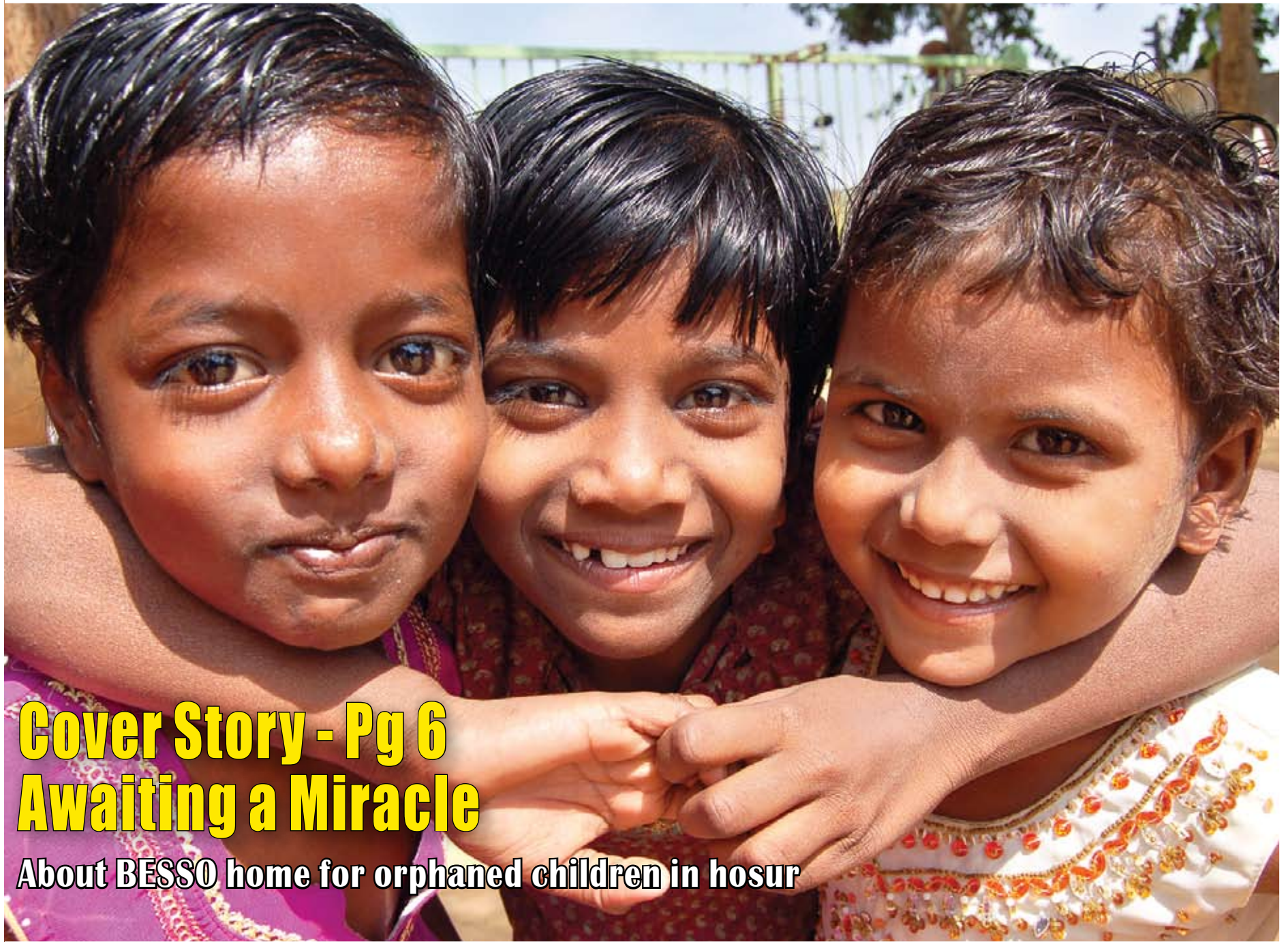


Conversations Today

Your journal about the world of NGOs and Social Enterprises

RNI No.TNENG/2013/52428 | Volume 2 | Issue 1 | January 2014 | 12 Pages | For Free Circulation Only| www.msdstrust.org



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About BESSO home for orphaned children in hosur



Published by P.N.Subramanian on behalf of
Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani,
391/1, Venkatachalapathi Nagar, Alapakam,
Chennai - 600 116 and printed by him at
Express Press, Express Gardens, No.29, Second
Main Road, Ambattur Industrial Estate,
Chennai - 600 058.

Editor : Marie Banu
Phone : 044-42805365



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because you work towards winning
and it gives you a lot of focus."**

An exclusive interview with
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MOP Vaishnav College For Women

From the Editor

Dear Friend,

CSIM team wishes you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year- 2014!

Let us all resolve to walk through our lives not looking for flaws, but looking for potential among ourselves and all whom we interact in the coming days!

All the change makers featured in this New Year issue have been able to empower the world around them by following this golden rule. They indeed have the power to make someone happy and the world needs more of that.

We are not living in a paradise. Hunger, abuse, poverty, pollution, and many other dangers are prevalent around us. But, this should not be an excuse for us to remain silent.

It's not as hard as you think! Simply reach out to one person's needs and in return tell them to do the same. This would have an exponential reach and the world around you would be different.

New Year is not about changing the Dates, but Direction; It's not about changing the Calendar, but Commitment; It's not about changing the Actions but Attitude; It's not about changing the Fruit, but Faith, Force and Focus!

May you Commit and Create the best New Year ever!

Happy Reading!!

**Latha Suresh &
Marie Banu**

Giving from Energy Abundance and receiving in the "inner game"

"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give." - Kahlil Gibran

Living life as a Positive energy practitioner has resulted in three realizations:

1. Giving happens because of energy abundance and not material abundance. Giving is triggered by not even having the thought of giving. It's a natural way of living, overflowing with bliss.
2. Often, we tend to believe that once we give we will receive. Though we may not acknowledge it openly, there is a tacit feeling around receiving that each of us carries. Positive Energy practices liberate me from this tacit expectation. Receiving happens before the act of giving. Receiving is not a material gain or a praise or appreciation in the outer game. It is the removal of energy blocks that I carry in the form of anxiety, fear, thought of scarcity, which is my inner game.
3. Giving is seen as an altruistic process, where individuals go beyond me, mine and I. In Positive Energy terms it means going beyond the ego-self and reaching the real-self. This transition from ego-self to real-self is greatly helped when there is energy abundance received from giving.

Receiving in the inner game: Experiencing Energy abundance and wholeness

In this article we have looked at the impact of giving on my inner and outer game. Before we proceed further, let me explain what we mean by inner and outer game. Inner game is what is happening in my mind and the emotions that one feels and expresses, in short what one thinks of herself. This is the intangible, yet powerful part of my existence. The outer game is the 'happening' on the outside in one's existence. The inner game has a deep impact on the outer game.

Once, I was asked by a friend, that how do I give so unconditionally? Until she asked the question, I did not even know that I was giving.

