

**03 MARCH 2025**

**NATIONAL CSR NETWORK'S  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON THE THEME:  
“ALIGNING CSR WITH ESG”**

**PREPARED BY :**

NATIONAL CSR NETWORK

# CONTENTS

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## 1. List of Attendees

## 2. Agenda

## 3. Theme Address

By Mr. Praveen Karn

## 4. Presentation - 01

**Theme : Periphery? Core? Journey of Transformation**

By Dr. Lichia Saner-Yiu

## 5. Presentation - 02

**Theme : Aligning CSR, ESG, SDGs: Trade- Offs and Synergies**

By Dr. Raymond Saner

## 6. Key Insights

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# LIST OF ATTENDEES



**Dr. Lichia Saner-Yiu**  
*President & Co-founder,  
(CSEND), Geneva*



**Dr. Raymond Saner**  
*Titular Professor, Basle  
University & Co-founder of  
CSEND*



**Mr. Praveen Karn**  
*Head Sustainability & CSR,  
Spark Minda Group*



**Mr. Sameer Madan**  
*Director of Country  
Controllership Org.,  
Agilent Technologies*



**Ms. Ravinder Singh**  
*AGM – CSR, BHEL*



**Mr. Devasheesh Kumar**  
*HR Head, C&S - Siemens  
Electric Ltd.*



**Ms. Kavita Sah**  
*CSR Head, CNH Industrial*



**Mr. Vishal Dhingra**  
*India Finance Head,  
Cognex Corporation*



**Ms. Shivani Agrawal**  
*AVP, CRC Group*



**Mr. Joy Mukherjee**  
*Addl GM CSR, DCM  
Shriram Ltd.*



**Mr. Hammad Abedin**  
*Manager Community  
Projects, Dr. Shroff's  
Charity Eye Hospital*



**Ms. Muskan Jain**  
*AVP- Global CSR Lead, EXL  
Service*



**Ms. Anyuta Dhir**  
*HR Director, Fin Tech – IT  
/ ITES / BPM*



**Mr. Neeraj Mehra**  
*VP HR, Infogain*



**Ms. Akshita Shukla**  
*Head ESG & CSR, PI  
Industries*



**Mr. Vipul S.**  
*DGM CSR, Power Grid  
Corporation of India*



**Mr. Gambhir Agrawal**  
*Head CSR, Relaxo  
Footwears Limited*



**Ms. Abida Aneez**  
*Head CSR, Legrand*



**Mr. Parvind Negi**  
*DGM / Section Head – CSR,  
SJVN*

# AGENDA

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION "Aligning CSR for ESG"

11:00 AM - 01:00 PM | 03rd March 2025 | MONDAY

### Flow of discussion

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKERS
11:00 AM – 11:05 AM	Welcome Remarks	National CSR Network
11:05 AM– 11:15AM	Theme Address	Mr. Praveen Karn Group Head Sustainability & CSR Minda Corporation Limited
11:15 AM –11:30AM	Presentation - 01	Dr. Lichia Saner - Yiu President CSEND - Geneva
11:30 AM– 11:45AM	Presentation - 02	Dr. Raymond Saner Prof. at University of Basel
11:45 AM – 01:00 PM	Discussion	Participant Engagement
01:00 PM	Networking & Lunch	
Close		

## THEME ADDRESS

By Mr. Praveen Karn

### CSR vs. ESG (Post-2013 Amendment)

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) focuses on ROI, profit, and societal impact.
- Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) covers carbon impact, security, diversity, inclusion, and governance.
- European influence has strengthened ESG frameworks and regulations.
- Investors consider ESG compliance as a key factor in investment decisions and business sustainability.

### Key Impact Areas

- ESG compliance extends to supply chain and value chain partners.
- Companies with strong ESG frameworks gain higher customer trust and brand credibility.
- Studies show that ESG-compliant businesses enjoy long-term market value and positive consumer perception.
- Over 50,000 companies globally follow ESG frameworks.
- The Government of India has introduced carbon neutrality targets and broader sustainability goals.

### Challenges in ESG Implementation

- High costs related to software, infrastructure, and capital expenditure (CapEx).
- Complex ESG data management and reporting.
- Greenwashing risks due to misleading ESG claims.
- Audit and compliance challenges, as not all companies are currently required to comply.
- Supply chain partners face additional pressure to integrate ESG practices.
- Increasing regulatory expectations pushing businesses toward ESG compliance.

### Future Outlook (2030 & Beyond)

- ESG compliance is expected to become standard across all sectors.
- Companies must take greater ownership of their ESG responsibilities.
- Aligning CSR with ESG can help overcome implementation challenges.
- ESG presents vast opportunities for businesses and humanity in shaping a sustainable corporate future.

