

INVESTMENT IN LEARNING

Promoting Quality School Education
through Corporate Social Responsibility

November 2014

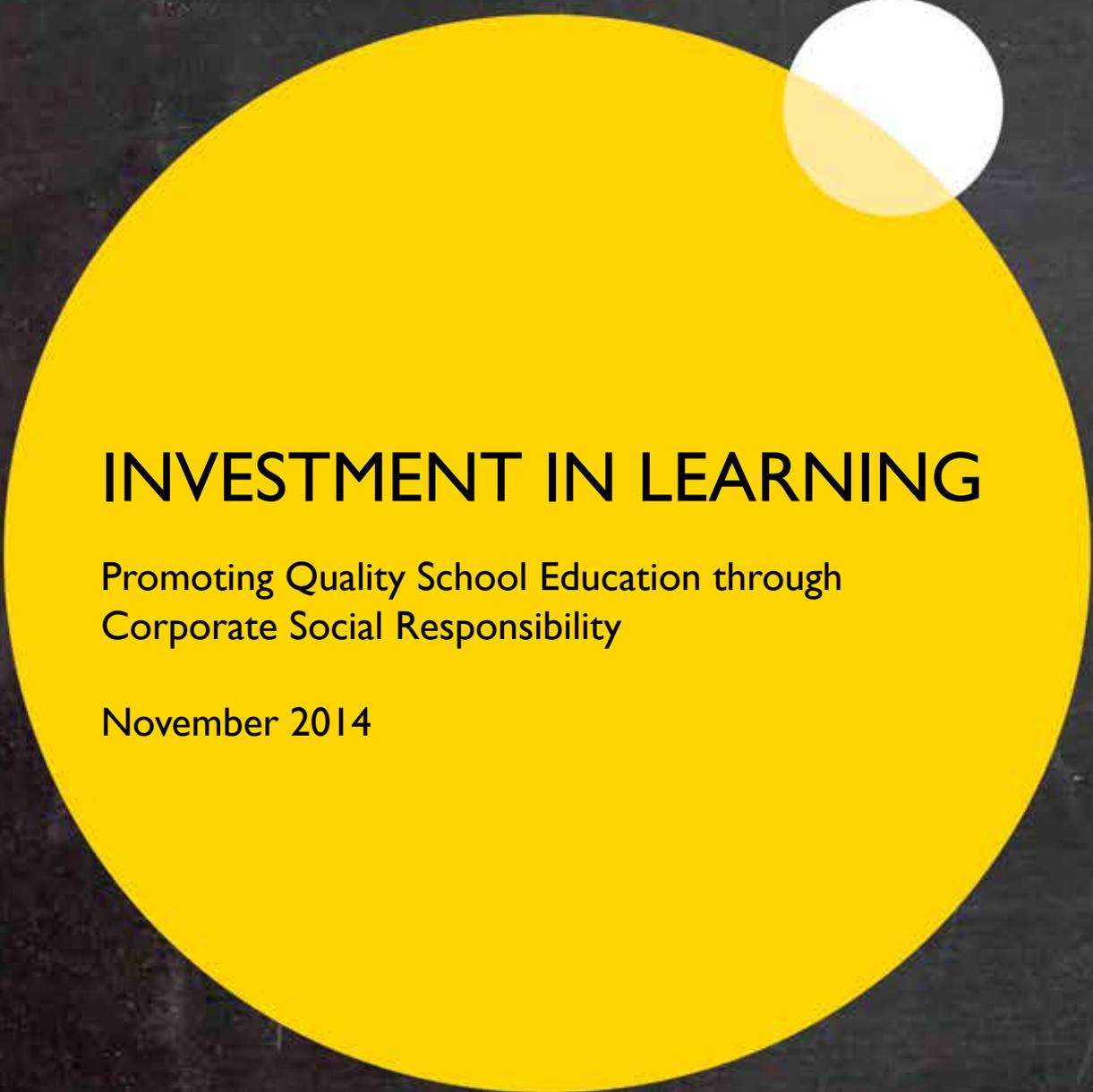


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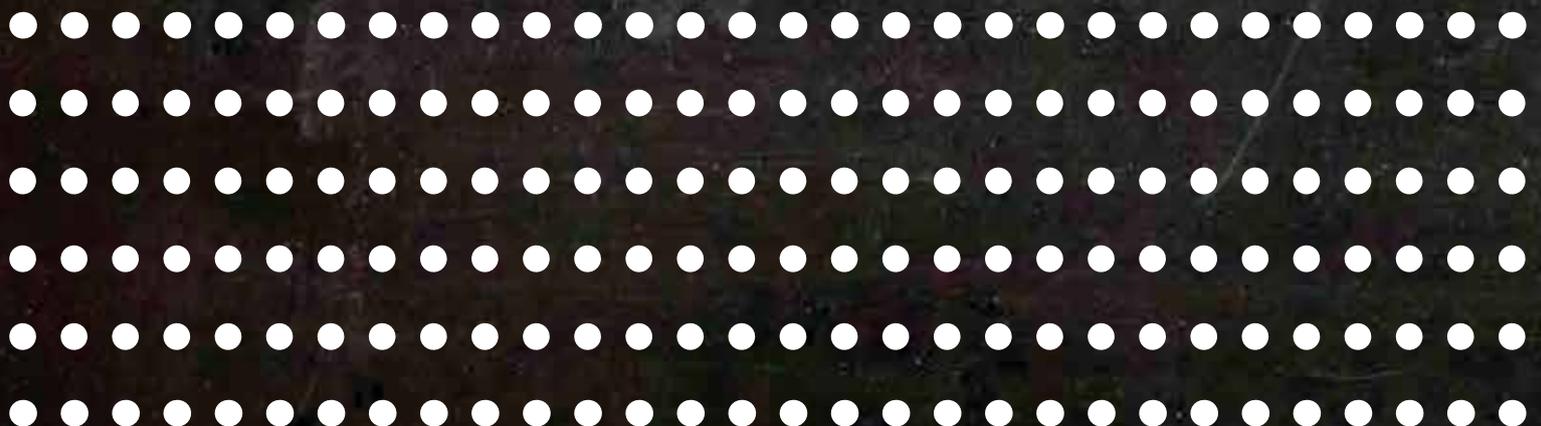
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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
FOREWORD	4
INTRODUCTION	5
PART I: A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO EDUCATION CSR	7
A Brief Overview of India's Education Landscape	8
The Imperative for Companies.....	8
Strategies for Maximising Impact	9
Structures of Implementation	12
CSR for Quality Education	13
PART II: KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CSR IN EDUCATION	15
Public-Private Partnership Schools.....	16
Remedial Education	19
School Leadership	21
Teacher Training	24
Technology in Education	27
Social Integration in Private Schools under the Right to Education Act	29
Equity in Education for Marginalised Groups	31
School Management Committees.....	33
Early Childhood Education	35
Co-scholastic Learning	37
Nutrition and Health	39
Vocational Education in Secondary Schools.....	41
CONCLUSION	43
REFERENCES	44

FOREWORD

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The Companies Act, 2013 is an opportunity to catalyse critical improvement in India's education system and set new benchmarks for business' role in contributing to the nation's development. Providing quality education to all students is vital to India's future, and is an imperative that companies can help achieve by taking a strategic approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR).

There has been significant improvement in access to schooling following the passage of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. More recently, as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, the Government has committed to ensuring separate girls' and boys' toilets in each government school, with a view that toilets are particularly important to girls' retention and attendance.

To capitalise on these positive developments in access to schooling and school infrastructure, improvements in the quality of education are essential. Presently, far too many students go through school without building the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed. The low quality of education also has a direct impact on companies, which frequently struggle to find adequately skilled employees. Through CSR, businesses can contribute to reversing this trend and building an education system that equips every student to be a responsible and productive citizen.

This brief aims to guide companies who are preparing or revising their CSR policies on how to catalyse innovations in education quality. Companies will need to look beyond infrastructure to bring about this change. The brief highlights key interventions that can have a powerful impact on student learning and offers suggestions to help corporates maximise the impact of their CSR.

Corporate leadership in improving education quality can significantly bolster efforts to enable learning for all of India's students. On behalf of the FICCI School Education Committee, we encourage companies to invest their financial resources and core competencies to support our nation's education system.



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INTRODUCTION

.....

Corporate social responsibility—mandatory for specified companies as of April 2014 under the Companies Act, 2013—has the potential to catalyse significant and much-needed improvement in India’s school education system.¹ One of the 10 approved areas for CSR notified under Schedule VII of the Act is “promoting education, including special education and employment enhancing vocational skills, especially among children, women, elderly, and the differently abled and livelihood enhancement projects”. This brief provides advice for companies formulating or revising their CSR policies to help them structure a strategy focused on education.

Past philanthropic trends indicate that education will be a primary focus for companies.² Those who direct their resources towards education have a critical role to play in addressing the challenges of quality and equity. They can contribute to creating an education system in which all children in India, regardless of their social and economic status, receive an excellent education.