I had two pathways to process my response to my friend—one, saying that giving gave me joy and such a response would have definitely stroked my ego and I was then likely to get into a compulsive state whenever I gave or did not give. By compulsive, I mean, an expectation that the recipient would acknowledge and praise me or that I will always seek out



occasions to give so that I could feel complete and content. This pathway would certainly orient me to the outer game more deeply and make me externalized. In other words, I would draw my purpose by events happening in the outer game. It would also add to my inner game but in a negative way, by reinforcing thoughts of incompleteness.

My second pathway of response could have been to surrender the thought of giving to the inner game. And by this I mean, reinforcing my inner game with awareness that in the act of giving itself, receiving was built-in. Let me explain how that happens - in giving I have challenged my limiting beliefs, I have shifted from the inertia of "I won't do" or "I can't do". I have let myself experience the opportunities of addressing the interferences within me by the process of giving, thereby leading to energy abundance.

This choice-making lets us see giving in a very different light. Giving is not measured by emotional gain in the outer game after the act; it is by knowing and deeply experiencing the gain in the form of energy abundance even before the act of giving. This is a step towards focusing on whatever is wholesome.

Giving 'myself'

We came across this practice in a book on healing which says, 'native Americans gave away all their possessions in a ceremony they called the great give away'. Humans over many centuries have been made to believe that "having" is better than "giving". As long as we remain identified with our human body, we inevitably become a part of such a belief."

As we practice the rituals of Positive

Energy, the energy abundance results in giving of one's presence and trust, something that triggers changes in our individual consciousness. And others experience this shift in consciousness as a serene and harmonious exchange.

So giving 'myself' is not altruistic anymore. Altruism comes up when we still take a position from the ego. Giving 'myself' is a process of gaining energy abundance which supports one's journey of meeting the real-self. And at one stage, giving and receiving merge into a seamless experience, where the giver and receiver is the same universal soul. In this state all lines blur and total wholeness is experienced.

—Bhuvaneshwari Ravi

Yours Energetically

Dr. Bhulakshmi V and Ms. Bhuvaneshwari Ravi are trainers and facilitators of the Positive Energy (PE) program. They are spiritual seekers with a vision of transforming their own energy state from surviving to being. In this journey they have gathered deep insights and are continuously working towards creating a pathway for more seekers. With years of exposure to spiritual practices like yoga, reiki, and personal development interventions like coaching, the authors are working in the Organization Development and Leadership Development space.

This intervention is offered by GapSkills Learning Solutions Pvt. Ltd is being offered to corporates and schools. You can contact them at info@gapskills.com to design a customized intervention for your organization or join the PE open program - www.gapskills.com.

Folklore And Street Theatre Made Contemporary

“CSIM is the first organisation that recognised me as a trainer in street theatre. I am now known to many and people recognise me.”

Folklore in India has had a very unique following among the rural and urban population. Songs and dances suiting every occasion beginning from birth to death, although expected to lose their relevance in modern culture, continue to remain contemporary through the efforts of individuals like Ms ‘Kulandai’ Rathna, Co-Founder of Kathambam Kalaiyagam. Beginning as a folk singer from a village in Kumbakonam, she has come a long way in presenting the art form through street theatre, with relevant instances and messages.

Poverty restrained Ratna from studying beyond class 9. “My education was compromised to make both ends meet in the family. We had no choice then,” she says. School days in a village called Patteeswaram saw Ratna getting hooked to folk songs. “I liked the way they connected to people from all strata within the community,” says Rathna, who soon decided to engage herself in this art form. Post marriage, her husband gave her the space in his group called ‘Kathambam Kalaiyagam’ to sing songs and manage the group.

“Our group performed in several villages, and in 1996 we migrated to Chennai in search of new opportunities. Ten of us put together a show for Jaya Television. It soon became difficult to work as the team began to disintegrate and we could not put up a new team in this city. We called it off,” recalls Rathna, who then pursued B.Lit in Tamil from Madras University.

It was during this time that Rathna decided to work in NGOs. Two training programmes in street theatre that she had gone through introduced her to the multifaceted issues in society, which people often failed to understand. “I realised the scope of street theatre, but with no resources I decided to work with NGOs to further understand the issues needing attention and awareness,” she shares. In a period of 10 years she had worked with 8 NGOs in the city. It was during her days at Pasumai that she came to know about CSIM. “A friend called Logammal told me about CSIM and encouraged me to start our organisation with practical guidance from CSIM.”

“I hail from a village and English still sounds alien to me. The best part of CSIM’s courses is that they are bilingual. I never felt left out at any point. Besides singing folk songs, I can also teach dance forms like *Kolattam*, *Paraiyattam*, *Karagattam*, *Kummi* and *Oyilattam*. Having learnt street



theatre once again at CSIM, I became a trainer for this very organisation,” narrates Rathna proudly. “Kathambam Kalaiyagam was thus re-launched in 2006, with renewed zeal. Thanks to CSIM!”

Besides providing training in folk singing, dance forms, Ratna also trains schools, NGOs and colleges in street theatre. “CSIM is the first organisation that recognised me as a trainer in street theatre. I am now known to many and people recognise me. This new identity has helped me work on new lines of thought in taking street theatre forward,” she adds.

Ratna feels that trainings such as these go a long way in surviving an art form. “With no complete knowledge of theatre, I would just portray a character. Now, I know every aspect of it— from script to casting and performance. If one wonders whether all this experience brings in enough resources to sustain, then it’s a mistake. “People think we are a drama team, nothing more or nothing less. Hence, nobody is inclined to help. They do not even realise that this is a profession to many,” dispels Rathna.

Ratna’s team manages to do 4 to 5 programmes in a month. Some of her friends offer support in kind, while few help her to find new opportunities.



with a wider reach they have an advantage of. But, they do not deem it a responsibility to promote awareness on social issues, which we do. People like fast mode, want to see scenes from others’ lives and thus prefer cinema. We are on the end of the spectrum. We want to educate our audiences.

We may not become popular, yet we are happy to use street theatre as an instrument in educating the public,” she asserts.

Ratna might be wary of opportunities for her group in the city. However, she is very confident that street theatre will continue to be used as a medium as long as social problems exist, with a need for wider dissemination of information.

Hard work and pointed observations have earned Ratna several awards and appreciation. She was given the title ‘Puratchi Kuyil’ by Vidiyal Munnani in 2013. Soon, she will also receive the award ‘Vetri’, which is given for artists by the Department of Journalism, Madras University. “Limited opportunities and yet a lot of work to do,” signs off Ratna with her characteristic smile.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

The Dynamics of Social Entrepreneurship

As more and more social enterprises crop up with the intention of impacting the society, their long-term sustainability depends on constantly innovating their business model to a fluctuating rural market

In 2006, Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus in his acceptance speech had outlined the importance of social business in the world – ‘Social business is important because it addresses very vital concerns of mankind. It can change the lives of the bottom 60 per cent of world population and help them to get out of poverty.’ Yunus, founder of Bangladesh’s Grameen Bank (a micro credit institution) goes on to mention that the challenge for social entrepreneurs lies in innovating business models and applying them to produce desired social results, cost-effectively and efficiently. India has seen a new breed of entrepreneurs who are just as concerned about impacting the society as they are about reaping dividends. But as such enterprises come into being, how many of them stand the test of time depends on an entrepreneur’s focus and ability to build a business proposition to a fluctuating market and social dynamics.

