

SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL INSIGHTS

CSR | ESG | SUSTAINABILITY

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KEY NEWS ON CSR, ESG & SUSTAINABILITY

TOP 500 FIRMS LIKELY TO GET 'QUOTA' FOR INTERNS BASED ON CSR SPEND

THE GOVERNMENT plans to talk to the top 500 companies and mutually agree on a “voluntary quota system” for taking on board interns under the employment package announced in the Budget 2024-25. The “quota system” would be based on the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure of these companies, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan told The Indian Express.



UNSPENT CSR FUNDS HIT FIVE-YEAR HIGH OF RS 1,475 CRORE IN FY23, SHOWS DATA

Not all listed companies above a threshold have spent the required portion of funds on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) areas. This unspent amount stood at a five-year high of Rs 1,475 crore during 2022-23 (FY23).



A POLICY SOON TO CHANNEL CSR FUNDS IN EDUCATION: KARNATAKA DEPUTY CM SHIVAKUMAR

The government of Karnataka will soon formulate a policy to mandate corporates in the States to direct their Corporate Social Responsibility finds to education, said Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.

MCA SEEKS EASING OF CSR RULES, FUNDS FOR MCA21, NCLT

The ministry of corporate affairs has proposed a few key changes in corporate social responsibility (CSR) rules, including a hike in the cap for “administrative expenses” incurred by the companies under CSR function to 10% from 5% now. As part of a set of recommendations made to the finance ministry ahead of the Budget 2024-25, the MCA also sought longer timeline for completion of projects taken up under CSR.

CSR INITIATIVE BY HYUNDAI MOTOR INDIA LIMITED: ART OF HOPE



Introduction to the Organisation

Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF) was formed in 2006 with a purpose of 'giving back' to society and to initiate CSR activities, in line with Hyundai's vision of 'Progress for Humanity'. HMIF has undertaken many welfare projects in line with the Hyundai Motor Company's global Creating Shared Values project 'Continue' that demonstrates the company's commitment to sustainable future with a focus on Earth, Mobility, and Hope. HMIF undertakes activities under the pillars of 'Earth', 'Mobility' and 'Hope' focus on community development, healthcare, educational and vocational training, environment, road-safety, art, science and technology.

The Purpose

The Art for Hope programme is a one-of-its kind project initiated by HMIF. Inspired by Hyundai's global vision of 'Progress for Humanity', the programme aims to showcase India's rich heritage in art, craft and culture and help elevate the lives of artisans and craftspeople who were affected by the pandemic.

The initiative spans various artistic domains, including visual arts, digital arts, performance arts, folk traditional arts and community arts.



By creating opportunities for these groups to connect, learn, and thrive, the initiative seeks to strengthen the cultural landscape and promote inclusivity in the artistic community.

Through strategic partnerships and tailored support, it endeavors to uplift and amplify the voices of emerging talents, contributing to a more vibrant and diverse cultural scene in India.

Theory of Change

Art plays a pivotal role in shaping India's rich cultural tapestry. Artists, through their creations, preserve traditions, challenge norms, and reflect societal values.

Their contributions serve as a mirror to our collective identity and heritage, warranting acknowledgment and celebration. By spotlighting artists and their works, Art for hope not only honors their talent, but also amplifies diverse narratives, fostering understanding and unity. Recognizing artists bolsters cultural appreciation, stimulates creativity, and ensures the preservation of India's artistic legacy for future generations. In essence, valuing and promoting artists is essential for nurturing a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape in India.



Steps in the project

Launched in 2021, the programme aimed to provide financial assistance and encouragement to the pandemic-struck arts and culture community in India, through an exclusive grant programme.

The programme has now developed as an annual flagship art-grant programme of HMIF to provide support and encouragement to youth, women, folk and tribal artists who do not have a platform to showcase their arts. In the second edition (FY 2022-23), 51 artists including two differently-abled artists, as well as collectives were supported through 35 grants across 20 states and union territories of India. The artworks were showcased for community viewing in two exhibitions held at Bikaner House, New Delhi and InKo Centre, Chennai. The exhibitions were visited by 3700+ people and 1180 children and youth who participated in free art workshops held along with the exhibition for promotion of traditional arts.

