. A companion app was also launched to track the location of the garbage-picking machines and monitor garbage reports.



6. Building Blocks of the Future

A letter from a nine-year old in Maryland, USA that reads "When I grow up, I want my kids to grow up in a healthy world," prompted toy production company Lego to create an initiative to support children build the future of their dreams. Build The Change aims to inspire kids to design their own futures, such as building their future schools, or neighbourhoods—using none other than Lego bricks! Last 2017, the global initiative has been organized in 17 different cities and reached more than 680,000 children. 





IDEAS & INNOVATIONS



Bringing Women Within Network Coverage Area

Drawing on Gram Vaani's experiences, Vani Viswanathan suggests asking a few basic questions to ensure that your ICT for Development project listens to, and accurately represents, women's voices.

"What do I need a phone for? If I ever need to talk to someone, I ask my son and he helps me..." a woman in her 50s, from the Nalanda district in Bihar, India.

Mobile phones (and smartphones and related applications) have formed the dominant discourse in development over the last decade, and for the right reasons. At Gram Vaani, we have developed Mobile Vaani and other solutions that tap into the power of mobile phones to provide people access to information and learning, to share and listen to perspectives on a wide range of topics, and to strengthen people's ability to demand accountability from the State. Indeed, mobile phones are considered an important tool to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this well-intentioned euphoria, though, those of us working on the use

of mobile phones for development, must pause to ask whom we reach when we plan, implement and monitor/evaluate our mobile-based solutions. Whose voices are we hearing when we conduct our base studies, develop programmes and solutions or monitor and evaluate these? Embedded within any community are power structures that affect people's ability to access or use any resource. These power structures straddle diverse genders, caste, class, religion, race and more, but one pervasive structure across the world is gender, specifically women.

A significant reason why fostering technology adoption among women users is hard is simply poor access to mobile phones, due to reasons ranging from a lack of financial resources to patriarchal cultures that consider mobile phones as a "bad influence" on women, and don't trust them with

Access to technology is one thing; knowing to use it is another.

66

its use. Women often share mobile phones with family members, or even if they have their own phone, male family members monitor whom the woman calls, messages or what apps she uses. These factors limit women's ability to learn the variety of benefits of mobile phones, be comfortable using them, or even more fundamentally, be convinced that they, as women, have as much right to use mobile phones as men do—something that the woman quoted at the beginning of this piece conveys!

This puts a lot of responsibility in our hands as organisations using ICTs for development; we must be aware that developing technological solutions with good intentions isn't sufficient to encourage their uptake among all sections of society, especially women. And among women, too, factors such as age, race, caste location, and whether they live in urban or rural areas influence their ability to access technology solutions.

At Mobile Vaani, we've attempted to bring more women into our digital media platforms that help inform and connect people. We have been successful in some cases, but in others our attempts only bring about minimal engagement from women. Based on our ten years of experience and learnings, here are some questions that can help us increase women's adoption of a mobile phone solution:

Are there other positive social trends that can help?

As more families give importance to women's education, we found that speaking with young women in colleges about Mobile Vaani helped them understand how the platform worked, and how it could help them (and their families). They also got the language required to convince their families about using a mobile phone.

Are there community role models we can work with? Neha Bhatt became our youngest reporter in Jharkhand at the age of 16, after persuading her father, himself a community reporter with us, to buy her a mobile phone so she could listen and contribute to Mobile Vaani.

Do women know how to use the phones?

Access to technology is one thing; knowing to use it is another. We've seen older women, especially, face this issue. In such instances, training women on basic phone functions – dialling numbers, sending or reading messages, using the camera, etc.—becomes imperative. To promote our JEEViKA Mobile Vaani and in our project Meri Awaaz Meri Pehchan, for example, we took the help of women's Self-Help Groups and female volunteers to get women acquainted with and confident about using the phone, and later, our solution.