Considering that corporate contribution to education will continue to represent a fraction of government expenditure, the way companies spend matters at least as much as the amount they spend. To maximise the impact of their contribution, companies need to be strategic in their approach to CSR. Doing so will allow them to play a catalytic role in the sector by developing innovations and models for the Government and others to adopt.³

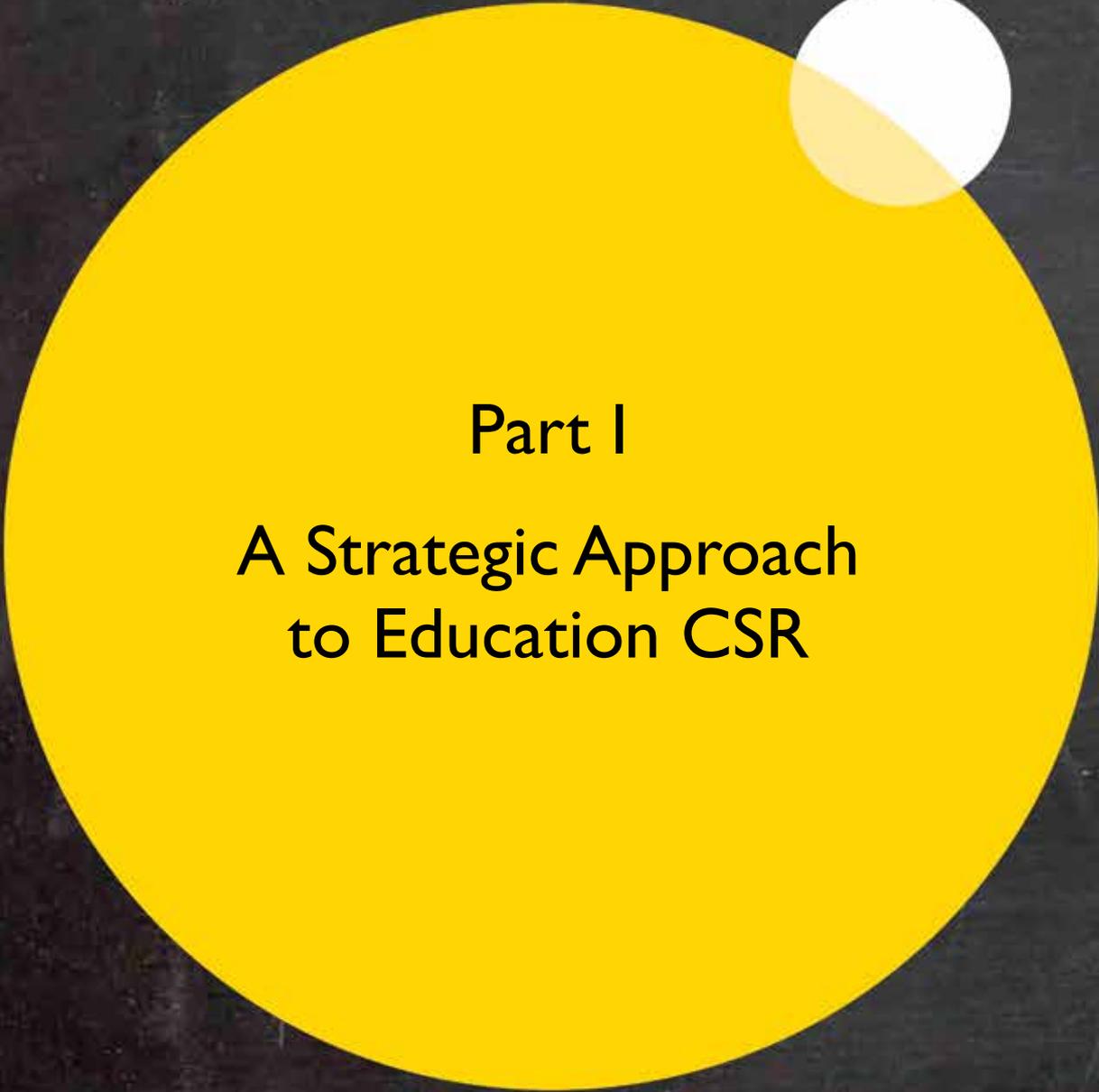
¹ Companies are required to spend 2% of their average net profit over the three preceding years on CSR or else report their reasons for not doing so if their net worth is INR 500 crore or more, their turnover is INR 1,000 crore or more, or their net profit is INR 5 crore or more.

² While there has been a lack of reporting about CSR spending prior to the Companies Act, E&Y found in an analysis of 50 companies from the S&P Bombay Stock Exchange Top 100 index that all of them were contributing to education. Adarsh Kumar of the National Foundation For India also found education to be the foremost focus area for the CSR activities of India’s major companies. Of the top 50 listed companies, he found that 39 were contributing to education, while health was a close second, with 38 companies contributing to it. Sources: *Corporate Social Responsibility in India: Potential to Contribute Towards Inclusive Social Development* (New Delhi: E&Y, 2013), 16-17; Adarsh Kumar, *Emerging Philanthropy in India: Analysis of Gaps and Recommended Interventions* (Delhi: National Foundation For India, 2013), 36.

³ Catalytic philanthropy is a term coined by FSG to refer to “innovative practices that have the potential to catalyse social impact at scales that far eclipse the amount of resources invested.” Source: Nidhi M. Reddy and Lalitha Vaidyanathan, *Catalytic Philanthropy in India* (Hyderabad: Indian School of Business, Centre for Emerging Market Solutions and FSG, 2012), 5.

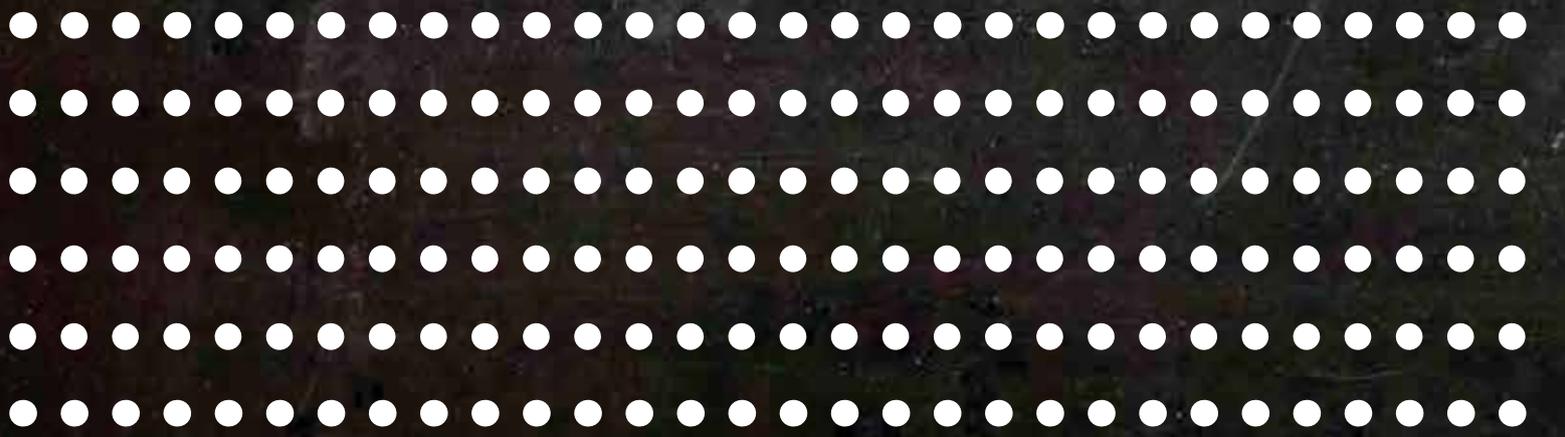
This brief highlights 12 key areas for corporate involvement in education. These areas, selected because of their potential to enable systemic change, are:

- Public-private partnership schools
- Remedial education
- School leadership
- Teacher training
- Technology in education
- Social integration in private schools under the Right to Education Act
- Equity in education for marginalised groups
- School Management Committees
- Early childhood education
- Co-scholastic learning
- Nutrition and health
- Vocational education in secondary schools



Part I

**A Strategic Approach
to Education CSR**



A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO EDUCATION CSR

.....

A Brief Overview of India's Education Landscape

The new CSR rules come at a time of both positive momentum and cause for concern with regard to India's school education system. Following the passage of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, India has made wide strides in ensuring universal access to education for children ages 6 to 14. More recently, the Government has committed to improving retention and attendance of girls by ensuring a separate girls' toilet in each government school. As progress is made in terms of access to schooling, however, ensuring student learning remains a challenge.