The third edition of the programme (FY 2023-24) supported 30 grant projects focusing on revival of traditional arts, projects around environmental and social awareness. In addition to the 30 grants 10 grants for the differently-abled artists.

An exclusively curated virtual training in accessible format was held differently-over a period of 12 weeks, where the PWD's along with their caregivers were upskilled in soft skills, communication, portfolio management, social media,

personal branding, exposure to art exhibition setting up, cataloging art, basic legal awareness and financial literacy, etc.

Through a meticulous evaluation process by a celebrated jury panel, artists are shortlisted based on parameters like project concept and impact, artist portfolio, and their respective backgrounds.

Monitoring and Evaluation Processes

In order to assess the effectiveness of the program, a multi-faceted approach is followed. At the beginning of the program, the project KPIs were aligned with the project's objectives that include metrics such as the number of artists supported, community engagement levels, the reach of public exhibitions, and the quality of the art produced, market linkages opportunities are set. These are broken down into timeline milestones.

The monitoring and evaluation in this program is done two ways – one involving the beneficiary artists and other with focus on community engagement and interaction.

There are regular artist check-ins through direct one-one one and group discussions,

documentation of artistic processes through photos, videos and written reports.



A detailed record is kept of community involvement, including the number of participants in workshops, public feedback, and the diversity of groups engaged. There are visitor surveys at exhibitions through visitor books and through a team of volunteers who record feedback. This data has helped us identify new audiences created for the arts through our intervention. 61.1% of the audience at our third-year grant exhibition were first time visitors to an art exhibition despite the exhibition being held at an extremely popular venue for arts and culture activities.

After the completion of the project, comprehensive evaluation to measure the overall success is done. This includes comparing the outcomes against the original objectives and KPIs.

An evaluation of economic benefits to the artists and the community, such as income generated from art sales, increased visibility leading to further opportunities for artists, or job creation within the community, is also done.

Outcomes and Impacts

From nurturing preservation of the “Tarpa” music, a subject often seen in famous Warli paintings by supporting training community youth in indigenous musical instrument by one of the last practitioners, to supporting a young artist-activist making art from the waste collected from the community beach cleanup drives or the compelling story of three artists coming together to make an art documentary film to highlight environmental concerns arising due to uncontrolled mangrove destruction due to construction activities along the Panjim – Bambolim highway ,



Art for Hope has been successful in unearthing unsung artists and bringing to life their fascinating stories. In the past three years, HMIF has consistently dedicated itself to promoting art and culture, awarding 100 grants adding up to Rs. 1.05 crore of direct financial help to artists in the last 3 years.

Empowered by the grants and resources provided, the artists have been able to continue their work, create new opportunities for themselves, and contribute to the cultural landscape of India. Many artists have reported increased confidence, improved skills, and greater recognition in their fields.

By promoting cultural preservation, the program has helped sustain the identity and diversity of various communities. The public exhibitions have educated audiences about traditional arts, fostering a deeper appreciation and encouraging the continued practice of these art forms.

The program has also raised awareness about critical issues among the public. The engagement of diverse audiences in these discussions has contributed to a broader societal understanding of the issues addressed by the artists.

In addition the program has fostered inclusivity and strengthened community bonds by bringing people together around shared cultural experiences. The inclusive nature of the program has helped bridge social divides and promote understanding across different community groups.

The economic empowerment of artists has had a ripple effect on their communities, contributing to broader economic development.

The exhibitions and workshops have attracted significant public interest, with thousands of people attending and participating. This increased public engagement has been a key outcome of the program's efforts to make art more accessible. By drawing large and diverse audiences to its events, Art for Hope has helped broaden the reach and appeal of the arts. This increased engagement has also contributed to a greater public appreciation of the role of art in society and its potential to drive social change.