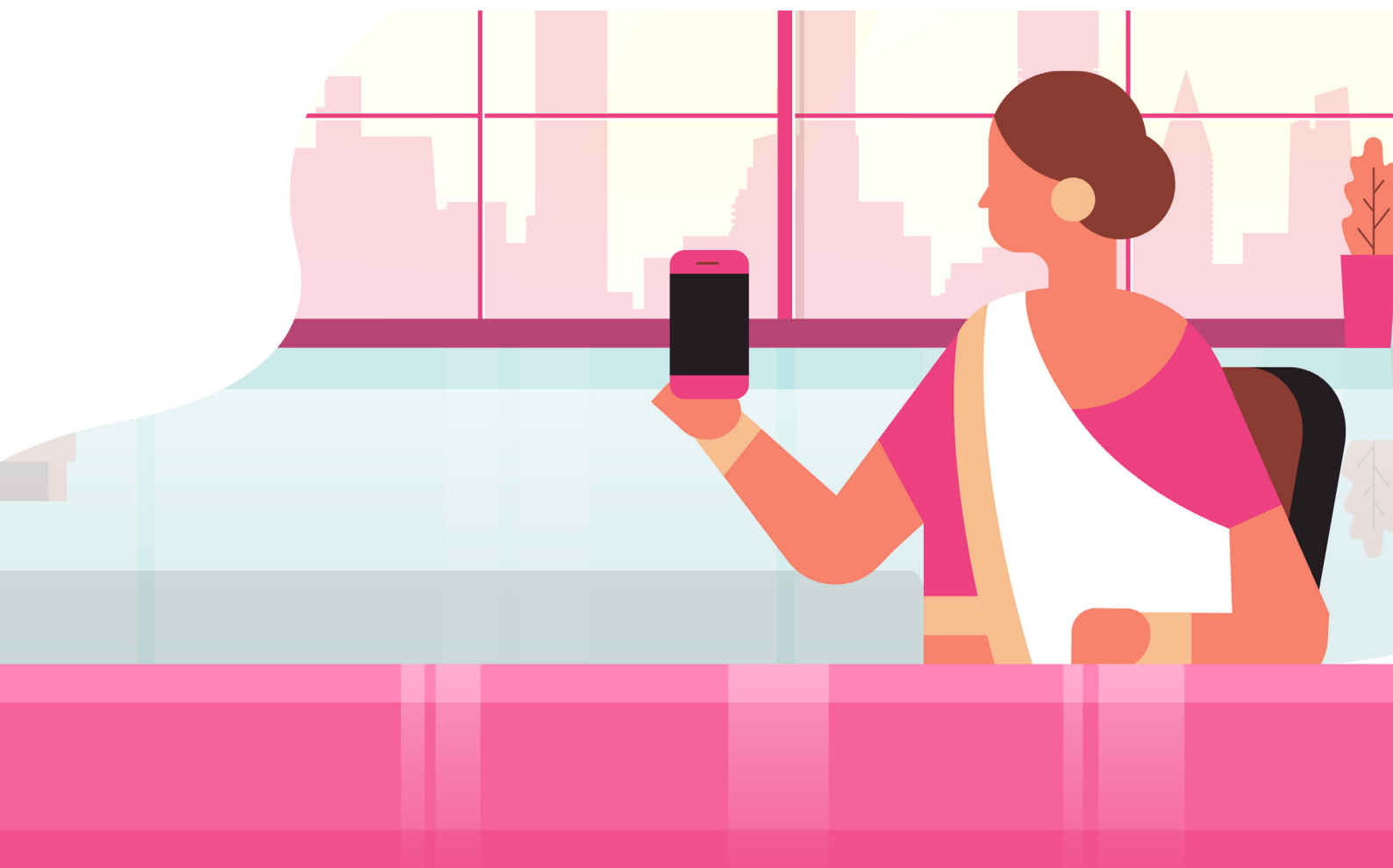




Image courtesy of Gram Vaani

Who is the content for?

Content is closely connected to issues of access and use. Some projects might benefit from content written exclusively for women, as it creates a trusted network where women feel safe sharing their experiences. Others might work well with content and programmes that include men, contributing to broader change. The latter builds trust among men and prevents them from barring women's access to the content, but also chips away at the idea that "these are women's issues" or "we don't want to be involved in something that includes women."

For instance, content on maternal health and nutrition in our JEEViKA Mobile Vaani, tailored for women, was heard by men too, who told us that they had never, until then, bothered about what their wives ate, but now wanted to change that.