“There is very little venture capital going into companies that focus on bottom of the pyramid (BoP), who are people earning less than US \$2/day and they constitute 25 per cent of India.”

“If the business model and the value proposition of a company are on target, then there is definite long-term sustainability,” says Vishal Vasishth, managing director of Song Investment Advisors India (Song), a SME (small and medium enterprises) – focussed fund. Song backs ventures that are into solving problems with a focus on health, education, agriculture, clean tech and financial inclusion. It hopes to invest US \$ 17 million in about five companies soon.

However, experts are also of the opinion that the social wave India is riding is only the beginning and signs of maturity are yet to manifest themselves. Vishal Mehta, co-founder and partner of Lok Capital, a fund with focus on social and financial inclusion, says some of the business models of social ventures that existed a couple of years ago have shown signs of becoming more established. “India is still witnessing only the early stages of such ventures and the benchmark for long-term sustainability is too soon to gauge. Even in the microfinance sector, which has seen a lot of activity last year, only four IPOs (initial public offering) have taken place globally, though the segment has been functioning for the past two decades,” he says. He adds that while healthcare and education ventures in this space are more established, others are yet to gain a stronghold. Lok Capital has US \$ 90 million of assets spread over two funds. While fund-I has seen an investment in nine companies for US \$ 22 million emphasising on financial inclusion, fund-



It is still in its early stages having invested in one company and will be looking to invest in another 10 to 12 companies. The second fund will focus on the spaces of healthcare and education, which include skill and vocational training institutes, besides financial inclusion.

Scaling challenges

This September, Lok Capital had invested US \$ 3 million in Bengaluru-based Rural Shores Business Services Pvt. Ltd. (Rural Shores), a rural business process outsourcing venture. The company will use the funds to expand its management bandwidth and improve its technology. Currently, Rural Shores has 10 centres in seven states, situated in rural regions where the population is less than 20,000 people. It now employs over 1,000 people since incorporating its first centre in Bagepalli, Karnataka in 2009. “Our business model of bringing jobs to rural areas worked and helped us scale fast,” says Murali Vullaganti, co-founder and chief executive officer, Rural Shores. The company now wants to set up another 10 centres in the next 10 months. But this process of scaling up comes with its set of challenges. Vullaganti says that every time the company decides to start a centre in a new location, there is the problem of attracting talent. “People are sceptical as they have never heard of us before. We have to convince the first batch, but after that, it becomes easier as they see how we benefit them,” he adds. Rural Shores’ expansion plan also signifies the demand in the industry for such talent and the need to go beyond the supply saturation in cities.

According to Vasishth, the challenges for scaling up for social ventures are both at the macro and micro level. “Scaling up

does take time since there are structural issues like the size of the company. Attracting talent is not easy either,” he adds.

The road ahead

“There is very little venture capital going into companies that focus on bottom of the pyramid (BoP), who are people earning less than US \$2/day and they constitute 25 per cent of India,” says Jayant Sinha, managing director, Omidyar Network India Advisors (Omidyar), a philanthropic fund that invests in for-profit social ventures and issues grants for not-for-profit social ventures. Omidyar will be investing US \$ 100 million – 200 million in the next few years in India. He believes the main challenges for-profit companies targeting BoP face in sustaining long-term growth are cost-effective distribution, obtaining working capital, asset-backed financing (financing a project with 100 per cent equity, which is expensive) and the lack of talent.

Dr. Ashwin Naik of Vaatsalya Healthcare (Vaatsalya) does agree to some of those challenges. Present in 14 different districts with 800 beds, Vaatsalya employs 1,400 people. “For a healthcare facility like Vaatsalya that targets rural regions, there needs to be an ecosystem in place every time we choose a location to set up a facility,” says Naik. That ecosystem refers to skilled talent such as nurses, blood banks, local infrastructure and the jurisdiction of local bodies. Vaatsalya has a 22-point checklist that outlines the kind of locations it can scale up and Naik is clear that it includes Tier – II and III towns as smaller towns cannot afford its services.

Though the problem of attrition and migration is present, both Vullaganti and Naik believe that is reversing. “By

providing opportunities in their area, many of them choose to live with their families. Also, we provide ground level support for corporate companies to reach out to their Bhaarat consumers,” affirms Vullaganti. According to Naik, he sees attrition with outside talent but not so much with the local people. “Hence, we try to balance the number of local and outside recruits,” he adds.

Living up to market expectations

Vaatsalya has received funding from Aavishkaar, Seedfund, Oasis Fund and Aquarius India Fund, and it is now targeting a turnover of Rs. 50 crore with a 36 per cent top line growth this fiscal. Naik believes there is no right time to approach investors unless there is considerable traction from customers. “It is harder for social enterprises to obtain funding due to the new geographies and new business models they are working to establish. But it definitely helps with the new class of such social funds,” he says. Naik believes that while social funds expect the same ROI (return on investment) as other VCs, the time frame is longer. “Expecting the market rate is reasonable else businesses will not have that focus,” he adds. Sinha also reiterates that point. “ROIs often differ with each business and yes, VCs do expect the market rate. Businesses that do not live up to the market return often find it difficult to scale up.”

Rural Shores, which hopes to become profitable by mid-2012, believes social funds expect less ROI compared to regular VCs. “If normal VCs expect about 25 per cent ROI, social VCs would probably expect about 15 per cent – 18 per cent and their patience levels are also more,” says Vullaganti. He hopes that Rural Shores will be present in each of the 500 districts in India in the next 10 years. Mehta believes since there are higher risks involved for social ventures due to the nature of geography they work in, a suitable ROI is not easy to establish. “Social funds should be flexible with the time period. Our theory so far is that if founders are focussed on giving financial and social inclusion, and make a sound business proposition around it, then they will definitely be able to sustain,” he concludes.

Some Challenges Social Enterprises Face:

- Attracting talent
- Not much social capital
- Rural execution site
- Innovating business models
- Cost-effective distribution network
- Obtaining working capital
- Asset-backed financing

—Mahathi R. Arjun

This article was first published in *The Smart CEO Magazine* (www.thesmartceo.in)

The transition from Manager to Entrepreneur

Raman Roy, the founder and CEO of Quattro BPO Solutions is one of the pioneers of the Indian BPO industry. Decision-making and solving operational problems are his forte. Here, he shares with us some tips for early stage entrepreneurs.

The year 1984 was an important one for India. A good six-years before liberalisation an extremely important event occurred. American Express started India's first ever business process outsourcing (BPO) operation in the country. Today, the IT-BPO industry puts India on the global radar and offers more jobs than any other industry in urban India.