Challenges Faced

The first major challenge is in identifying and engaging with artists from marginalized communities,

including those in remote or rural areas.

These artists often lack access to digital platforms and networks, making it harder to communicate opportunities and provide support. It required extra effort in outreach and collaboration with local organizations to ensure that these artists were aware of and could benefit from the program.

Designing and delivering accessible training programs and support for differently-abled artists in addition to artists that come from different areas, educational backgrounds etc. was a complex task. The need to adapt content into accessible formats and provide personalized support to meet diverse needs added layers of complexity to the program.

There are also logistical challenges and some hurdles faced in organizing exhibitions, workshops, and training sessions across multiple locations in India involving significant logistical coordination. Challenges included securing appropriate venues suitable for display of different arts, managing transportation of artworks, and ensuring the participation of artists and audiences.

Balancing the expectations and interests of a wide range of stakeholders, including artists, community partners, and audiences, was challenging. Different stakeholders often had varying priorities, which required careful negotiation and alignment.

Sustainability and Exit Strategy:

In Art for Hope, measures like yearly grant programme, digital archiving of all projects, yearly multi-city exhibition, dialogues on significant social and environmental issues and promotion of dying arts linking with Hyundai's other thematic areas ensure there is a continued support.



Further, sustainability tracking is done by assessing the long-term impact of the project by tracking whether the benefits (e.g., continued community engagement, preservation of cultural practices, or ongoing art-related activities) persist beyond the project's end.

Any new projects or initiatives that have been inspired by Art for Hope are analyzed, indicating a ripple effect of the program's influence. Case studies of specific projects and participants and highlighting successes, challenges, and learnings from the program are also documented.

There are plans to establish a digital platform for sales, opportunity linkage and visibility in addition to archiving the arts to ensure the artistic legacy continues forever.

THE BUDGET 2024 ON CSR AND SKILLS: FROM THE SPEECH BY FINANCE MINISTER NIRMALA SITHARAMAN

(These quotes emphasize the government's focus on CSR and skill development as key pillars for national progress in the 2024 budget.)

“
"The government encourages businesses to continue their focus on CSR activities that are aligned with national priorities and contribute to societal well-being."
”

“
"Corporate Social Responsibility is not just a statutory obligation but a moral imperative for companies to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development."
”

“
"We urge corporates to channel their CSR funds towards impactful projects that align with the nation's development goals, including education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability."
”

“
"We are expanding our skill development initiatives to ensure that our youth are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in an evolving job market, particularly in sectors critical to the country's growth."
”

“
"Skill development remains a top priority as we aim to harness the potential of our demographic dividend by providing young Indians with the skills they need to succeed in a dynamic global economy."
”

“
"Our commitment to skill development extends to rural and urban areas alike, ensuring that opportunities for growth and employment are available to all."
”

SOME ADDITIONAL QUOTES BY OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS RELATED TO THE 2024 UNION BUDGET SPEECH:

(These quotes provide a broader perspective on the emphasis placed on CSR and skills development by various government officials in the 2024 Union Budget.)

On Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):



"Incentivizing CSR contributions is a step towards fostering a culture where businesses actively participate in community development and national progress."

- Jitendra Singh,
Minister of State for Science
and Technology



"The role of corporate entities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is crucial, and we must leverage CSR funds to address pressing social challenges."

- Piyush Goyal,
Minister of Commerce and
Industry



"Companies that invest in CSR initiatives not only fulfill their social responsibilities but also create lasting value for society and the environment."

- Dr. S. Jaishankar,
Minister of External Affairs



"We are enhancing the framework for CSR to ensure greater transparency and effectiveness in the allocation of funds towards societal development projects."

- Harsh Vardhan,
Minister of Health and Family
Welfare

SOME ADDITIONAL QUOTES BY OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS RELATED TO THE 2024 UNION BUDGET SPEECH:

(These quotes provide a broader perspective on the emphasis placed on CSR and skills development by various government officials in the 2024 Union Budget.)