As we step into a new decade, we must, more than ever, question the common belief that technology, as an extension of science, is inherently neutral and free

of biases of society. The position, power, and beliefs of those who develop any technology will inevitably flow into the technology itself, and this is certainly the case with mobile phones and their various applications. Being aware of and acknowledging the gaps in terms of whom we're reaching and whose voices we're hearing will help us seek solutions; not doing so will unfortunately only perpetuate inequities without challenging status quo. 📱

We must be aware that developing technological solutions with good intentions isn't sufficient to encourage their uptake among all sections of society, especially women.



Vani Viswanathan is a communications consultant with Gram Vaani, a social enterprise working on building participatory media platforms, including Mobile Vaani. Vani is interested in the role of gender and sexuality in all facets of human development.

Charging Up by Induction

A well-planned induction program for a new Board member helps add value to the governance structure, writes Aarti Madhusudan.



You have invited a friend, or someone who is an expert in their field, to be on the Board of your non-profit organization. What's next?

Oftentimes, the founder/CEO spends some time with the new Board member introducing them to the organization and its plans, and they are left to perform wonders. The enthusiasm of the new Board member carries them through a few Board meetings. Value add occurs until the founder struggles to provide the required attention. The Board member starts to have other priorities, the struggle to engage begins... and a long painful journey often follows.

Earlier articles have discussed making the choice to invite a person to the Board basis the role that is expected of them, and a Board plan as a mechanism to keep the Board invested in the organisation. Testing for this periodically ensures that Board performance is institutionalised in the governance of the organisation.

However, many organisations fail to properly induct their Board member. The assumption is that the individual can just get started basis a few conversations. Nothing is further than the truth.



Why must a Board member go through a formal induction?

- 01 It communicates the seriousness of the intent to engage with the Board member.
- 02 It provides information on the history of the organization, and its growth and impact trajectory, so the new Board member can determine how they would like to be part of the legacy that is being built.
- 03 It provides insights into existing Board dynamics. Giving new Board members insights into how the Board behaves, and what each Board member brings to the table puts the new joinee in a position of great comfort, since they can now plan the responses of their involvement more strategically and seamlessly, without stepping on anyone's toes.
- 04 Lastly, an induction, if done well, enables the Board member to understand the organisational ethos and culture which directly impact their own engagement with the organisation's staff, CEO/founder, and the rest of the Board.



How does one plan for a good induction?

Communicate that there is one and that it is mandatory for the Board member to participate in the same before the first Board meeting. Some organisations plan it along with the first meeting. This is sub-optimal but it's better than not having one at all.

A good induction will require the investment of a day at least by both the Board member as well as key people in the organisation.

Many organisations fail to properly induct their Board member. The assumption is that the individual can just get started basis a few conversations. Nothing is further than the truth.

“

What goes into a good induction?

COMMENTARY

WHAT

Introduction to the organisation – staff, Board and others

Vision, Mission and Values of the organisation

The organisation's programmes, the impact on beneficiaries, methods, plans for the future

Finance

Internal relationships

Compliance

Conflict of interest policy / disclosure policy

Individual expectations

How NOT to behave and what NOT to do

HOW

- E-mail message from the Chair or CEO to all staff, key donors, and other stakeholders and partners
- Conversations with the CEO/Founder and existing or past Board members
- Senior programme staff /CEO provide an overview
- Documents, reports, and other reading material
- Visit to the field
- Interactions with beneficiaries
- Introductions to other donors (one/two) who support the programme to get a perspective of why this programme was attractive for them to support.
- The auditor, head of accounts, or the CEO provides the top-line numbers, how funds are utilised, budgets for the coming year, sources of funding, allocation, etc.
- Minutes on allocations, earlier resolutions passed, etc. provide an insight into HOW decisions are made on money
- Chief of staff, CEO share how the organisation is structured, what are the work dynamics, who does what and how decisions are made
- One conversation with the organisation auditor with all legal documents explained and ensuring that this is clearly understood by the Board member
- Sign off that the Board member will not use her/his position in the organisation for any personal gain perceived or actual. All other associations and relationships with other constituents organisations, if any, will be disclosed and made available by the board member
- Chair/CEO / founder clearly outline expectations of the Board member, including the support that will be provided by the organisation to carry out the duties in the role
- Clearly articulating this helps set the expectations clearly, especially in terms of Board dynamics. Having a Board buddy or mentor is helpful in ensuring that the Board member is eased into the culture of the organisation and establishes comfort in the interactions more seamlessly. ⓘ



Aarti Madhusudan runs Governance Counts, an initiative which helps non-profits build more effective Boards. She is associated with iVolunteer, India's largest volunteering organisation and Daan Utsav, India's festival of giving.