Raman Roy, then a manager at American Express, was the man at the center of affairs. He convinced his bosses into believing that an outsourcing facility could be operated out of India. In spite of the infrastructural, hiring and technological challenges, Roy and his team beat all theorists' opinions and set up American Express' support operations in India. Following this stint, he moved to head operations at GE's outsourcing facility now known as Genpact. In 2000, Roy decided to make the transition from being a manager to start Spectramind. "While the fact that I wouldn't have a boss was exciting, the lack of the large organizational backup was scary," shares Roy. Spectramind was among the first few BPO's in India that catered to third party clients. In 2002, after exiting

Spectramind, he started Quattro BPO solutions to focus on higher-end knowledge process outsourcing services.

"Quattro's focus is to offer our clients beyond what exists today," says Roy. They employ highly qualified engineers, doctors, chartered accountants, business editors and several other knowledge professionals to serve 200 clients from around the world. Roy adds, "We are focused on new service areas, new markets. We're looking at serving millions of markets worth dozens, instead of dozens of markets worth millions". Today, Quattro's service lines include risk, mortgage, finance and accounting, legal solutions and interactive entertainment services among others. They operate 13 centers across seven countries to serve their clients world over.

The Smart CEO caught up with Roy to understand what he learnt over the last 26 years in the IT-BPO industry and this is what he had to say.

Decision Making "If you are someone who makes decisions, you are bound to make correct decisions and wrong decisions. The important thing is to learn from these mistakes and

always keep that learning in mind."

Listening to the customer

"Listening to the customer and translating that to the realities of the business is one of the most difficult and important things to do. Once we had two delivery centers one each in Delhi and Mumbai. We appointed center heads in these two facilities and they operated almost like independent centers. Soon we realized that our client didn't see the two facilities as two different centers and we had to take corrective action. Every aspect of your business has to be decided keeping the client in mind."

The fulfillment side "Especially in services, there are two aspects we always need to remember. The customer side and the fulfillment side. Sometimes, when your service offers value, getting the clients is not the only problem. Delivering what he needs is as important. That's where the team comes in. Delegating tasks to the right leaders and business unit heads and monitoring them is key."

—S. Prem Kumar

This article was first published in The Smart CEO Magazine (www.thesmartceo.in)



Editorial

**Latha Suresh
Marie Banu**

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVE AND MANAGEMENT



Centre for Social Initiative and Management (CSIM) is a unit of Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani. It is a learning centre that promotes the concept of social entrepreneurship. **CSIM offers training and consultancy to social enterprises – for-profits and non-profits – to facilitate**

them to apply successful business practices and yet retain their social mission. It also offers training and hand holding support to prospective social entrepreneurs and enable them to launch their social initiatives. CSIM operates in Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

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CSIM also facilitates Social Audit for social enterprises through Social Audit Network, UK and SAN, India.

For more information, please visit www.san-india.org or contact Ms. Latha Suresh, Director @ 92822 05123.

Awaiting a Miracle

“Although I do believe that good deeds never fail, I have been taught by CSIM how to carry forward this noble deed.”

It was a quiet Sunday afternoon, until Latha and I reached BESSO Home at Hosur. The laughter and cheer of the children were music to our ears.

Sam took us around the premise and led us to a large hall where over 100 children were assembled.

Sam is a Post Graduate in Social Work and worked as a Lecturer in St Xavier's College at Thirunelveli until 1990. Watching an abandoned child eat the leftovers from a banana leaf discarded by a hotel, urged Sam to provide succor for such children. He quit his work and founded Bethel Education Social Service Organisation (BESSO) in 1991. With his personal funds, he launched a school for underprivileged children in Denkanikottai, and provided hostel facilities as well. He simultaneously started paid tuition centres to financially support the school's needs, and later established BESSO home to accommodate orphaned, and abandoned children.

I waited patiently until the children settled down to begin the conversation.

“What did you do this morning,” I looked at one of the children and asked casually.

“We prayed,” responded Gnanasundaran, one of the boys who have been living at BESSO for over 5 years.

“What did you pray for?” I probed.

“For rice, dal, oil, and sugar,” he softly said.

I hid my surprise and looked at Sam who was by my side. “The children begin the day with a prayer. We pray for donors to visit us and donate rations. For instance, we need 14 kilos of rice for tomorrow's meal,” said Sam with a smile.

Having visited several homes in the past, most of them having rations stocked in advance, I grew anxious.

Sensing my worry, Sam added saying: “I am sure we will get the provisions that we need before end of today. Since the time we launched BESSO home, we have been having enough food to provide our children. Donors from the neighbourhood as well as from nearby villages sponsor breakfast and lunch expenses from time to time. It is only that we do not have enough donors to support us throughout the year.”

The children grew restless as we spoke and tried to distract us. To put them at ease we played some games and began to chatter again.

“How many of you like to live here?” I asked directly.

All the children raised their hands instantly.

“If there is a better school in the neighbourhood, will you go there?” I asked again.

“No. We won't,” replied the children in chorus.

“Then, tell me what is so good here?” I inquired.

“We have food to eat; place to stay; a sleeping mat, and friends to play. Besides, our teachers take good care of us,” said Glory, one of the older girls.

Sam said beaming with pride, “Until I joined CSIM, I was managing BESSO with the donations that came from individuals and companies from time to time. I now realize that we should have a sustainable income to have a secure tomorrow. I therefore plan to provide skill training for children over 14 years of age and engage them productively by launching a vocational training unit. Although I do believe that good deeds never fail, I have been taught by CSIM how to carry forward this noble deed.”

As lunch time neared, we stepped out to spend time with the visitors who were waiting to meet the children. Most of the children at BESSO are orphaned, while a few have single parents.



Munratna, a single mother, was waiting to meet her children Sudha and Sudhakar whom she had admitted at BESSO some seven years ago. After a brief while, I joined her to listen to her story.

“I live at Denkanikottai. My husband is an alcoholic and used to abuse me. I therefore got separated and began to live with my mother. I could not take care of my children as I worked as a coolie and was away the whole day. Thus, I admitted them in BESSO,” said Munratna.

“I visit my children every month, and spend time with them. I learn that my husband too visits our children occasionally. Apparently, my mother-in-law has come to meet her grandchildren today and we just met after a very long time. I am happy that my children are taken good care by BESSO. They know how to read and write, and besides our mother tongue Kannada, they are conversant in Tamil, Telugu, and English too,” she signed off.

After clicking pictures of children in the playground and distributing chocolates I continued to converse with Sam.

“In 1991, we first launched BESSO in a rented premise at Denkanikottai. For over ten years, we kept moving from one place to another as our landlord did not permit us to continue for more than a year. It was a huge challenge for us to keep shifting our residence year after year. In 2000, we had visitors from Seventh Day Adventist Church. One of their members offered us a one-time donation, and we used it to purchase 40 cents of land and construct this building,” said Sam.

BESSO has separate buildings to house the boys and girls and have a large play area. The older children help the younger ones by washing their clothes and providing succor when they feel home sick. “The children maintain their own rooms and also assist in cleaning the premise. One of our students is now pursuing engineering in Chennai and we fund her education costs totally,” added Sam.