On Skills Development:



"Investing in skill development programs is essential for empowering our youth and equipping them with the competencies needed to excel in emerging industries."

- Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship



"We are committed to creating a robust ecosystem that supports lifelong learning and skill enhancement to prepare our workforce for the future."

- Anurag Thakur, Minister of Information and Broadcasting



"Our strategy includes expanding vocational training programs to bridge the gap between education and employment, ensuring that skills match industry needs."

- Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways and IT



"The government is focused on creating opportunities for skill development that are accessible to all, particularly for women and underrepresented communities."

- Smriti Irani, Minister of Women and Child Development

SURVEYS CONDUCTED BY NCN

INTRODUCTION

The National CSR Network (NCN) recently conducted two pivotal surveys to assess the current landscape of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in India and identify actionable strategies for improvement. As CSR becomes increasingly integral to business operations, understanding the factors that facilitate or hinder these initiatives is crucial for maximizing their impact.

The first survey, titled "Ease of Doing CSR," sought to identify key strategies that could simplify and enhance the effectiveness of CSR activities. Respondents were asked to prioritize strategies such as Simplifying Regulations, Providing Tax Incentives, Offering More Training, and Increasing Collaboration. The results highlighted a clear preference for collaborative approaches, indicating a strong belief in the power of partnerships between corporations, NGOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders to drive more impactful CSR initiatives.

The second survey, "Biggest Challenge in Implementing CSR Initiatives," aimed to uncover the primary obstacles organizations face when executing CSR programs. Four key challenges were examined: Difficulty in Measuring Impact, Regulatory & Compliance Issues, Budget & Resource Constraints, and Inadequate Leadership Support. The findings revealed that measuring the impact of CSR efforts is the most significant challenge, emphasizing the need for robust frameworks and training to ensure accurate assessment and reporting of CSR activities.