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A Seat

Image courtesy of Shiksharth

at the Table

The rural development discourse is populated by experts and policymakers who have little or no experience in the rural set-up, leading to an alarming lack of understanding of ground realities, writes Ashish Shrivastava.

It was 2017. An NGO conference in Raipur, Chhattisgarh was nothing less than a corporate networking event. Leading organizations were trying to sell their solutions and models (read: digital classrooms) to the bureaucracy. Shiksharth was the only organization representing the ground reality: challenges of a conflict-affected tribal region (Bastar and Sukma among them). Yet, our opinions (that the teachers' competence had to be built first) were brushed aside by experts from Delhi- and Raipur-based development agencies, who were holding forth on how the issue of out-of-school children in tribal areas could be addressed –exactly what we were working on.

While the basic philosophy of the development sector is equity and inclusion, we have struggled to practice the same in our own backyards. We have failed to create and engage with voices from remote geographies, rural

and tribal areas, and marginalised communities. The power centres in the space still revolve around the national capital Delhi, and the other metro locations for the huge amount of Corporate funding that comes with it. One only has to look at any thematic conference, and the lack of representation is obvious.

The willingness to engage and encourage has been completely lacking (barring

a few notable exceptions like the Wipro Foundation and the EduMentum incubator) and has been restricted to discussions in conferences and research papers. This, despite the fact that the best welfare schemes of this country have come from grassroot innovations: be it the MGNREGA, Self-help groups, School Management Committees, or micro-finance.

Fast forward to July 2019. I was part of a world-class program on non-profit management, conducted by the best in the world. Out of 80 participants from leading organizations, only two (including us) were headquartered in a rural setup. What was interesting was that the organizers were well-aware of the disparity, and stressed that they really wanted diverse participants. The problem was that they could not design a program suited for a rural organization.



Image courtesy of Shiksharth



It is a problem of the head, heart, and hand not being in sync. Until we, as Civil Society Organizations, do not practise inclusion, we cannot expect it to trickle down to society.



Ashish Shrivastava is an engineer-turned-education sector contributor, currently working with conflict-affected tribal children in Sukma in Chhattisgarh in Central India. His initiative, Shiksharth, works towards improving the quality of education in rural and tribal areas through action-based research, design, and implementation.

Here was a case where despite the willingness, the ability to design a program did not exist. In fact most of the leadership programs do not fulfil the needs of grassroots entrepreneurs and leaders, and do not offer vernacular mediums of communication. This automatically excludes many who have deep insights and vast experience in the space.

It is a problem of the head, heart, and hand not being in sync. Until we, as Civil Society Organizations, do not practise inclusion, we cannot expect it to trickle down to society. As CSO professionals, we all know that a one-time solution will not work with any problem. What we need is consistent engagement and representation on all platforms.

This problem trickles down to the professionals who want to enter the sector. I've been recruiting from a leading fellowship program for six years: no one has ever applied or joined us through the process. Three years back, at a placement fair, only one out of 652 young professionals had expressed interest in exploring working in rural areas. Let that sink in. That's 0.15%.

The fact is that as young passionate future changemakers, they have not been exposed to grassroots challenges. The role models presented before them have been from cities who look at every problem from a techno-managerial lens, executing social change programs as short-term projects.

However, if there's one thing we have learnt in our eight years of operating in remote rural and tribal regions, it's this: only consistent long-term engagement will truly bring in the change we all aspire to see.

Media portals do not find it necessary to focus on these stories of change, restricted as they are to their norms of comfort and luxury of cities. In fact, when I read articles celebrating Top Changemakers and the Forbes 30 Under 30, etc., I wonder if there is any innovation in the grassroots at all, but I only have to look close enough to spot some brilliant minds working in the space.

The road to true inclusion need not be too long and arduous. From calling out "manels" to helping institutions recognize the lack of diversity, the feminist movement might hold some clues to the road ahead.