BESSO coordinates health awareness camps in nearby villages and also organizes sensitization programmes on parenting and values. “We did not have enough funds to organize camps in 2013, but will certainly plan some this year. We have a counselor who visit families and encourage reconciliation. We have also reunited several children with their families,” said Sam.

The lunch bell rang and the children rushed to the dining hall. They all queued and awaited eagerly to have their plate filled with chicken *biryani* and *raita* and the room was packed with flavor.

“Today's lunch is being sponsored by one of our donors. Hence, it is chicken *biryani*. The journey of BESSO has been rough, and challenges do remain. But, I am not deterred at all. Miracles have happened, and will happen,” Sam signed off confidently.

As the children enjoyed their meal, I wondered along with Sam if a miracle would certainly happen for BESSO so that these children would get to have a good meal every day.

—Marie Banu

If you wish to support Besso Home, please contact Sam at +91944320871 or visit www.bessomission.com



Photos: Marie Banu

Made in Bangalore

As someone who grew up in Bangalore, I have seen my city undergo a startling transformation, from the Pensioners Paradise — to the Silicon Valley of India. I am almost a pensioner myself now!

Sometimes, I feel stupefied and amazed by the changes, but I can't feel old: not with so much energy all around me. And from what I see, I feel truly optimistic about the new India, and in particular, the remarkable ways in which a new generation of entrepreneurs are harnessing business skills to tackling the miseries and injustices of our country.

I have been involved in a study with the Centre for Social Markets into the new forms of innovation pouring out in forms of enterprises here, which we have published as 'Made in Bangalore'.

Take for instance 'Vindhya-Infomedia Pvt Ltd', an IT company that does business process outsourcing. Vindhya employs more than 230 physically challenged young men and women, which forms two-thirds of the entire staff.

I am greeted by Srinath at the door. I was about to extend my hand to him when I realised that he had just two stubs for hands. Seeing my confusion he smiled and explained: "I lost them while working on a construction site. The metal pole I was carrying got stuck to a high-tension

wire and my hands got completely burnt. I cannot work on computers, but I can do many other tasks."

Vindhya was founded by 26-year old Pavithra Ashok and her husband Ashok Gil. Early on they faced many hurdles. For several months in 2006-07 their staff had to go without salaries; employees were accommodated in spare rooms; and Pavithra cooked the food. Realising the difficulties, the employees said: "Give us one meal a day, and that would suffice." Today, Vindhya has clients ranging from Yahoo to local microfinance institutions and has an annual growth rate of 80 percent.

Now, let's talk about Dr Sudhakar Varnasi who observed that it is possible to deliver a pizza within 20 minutes, whereas it was almost impossible to deliver health care during emergencies. Out of anger at that incongruity, Dr Sudhakar created the GVK-Emergency Management and Research Initiative (EMRI). In conjunction with the government, this initiative provides the 108 toll free number for emergency services.

108 was the brainchild of Mahindra Satyam who began it in Karnataka. In five years 108 service was available in 10 states, and was the only professional service of its kind in India that handled medical, fire and police emergencies. In

Karnataka, 108 has 517 ambulances and typically able to get to any emergency within 20 minutes — the equivalent of a pizza delivery! In a day 108 saves over 300 lives, and some 8,000 babies have been born in its ambulances. The GVK-EMRI works on a public-private partnership model, with the state underwriting 95 percent of the cost and GVK and private donations meeting the remainder.

Dr Sudhakar says: "We need to marry the passion and professionalism of the private sector and the power and reach of the government to have a win-win solution. The time is ripe: politicians have recognised that good development is good politics. If the private sector shows the way by transparent, innovative approaches to solve some of these tough problems, partnership with the government can result in phenomenal success, scale and impact."

Let me give you one final example. In 2001, the Supreme Court ruled that state governments must introduce a cooked meal at mid-day in all government primary schools. Now 'Akshaya Patra' provides nutritionally balanced and hygienic mid-day meals to 1.3 million children from the world's largest centrally managed kitchen, using cutting edge culinary technology. It is another public-

private partnership. The government supports some of the running costs, individuals and corporates like Infosys, Biocon and Bosch provide the rest.

What lessons do I draw from these and many other case studies in our report?

I would say that we are seeing a new stream of business developing and leading the way in taking on the challenges of equity, accessibility, and sustainability. These businesses are many different types; there is no one model. But, what they have in common is two-fold: their focus, to tackle poverty and exclusion, and their use of IT to deliver accountability, transparency, and most vitally efficient and prompt delivery. A new ecosystem of support facilities has started to emerge around these enterprises and what these entrepreneurs are doing has started to be celebrated. A virtuous circle has begun!

As we all embark on a new year, I see my city changed beyond belief. But, I feel buoyed by the efforts of these new change makers, not downcast.

Please do please read these stories in detail from <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/made-in-bangalore-how-social-enterprise-is-transforming-business-as-usual-204790> and share my excitement.

—Pushpanath Krishnamurthy



Engineering Water For Sustainability

Depletion of ground water reserves across regions has remained a concern, specifically in the context of agriculture. India being an agrarian economy primarily has the obligation of replenishing these resources to make them sustainable. Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) is an organization working on this front by promoting community based models.

“Headquartered in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh, CWS works with more than 150 organisations spread across 5 states in India – Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar and Jharkhand,” introduces Mr R V Rama Mohan, Joint Director-SuGWM project. Also supporting the state and national networks of these organisations, CWS plays an intermediary role engaging in developing new models, providing technical support to implement them in the communities, support organisations to take these to people and thence advocate to policy changes for a wider impact.

Rama Mohan explains that CWS works on three broad themes – human dignity, that concerns the rights of tribals, dalits, women discrimination and violence; local governance, where empowerment of Gram Panchayat leaders is focused through capacity building, encouraging women participation; and sustainable livelihoods. Access to water resources, forest areas and their usage, agricultural land usage/distribution, right to land are concerns that have to be addressed with equity to ensure sustainable livelihoods in the rural areas. “We have been working consistently on promoting participatory approaches in water management, especially ground water management for the last 10 years,” Rama Mohan informs. “We work on creating small models, promote alternative approaches to water management, generate experiences and demonstrate the impact through our partner organisations,” he adds.

Along with the technical permutations in line with the local needs, CWS plays a liaising role by aggregating experiences and relating them with existing policies or schemes. Participatory ground water management, community management of ground water are approaches promoted by CWS through various



projects. They have also gone over finding a place in the latest Model Bill on Ground Water in India. Often farmers are seen investing in drilling new wells to suit individual farming styles, but most of these wells are failing. Replenishment of ground water is never thought of or they are unaware of. Competitive drilling of wells by farmers, as many as 50 to 60 over a period of few years but all failing, lead to loss of investment and, profusely ground water reserves. “Our work with the communities is two pronged. Social regulations to manage the already existing wells (some jointly owned too) and prevention of drilling new wells. It has taken 4 to 5 years to convince people about this approach, only for the cause of sustainability. With no other option, they have to think of sustainability,” he says.