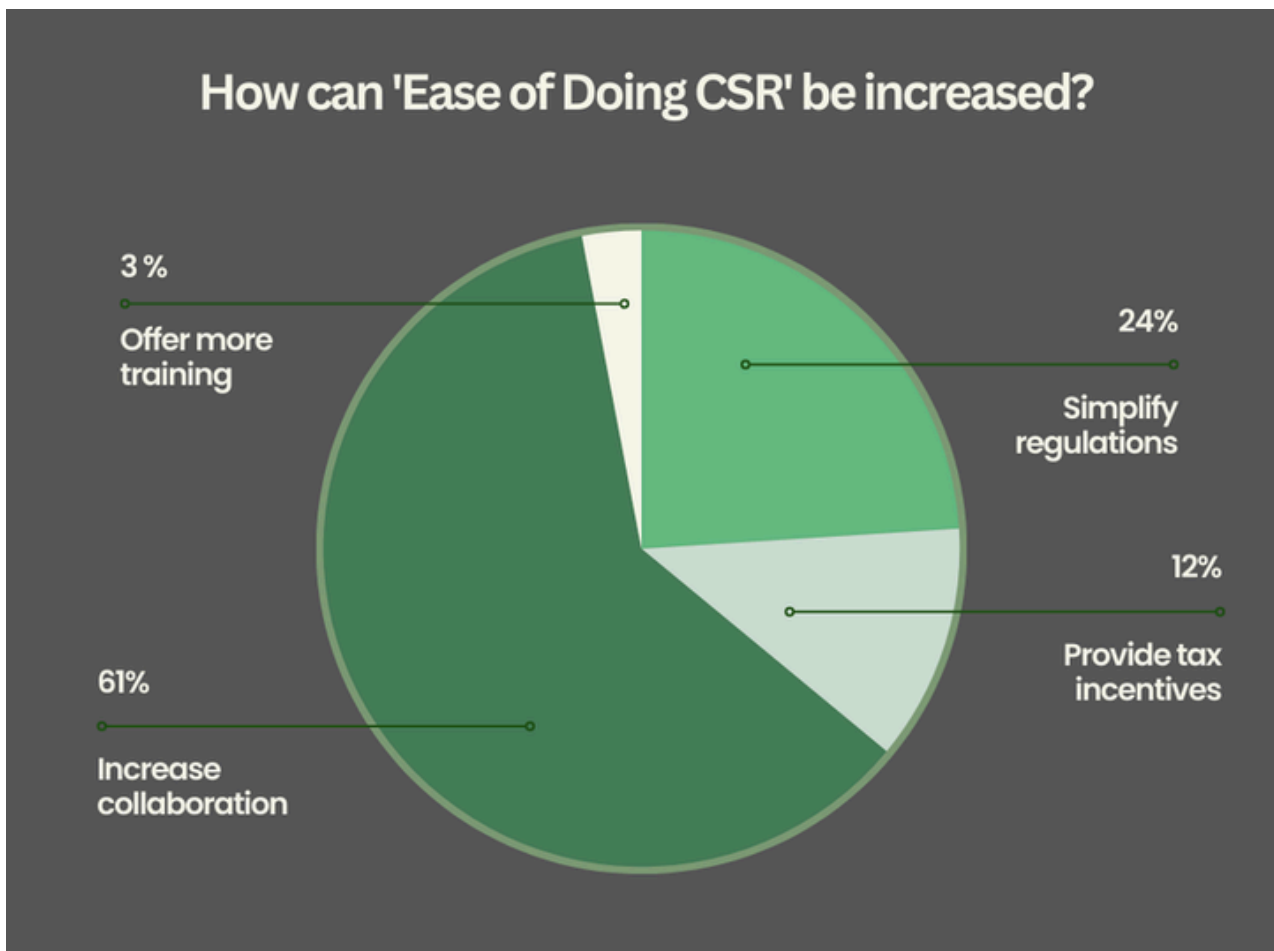
Together, these surveys provide valuable insights into the current challenges and opportunities within the CSR space. By addressing the identified obstacles and leveraging the preferred strategies, organizations can create a more conducive environment for CSR, ultimately leading to more sustainable and socially responsible business practices. The recommendations drawn from these surveys offer a roadmap for enhancing the ease and effectiveness of CSR, enabling organizations to contribute more significantly to societal well-being and development.

SURVEY - 1

How can 'Ease of Doing CSR' be increased?

Introduction:

Enhancing the ease of doing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is crucial for increasing the effectiveness and impact of CSR initiatives. To identify the most effective strategies to improve the ease of doing CSR, a survey was conducted, presenting four key strategies: Simplifying Regulations, Providing Tax Incentives, Offering More Training, and Increasing Collaboration. This report outlines these strategies based on survey results and provides recommendations for their implementation.



Recommendations:

Based on the quantitative data collected through the National CSR Network opinion poll on LinkedIn, as reflected in the accompanying graph, the following strategies are believed to be the most effective in increasing the ease of doing CSR:

SURVEY - 1

How can 'Ease of Doing CSR' be increased?

- Increasing Collaboration, which received the highest priority with 61% support through the survey, focuses on fostering partnerships between corporations, NGOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders. This approach encourages shared resources, knowledge, and expertise, leading to more effective and scalable CSR initiatives. Collaborative efforts also ensure that CSR activities are aligned with broader social goals, creating a greater collective impact.
- Simplifying Regulations, with 24% support, aims to streamline legal and regulatory processes associated with CSR activities. This strategy involves reducing bureaucratic hurdles, offering clear guidelines, and providing a more predictable regulatory environment. Simplifying regulations can lower the entry barrier for companies, especially smaller businesses, and enable them to participate more actively in CSR.
- Providing Tax Incentives, which garnered 12% support, focuses on offering financial incentives to companies that engage in CSR activities. Tax incentives can motivate more companies to invest in CSR by reducing the financial burden and making CSR initiatives more economically viable. This strategy also encourages long-term commitment to CSR, as companies are more likely to continue their efforts when they see tangible financial benefits.
- Offering More Training, though the least prioritized at 3%, remains important for equipping CSR professionals with the necessary skills and knowledge to execute successful CSR initiatives. Training programs can cover areas such as project management, monitoring and evaluation, and sustainability practices. By building capacity within organizations, this strategy ensures that CSR activities are carried out efficiently and effectively.