In a majority of India's schools, education quality remains unacceptably low. Despite increased outlays on education, the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2013 has reported a decline in learning levels. In Class 5, 47% of children are unable to read a Class 2-level text and 74% of children are unable to do simple division.⁴

Enrolment levels in early childhood and secondary education are cause for further concern. A majority of students enter school at a disadvantage due to lack of early childhood education. Further, they do not receive adequate skills and knowledge because they do not go to secondary school.

Given the scope of the problem, there is an urgent need to direct focus and resources to ensuring that all children receive a school education that prepares them to be responsible and productive citizens.

The Imperative for Companies

For corporations, promoting quality education is both a social imperative and a strategic one. The social imperative is that education leads to greater equality, better health outcomes, higher incomes, more active engagement in democracy, and more awareness of human rights. Indeed, studies have shown that investment in the education of girls

In Class 5, 47% of children are unable to read a Class 2-level text and 74% of children are unable to do simple division.

produces one of the highest social returns on investment possible because of the effects it has on the wellbeing of families and society.⁵ Through education CSR, corporations can help build a more equitable, engaged, peaceful and prosperous society.

⁴ Annual Status of Education Report 2013 (New Delhi: ASER Centre, 2013), 66.

⁵ See, for example, Ruth Levine et al., *Girls Count: A Global Investment and Action Agenda* (Washington DC: Centre for Global Development, 2009).

Companies also have a strategic imperative as the poor education system is delivering inadequately skilled employees to India's workforce. A 2012 PricewaterhouseCoopers global CEO survey found that 41% of CEOs in India had to cancel or delay a key strategic initiative because of talent-related constraints.⁶ Investing CSR funds in education will help companies address the need for skilled labour, thereby facilitating growth. The Brookings Institution, Accenture and the Global Business Coalition for Education have estimated that for every INR 100 invested in a child's education in India today, there is an INR 5,300 return to the employer at the start of that person's employment.⁷

Strategies for Maximising Impact

Given the finite resources that companies will spend on CSR and the massive needs of the education sector, adopting a strategic approach can help companies maximise the impact of their contribution. In an analysis of philanthropic giving in India, McKinsey & Co. found that donors thus far have focused support on interventions that directly target beneficiaries, such as providing books or supporting a chain of schools. And yet, systemic transformation requires a combination of direct and indirect interventions.⁸

The following five approaches will help companies maximise the impact of their CSR:

- **Design a focused strategy:** Focusing on a single issue or limited set of issues will enable companies to devote attention to developing and honing their approach. Companies should consider priority areas aligned to their mission, competencies and values so that CSR becomes tightly integrated into the business as a whole. Those who develop a focused strategy will have a better understanding of the challenge they are addressing as well as the potential interventions and partners in the space. They will also be able to assess and communicate their impact more readily.
- **Aim for systemic impact through policy optimisation and other indirect modes of intervention:** Even with the requirement for 2% spend under the Companies Act, the total outlay on CSR for school education will remain small compared to the corresponding government outlay, which for the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) alone was estimated at INR 47,159 crore in 2013 to 2014.⁹ Since there has been limited scope for innovation within the government system, corporates should approach CSR efforts as research and development (R&D) by piloting innovative models and gathering evidence of the impact. Successful innovations could then be brought to scale through policy changes.

For every INR 100 invested in a child's education, there is an INR 5,300 return to the employer at the start of that person's employment.

⁶ Rebecca Winthrop et al., *Investment in Global Education: A Strategic Imperative for Business* (Center for Universal Education at Brookings, Accenture and Global Business Coalition on Education, 2013), 15.

⁷ Ibid, 24-28. The study listed this calculation in US dollars, with \$1 investment producing a \$53 return.

⁸ Ramesh Mangaleswaran and Ramya Venkataraman, *Designing Philanthropy for Impact: Giving to the Biggest Gaps in India* (Chennai: McKinsey & Company, 2013), 20-23.

⁹ "Notes on Demands for Grants: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Demand No. 59, Department of School Education and Literacy," accessed October 12, 2014, <http://www.indiabudget.nic.in>

Companies can also create systemic impact by focusing on indirect modes of intervention such as institution-building. The Azim Premji Foundation, for example, has established Azim Premji University to prepare professionals for the education sector and other development work. Another indirect mode is investment in research, which will enable more effective non-governmental organisation (NGO) interventions and government policies. The table below by McKinsey & Co. shows modes of intervention on a spectrum from direct to indirect.

Table: Modes of Intervention

← Most direct
Most indirect →

Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D
Direct to beneficiaries ¹	Services for improving the impact from a direct input	Working with the institution that serves the beneficiary at scale	Optimising the policy or framework that governs the institution that serves the beneficiary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly running operations • Building physical infrastructure • Providing repeating commodities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of specialised services, potentially through specialist organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System capability-building • Supporting entrepreneurs/ making the market work • Driving public-private partnership models • Building an institution as a critical resource • Creating change agents • Driving community behaviour change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based advocacy • Policy changes, e.g. regulation that allows the market mechanism to work • Fundamental and sustained societal changes
Examples from primary education			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chain of schools by several foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remedial support to children lagging behind, by several foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Excellence Program by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, with partners and donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts to make the Right to Education (RTE) Act work well, by Centre for Civil Society

¹From a donor point of view, this could also refer to funding an NGO that is directly serving the beneficiaries

Source: Table reproduced from Mangaleswaran and Venkataraman, *Designing Philanthropy*, 22.

- **Collaborate with other stakeholders:** Collaboration will enable companies to use their resources more efficiently and to promote sharing of knowledge in ways that benefit the sector as a whole. Methods of collaboration include:

- a) **Collaborating with an NGO implementation partner:** For many companies, partnering with an NGO that has expertise in the issue and is committed to sustained engagement with the community will be more effective than operating a programme in isolation. Organisations like FICCI Socio Economic Development Foundation (SEDF) and other social sector advisory organisations can help companies in their selection of NGO partners.

To make these collaborations most effective, it is essential that companies actively recognise their NGO partners' expertise. As companies enter into partnerships with NGOs, they must be open not only to contributing their own funds and knowledge, but also to learning from their partners. Some NGOs, especially less well-established organisations, may be hesitant to tell a corporate funder if their idea is impractical or not aligned with field realities. Companies should avoid an imbalanced relationship by promoting a shared culture of open communication with their partners.

Companies should also establish a clear understanding with their NGO partners concerning the terms of the partnership and should promote the long-term sustainability of the NGOs—beyond the companies' involvement. As part of this goal, companies should work with their partners to understand administrative needs rather than placing arbitrary constraints on such spending. To promote NGO effectiveness and sustainability, companies should consider supporting capacity building for their partner NGOs, including hiring and developing talent.

- b) **Collaborating with other companies or grantmaking foundations:** By pooling resources with other funders, companies can achieve greater scale and impact than they can alone. Collaborations with grantmaking foundations also allow companies to leverage the expertise of a funder focused on a specific area. One such model of collaboration between funders is the secondary education international grantmaking programme launched by the Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education Coalition (PSIPSE), which includes the MacArthur Foundation, The MasterCard Foundation, Human Dignity Foundation, Intel Foundation and others.

Small businesses may find pooling resources particularly helpful in enabling them to undertake a larger project and reduce the overhead costs of designing and monitoring the intervention. A large business or NGO might lead the way in creating an endowment fund for a specific need area in education to which other businesses could contribute.

Collaboration will enable companies to use their resources more efficiently and to promote sharing of knowledge in ways that benefit the sector as a whole.

Contributing to a collaborative fund managed by a third party agency is another option for companies.

- **Take a long-term view:** Companies should set clear and realistic timeframes for their interventions, taking cognisance of the fact that improving education quality is likely to be a slow process, particularly when compared to building infrastructure. The complex and gradual nature of change in the education sector demands that, when crafting their CSR approaches, companies take a long-term view, while also setting out short and mid-term objectives.
- **Invest in monitoring and evaluation (M&E):** CSR budgets should include funding for monitoring and evaluation to assess inputs, activities, short-term outputs and long-term outcomes. Companies and their NGO partners should regularly evaluate their activities so they can refine their approach as needed based on learning from the projects and make decisions about when to scale-up a programme. Effective M&E will also inform companies' future CSR activities and enable CSR's R&D function.

Determining evaluation metrics for a project requires an understanding of the problem, the intended solution and contextual factors that may influence patterns of change. The most meaningful metrics for a project may not be the ones that are easiest to envision and track. Given these complexities, it is important that companies and NGOs jointly develop measures of success to ensure realistic metrics that are significant for achieving long-term impact.