I see the idea of inclusive action in the development sector in four stages:

1. Acknowledgement of the problem of inadequate representation
2. Willingness to take steps and truly listen from unheard voices
3. Developing the ability to engage and empathise
4. Ensuring representation across platforms

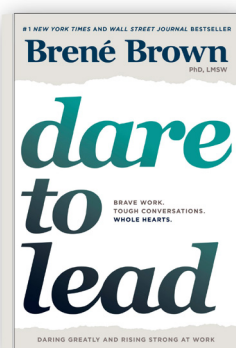
As we move from philanthropy-based social work to accountability-led systemic transformation and advocacy around policy design and implementation, it becomes important for CSOs to listen to the primary stakeholder, instead of trying to become their representative voice. **i**

OUR PICKS

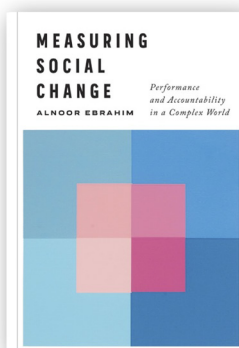
Looking for your next read, documentary to watch, or organization to follow? Look no further, for we share some of our favourites in the development space.

If you'd like to suggest a resource for inclusion in this list, email us at editor@asiango.org

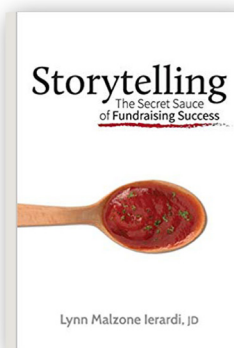
What We're Reading



1



2



3

Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts (2018)

by Brené Brown

In *Dare to Lead*, New York Times Best-selling Author Brené Brown addresses the concept of courageous leadership—what makes a daring leader? How do you cultivate the value of courage in your organization's culture?

Measuring Social Change: Performance and Accountability in a Complex World (2019)

by Alnoor Ebrahim

This book addresses one of the fundamental problems NGO leaders currently face: tracking their performance. How can they measure their progress in achieving goals such as reducing poverty or advancing human rights? For professor Alnoor Ebrahim, it entails an effective performance system and influence from impact investors and aid agencies.

Storytelling: The Secret Sauce of Fundraising Success (2019)

by Lynn Malzone Ierardi

Brewing the perfect impact story to engage your donors can be a little tricky, but Lynn Malzone Ierardi of Merrill Lynch Center for Philanthropy has got you covered with the right ingredients, while breaking down some of the secret sauces that combine to create great stories.

Who We're Following

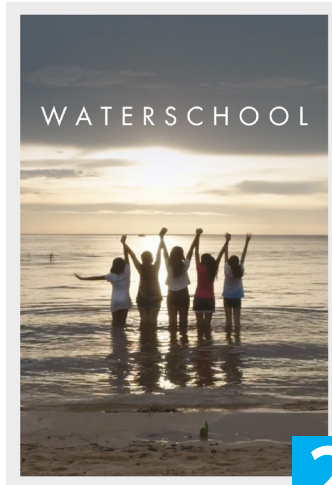
Big Duck

Big Duck is a communications firm that aims to support non-profit organizations in improving their communication with their donors, audience, and potential members. Their blog boasts of a variety of communication strategies to help non-profits craft the perfect branding or campaign for their projects.

What We're Watching



1



2

What We're Studying

The Supreme Price (2014)

Directed by Joanna Lipper

The Supreme Price explores the incredible journey of Nigerian civil rights and political activist Hafsat Abiola, and her crusade to deconstruct the corrupt governance structure and empower marginalised communities, including women and the poor.

Waterschool (2018)

Directed by UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television (TFT) and Dean Teri Schwartz
On Netflix

In Waterschool, six young girls who live along the world's major rivers – the Amazon, Mississippi, Danube, Nile, Ganges, and Yangtze learn about the importance of water and sustainability, as they become the voices of their generation, in tackling one of the world's pressing issues.