One of CWS’s landmark projects —Community based Sustainable Ground Water Management (SuGWM)— has demonstrated the workable combination of integration and sustainability, through community participation. “Water-Sanitation and Irrigation are usually dealt as two separate themes. We tried to bring these two together. This was strongly influenced by the inference that construction of water infrastructure that ends to be defunct is not enough. Absence of a local operation & management system and the lack of source sustainability when (wells dry out in summer) have added to this dismal picture. Inequity in water distribution

during these times has a strong implication on peripheral habitations where marginalized groups like dalits and tribals live,” shares Rama Mohan, whose team worked on a holistic approach with these concerns staring at them. SuGWM was initiated to achieve sustainability in ground water management, addressing drinking water, sanitation and agricultural needs. Institutionalising social regulations on water use management in the 6 Gram Panchayats of Andhra Pradesh, promoting traditional water sharing practices, enhancing water and energy use efficiency in agriculture, ensuring source well sustainability, improving local operation and maintenance systems have all come together in benefiting more than 3000 families in accessing water.

Constant exploration has led the team under him to the discovery of Gonchi irrigation system that is more than 700 years old, still prevailing in Andhra Pradesh and bordering districts of Karnataka. “In Gonchi, seepage water from a river or a stream is diverted and shared by farmers in an equitable manner. We documented this practice in the present condition and informed the government departments about it. Today, renovation of these channels is taken up through NREGS”.

CWS has of late launched a campaign called ‘SpliceDrip’. Interestingly, SpliceDrip is based on the model of social entrepreneurship, generating employment for rural youth. Drip irrigation, also known as localized

irrigation, is a method that saves water and fertilizer by allowing water to drip slowly to the roots of plants, either onto the soil surface or directly onto the root zone, through a network of valves, pipes, tubing and emitters. This is done through narrow tubes that deliver water directly to the base of the plant. The campaign is an effort to retrieve abandoned pipes once used for drip irrigation, thereby preventing plastic pollution to the environment. On retrieval, these pipes are connected and their reuse is promoted for the cultivation of vegetables and food crops. “These pipes can be used for another 4 to 5 years,” says Rama Mohan.

The most exciting part of this campaign is the local network that has emerged in the Anantpur and Warangal districts of AP. Appreciating the cooperation of farmers in this initiative, he goes on to acknowledge the same from local entrepreneurs and micro irrigation companies, who have walked the extra mile to balance sustainability and micro investment, for long term benefits. Here is how the cycle works.

- The farmers are assisted by CWS in retrieving and installing the old pipes in their fields. The other spare parts required to make this system operational are purchased at subsidized rates from companies that partake in this initiative. These micro companies also provide other services to the farmers at subsidized cost.
- Local entrepreneurs are the youngsters from the neighbourhood trained under this campaign to do the installation and maintenance for the farmers, with decent remuneration.
- Having been a part of multiple projects and campaigns such as the aforesaid, Rama Mohan is confident that CWS will be able to influence policy decisions and widely disseminate the need and effectiveness of an integrated approach to ground water management at the local level.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

For more info on SuGWM project, visit <http://cwsy.org/sugwm> and for SpliceDrip campaign, visit <https://sites.google.com/site/splicedrip/>



Conversations with Shri Ramana Maharishi

Explaining a stanza in Aksharamanamalai Sri Bhagavan said that *mowna* is the highest form of *upadesa*. It signifies 'silence' as master, disciple and practiser. Three *sanyasins*, who were visiting Sri Bhagavan, began a discussion.

D.: If one remained quiet how is action to go on? Where is the place for karma yoga?

M.: Let us first understand what Karma is, whose Karma it is and who is the doer. Analysing them and enquiring into their truth, one is perforce obliged to remain as the Self in peace. Nevertheless the actions will go on.

D.: How will the actions go on if I do not act?

M.: Who asks this question? Is it the Self or another? Is the Self concerned with actions?

D.: No, not the Self. It is another, different from the Self.

M.: So it is plain that the Self is not concerned with actions and the question does not arise.

D.: I agree.

Another asked: What is the state of the realised man? Is he not acting?

M.: The question implies that the realised man is not the questioner. Why should you concern yourself with another? Your duty is to look to yourself and not ask of others.

D.: The scriptures hold him up as the ideal.

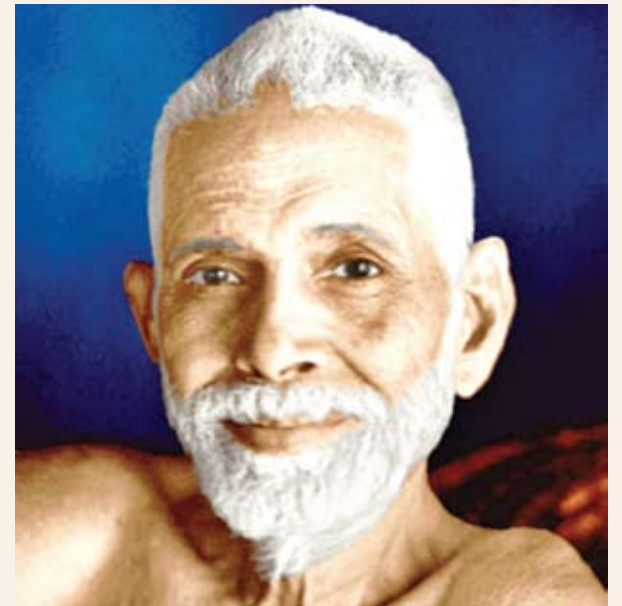
M.: Certainly. He is the ideal. You should realise the Self. Even if his state be now described, your

understanding of it will be only according to your capacity. You admit that your capacity is limited. The scriptures say that the realised state admits of no limits. So then, the only way to understand his state is to realise the Self and experience the state. If the question arises afterwards the answer will be found.

Another visitor asked: There is differentiation made between the sentient and the insentient (*chit* and *jada*) in the opening verse of Upadesa Sara.

M.: The Upadesa is from the standpoint of the hearer. There is no truth in the insentient (*jada*). One whole consciousness (*chit*) prevails all alone.

—Excerpted from talks with Shri Ramana Maharishi



Belongingness Dimensions – Gender sensitivity

Being sensitive enough to not allow the considerations of gender to come in the way of work decisions is one of the simplest meanings given to gender sensitivity. But this has numerous interpretations and ways of understanding that has made gender sensitivity a very critical and important dimension of the HR in an organization. This is most oft used term in HR now. The issue of gender sensitivity quite contrary to the original meaning has been interpreted in most spaces as female empowerment, female gender sensitivity compromising one gender for the protection of the other. Further it has also become more of a gender equality issue compromising the sensitivity part. In all the discussions the question largely is on inclusion and respect of the human being over the gender issues which has not been focused enough.

HR as a conscious keeper has significant role to play to ensure there is highest level of inclusion, respect, sensitivity to human in the organization irrespective of their gender. They need to take care that the stereotype of culture and region does not directly impact the evaluation of the individual competence and capacity. The relationship and roles that people play outside the organization does not influence the standing and the role choices within the organization. The sensitivity is driven by equality in opportunities and acceptance.