Structures of Implementation

There are four main ways companies can conduct their CSR activities:

- **Funding:** The company funds an NGO, which acts as the implementing agency. NGOs and corporates can collaborate to initiate a new intervention or to scale-up an existing intervention with a track record of success.
- **Employee volunteering:** The company runs a programme for employees to volunteer with an NGO. It is important to note that employee volunteers' time may only count as a small percentage of the mandated CSR expenditure. Per the Ministry of Corporate Affairs notification of September 12, 2014, expenditure on employee salaries (whether employee volunteers or full-time CSR staff) and other administrative costs are capped at 5% of the total required CSR spend.¹⁰
- **Sharing expertise:** The company donates its time and expertise to build NGO capacity. Expertise will vary from company to company, but common areas include strategy development, marketing, technological capacity, data analysis, and administrative and management processes. This is distinct from employee volunteering because employees may volunteer in capacities that differ from their professional roles, whereas if they are sharing expertise, it will generally be in

¹⁰ Ministry of Corporate Affairs Notification, September 12, 2014.

line with their professional specialty. As noted above, expenditure on salaries of employees engaged in CSR activities must fall within the 5% cap.

- **Operating:** The company develops and implements its own programmes through its corporate foundation or CSR department.

Evidence shows that learning levels rather than school years, drive socio-economic returns on investment in education, including employability, productivity and growth.

For most companies, collaborating with NGO partners will be most effective from a resource and impact perspective. This partnership need not be limited to funding. For example, a company providing funding to an early childhood education NGO to operate its centres might also engage employees in volunteering programmes and share expertise in branding by helping the NGO design an awareness-building campaign around the need for early childhood education.

CSR for Quality Education

An overarching opportunity for CSR in education is to address the critical issue of quality in education. This shift in perspective—from ensuring that all children have access to schooling to ensuring that all children have access to quality learning—is aligned with the larger movement in education happening in India and internationally.

As the 2015 target date for the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) nears, the Learning Metrics Task Force is calling for a post-2015 development agenda that moves from the MDGs' focus on access to education to focus on *access plus learning*.¹¹ The Task Force reports that “evidence shows that learning levels, rather than years in school, are what drive many social and economic returns on investment in education, including employability, productivity and growth”. This understanding of the central importance of learning outcomes is reflected in the UNESCO's Education for All Goals and the UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative. In India, the Government of India's 12th Plan also addresses the need to focus on quality learning outcomes.

Achieving quality education for all students requires an outcomes-focused approach to education. Corporates can contribute to this shift by thinking beyond the provision of infrastructure and making student learning their ultimate focus.

The next section of the report highlights key opportunities for CSR in education, each with suggestions for company action and an example of corporate involvement in this area. While not an exhaustive list of areas within education or possible corporate activities, this section provides background on specific issues and ideas to enable innovative and strategic thinking to those charged with formulating CSR policies.

¹¹ The Learning Metrics Task Force is a project of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at Brookings Institution.

¹² *Towards Universal Learning: Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force* (UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution, 2013), 9.

Companies should consider using their CSR to address needs in both government and private school systems. 35% of elementary school students in India attend private schools,¹³ many of which serve low-income families. In urban areas, this percentage is often much higher. In rural areas, ASER 2012 found that private school enrolment has been rising at about 10% annually since 2009. If this trend continues, by 2018 half of students in rural areas will be attending private schools.¹⁴ Ensuring education quality for all will therefore require driving quality improvements in affordable private schools along with government schools. The opportunities highlighted in the next section apply to both.

We have prioritised our recommendations based on ones that a majority of companies could adopt. Therefore, in most cases, we have not detailed options for companies to operate their own programme.

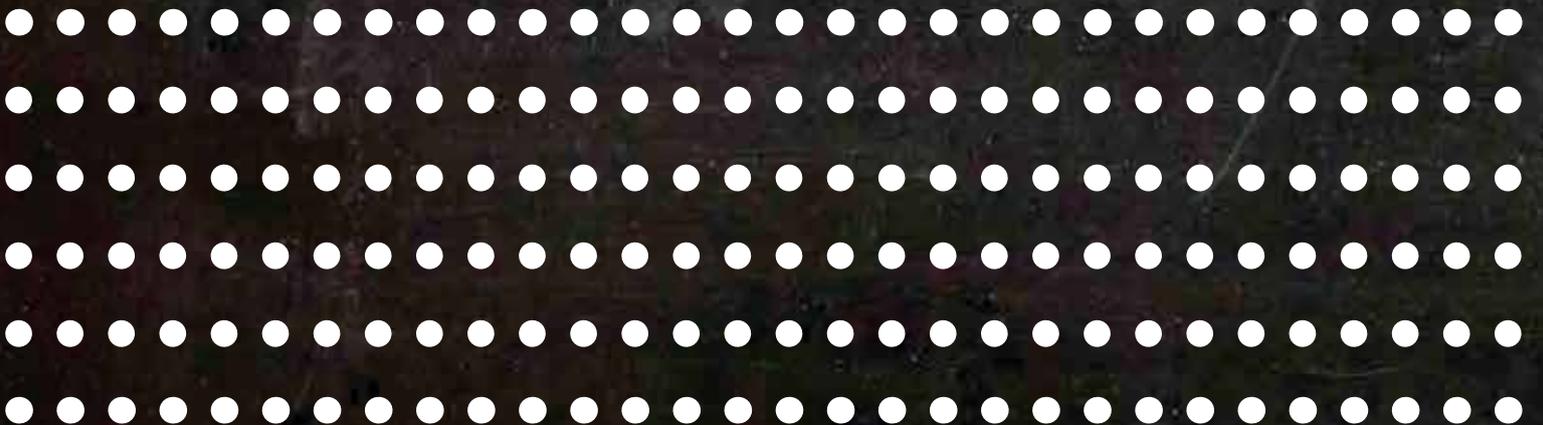
¹³ *DISE Flash Statistics 2012-2013* (New Delhi: National University of Educational Planning and Administration and Department of School Education and Literacy, 2013), 29.

¹⁴ *Annual Status of Education Report 2012* (New Delhi: ASER Centre, 2012), 47.



Part II

Key Opportunities for CSR in Education





AREA I: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

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The Issue

Public-private partnership (PPP) schools, which are publicly owned and privately operated, are a promising approach to bringing about innovation and improvement in the education system.¹⁵ PPP schools are an opportunity to introduce private innovation in the government system to improve the quality of education. In addition to providing high quality education for their own students, these schools can effect change at scale by disseminating their quality innovations. Further, parents' increased preference for enrolling their children in private schools has resulted in excess infrastructure in government schools, particularly in urban areas. PPP schools would likely bring children back into the government system.

Some states and localities have developed frameworks to support PPP, and there is evidence of positive impact. For example, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) has created

¹⁵ There are other approaches to public-private partnerships in education but this report focuses on the school management PPP model, where a private party has full control over school operations, because it provides the school operator the greatest autonomy and thus capacity to innovate, and because most PPP laws are being developed around this model.

a framework to enable private operators to manage schools in under-utilised government school buildings. The MCGM reimburses private operators at a cost-per-child rate that is based on the aid provided to private-aided schools. The policy is based on the example of NGOs that were operating PPP schools and outperforming government-run schools.¹⁶

A newly formed organisation, The Education Alliance, is now working to build the ecosystem for public-private partnerships in school education by working with governments to design and implement PPP policies, including quality assurance mechanisms, and by building the ecosystem of non-profit PPP operators.

The PPP model provides a way for corporates to maximise the impact of their CSR spending by pooling their funds with government resources. Furthermore, PPP schools can demonstrate high quality schooling for low-income children at a similar cost per child as government schools, resulting in replicable models of achieving quality.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other companies to create an endowment fund for PPP operators. By providing gap funding and working capital, necessary due to the likely delay in government reimbursement, this endowment would help draw new operators into the market. In the United States, the New Schools Ventures Fund (NSVF) supports a number of private operators and charter management organisations with funding raised from individuals and institutions.
Operating + funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with Government and NGOs to operate schools under a PPP model. Under this approach, the company would provide funding and administrative support in line with its core competencies, while the NGO with education expertise would have primary responsibility for the school’s faculty and curriculum. • Companies who are already operating or supporting non-PPP schools could consider transitioning these schools to a PPP model.

Example

Satya Bharti School Program is an initiative of the Bharti Foundation to provide high quality education to disadvantaged children, with a particular focus on rural areas. The initiative is providing education to more than 41,000 children across 254 Satya Bharti Schools in six states in 2014. In Punjab and Rajasthan, Satya Bharti Schools are run in partnership with the Government, where the Foundation is responsible for all aspects of the schools’ operations including staffing, curriculum and non-academic activities. Expenses are shared between Bharti Foundation and the Government. In Rajasthan, the Government provides the infrastructure and the Bharti Foundation covers the operational cost. In Punjab, the Government and the Bharti

¹⁶ *Making the Grade: Improving Mumbai’s Public Schools* (Mumbai: Dasra, 2010).

Foundation each provide 50% of the capital expenditure, and the Government contributes 70% of the operational expenditure.

Through the Satya Bharti Schools Program, Bharti Foundation and its supporters aim to promote the academic and holistic development of children, with particular attention to equitable opportunities for girls and students from marginalised communities. Bharti is now building on the initiative's success and scaling its impact by using learning and best practices from the Satya Bharti Schools to support quality improvements in government schools. The Foundation has, for example, developed a Quality Support Model (QSM) with the Governments of Punjab and Haryana to build capacity of government teachers.