Learning Equity Requires More than Equality (2019)

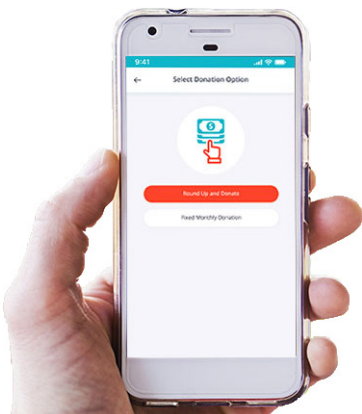
Maryam Akmal and Lant Pritchett

One of the key elements in achieving global equity in education is inclusivity in all forms. However, achieving universal literacy and numeracy might take more than just inclusion. In this study conducted by non-profit think tank Center for Global Development, Maryam Akmal and Lant Pritchett examine the measures that go beyond closing the learning gap between the rich and poor to achieve educational development for all. [i](#)

What We're Downloading

Coin Up

Available on iOS and Android



Coin Up is a charity donation app which aims to help users round up and donate the "spare change" from their everyday credit/debit card transactions to their chosen non-profit. The app is protected by a bank-approved encrypted system and hosts different causes to choose from, ranging from women empowerment, poverty alleviation and even animal protection.

Toggl

Available on iOS and Android



Aimed at non-profits and corporate professionals who wish to allocate their resources more efficiently, Toggl is a time tracking app that shows which projects are worth spending time on, as well as the time you're spending on social media sites.



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Human Resources
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Ken Ng
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Jeremy Lee
Principal Consultant
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MDT Innovations Sdn Bhd



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Malaysia People Advisory
Services Leader
EY



Peter Law
Senior General Manager & Head,
Talent Management & Development
Mah Sing Group Berhad



Praveen Rajan
Chief Digital Officer
Digi



Reza Zainudin
Head - Group
Human Capital Division
UDA Holdings Berhad



Shu-Tze Tan
Organisation and
People Strategist
Alignz Associates



Subash Ganapathy
Head of Human Capital
BMW Group Malaysia



Zenas Kok
Head of Human Capital
Fraser & Neave
Holdings Berhad

3 Key Takeaways:-

- Organizational growth and innovation in a disruptive environment
- Increasing the productivity and agility of employees in the organization
- Seizing untapped business opportunities by creating entrepreneurs in your organization (Intrapreneurs)



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Pet Peeves: CSR on NGOs

The CSR-NGO relationship is full of complexities. Complaints abound on both sides. What do CSR folks think NGOs must understand? We asked a few folks who've worked with NGOs to tell us!

"I think one of my biggest pet peeve is when NGOs invite donors to projects which do not represent the donor's core values and do not align with their business strategic growth. I find it to be quite a waste of time, especially because you're allotting resources too. If an NGO wants to do better or excel, it must be able to understand the business perspective of its donor, their vision and their strategic growth."

Tuyet Trinh

*Director, corporate communications,
L'Oreal Vietnam*

"From a business/corporate perspective I believe that NGOs, as they are on the ground, can help to accelerate the project performance a lot. However, I have had encounters with NGOs that made it more difficult to partner and to enjoy the collaboration, due to inexperience in management.

As we are not having the time for administration and we do not have enough insight into the local context, we are partnering with NGOs to support us with this. I realized that process orientation, effective meetings and communication, proper follow-up, and planning in advance are pet peeves. Furthermore, I appreciate NGOs which are not only focusing on the "cash donation part," but rather offer alternatives to funding and find creative ways to partner (with corporates)."

Felicitas Huong Friedrich

*CSR and education manager,
Schneider Electric Vietnam*

"Due to limited resources, it may be difficult for the team members of the NGOs to respond to emails promptly. However, a quick reply to inform us that something could be delayed will help reassure us that the email is not lost. We may also be able to lend a helping hand to move things along, if we know what the constraints are."

Alezandra Nicolas

*Consulting methods and tools (CMT) deployment
lead, Deloitte Consulting, NCR, Philippines*

Honest Social Sector Job Descriptions



Our Foundation Is Looking For:

Manager, Communications (and fundraising and emails)

Duties

- **Strategize communication across the organization and stakeholders** when no one thinks it is important, and often without any, ahem, communication from colleagues or the boss.
- **Creating communication materials that includes,** and is definitely not limited to, newsletters, brochures, project reports, event programs, advertisements, project proposals, emails, bit notices, leave letters/homework of colleague's/beneficiary's children. Basically, anything.
- **Creating content on social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Whatsapp, Snapchat, TikTok, WeChat, YouChat, iChat, and whatever else is obsolete.** Basically, any social media channel past, present, and future.
- **Increasing engagement with stakeholders on social media** when there is simply no material available
- **Creating engaging content from source content** that is likely only three words long—"thank you, madam."