Conclusion:

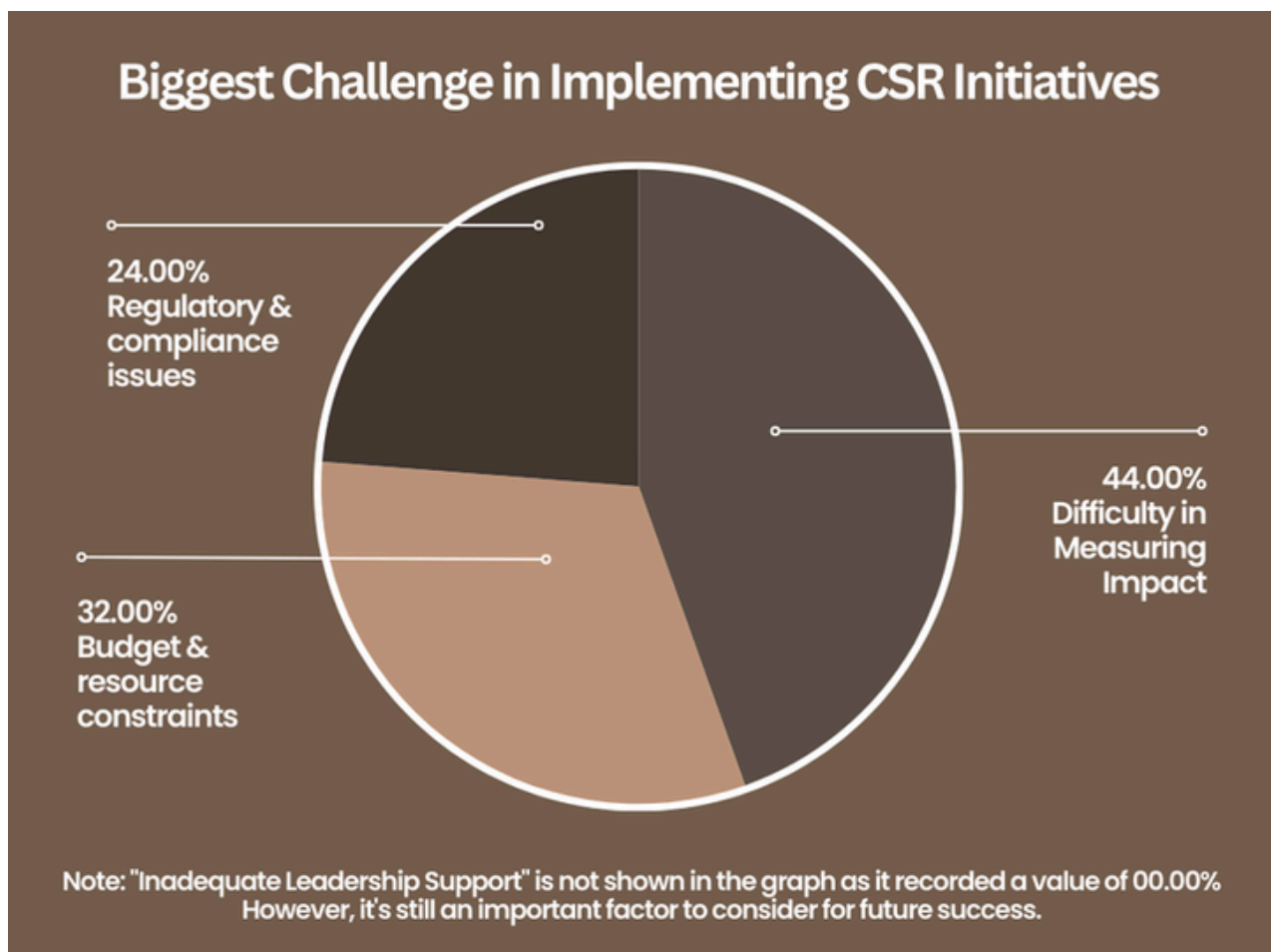
To effectively increase the ease of doing CSR, a multifaceted approach is essential. Increasing collaboration among stakeholders is the most favored strategy, followed by simplifying regulations, providing tax incentives, and offering more training. Implementing these recommendations can create a more supportive and enabling environment for CSR, allowing organizations to maximize their social impact and contribute to sustainable development.