Thermax Social Initiative Foundation (TSIF), the CSR arm of Thermax Group, also supports quality education through a PPP model. TSIF has adopted six municipal schools in collaboration with their knowledge partner, the Akanksha Foundation. They have signed a 30-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) School Board and the Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) School Board for operation of these schools. The PMC and PCMC provide the infrastructure, books and stationery, mid-day meal and school uniforms, while TSIF is responsible for day-to-day administration and teacher salaries. The Akanksha Foundation is responsible for educational leadership, including teacher training and curriculum development.

TSIF and Akanksha's PPP schools provide quality education to children from low-income families. Akanksha, which conducts the national ASSET test to monitor student's progress, has found that the 35 to 40 percent of students who were below the national average in the first year were on par with the national average by the second year.¹⁷ In 2008, the Educational Quality Foundation of India selected one of the TSIF and Akanksha model schools among all government schools as the winner of the "Whole School Award."¹⁸

¹⁷ "Thermax Social Initiative Foundation," *Dasra.org*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*



AREA 2: REMEDIAL LEARNING

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The Issue

Remedial learning is a critical task for India's schools given how many students are behind grade level benchmarks. As noted earlier, the ASER Report finds 47% of children in Class 5 are unable to read a Class 2-level text, and 74% of those children are unable to do simple division. Each year's curriculum relies on mastery of the preceding year's content and skills, so without proper remediation, these students fall further behind as they proceed through school. For example, students who have not mastered fundamental literacy skills in the early years of schooling will face challenges as they progress to higher classes where content is increasingly taught through reading. Remedial programmes can help get these students back on track in their learning.

According to research by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), "interventions that direct instruction toward children's actual learning levels are the most consistently effective at improving learning outcomes, and are also very cost-effective".¹⁹ This finding underscores the critical importance of remedial education programmes. Interventions that focus on remedial learning benefit individual students and call necessary attention to the systemic problem of

¹⁹ "Student Learning," JPAL, accessed September 29, 2014, <http://www.povertyactionlab.org/policy-lessons/education/student-learning#more>.

poor learning outcomes; identifying students for remediation requires attention to class-specific targets and monitoring individual student progress.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to run remedial education programmes during school, after school or during summer holidays.
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an employee volunteering initiative in which employees provide additional, personalised support to students in remedial programmes.

Example

Pratham is the largest NGO working to provide quality education to underprivileged children in India. Its flagship programme, Read India, is targeted at improving the reading, writing and basic arithmetic skills of students ages 3 to 14. In rural areas, Pratham provides high intensity, short duration learning camps for students who are unable to read or do basic arithmetic at the expected level for their class. Through this programme, Pratham directly reached 4.5 lakh children across 15 states in 2013 to 14. In cities, Pratham's Urban Programme reached 3.5 lakh children across 10 states.

In addition to directly improving children's learning levels, Pratham partners with state governments to influence teaching-learning practices in government schools and increase community participation. In the year 2013-14, Pratham partnered with 9 State Governments to help them implement learning improvement programmes, which reached an additional 40 lakh children.

Pratham receives support from ITC Ltd. in 9 states, from Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, from HCLT Foundation in Delhi and from Tata Steel in Jharkhand among others.



AREA 3: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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The Issue

Research shows that principals account for 25% of a school's impact on student achievement.²⁰ Effective school principals are visionaries and change-makers in their schools. As Kenneth Leithwood et al. write in *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*, "There are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. Many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst".²¹

At present, however, India's schools lack leadership; only 55% of primary schools with enrolment of 150 or more and upper primary schools with enrolment of 100 or more have a principal.²² Furthermore, there is inadequate pre-service and in-service training for school principals despite the essential nature of these programmes in building strong leadership for India's schools.

²⁰ *Playmakers: How Great Principals Build and Lead Great Teams of Teachers* (New York: New Leaders, 2012), 5.

²¹ Kenneth Leithwood et al., *How Leadership Influences Student Learning* (New York: The Wallace Foundation, 2004), 5.

²² *DISE Flash Statistics 2012-2013*, 7.

Policymakers are increasingly responding to this need. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee on the Universalisation of Secondary Education (2005) recommended six months of professional training for school heads, while the working group report under the 12th Five Year Plan called for continuous training of school leaders. The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) has also created a National Centre for School Leadership (NCSL), which has four primary activities: curriculum development for current and prospective school leaders, capacity building of school leaders, networking and institution building around school leadership development and research on school leadership.

As the Government prepares to strengthen school leadership training programmes, now is the time for experimentation in effective delivery of such training. CSR funding can be used for R&D, with the possibility of effective interventions being brought to scale by the Government. Given that many companies invest in internal leadership development, this may be a synergistic area on which to focus. There is also a need to improve training for education functionaries above principals (e.g., block resource coordinators and cluster resource coordinators) in instruction and management processes.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to carry out school leadership training. For example, a company could fund an NGO to provide training for school leaders across a given district.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on corporate knowledge of management to contribute to curriculum for education functionaries such as block resource coordinators and cluster resource coordinators.

Example

The Piramal Foundation for Educational Leadership (PFEL) and Kaivalya Education Foundation aim to train a new generation of education leaders. PFEL, which operates in Rajasthan, and Kaivalya, which operates in Gujarat and Maharashtra, build leadership capacity for headmasters and block and district officials. The Principal Leadership Development Program, a three-year in-service programme, uses a combination of workshops, learning resources and field support to change the mindsets of headmasters and build their leadership and instructional skills. The programme has trained over 1,500 headmasters and demonstrated improvement in headmaster competencies and student learning.²³

To further its work, PFEL established the Piramal School of Leadership (PSL) in Bagar, Jhunjhunu District, Rajasthan in 2013. PSL plans to offer masters’ degrees in the areas of education leadership, district education management, coaching for school improvement, instructional design, education assessment and policy design.

A fellowship programme—known as the Piramal Fellowship in Rajasthan and as the Gandhi Fellowship in Gujarat and Maharashtra—supports the PLDP by assigning recent university

²³ “Piramal Foundation for Education Leadership,” accessed July 20, 2014, <http://www.dasra.org>.

graduates to work with headmasters in bringing about change in their schools. In addition to enabling school improvement, the fellowship functions as a youth leadership development programme, aimed at building the next generation of leaders committed to social change.

PFEL is an initiative of the Piramal Foundation and Kaivalya is supported by Piramal, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, UNICEF and USAID.



AREA 4: TEACHER TRAINING

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The Issue

Research shows that teachers are the most important factor in the success of an education system.²⁴ Robust pre-service and in-service training programmes are critical for improvement of the teacher preparation system in India. The country faces a shortage of 12 lakh teachers.²⁵ The quality of pre-service training is a significant challenge with only 2.8% of graduates able to pass the Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) for teaching in higher classes in 2014.²⁶ In addition, the majority of teachers (78% of elementary teachers in 2013-2014) do not receiving in-service training.²⁷

Companies may find teacher training a synergistic area for involvement given their own commitment to ongoing professional development. Corporate involvement could also bring

²⁴ Byron Auguste, Paul Kihn and Matt Miller, *Closing the Talent Gap: Attracting and Retaining Top-Third Graduates to Careers in Teaching*, 2010 (McKinsey & Company, 2010), 5.

²⁵ Namita Kohli, "Not in the class: A story of India's missing teachers," *Hindustan Times*, September 18, 2014.

²⁶ "Only 2.8% pass CTET for higher classes," *The Times of India*, October 9, 2014.

²⁷ *DISE Flash Statistics 2013-2014* (New Delhi: National University of Educational Planning and Administration, and Department of School Education and Literacy, 2014), 26.

recognition to the critical importance of teachers, bringing greater dignity to a profession that is often not accorded the respect it deserves.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to carry out in-service teacher training, which can both remediate gaps in teachers’ pre-service education and provide for continued growth across teachers’ professional lifecycles. Within in-service training, programmes may focus on areas such as content knowledge, pedagogical practice or personal development. A financial services company might support a programme to improve teachers’ ability to teach mathematical concepts to their students, while an ICT company could focus on teachers’ readiness to use online content in their teaching. In-service training programmes can also be delivered in a variety of formats, from self-paced online content to ongoing workshops in schools to intensive programmes during the summer holiday. Programmes may work with all teachers in a given set of schools, teachers struggling in a particular area or teachers identified as potential agents of transformation. STIR Education, for example, identifies teacher changemakers and brings them together to initiate change in their own schools and in the broader ecosystem. • Establish and fund a PPP for pre-service teacher training or teacher educator training. Under this model, a corporate and its NGO partner would sign an agreement with a State Government to implement training of pre-service teachers or teacher educators. The NGO would implement the programme, while the corporate would subsidise costs not covered by the Government. The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, for example, funds Humana People to People India to lead teacher training in District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and Government Elementary Teacher Training Institutes (GETTIs) in Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an initiative for employee volunteers to help develop subject matter knowledge of secondary school teachers in high need areas, including English as well as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on corporate expertise in marketing to design and implement an awareness-building campaign to highlight the importance of teachers and present teaching as an aspirational profession. The campaign could be run in partnership with NGOs that work in the field of teacher education. • Share expertise in human capital development with teacher educators. Corporate trainers could build the capacity of teacher educators in skills and practices that cut across sectors, while leaving education-specific knowledge to the faculty of teacher education institutes.

