



THE BRIDGE INDIA

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EDUCATION
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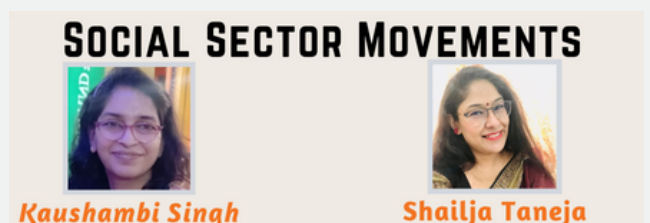
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Let's Plug the Learning Gaps of Covid Era in Indian Schools



Dear Readers,

One of the main victims of turmoil-filled COVID times has been education. Though a timely digital disruption prevented a collapse of two years of academic life, the novel experience had its share of lacunas as well.

Millions of children and teachers depended on smartphones to derive or deliver the finest possible in terms of studies via digital interactions. It felt miraculous that education was being accessed from the comfort of one's home amid the threat of a contagious virus. But it has caused a lot of challenges especially in developing countries like India.

From Kindergarten kids to senior students to even teachers, all tried coping up with it. But this alternative imperiled kids' holistic development, not just their learning process for a long period.

A large chunk of students with limited means have been disproportionately affected by disrupted schooling. A lot of students are now paying a heavy price due to the lost time of regular schooling.

From the desk of Editor-in-Chief

There's perhaps a much stronger need to observe students especially when it's been months since schools reopened in April. Many of them may be facing some challenges in rediscovering their enthusiasm or performance in studies.

The data compiled by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights and reported in a daily show until September 30, as many as 7,516 of the children enrolled in these schools did not attend school for a single day. Even their families couldn't be contacted.

Within these 73,513 cases, the overwhelming majority, 41%, were reported by parents as being because of sickness. With the migrant character of families of a large number of students, in 25% cases, parents said they had taken the child back for a visit to their village.

There were also cases of parents who assumed that their child had gone to school but the child had not.

Concisely saying, if we as a nation are delighted to see digital disruption germinating a massive tech savvy generation, we should also see who has been left behind in this expedition.

Happy Reading!!

How Corporates are Embracing the Education Sector Post Covid

If we look at the most recent integrated reporting and annual statements, investment in CSR in education is still the primary concern for Indian companies, and the same happened during and post-COVID-19 pandemic. By Sunidhi Pareek



To ensure education continues to be attained by all children, especially the most sensitive and unprivileged ones, the coronavirus pandemic required a swift but immersive response.

The unprecedented two-year phase has created an opportunity to start over better by organizing a systemic change that can produce more efficient pedagogies over the foreseeable future and generate higher adaptability to different system impacts.

To bring a major transformation and supplement India's fascinating growth trajectory, the corporate's CSR activities offer massive hope.

A cursory glance at some of the notable CSR activities of the corporate shows how they are busy preventing the pandemic's aftermaths from widening the opportunity gap.

Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) has evolved as a major force by setting better standards for excellent CSR practices throughout the nation.

Today HZL - an Indian integrated mining and resources producer of zinc, lead, silver and cadmium, a subsidiary of **Vedanta Limited** – funds numerous CSR initiatives for students in lower-division primary, secondary, and higher education.

A one-of-a-kind Public-Private-People approach is HZL's flagship project -- Khushi Anganwadi Programme.

It enables as many as 3,089 rural child care or, Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) in the districts of Ajmer, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Rajsamand, and Udaipur to effectively serve 60,000 children.

Early childhood educational content, and teaching resources were distributed through over 2,500 WhatsApp (groups) in order to maintain delivery of preschool education throughout COVID-19 and beyond.

Its **Shiksha Sambal** project aims at quality teaching of Science, Maths, and English (SME) subjects to raise the foundational understanding of students in

rural areas, which will enhance their ability to learn.

As many as 64 Government Secondary & Senior Secondary schools have endorsed it, leading to over 13,000 students in grades 6 up to 12 receiving quality education in the financial year 2022 to date.