The right candidate will:

Be an excellent *fiction* writer.

- **Preferably know how to write well** (Pulitzer-winners get preference), **edit videos** (here's looking for the next Sreekar Prasad), **and are familiar with InDesign** (because that is the one we have a cracked license for).

Remuneration:

Best (of luck, really, we have no clue or budget) **in the industry.**

Our Foundation Is Looking For:

Manager, Projects (a.k.a., general go-to person)

Duties

- **Design projects in conjunction with various stakeholders** who we don't know yet. Basically, we give you a tight budget and ask you to create a project
- **Implement the project within set parameters** of low or no budget and tight funding restrictions
- **Oversee all project activities** including loudspeakers for inauguration, tables for monthly meetings, and availability of water in the toilet for visiting donors
- **Prepare and submit transparent monthly budget and activity reports** but on second thought, perhaps more, like, translucent reports
- **Actively explore connected projects for synergies** so that we can ask for more from the donor
- **Build positive partnerships with other organizations working in the region** and get to know about their funding source
- **Motivate the team and consultants to achieve outputs.** Might mean self-motivation. A team of one is still a team.
- **Maintain constant flow of information and communication with the Manager, Communications.** Not really. Wink, wink.

The right candidate will:

- **Be a multitasker, i.e. Superman. Or a woman.**
- **Be able to deliver projects on time**
- **Be great in communication**

Remuneration:

Commensurate with experience and your need. You know how it is.

Please send (real) job descriptions and leads to editor@asiango.org, for you know how journalism is faring these days!

Open Grants and Prizes

Grant Opportunities

This is a curated list of grants and prizes. For more, please visit www.asiango.org

Open Grants

1. Call for Applications: 2020 European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Country-Based Support Scheme

Deadline: April 15, 2020

Grant amount: €980,000

<https://bit.ly/2Ppnr6e>

Aims to support the work of civil society organizations in addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups (IPs and human rights defenders) in the Philippines.

2. Call for Proposals: Nagao Natural Environment Foundation Research Grant Programme

Deadline: April 17, 2020

Grant amount: ¥500,000

<http://www.nagaofoundation.or.jp/e/research/research.html>

Aims to support academic and scientific research that will deepen knowledge of nature conservation in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

3. Call for Proposals: Innovations for Improving the Impact of Health Campaigns

Deadline: April 22, 2020

Grant amount: Up to USD 1,000,000

<https://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/challenge/innovations-improving-impact-health-campaigns-round-25>

Seeks to fund innovative solutions that accelerate the improvement of coverage, reach, efficiency, and effectiveness of mass health campaigns that deliver health products or services in low-and middle-income countries.

4. Call for Applications: Accelerating Sustainability of Public Health Systems in India

Deadline: April 27, 2020

Grant amount: Up to USD 30,000,000

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=320708>

Seeks to strengthen district, state and national public health systems in India to sustain and continue advancement of Global Health Security Agenda (GHS) priorities to prevent, detect, and respond to disease threats across the country.

5. Call for Applications: Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme 2020

Deadline: May 19, 2020

Grant amount: Up to €1,400,000

<https://bit.ly/3aT3rSt>

Aims to enhance human capital development in Africa by improving quality and modernizing higher education in Africa.

6. Call for Proposals: Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in the Western Indian Ocean

Deadline: May 24, 2020

Grant amount: Up to €30,000,000

<https://www.blueactionfund.org/call-for-proposals-ecosystem-based-adaptation>

Seeks to provide individual grants to selected NGOs for projects focused on coastal and marine conservation and sustainable livelihood development for vulnerable communities in the Western Indian Ocean.

7. Call for Applications: Right Sharing of World Resources Grants Program

Deadline: June 30, 2020

Grant amount: USD 5,500

<https://bit.ly/2SQi0j4>

Aims to provide seed grants to small grass-roots organizations to implement women-led income-generating projects in India.