Example

Muktangan integrates a teacher training programme into the seven PPP schools it runs in partnership with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. Muktangan's approach is "education for the community by the community", whereby teachers, primarily women, are recruited from the same educationally marginalised communities that the schools serve. The school-based training programme integrates theoretical and practical components in line with the recommendations of the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) and Justice Verma Commission on Teacher Education. Teacher educators train teachers through the same active learning approaches they expect teachers to use with students.

The initiative has grown from a one-year programme to a three-year programme. The first year is equivalent to year one of the Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) while the subsequent two years provide subject matter pedagogy through a residency model. Teacher education faculty also facilitate ongoing training for all Muktangan teachers, including daily reflective planning sessions. They feed the lessons they learn from this in-service teacher training back into the pre-service curriculum.

Launched in 2003 with seven teachers, Muktangan's teacher education programme has now trained more than 550 teachers. The organisation also creates systemic impact through its teacher educators, who serve as resources for Government and other NGOs. Muktangan has partnered with UNICEF and the Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to conduct workshops for master trainers, who then train thousands of teachers across Maharashtra. Muktangan has also trained representatives from other NGOs as well as D.Ed. students and faculty in Mumbai colleges.

Muktangan is supported primarily by the Mumbai-based Paragon Charitable Trust.



AREA 5: TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

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The Issue

India's robust ecosystem for information and computer technology can be harnessed to spur improvement in education. Technology enables changes in pedagogy such as personalised learning and the development of more interactive approaches. It also provides opportunities for improvement in teacher training, administrative processes and accountability mechanisms. Further, the Internet makes it easier to share best practices and bring successful programmes to a wider audience.

To realise this potential, there is a need for improvements both in infrastructure—hardware and Internet connectivity—and in the capacity of teachers, school leaders and others to use technology for improvement in education quality. Developments should be carried out along both these parameters simultaneously, as programmes that deliver infrastructure paired with support for technological integration are likely to have a greater impact.

Role for CSR

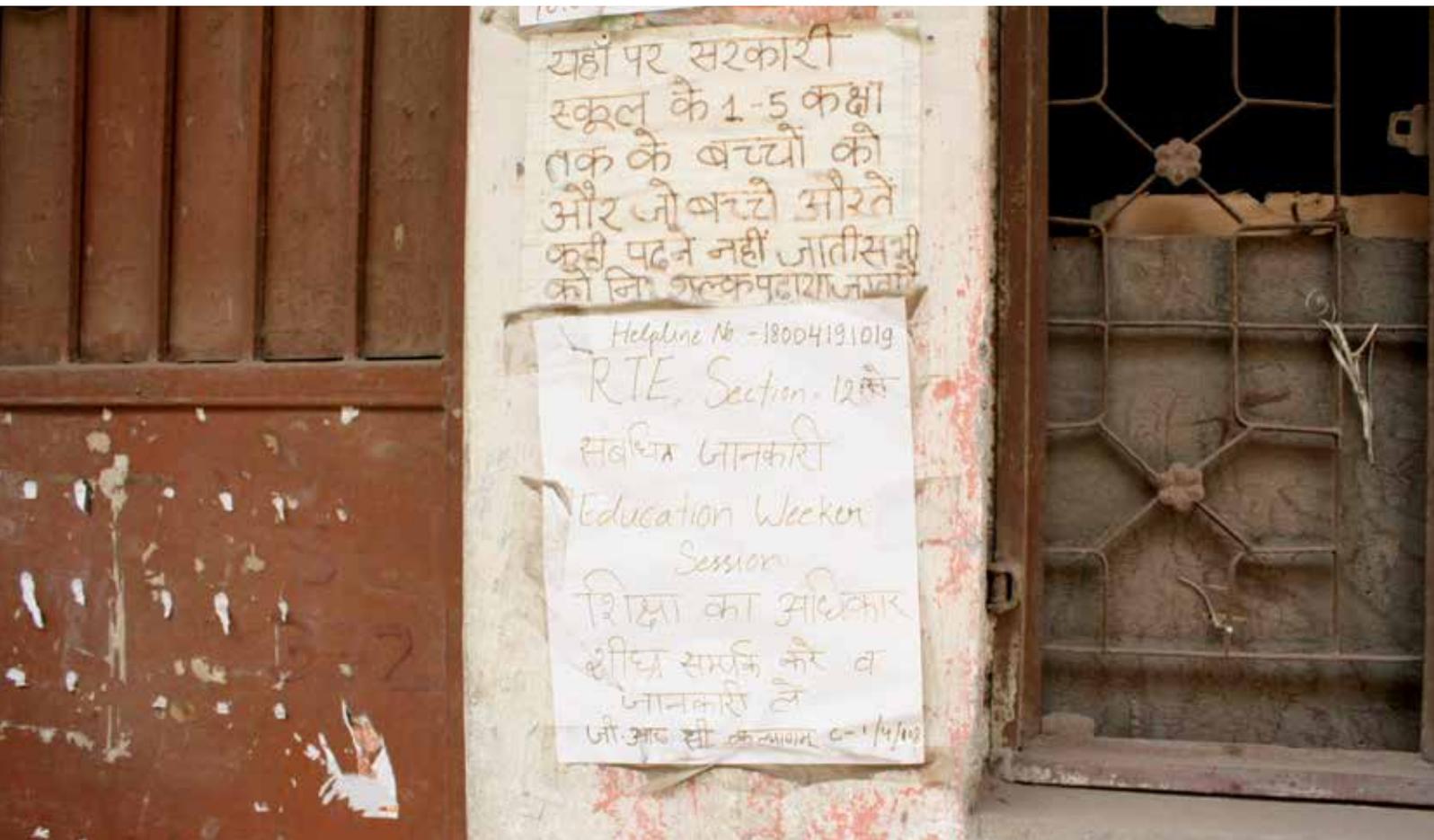
Approaches	Opportunities
Funding + sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable pedagogical innovations, including personalised and activity-based learning, by bringing technology into schools in partnership with implementation experts. Under this model, companies fund hardware or Internet connectivity in schools and partner with an NGO to build teachers' capacity for technological innovation. For example, Dell donates devices and provides grant funding to NGOs in support of a range of education initiatives, from visual learning programmes for students with disabilities to new assessment tools for teachers. A Dell representative is responsible for the deployment and maintenance of the technology, and Dell team members are engaged as volunteers with the NGOs.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share technical expertise with education organisations, with the aim of helping them achieve greater scale, efficiency and transparency. Education NGOs are increasingly interested in using technology to reach wider audiences; while these NGOs have content expertise, many lack technical capacity. Similarly, companies can support schools and school systems that are interested in using technology to improve governance and administrative processes. A company might, for example, donate their employees' time to help a district develop its data collection, analysis and reporting systems.

Example

Nokia Devices, with Pearson Foundation as content partner and EZVidya Pvt. Ltd. as implementation partner, runs BridgeIT India, a programme to improve teaching quality. The aim is for teachers to adopt a more engaging and student-centred approach, so that they are able to develop students' twenty-first-century thinking skills and English language skills. BridgeIT provides teachers and trainers with a Nokia mobile phone through which they can download curriculum-aligned videos and other educational resources. Teachers connect these phones to a television or projector to share content with their class. BridgeIT has been endorsed by the education boards of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, and Nokia and its partners have implemented the programme in about 160 schools in these states.

Programme evaluation includes teacher surveys on the use of technology, pre- and post-intervention classroom observation, and pre- and post-intervention student assessments. The programme reports that over the course of its first year, teachers used an average of 158 digital media activities with significant behavioural changes on the part of teachers and improvements in student performance.²⁸

²⁸ "What is BridgeIT?", *Bridge IT*, accessed July 28, 2014, <http://www.bridge-it.in/wordpress>



AREA 6: SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS UNDER RTE

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The Issue

Section 12 (1)(c) of RTE provides for 25% reservation of seats in non-minority unaided private schools for students from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections of society. This policy has the potential to promote greater equity and inclusion in education and opens the door to quality private schools for students who otherwise would not have such education opportunities.

Effective implementation of the 25% reservation requires attention to social integration, in particular ensuring that disadvantaged students have the resources and support they need to participate fully in school. Concerns about additional costs keep some economically weaker section (EWS) families from applying to private schools. Parents who do ultimately enrol their children often struggle to cover out-of-pocket expenses such as books, uniforms and tuitions, much less fund their children's participation in extracurricular activities.