Their **Unchi Udaan Programme** helped in gearing up young people from the Hindustan Zinc neighbourhoods to get admitted to prestigious academic institutions and engineering schools like the IITs.

A total of 184 students were assisted with engineering coaching in batches 1 to 6. Through the "Yashad-Sumedha Scholarship" programme, HZL has been helping eligible engineering students of Rajasthan for several years.

Over 800 specially-abled kids with listening impairments or other legitimate academic needs are the focus of the **Jeevan Tarang Programme**.

Corporate Story

By providing the children better educational resources, which include technology-based learning, the goal is to help them become independent.

Newgen Softwares Technologies Ltd. another notable organisation keeping in mind the children as the country's future has made significant efforts to make larger impact on society. It is globally recognised as a provider of a Low Code Automation Platform for Digital Transformation.

In the month of August 2022, it was felicitated Asia's Best CSR Practices Awards at the 13th Edition of the CMO Asia held at Pan Pacific, Singapore.

To gain an in-depth knowledge of ground realities, it founded and independently executed its flagship programme -**Newgen Digital Discovery Pathshala (NDDP)**.

The NDDP, launched as part of Newgen's endeavour to make digital education become accessible to lesser-privileged children, intends to promote digital literacy, equitable education, and quality learning.

To ensure that the children's needs are met in full, they took a holistic approach and made an effort to meet them. It has attempted to address all requirements of the children so that they are groomed in totality. The children that they support are hoping to act as the engine of change over the next 5-8 years, according to their vision.

The curriculum is tailored to each child's needs and covers a variety of topics, including leadership skills, society improvement, psychological health, professional counselling, and character building.

As schools in different parts of the country started experiencing as significant

dropout rate during and after the pandemic's easing off, Newgen put to use its finest creative efforts to motivate kids to return to classes. With the help of Newgen's additional support, today promotes equity among children, creating a conducive atmosphere of learning, engagement, and creativity.

For instance, the gadgets like tablets provided to pupils not just helped the children that were under NDDP's support, it also facilitated their sibling's and parents' growth. Since the majority of the families belong to humble backgrounds and can ill-afford expensive devices, even siblings use these tablets in taking classes, completing homework, and gaining extra knowledge or skills.

The NDDP's sessions have evoked tremendous interest from parents and other neighbourhood children as well. It is so because they have also found it informative, interactive, and engaging.

These pupils ought to become active members of their communities, passing on the lessons that they learned from the programme.



Besides that, over 4,000 students benefited from their partner programs with **KHUSHII** for primary education, more than 22,000 students were served at Akshaya Patra's midday meal.

In brief, with the education sector suffering a big jolt after the pandemic's outbreak across the globe, the corporate sector's role has once again proved to be a big relief in developing countries like India.

The CSR's inexplicable help in one of the most challenging phases for the country surely deserves proper recognition and empowerment.



NGOs Bridging the Gulf on Indian Education Landscape in Post-Covid Times

In India, NGOs provide education to underprivileged children and create new techniques to raise the standard of education. By Sunidhi Pareek



Since the world was shaken by the tremors of an unheard of pandemic, several non-profit organisations have donned a new role of being education warriors. Silently but steadily they are bringing the much-needed change in the lives of those who were left out in India's resurgence narrative.

Looking at the way the global leadership got consumed in containing the contagious virus in 2020, new alternatives and approaches have been evolved to take education to the poverty-stricken masses. And in this endeavour, the NGOs are shining in their crucial role.

Education Scenario in India

A cursory glance over India's growth story shows how the country's education system has significantly evolved.

It has undergone numerous changes, including a more uniform structure in the country, the declaration of literacy as a fundamental right of every child, and strict regulations on unregistered institutions.

In 2019, there were 37.4 million students enrolled in tertiary institutions.

But when the COVID-19-induced lockdown began in India, there were approximately 250 million students that were impacted due to school closures.