But none of these can be done out of context. Very recently I was reading a newspaper in KL which says men are contemplating to start a forum that will take care of male abuse at home and office. Another observation is that gender sensitivity has become many times an issue of convenience that can be used by either gender to their advantage. How can



then the various issues that arise related to gender be handled at an organizational level?

HR needs to focus at the cause level while dealing with these sensitive issues. Identification, awareness, education and modification of beliefs related to gender have to become an ongoing process. Many include it as a training module expecting things to change after that. But actually this sensitivity has to be integrated into the culture of the organization. The values of mutual respect, inclusion, focus on vision and essence are the foundations on which the gender sensitivity can be built. The dialogue should address the belief that the employee hold with regard to masculine and feminine characteristics. These beliefs are made right from womb stage; they are the learning from every experience that the person has gone through the growing years. These learning over a period of time become conclusions and remain as beliefs. The beliefs govern behaviour. The various interpretations related to the culture of the larger society and their own upbringing

has to be explored. A deep dive into the core life orientations with process methodology would go a long way in enabling the individuals in evolving beyond their gender fixations and stereotypes. This assumes a larger significance in social organizations with its heightened sensitivity to any kind of social injustice, compromise and flaws.

Many times in the name of equal justice and sensitivity the contextual elements are forgotten. The unique requirements of each gender and the natural competence are under played. This robs the spirit of true sensitivity and concern too. This happens when the gender issues are viewed and decisions taken at a form level rather than at the essence level. More so, in a social organization where the extent of risk can sometimes be large when working with a community that is hostile. When a person requires support, help, protection it is not to be viewed as being weak but as something that the context demands for vision to be fulfilled. Many a time the sensitivity is also used as a convenience factor in favor of one gender. This can again defeat the purpose of mutual respect and inclusion.

Therefore, the possible steps that HR can take is to –

- Identify all spaces in the culture and behaviour where disrespect, non-inclusion, insensitivity, bias shows itself
- Find or create opportunities where effective dialogue and process can happen to articulate the beliefs that govern the above behaviour
- Bring to the awareness of the people the decisions taken based on stereotypes and past baggage

without taking the micro and the macro context into consideration

- Cut down consciously all policies and rules that may lead to compromise of any gender for the favor of the other
- Ensure maximum micro and macro contextual elements are taken into consideration in any decision making process
- Enable through tolerance, acceptance and love the modification of the beliefs to ensure respect and inclusion grows within the organization
- Enable integration of sensitivity and appropriateness into each employee through positive appreciation and reinforcement
- Make these a conscious keeping and ongoing activity of HR

Ensuring a nurturing evolving respectful, inclusive culture is an ongoing activity. The HR as conscious keepers have to ensure this is ingrained into the DNA of the organization.

Reflections:

1. What are the typical gender related conversations that goes on in my organization?
2. To what extent are the values of respect and inclusion seen in my organizational culture?
3. What actions are taken to ensure no one gender feels compromised while working on any task in the organization?
4. What are the conscious keeping actions that are taken on an ongoing basis to ensure gender sensitivity is a part of the organizational culture?

—Dr. Kalpana Sampath, PhD.

7 predictions for the Social Enterprise industry in 2014

Last year was a stellar year for social entrepreneurship. Some of the biggest stories that hit the headlines were: India becoming the first country in the world to make CSR mandatory, the continued rise of social impact bonds, Delaware signing a legislation to form public benefit companies and Pierre Omidyar's decision to back ex-Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald to launch a new media organization that promises to be free, fair and fearless.

This year promises to build on the good work that has been put in the last decade and make rapid strides. Here's taking a hard look at the crystal ball to predict what might happen in 2014. Read on to find out more.

1) The consumer will start to weigh in:

Have you heard of the acronym LOHAS? No it isn't a top-secret government organization or the short form for Lutherans Outside Houston Acting as Santa. It stands for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability. These are a segment of consumers who will drive the future of social enterprises through their collective buying power. The size of the LOHAS market globally is around \$500 billion.

As more and more of these socially and environmentally conscious consumers, start to buy from companies that respect their sentiments, social enterprises with a triple bottom-line focus are bound to benefit. In advanced economies, like Japan and the US, consumers who fall under the LOHAS category can be between 10-30 per cent. In India, while the percentage of LOHAS consumers could be low, the overall numbers could see a dramatic increase as the young urban consumer base discovers products and services that are sold by socially and environmentally companies.

2) Governments will continue to play an important role:

Last year's G8 Social Impact Investing forum was headlined by David Cameron who is a long-term ambassador for social entrepreneurship. He displayed



Photo credit: publiseek.com

his commitment for social entrepreneurship by unleashing a number of initiatives including a multi-million pound investment into Big Society Capital. The US president Obama was not to be left behind as he announced the National Impact Initiative that solidifies the commitment to bolster impact investing in the country.

This year should see new programs being launched and old ones strengthened. In India, the government has taken a few steps to boost social entrepreneurship, like the launch of the Rs 5,500 crore India Inclusive Innovation Fund. But more is clearly needed, including a social enterprise policy and new laws, that will define the regulatory environment for this fledgling industry.

3) Corporates will become smarter with their social entrepreneurship engagement:

MNCs have been dabbling in some sort of social entrepreneurship that goes beyond their corporate social responsibility. Danone for instance teamed up with Muhammad Yunus' Grameen Foundation to launch Grameen

Danone Foods in 2006, a social business that sells products that are targeted at communities at the bottom of the pyramid (BoP). Coca-Cola's Coletivo initiative to build skills among low-income youth in Brazil has trained more than 50,000 young people in retailing, business operations, and basic entrepreneurship concepts since 2009.

This year, its highly likely that initiatives like this will only increase. It will be driven from the pressure from the LOHAS segment for companies to become more socially and environmentally responsible and companies trying to tap the estimated trillion dollar opportunity at the BoP. Government regulations might also prompt companies to launch social enterprises that could become million dollar businesses. They might take a leaf out of Korea, for example, where the biggest social enterprises are run by big conglomerates like Posco (POSCO Humans) and SK Group (Happynarae).

4) The rise and rise of the social intrapreneur:

In 2012, Ashoka: Innovators for the public launched a

competition called The League of Intrapreneurs: Building Better Business from the Inside Out to identify social intrapreneurs working at corporations and recognize their efforts. Social intrapreneurs are individuals inside organizations who initiate social initiatives inside their organizations that can then become a separate business.

MNCs might start to cultivate social intrapreneurs so that they could be seen as being more socially environmentally conscious and as a way to retain top talent that might seek to launch their own social enterprises. They might also be motivated to draft a social intrapreneur policy so that employees might understand how they can become social intrapreneurs.

5) Collaboration will become critical:

In an article last year the Guardian's secret social entrepreneur bemoaned the lack of collaboration among social enterprises by asking the question 'Why isn't social enterprise more social?'