8. Call for Applications: The Conservation, Food and Health Foundation

Deadline: July 1, 2020

Grant amount: USD 20,000

<https://bit.ly/3e0xtWi>

Seeks to protect natural resources, improve the production and distribution of food, and promote public health in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

9. Call for Proposals: Teacher Education to Support Girls' Empowerment

Deadline: July 3, 2020

Grant amount: USD 10,000

<https://bit.ly/2RnkLai>

Seeks to foster international partnerships and alliances that bolster Africa's ability to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the areas of education and gender equality.

10. Call for Applications: Stories for Tropical Rainforests

Deadline: July 22, 2020

Grant amount: USD 5,000-70,000

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/tropical-rainforest-story>

Aims to support storytelling projects that highlight ecosystem-scale stories and solutions-oriented attempts to mitigate or reverse human impacts, particularly in the Amazon River basin, Congo River basin, and rainforests in Southeast Asia.

Open Prizes

1. UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence 2020

Deadline: April 30, 2020

Prize: USD 100,000

<https://bit.ly/2RRAHkS>

Recognizes individuals, institutions and other entities or non-governmental organizations that have made exceptional contributions and demonstrated leadership in the promotion of tolerance and non-violence as a universal human right.

2. World Food Prize 2020

Deadline: May 1, 2020

Prize: USD 250,000

<https://www.worldfoodprize.org/index.cfm?nodeID=87515&audienceID=1>

Recognizes the accomplishments of individuals who have worked to improve the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world.

3. Zayed Sustainability Prize 2020

Deadline: May 21, 2020

Prize: USD 3,000,000

<https://zayedustainabilityprize.com/en/about/zayed-sustainability-prize>

Recognizes organizations that pilot impactful, innovative, and inspiring sustainability solutions across five distinct categories: Health, Food, Energy, Water, and Global High Schools.

4. 2020 iF Social Impact Prize

Deadline: May 27, 2020

Prize: €50,000

<https://ifworlddesignguide.com/awards/participate/if-social-impact-prize>


Awards any projects contribute to solving the most urgent challenges of our time such as poverty, hunger, climate change, inequality, etc.

5. 2020 Al-Sumait Prize "Education"

Deadline: June 30, 2020

Prize: USD 1,000,000

<http://www.alsumaitprize.org/nominations>

Rewards projects that advance economic and social development, human resources development, and infrastructure on the African continent. 

TITLE OF ARTICLE	ORGANIZATION	WEBSITE
This Caught Our Eye: In the Moood for VR	Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Moscow Region	www.bit.ly/3aOmT2s
This Caught Our Eye: What a Cool Classroom	Michael Gilraine, New York University Pinyapel	www.as.nyu.edu/faculty/michael-gilraine.html
This Caught Our Eye: Thought Filters	Carnegie Mellon University	www.cmu.edu
This Caught our Eye: Mining for Press Freedom	blockworks	www.blockworks.uk/the-uncensored-library
This Caught our Eye: Besting Breast Cancer	Google	www.go.nature.com/2UCE3dU
This Caught our Eye: Dressed with Purpose	Vogue Italia	www.vogue.it/moda/article/vogue-italia-gennaio-editoriale-direttore
Decoding the Donor	Cascade Philanthropy Advisors	www.cascadephilanthropy.org
All Roads Lead to the SDGs	Yeti Airlines Dr Reddy's Foundation	www.yetairlines.com drreddysfoundation.org
CSR 2.0: What Are Corporates Looking For?	Hayleys Sattva	www.hayleys.com www.sattva.in
Corporations-Social Startups: A Purposeful Match	makesense Philippines	philippines.makesense.org
Goodbye CSR, Hello Responsible Business	Villgro	www.villgro.org
The Power of Six: CSR Campaigns That Build a Better World	CEAT India Limited Google Tata Power IKEA Foundation Adar Poonawalla Clean City Initiative	www.ceat.com www.blog.google/topics/causes-community/pride-for-everyone www.tatapower.com www.ikeafoundation.org www.adarpcleancity.com/about-us.html
Bringing Women Within Network Coverage Area	The Lego Group Gram Vaani	www.lego.com/en-us www.gramvaani.org
Charging Up by Induction! A Seat at the Table	Governance Counts Shiksharth	www.ivolunteer.in www.shiksharth.in

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