A surge in dropouts, learning losses, and a revelation of the existing digital divide in the country -- were just a few of the difficulties the pandemic presented to both the public and private schools.

It has been now observed that the government school enrollment spiked by an unprecedented level, while private school enrollment reached a 10-year low.

The pandemic made the youngest pupils in India's formal education system particularly vulnerable due to lack of exposure to pre-primary classes and lack of adequate access to digital devices.

When NGOs Became the Lifeline of the Hopeless Souls

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving," Mother Teresa is known to have once said.

Driven by such a spirit, a sea of iron-willed NGOs came to the fore to help out students across India. And their vital role and stealth soon became visible the way they reached out to children despite all limitations.

Few such key organisations deserve a mention for the way they continue to ensure that there remains a light at the end of the tunnel for all.

CLT India Children's LoveCastles India has dedicatedly worked in the last one-and-a-half decades a mission mode to make education more accessible. It has worked for transforming government-run schools-digitally upgrading their infrastructure and training the teachers.

The pandemic brought to the fore their program's significance and applicability to life.

During national lockdown CLT Team connected with rural communities to reach out to the teachers and parents in districts across Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala.

Through their two apps they aimed to expand their service outside classrooms and planned novel ways to connect with students and educators via digital academic materials.

To make its efforts effective and long-lasting, CLT India embraced providing technological solutions.

As a result, schools in the CLT India network were able to use the Jigi-Jigi app to encourage student-teacher interaction and utilizing the app to achieve the curriculum. During the COVID period, this app was made available free of cost to students.

An ePatshala digital content suite offers free Hindi content on Pratham Foundation. They have finished setting up their digital STEM programme in 4,000 government-run schools.

According to BhagyaRangachar, Founder and CEO of CLT India, "While the strategy of private schools was to adopt online teaching, it was not in the ambit of what government schools could provide".

Vidya is an all-inclusive education that enhances lives by providing good quality education, career training, and financial assistance to struggling individuals.

During COVID-19, they organised gadget collection and distribution drives to maintain an uninterrupted learning.

Vidya organised training sessions to dismiss taboos around digital classes, and provided digital training to upskill people.

The two most important components of empowering lives were -- schools and skills - -which they mainly focused on.

Currently, they are still building schools & empowering people by assisting them from

childhood through adulthood, and into the workforce. But they have realised that there are ways to extend their reach far beyond the boundaries of the built environment.

Although the value of actual physical locations is unchanging, the centers they create will also make it possible to communicate knowledge and abilities of their teachers and students to the rest of the world.



The VIDYA School, located in Gurugram city, developed interaction, case studies, real-world problems, and oral exams. It was done apart from using Google Forms to evaluate students' progress.

Today, every VIDYA student carries a device for digital learning. Each VIDYA School has been designed to benefit from both traditional education and digital media. And they wish to make their courses available to everyone.

NGO Samaj Vikas Sanstha helps the poor and underprivileged people. It is dedicated to the cause of child help, education, and women empowerment.

After COVID-19, Vatsalya Balgruh (or, child orphanage) was opened in Maharashtra's Omerga town, enrolling 27 orphan kids from low-income backgrounds, and offering them free education, food, and housing.

When the pandemic occurred, Samaj VikasSanstha (SVS) in vatsalya Balgruh managed an Anganwadi (childcare center)

for children of construction workers in Pune. It offers preschoolers -- education, a secure environment, and extra food. As many as 167 children benefitted immensely from seven Anganwadis.

After COVID-19, the organization looked after the health of at least 8,000 children in the areas where the SVS is active. It was done by educating children about Covid safety precautions, disseminating information, providing ration, masks, and sanitizers, and disseminating health information among children.

As a result, a large number of children, who were earlier not studying at any school, have been enrolled now.

The organization is running public awareness campaigns to help parents realise the value of education, and encourage children to attend regular classes in schools.

For the employment and skill development of youth Child Health Nursing programs have been launched in Mumbai (Govandi area) and Pune (Katraj area).