SURVEY - 2

What is the Biggest Challenge in Implementing CSR Initiatives?

Introduction:

Understanding the biggest challenges organizations face in implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives is critical for devising effective strategies to overcome these obstacles. A recent survey was conducted to identify the primary challenges organizations encounter in their CSR efforts. The survey presented four key challenges: Difficulty in Measuring Impact, Regulatory & Compliance Issues, Budget & Resource Constraints, and Inadequate Leadership Support. This report outlines the survey results and provides recommendations based on the findings.



Recommendations:

Based on the survey data, the following strategies are recommended to address the identified challenges:

SURVEY - 2

What is the Biggest Challenge in Implementing CSR Initiatives?

- Addressing the difficulty in measuring impact, which is the primary challenge (44%), requires robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Organizations should set clear objectives, define key performance indicators (KPIs), and use data analytics to measure impact effectively. Investing in training for CSR teams is also essential to enhance their skills in impact assessment and reporting.
- To overcome regulatory and compliance issues (24%), organizations can establish dedicated teams or hire consultants to navigate the regulatory landscape, ensuring compliance with relevant laws. Engaging in dialogue with regulatory bodies is also crucial for staying informed about changes and advocating for supportive CSR policies.
- Budget and resource constraints (32%) can be addressed by exploring cost-effective CSR initiatives that align with organizational strengths and forming partnerships to share resources. A strategic CSR budget that aligns with organizational goals will help maximize impact.
- Lastly, while leadership support did not emerge as a significant challenge in the survey, it remains crucial. Fostering a culture of CSR within leadership ensures that leaders actively promote and participate in CSR activities, contributing to the overall success of the initiatives.

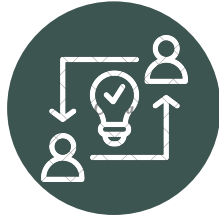
Conclusion:

The survey highlights that the primary challenge in implementing CSR initiatives is the difficulty in measuring impact, followed by budget and resource constraints. Addressing these challenges requires a strategic approach that includes developing effective measurement frameworks, managing regulatory compliance, and optimizing resource allocation. While inadequate leadership support did not emerge as a significant challenge in this survey, fostering leadership engagement remains a key factor for the overall success of CSR programs. By implementing these recommendations, organizations can enhance their CSR efforts and achieve greater social and environmental impact.

ABOUT US



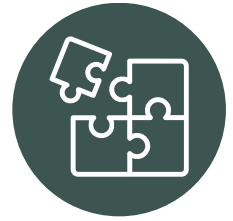
Section 8 Company



Industry led & managed organization governed by a strong Advisory Council



Interactive platform for CSR Stakeholders



Insights & Solutions to address pain points



THE AAA APPROACH

- ADVISORY:** CSRStrategy, Capacity Building, Professional Development, Influence and Advocacy, Knowledge and Expertise, Recognition and Awards
- ALLIANCE:** Networking Opportunities, Collaboration and Innovation Government, Access to Resources and Information, Resource Sharing
- AMPLIFY:** Best Practices, Brand Building, Showcasing Work, Recruitment and Talent Acquisition Community and Support

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