It is a valid question to ask. Social enterprises are not hot on

collaboration. This leads to many social enterprises spending a lot of time, effort and resources on reinventing the wheel. The reasons are many, but perhaps one of the most important reasons being that it is difficult for knowledge to flow across geographies, given that social entrepreneurship is still a relatively new industry that's constantly changing.

This should hopefully change as social investors insist on social enterprises cutting costs and improve efficiencies through the right partnerships and alliances. New emerging collaborative platforms and conferences should also contribute to increased collaboration.

6) Successful social entrepreneurs will play an important role:

In Silicon Valley successful entrepreneurs go on to launch new enterprises, invest as angels, start tech incubators, launch their own VC firms and nurture other entrepreneurs by mentoring them.

The fact that there are only very few social entrepreneurs who have had big successes and they are spread across many cities and not concentrated in a few areas makes it difficult for social entrepreneurs to share their knowledge and experience. This year should see more successful social entrepreneurs start anew, mentor, incubate and invest in other social enterprises. The network effect of this is bound to be a big shot in the arm for the social enterprises industry.

7) Spread of social stock exchanges:

Last year the UK took a cue from Singapore's Impact Investment Exchange and launched its own version with Social Stock Exchange. Considering that other countries like the US, Canada, Australia usually end up following in the footsteps of the UK when it comes to social entrepreneurship practices, expect social stock exchanges to proliferate.

—Nelson Vinod Moses

The story was first published on www.social.yourstory.in

“It is nice to be interested in sports, because you work towards winning and it gives you a lot of focus.”

Dr. Lalitha Balakrishnan shares with Marie Banu how sports shapes one's character.

Dr. Lalitha Balakrishnan has been a topper in Rosary Matriculation School and an Outstanding Student of Ethiraj College. She has been a Sports Presenter on Rainbow FM and has participated in Television shows. She has been chosen by the US Dept of State to visit the USA in Mar 2011 as an Exchange Grantee under the prestigious IVLP - International Visitor Leadership Program

Dr. Lalitha Balakrishnan is presently the Principal of M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women, an arts and science college in Chennai. The College is affiliated with the University of Madras and is a self-financing institution offering 14 undergraduate, six postgraduate courses, and Ph.D. programme in commerce. The College has been reaccredited at A grade by NAAC- CGPA 3.51 /4.

Dr Lalitha has a passion to excel in whatever she does. She is interested in reading, crossword, and music, besides being an avid quizzier. She is fond of Hindi movies and prides in stating that she has never missed a cricket match at the Chepauk stadium.

In an exclusive interview, Dr. Lalitha Balakrishnan shares with Marie Banu how sports shapes one's personality.

In just two decades, you have created your own niche amongst the city colleges. What is the secret for this success?

When we talk about college and its growth, we should definitely talk about Dr. Nirmala Prasad. She had a vision for the college, built it up over the years, nourished it, brought it to where it is today and placed it on a pinnacle. Definitely, she not only dreamt about the immediate future, but also for a very long time to come. In that way she has paved the foundation and what MOP is today is more than 100 percent due to her.

Of course, we had a very encouraging and patronizing management who not only paid heed to Dr. Nirmala Prasad's good suggestion and wisdom, but also



Photo: Marie Banu

encouraged her to dream bigger. We have been fortunate in these areas.

Can you share with us about your childhood? Your interest in sports?

I went to Rosary Matriculation School in Chennai. We were given a wide exposure in all areas. Sports day was compulsory, and so was drills. More than the compulsion, we enjoyed being part of it. We had the House system that most schools have, and we had the score boards running. Everything was done in a professional and systematic way.

I owe a lot of what I am to my school, and am very proud to be a Rosarian that way. There, people used to come from all walks of life to talk to us, and there were sportsmen too.

I developed interest in cricket after listening to the commentaries, reading the newspapers, and writing letters to the editor on what happened on some days in the field. I also developed interest in tennis, as my brother used to play this sport and I used to join him to the tennis court. After I grew up and got married, my son followed Formula 1 racing. So, that also came into my agenda.

MOP College gives a lot of importance to sports and has won several accolades. What are your views about how sports shapes one's personality?

It is nice to be interested in sports, because you work towards winning and it gives you a lot of focus. At the same time, everyone cannot be a winner. So, when you lose, you learn to lose gracefully. You learn to function as a team. As a loner, you can

succeed in many ways, but when you are able to take your team along with you, that is the best that can happen anywhere!

Sports shapes one's character – to adjust, to be with the team, to sacrifice one's individual interest in the interest of the team. It is a great level head in that aspect.

The youth of today are interested in virtual games. Your thoughts?

The youth of today are playing with people who are not there. The excitement of running or shouting in the field is okay as you need not have to do that in a claustrophobic atmosphere - in your drawing room shouting at each other – because you have vented all your feelings in the outfield.

There are certain things that children of today are losing out on. Even when I brought up my son, in the mid 80's and early 90's, there was some playing on the ground. Now, you find that very less as even a Pre-Kg a child goes for tuitions, and the mother wanting to watch television allows her child to play on the computer.

I think the art of outdoor games is totally dying down.

Your college encourages enrollment of special children in certain undergraduate courses. Can you please tell us more about this?

Each one is gifted and talented in a particular way. So, instead of saying that something is not right in you; you rather encourage something that is good in you. That is a very nice attitude to adopt and that way we have been encouraging children with special needs.

About the culture and discipline of your college. What are the special sessions that you conduct for your students?

The beginning school and finishing school, is not only to earn a degree. It is about having a right attitude towards life. Tomorrow, if you are going to settle down in your life, as a career woman or as a housewife, or both— you need to know certain things apart from having the right qualification and aptitude. One needs to know how to get along with people, how to make marriage workable and successful, how to behave in a party, and how to conduct oneself in a meeting. All these nitty-gritties are being taught in our college.

The parents are definitely giving us a good feedback and express that they are happy to have their wards study in our college. We do not have any parent complaining that we have packed many modules outside the curriculum.

Although MOP appears to be an affluent college from the outside, you do have children from the backward communities studying here. What are the scholarship schemes offered to these students?

We have a lot of students who are economically backward and insist in joining our college. Thanks to our management, we are able to provide such candidates with scholarships. We offer full fee waiver for at least one semester and we do not make it seem as though we have done the students a favour. We in turn make them work for about 100 to 150 hours in any of our College departments, like library, or office administration, or Public Relations, so that they feel that they have earned a part of the money to fulfill the fees.

Can you tell us about the community initiatives being coordinated by your college?

We have adopted five schools and three of them are in and around Thirutani. They are in a disadvantaged zone as they are in the suburbs and not in the city. When our students visit them, they are able to talk to them, share the latest happenings, and even entertain them. They feel very happy and our students have told me that on subsequent visits these rural students did the guard of honor and welcomed them cheerfully.

This year, the outreach programme is being organized in 5 schools and we have hand-picked 50 children who are most deserving for this purpose. We offer breakfast five days a week, as the mid day meal is provided by the state. This is called 'Project Aahar'.

We feel that breakfast is a very important meal. If you miss that, it tells on your health and concentration power.