Scholarships have traditionally been a focus of corporate CSR programmes. By investing in social integration programmes in support of the 25% clause, corporates can leverage their funding since Government covers part of the cost of children’s education. Corporate funding for social integration could also play a role in improving private schools’ readiness for admission.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to schools to support students admitted under the RTE 25% clause so they can participate fully in the academic and extracurricular life of the school. While RTE enables disadvantaged students’ admission to private schools, corporates can play a critical role in creating the link between admission and inclusion. Specifically, funding is needed to cover the additional expenses required to fully integrate disadvantaged students into their new schools. These expenses include costs for remedial support and for materials and activities that are not included in tuition, such as field trips and extracurricular programmes. The school may also need to build its own capacity for social integration, for example, by training teachers in inclusive education and appointing a designated resource person at the school for disadvantaged students and their families.
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a programme for employees to mentor students admitted to private schools under the RTE 25% clause.

Example

Ahlcon International School in Delhi began admission of EWS students in 2006 and currently has about 250 children studying under the EWS category. The school promotes social inclusion through a range of practices including training teachers to teach in diverse classrooms and educating fee-paying students to be sensitive to diversity and the importance of inclusion. Additionally, Ahlcon works with vendors to reduce the expenses EWS students incur for requirements such as books and uniforms and for activities such as field trips and coaching. The school serves mid-day meals to all students until Class 2 to promote unity and provides extra academic support to EWS students as needed, in recognition of the fact that these students may not receive this support outside of school. Ahlcon offers parent-teacher meetings in Hindi for EWS parents and intends to offer English classes for interested parents to empower families as a whole.

Social integration programmes of this nature are promising interventions for companies to support.



AREA 7: EQUITY IN EDUCATION FOR MARGINALISED GROUPS

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The Issue

An inclusive education system that provides equitable opportunities across lines of social differences, including gender, caste, religion and disability, is essential to building a more inclusive and equitable society. Significant challenges remain to achieve equity in education for traditionally marginalised groups. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme puts special focus on girls' education and children with special needs, but disparities persist.

Educate Girls has documented that in Rajasthan only 1 out of 2 women can read or write, 40% of girls leave school before they reach Class 5, and only 1 out of every 100 girls reaches Class 12.²⁹ With regard to children with disabilities, the World Bank has reported that the percentage of disabled children not enrolled in school in India is around five and a half times the rate of the

²⁹ "What We Do," *Educate Girls*, accessed May 7, 2014, <http://www.educategirls.in/index.php/what-we-do>.

general population.³⁰ At the same time, private philanthropic support for education for children with disabilities is very low.³¹

Companies can improve equity in education by contributing to interventions that directly support marginalised groups as well as by promoting inclusion through other programmes. The provision and maintenance of separate girls’ toilets, for example, could improve retention and attendance,³² while other interventions will be necessary to capitalise on these positive trends and improve learning.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO that is working to improve learning for historically marginalised groups. • Provide funding for building and maintaining infrastructure that promotes greater equity, such as separate girls’ toilets or accessible buildings for students with physical disabilities.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on corporate expertise in marketing to run an awareness-building campaign focused on equity in education.

Example

The Nanhi Kali programme, initiated by the K.C. Mahindra Trust, aims to ensure that girls from economically disadvantaged families receive 10 years of quality education. The programme, run in partnership with the Hyderabad-based Naandi Foundation, provides academic and material support to girls. Academic Support Centres are the core of the programme, with girls receiving up to two hours of additional after-school instruction in Maths, Language and Science. Material support includes school uniforms, bags, shoes and socks. The programme also works with families and communities to build support for girls to stay in school. Nanhi Kali has reached over 100,000 girls across nine states in India. It reports a dropout rate of less than 10% in its project areas and more than a 20% increase in learning levels.³³

³⁰ *People with Disabilities in India: From Commitments to Outcomes* (World Bank, 2007), xii.

³¹ Mangaleswaran and Venkataraman, *Designing Philanthropy*, 17.

³² Richard Murnane and Alejandro Ganimian’s meta-analysis shows that equipping schools with toilets improves enrolment and retention, particularly for girls. Source: Richard Murnane and Alejandro Ganimia, *Improving Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries: Lessons from Rigorous Evaluations*, (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2014), 4-5.

³³ “What Makes Mahindra’s Nanhi Kali Program So Successful,” *Samhita*, accessed October 10, 2014, <http://samhita.org/nanhi-kali/>.



AREA 8: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

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The Issue

Section 21 of the Right to Education Act mandates the formation of School Management Committees (SMCs) in all government-run or aided schools. Parents or guardians are to make up 75% of the committee, with proportional representation for disadvantaged groups and 50% representation by women. SMCs are responsible for monitoring school functioning and finances and for creating School Development Plans (SDPs) to address issues such as infrastructure and academic achievement. SMCs are a promising tool for improving governance of schools because they bolster community engagement in schools and schools' accountability to the community. Implementation of SMCs, however, remains weak.

SMC capacity building is one way for corporates to capitalise on an existing opportunity to improve community engagement and school accountability. By contributing funding to capacity building, corporates can enable effective implementation of SMCs and develop knowledge of best practices, which can then be brought to scale.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO engaged in SMC capacity building.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies with technical expertise could collaborate with NGOs to develop mobile-based applications for SMC members to use in school monitoring, enabling more effective data capture and analysis.

Example

Prajayatna works to improve education governance and quality by promoting community ownership of schools. Prajayatna works in four states—Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh—to strengthen local governance capacity at a range of levels. Prajayatna establishes and strengthens SMCs by educating community members about the need for and purposes of SMCs and the roles and responsibilities of their members. They begin by collecting extensive school-level data on infrastructure, student retention and learning, and teacher shortages, and use this information as the basis for a village-level meeting. They then support SMC members in the creation and implementation of School Development Plans and strengthen linkages between SMCs and local governance institutions. These linkages enable SMCs to advocate for change more effectively.

The initiative is funded by the Hewlett Foundation, Dalyan Foundation, Ernst & Young Foundation and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.



AREA 9: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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The Issue

Early childhood education, which develops children's cognitive and socio-emotional skills, lays a critical foundation for development across a student's lifespan. Indeed, studies suggest that early experiences and opportunities have an immense impact on later outcomes since the brain is particularly malleable in the early years of life. Quality early childhood education programmes have significant positive effects on later learning outcomes.³⁴

Ground realities, however, do not reflect this scientific understanding, with the majority of children lacking access to quality programmes. Although the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is the largest early childhood care programme in the world, its education

³⁴ Shari Krishnaratne, Howard White and Ella Carpenter, *Quality Education for All Children? What Works in Education in Developing Countries* (New Delhi: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), 2013), 16-18 and Halil Dunder et al., *Student Learning in South Asia: Challenges, Opportunities and Policy Priorities* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2014), 163-168.

component is limited and weak. ICDS is under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, rather than the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The lack of quality opportunities for children from low-income families leads to a significant achievement gap between high-income and low-income students. This gap is established by the time students enter primary school and persists through later learning. Given that the Right to Education Act only covers children beginning at the age of six, early childhood education is an area that could particularly benefit from private attention.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to run an early childhood education and care programme. • Fund an NGO to contribute towards strengthening the early childhood programmes of ICDS, the largest provider of early childhood services. The Pune-based Centre for Learning Resources, for example, conducts in-service training for anganwadi workers, trains teacher educators and develops curriculum and teaching-learning materials.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on corporate expertise in marketing to run a research and awareness-building campaign around the importance of early childhood education.

Example

Mumbai Mobile Creches supports the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of infants and young children living at construction sites. The construction industry is the largest employer of migrant labourers in India, and education can be a challenge for these families, as parents move job sites frequently. Access to local schools is often difficult for parents due to administrative, logistical or linguistic reasons. As a result, children who migrate with their parents frequently do not attend school.

Mumbai Mobile Creches partners with the construction industry to create day care centres at construction sites. Children in the age group of 0 to 3 years are part of the creche section, which focuses on stimulation. Children between the ages of 3 to 5 years attend the pre-primary (balwadi) section that focuses on school preparedness and skill development. Mumbai Mobile Creches also assists children to enroll in schools and provides after school support to children from ages 6 to 14 to ensure they stay in school. Across all ages, Mumbai Mobile Creches nurtures children’s healthy development through nutrition programmes and medical check-ups.

Independent Mobile Creches agencies also operate in Delhi and Pune. Together, the three agencies have served over 7.5 lakh children. The Mobile Creches organisations also train childcare workers and government functionaries involved in early childhood education and advocate for systemic improvement in early childhood education and care.



AREA 10: CO-SCHOLASTIC LEARNING

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The Issue

The arts, athletics, and other non-academic activities are increasingly understood as essential to children's development and lifelong success as these subjects promote creativity, socio-emotional skills, cultural awareness, and physical wellbeing. The 2005 National Curriculum Framework advocates for a more robust approach to arts and physical or health education, but many schools lack this programming.

