CSR for Education : Collaboration with Government of Maharashtra

Government of Maharashtra spends approximately Rs.44,000 Crores annually on Education. Most of this budget goes towards payment of teachers' salaries; besides, Government spends on training of teachers, providing entitlements under the RTE Act, basic infrastructure, educational aids and material etc. Despite the seemingly large budget, there are considerable gaps in educational infrastructure as well as learning outcomes of children. Many companies and corporates are already investing their CSR funds in the education sector and many others are partnering with the Government under the Chief Minister's Village Social Transformation Project which covers 1000 villages. Yet there is a large scope to go further and to contribute in a more meaningful and a sustainable way to promote education.

The Government issued a G.R. dated 09/06/2014 which lays down the CSR policy of the School Education Department. Corporates may approach the Secretary of the School Education Department at the State Level, the Commissioner Education, Pune, or the Chief Executive Officer of the concerned Zilla Parishad at the District Level for consultations on the required CSR activities. The Principals of DIETs, which are district level institutes responsible for conducting teachers' training, also act as the nodal officers for supporting academic activities in their district. The Government has broadly identified the following areas which require CSR support -

- Infrastructure, including repairs of schools, toilets, drinking water facilities, boundary walls, ramps, solar panels for electricity, Washing machines in girls hostels, setting up hand wash stations and water purifiers.

- Payment of pending dues of electricity bills, providing internet connectivity, upgrading kitchens, providing gas connections, utensils, storage bins and gas burners, developing kitchen gardens, providing fire extinguishers, providing sanitary napkins and inseminators.

- ICT - Computers, Projectors, Tablets or other equipment for digital schools and online training, developing digital content.

- Facilitating vocational training of students, specially in the informal sector.

- **Volunteers Programme** : For Academic support, learning enhancement, co-curricular activities, providing Life Skills Education, Scholarship to students, study tours and exposure visits.

- Establishing twinning/partnership between schools.

- Providing technical support to the department.

Many donors have already partnered with NGOs /implementing partners to implement pilot projects in the state. Some of the important MOUs with the Government include -

- **British Council** - School Leadership Development Programme in 100 schools.

- Lend A Hand India for vocational training and technical support.

- **British Council** - Building capacity for spoken English language.

- **Edelgive Foundation** - Improving learning outcomes, technical support.

- **Swadesh Foundation** - Holistic transformation of schools.

- **Rotary Club** - Setting up digital classrooms

- **Leadership for Equity** - Advisory group.

  Many pilot projects have been successfully implemented in the State, but have not been scaled up due to lack of resources. Some of the pilots worthy of scaling up are -

- Use of the 'Learning Navigator' by Gyan Prakash Foundation in Parbhani and Nandurbar districts.

- **Shikshan Parishad -** Building leadership and capabilities of Kendra Pramukhs at the Cluster level by Gyan Prakash Foundation.

- Providing Life Skills training to children, piloted by UNICEF in Tribal Ashram schools.

- Volunteers programme in school for supporting learning, creative expression and for achieving the broader goals of education.

- Teaching without textbooks, especially in Class I and II, successfully piloted in Kumthebeat, Satara.

- Providing technical support for low cost assessment (tests) of student to assess their learning outcomes.

- Vocational Education, specially in the informal sector and for self-employment.

- Reducing the burden of textbooks - 'Ek Pustak Ek Wahi' experiment in Pune Zilla Parishad.

- Designing online courses for teachers training and self-learning.

- Support in developing high quality digital content on the lines of Khan Academy.

- Training Needs Assessment (TNA) of teachers.

- Mapping of infrastructure and data analysis.

- Providing digital technology /equipment /platform/Virtual classrooms.

- Monitoring Attendance of Teachers and students digitally.

Many of these facilities will help to improve the Performance Grading Index (PGI) of Maharashtra, which is now being monitored by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

It is hoped that the proposed conference on CSR will help to promote greater interaction between corporates and Government, and to increase CSR contribution substantially in the field of education.