In essence, one can see to bring a comprehensive transformation the government and NGOs will have to supplement each other's works. And, COVID offered a major opportunity to see its remarkable results. All it needs is just understanding each other's role and continuing it with a team spirit.

Also, there is a need to realise the significance of education for overall growth of the society at large.

A right move in the required direction is all that was needed and, undoubtedly, the pandemic has tremendously helped one and all to sharply focus attention on the issues that matter.

Famous Chinese philosopher Confucius once stated back in 500 B.C.: "Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace."



Needs of PwD being addressed with flying speed in the state of Haryana

Under the tutelage of Haryana Disability Commissioner Shri Raj Kumar Makkad 5 Artificial limbs distribution camps was organized at Panchkula, Patoudi, Kanina, Bhiwani and Sirsa during the month of September 2022 in which 1346 PwDs were provided with assistive devices and artificial limbs of different kinds costing more than Rs. 6 Crore.

Block-wise assessment camps of about 8000 Children with Special Needs (CWSN) got convened in 15 Districts. 15 conferences in 12 Districts on Awareness of PwDs and Sentization meetings were conducted.

243 complaints in the Court of State Commissioner and other more than 500 during visits were heard and more than 200 were decided.

Gouri Foundation

On the occasion of Independence Day, Gouri Education Society celebrated Independence Day with young children and their parents at Jeewanti Public School, Sangam Vihar. The event started with Rally by children in the morning, followed by lightning of lamps by the auspicious hands of Garhwal Hiteshini Sabha's President Shri Ajay Singh Bisht and Shri Haridutt Bhatt. Active participation was done by children show

casing the patriotism and equality through various activities such as dance, musical play, etc. Smti. Jeewanti Devi Bist (President, Gouri Education Society) to promote regional language awareness amongst the students.

A special workshop was organised for student's over the duration of four months by Gouri Education Society with the assistance of Shri Kishan Singh Bisht, Shri Mohar Singh Rana, Shri Kundan Singh Rautela, Shri Mohan Singh Bist on Garwhali - Kumoni language and a small skit was performed by kids during the programme on the same.

All the guests were felicitated with small potted plants with the intention of spreading awareness on Environment.

Sightsavers India celebrated five years of RAAHI- National Truckers Eye Health Program

Sightsavers India commemorated the successful five year completion of its flagship programme RAAHI - National Truckers Eye Health Programme. RAAHI seeks to ensure that truckers with refractive errors receive glasses in the most convenient way possible, that they wear them consistently, and they seek regular eye examinations. The servicing include vision screening,

refraction, blood pressure checks, body weight measurement, cataract check-ups, and eye-health counselling and referrals. The RAAHI Programme has made a significant impact in the lives of the truck drivers and has played a critical role in addressing problems like eye health and road safety.

The celebration began with the screening of a short film presented by Sightsavers India and Cholamandalam, which was followed by the unveiling of "Eyes on the highway" a five year journey report, which highlighted the recorded data, progress, and insights of the National Truckers Eye Health Programme till date, as well as another report on the impact and effectiveness of ready-to-clip spectacles among truck drivers over the course of five years. Ready2Clip™ (R2C) spectacles were introduced into RAAHI Programme in order to reduce the Programme waste caused by the non-collection of custom-made spectacles.

The event was graced by Honorary Brand Ambassador, Mr Kabir Bedi, Mr Amit Ghosh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways; Dr Caroline Harper, Global CEO, Sightsavers; Mr R N Mohanty, CEO at Sightsavers India; and Dr SY Quraishi, Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

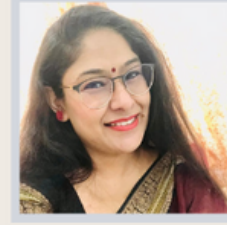
SOCIAL SECTOR MOVEMENTS



Kaushambi Singh

SENIOR HR HEAD

Moved from Railway Children to ActionAid



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