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fund an NGO to run co-scholastic programmes.
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer employees the opportunity to volunteer in co-scholastic programmes, according to their interest and skills.

Example

Through a programme that incorporates sports, mentoring and other activities, Magic Bus works to equip children and young people with the essential skills and knowledge they need to break the cycle of poverty and become active members of their communities. The curriculum targets five key areas—right to play, formal education, gender, health and socio-emotional learning. Magic Bus also trains community leaders to mentor children through its programme. A 2012 study of Magic Bus found that the programme had positively impacted student attendance and retention.³⁵

Magic Bus is funded by BMW Foundation, Barclays Spaces for Sports and Reliance Foundation among others.

³⁵ “Magic Bus Impact,” *Magic Bus*, accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.magicbus.org/impact>.



AREA II: NUTRITION AND HEALTH

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The Issue

Malnutrition is a pressing issue in India, with UNICEF estimating that 47% of children are underweight.³⁶ The Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the world's largest school feeding programme, is a direct response to this challenge. Originally called the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, the programme aims to improve nutritional levels, enrolment, retention and attendance among children. The scheme also promises to improve children's learning experience by contributing to a positive school environment and improving students' ability to focus.

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme, when delivered effectively, has shown evidence of positive impact. In many places, however, the scheme is plagued by implementation challenges. A study by Accountability Initiative found that, in Uttar Pradesh, the amount of food given is often significantly below the requirements in the guidelines, and that schools in Bihar often go months

³⁶ "Nutrition," UNICEF, accessed July 30, 2014, http://www.unicef.org/india/children_2356.htm.

without serving meals to students.³⁷ Further, there are instances of students falling ill from unhygienic or tainted food, illustrated by the tragedy of 23 students dying in Bihar in July, 2013 after consuming a poisonous mid-day meal at school.

Companies can contribute to student’s healthy development by leveraging their CSR to support effective implementation of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. CSR support for nutrition programmes is all the more important given the low supply of private philanthropy grants in this high demand area.³⁸

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to implement the Mid-Day Meal programme in a given region through a PPP.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on corporate knowledge of supply chain delivery processes to develop improvements in management and monitoring processes. These processes could be piloted within a district in partnership with an NGO.

Example

Akshaya Patra implements the Mid-Day Meal Scheme through partnerships with State Governments. Under this public-private partnership model, Akshaya Patra provides mid-day meals to approximately 14 lakh children across 10 states every day. The Government typically contributes 45% to 50% of the cost in the form of grain and cash subsidies, and the remaining cost for Akshaya Patra is approximately INR 750 per child annually. The organisation primarily prepares meals in centralised kitchens, and it has been recognised for its efficiency in operations and standards of hygiene and quality.³⁹ A 2006 A.C. Nielsen study of Akshaya Patra’s programme found that it led to increases in enrolment and attendance, reduction in dropout rates and improvements in student academic performance and nutrition. Data was most specific for enrolment and attendance: enrolment in Class 1 increased by 23.3% during the first year of the programme, while attendance increased by 11.67% for the same period.⁴⁰

Akshaya Patra’s corporate supporters include Cisco, Jindal Steel and Infosys.

³⁷ Yamini Aiyar, “Meal Scheme in ‘capability trap,’” *Livemint*, February 21, 2013.

³⁸ Mangaleswaran and Venkataraman, *Designing Philanthropy*, 16-17.

³⁹ “Akshaya Patra Foundation,” accessed July 20, 2014, <http://www.dasra.org>.

⁴⁰ “A.C. Nielsen Study,” *Akshaya Patra*, accessed May 7, 2014, <http://www.akshayapatra.org/ac-nielson-case-study>.



AREA 12: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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The Issue

Many graduates today face trouble securing employment, while employers struggle to find adequately skilled employees. Aspiring Minds, an employability solutions company, has reported that nearly 47% of Indian graduates in 2013 were unemployable in any sector of the knowledge economy due to a lack of English language and cognitive skills.⁴¹

Quality vocational programming in secondary schools can help to bridge the gap between completion of a degree and attainment of a career. These programmes can also help to stem dropouts by providing students and families more incentives to continue schooling at the secondary and higher secondary level, where the combined gross enrolment ratio (GER) is currently at about 54%.⁴² Vocational education is also a natural area for CSR, given that it

⁴¹ *Aspiring Minds National Employability Report – Graduates Annual Report 2013* (Aspiring Minds, 2013), 7.

⁴² *SEMIS Flash Statistics 2012-2013* (New Delhi: National University of Educational Planning and Administration, 2013), 30.

responds to industry’s own needs and draws on industry’s expertise.

The revised scheme for the “Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education” (March 2014) provides for offering vocational education in government schools beginning in Class IX, and incentivising aided and private schools to include vocational education in their curriculum. Effective implementation of the scheme will require developing appropriate curriculum, building capacity of teachers and providing students with practical training opportunities.⁴³

Role for CSR

Approaches	Opportunities
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund an NGO to support the implementation of vocational education in government secondary schools or private secondary schools serving low-income students.
Employee volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an employee volunteering initiative where employees mentor students on the transition from school to work.
Sharing expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As suggested by the revised scheme for the “Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education”, corporates could: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to the development of vocational curriculum for secondary schools. ▪ Train teachers in vocational curriculum and provide resource persons to serve as guest faculty in vocational courses. ▪ Provide practical training opportunities for students in vocational courses.

Example

The Wadhvani Foundation has partnered with the State Governments in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand to incorporate vocational education into secondary schools. Participating schools include courses in areas such as retail, information technology, security, automotive servicing and tourism as an integral part of their curriculum. Curriculum for these courses is aligned to the National Skills Qualification Framework, which defines competency standards across the spectrum of vocational training.

The Wadhvani Foundation serves as programme manager and knowledge partner to the Governments, contributing to: selection of schools; selection of vocational courses to provide within each school; curriculum development; teacher recruitment; training education officials, principals and teachers; and monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The foundation’s overall approach is to build the government’s capacity to implement the programme on its own. The programme, which began in Haryana in 2012, now serves over 25,000 students in 240 government schools across 21 districts in the state, and has expanded to Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand as well.

⁴³ Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education & Literacy, “Revised Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education,” March 12, 2014.

CONCLUSION



India's future will be significantly shaped by the country's ability to deliver quality education to its 35 crore school-age children.⁴⁴ Education has the power to open up new opportunities for each of these children, and to enable greater equity, economic growth, civic engagement, health and overall wellbeing for the country. Corporate India has a vital role to play in realising this vision.

To bring about this change in education, companies need to approach CSR with a focus on student learning. A range of interventions are necessary for addressing the crisis in education quality. This report has pointed to opportunities in 12 key areas. No matter how companies choose to focus their education CSR, quality learning outcomes for students should be at the centre of their policies.

By employing CSR to enable innovation, companies can play a catalytic role in the sector, making an impact that exceeds the amount they spend. Designing a focused strategy, taking a systemic view, leveraging the key competencies of the business, collaborating with other stakeholders, taking a long-term view and refining the approach through monitoring and evaluation will enable companies to drive innovation and maximise their impact.

While these underlying principles serve as a guideline for companies to contribute effectively, there is no one formula for success. Instead, CSR is ultimately an opportunity for creativity and leadership on the part of companies and their partners as well as an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding—through dialogue, strategic planning, and action—about how best to ensure learning for all of India's students.

⁴⁴ This is the number of children ages 4 to 17 as per Census 2011.

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Page 24: Akanksha Foundation

Page 27: Educational Initiatives

Page 29: INDUS ACTION

Page 31: Nanhi Kali

Page 33: Saajha

Page 35: Mumbai Mobile Creches

Page 37: Magic Bus

Page 39: Akshaya Patra

Page 41: Wadhvani Foundation

ABOUT US

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About Central Square Foundation

Central Square Foundation (CSF) is a venture philanthropy fund and policy think tank focused on improving school education and learning outcomes of children from low-income communities in India. Our work involves supporting social entrepreneurs, building networks towards common education goals and developing insights for informing public policy.

In specific, we support initiatives in four areas-

- Accountability and Governance
- High Quality Affordable Schools
- Human Capital Development
- Technology in Education

For further details, visit our website- www.centralsquarefoundation.org

About FICCI

Established in 1927, FICCI is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. Its history is closely interwoven with India's struggle for independence, its industrialisation and its emergence as one of the most rapidly growing global economies. A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry.

FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs; FICCI enjoys an indirect membership of over 2,50,000 companies from various regional chambers of commerce. FICCI provides a platform for sector specific consensus building and networking and as the first port of call for Indian industry and the international business community.

Our Vision

To be the thought leader for the industry, its voice for policy change and its guardian for effective implementation.

Our Mission

To carry forward our initiatives in support of rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth that encompasses health, education, livelihood, governance and skill development.

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