# PRESENTATION : 01

Theme : Periphery? Core? Journey of Transformation

By Dr. Lichia Saner-Yiu

## Key Points Discussed

- **CSR Integration:** Explored the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into core business strategies, emphasizing its importance for aligning with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Current CSR State:** Highlighted that CSR typically remains a peripheral concern; its incorporation into corporate strategy is essential for managing risks and enhancing competitiveness.
- **Market Dynamics:** Discussed the rising pressures from regulations and stakeholders that require a deeper implementation of CSR, driven by changes in shareholder activism and consumer expectations.
- **Cohesion in Sustainability Strategies:** Stressed that unifying CSR, ESG, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enhances credibility and minimizes inefficiencies, fostering investor trust.
- **Embedding Strategic CSR:** Suggested aligning CSR initiatives with ESG and SDGs as a pathway to innovation and business renewal.
- **Benefits of CSR Integration:** Affirmed that effective CSR implementation can lead to improved financial performance, competitive advantages, and fulfillment of stakeholder needs.
- **Challenges and Strategies:** Addressed the difficulties in navigating short-term profit pressures versus long-term sustainability ambitions, resistance from traditional corporate mindsets, and the need for better measurement frameworks. Proposed strategies include integrating CSR discussions at the board level and collaborating with policymakers on ESG disclosures.
- **Leading Examples:** Noted companies like Nestlé, Unilever, Tesla, and SAP as best practice examples in CSR and ESG integration.
- **Relevant SDGs:** Reviewed and focused on critical SDGs for businesses, specifically goals 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

## Key Learnings

- Embedding CSR in corporate strategies is vital for addressing both risks and competitive pressures in modern business.
- A cohesive approach to CSR, ESG, and SDGs not only builds credibility but also enhances investor and stakeholder confidence.

- Companies must balance immediate profitability with long-term sustainability to thrive in a changing market landscape.
- Engaging with stakeholders, including policymakers, is essential for effective CSR implementation and measuring impact.

## Conclusion

Concluded with an emphasis on the necessity for CSR to be foundational to business practices, with integration into ESG and SDGs providing key advantages and resilience for sustainable growth.



## PRESENTATION : 02

Theme : Aligning CSR, ESG, SDGs: Trade- Offs and Synergies

By Dr. Raymond Saner

### Key Points Discussed

- **CSEND Document Overview:**
  - Published in 2025, focusing on various developmental and sustainability topics.
- **India's Development Initiatives (VNR 2020):**
  - Poverty Alleviation: Over 271 million lifted out of multidimensional poverty.
  - Sashakt Bharat - Sabal Bharat: Empowerment and resilience initiatives.
  - Swachh Bharat- Swasth Bharat: Emphasis on cleanliness and health.
  - Samagra Bharat- Saksham Bharat: Focus on inclusivity and entrepreneurship.
  - Satat Bharat - SanatanBharat: Commitment to sustainability.
  - Sampanna Bharat, Samriddh Bharat: Aiming for prosperity and vibrancy.
- **Urban Development Metrics:**
  - Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs): 195 cities participating globally; Bhopal is India's representative.
  - Happy City Index: Bengaluru ranked 210, Chennai at 232 out of 250 cities.
  - SDSN Benchmarks for BRICS: India scored 109, compared to other BRICS nations.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Progress:**
  - General progress noted, but significant gaps in SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).
    - Aadhaar Coverage: 95.5% of the population covered.
    - Birth Registration: 89% of children under five registered.
    - Crime Charge Sheeting: 71.3% rate for IPC crimes.
- **Macro-Level SDG Implementation:**
  - Variability in implementation across countries.
  - Conflicts between economic growth and environmental sustainability.
  - Inconsistent enforcement of SDGs in global markets.
- **Social and Financial Inclusion in India:**
  - Focus on universal access to essential services and economic empowerment.
  - Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM): A framework for financial inclusion.
  - Significant benefits for over 200 million women through economic initiatives.

- **Multi-Level Reviews of SDG Implementation:**
  - Voluntary National Review (VNR): National level assessments.
  - Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSR): Regional/state level evaluations.
  - Voluntary Metropolitan Review (VMR): Focus on metropolitan contributions.
  - Voluntary Local Review (VLR): Community and municipal efforts.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):**
  - Adopted by the UN in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda.
  - 17 goals addressing global issues like poverty, inequality, and climate action.
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## Key Learnings

- **Integration of Sustainability:** Emphasizes the need for integrating sustainable development initiatives across micro (CSR), meso (ESG), and macro (SDGs) levels for comprehensive impact.
- **Social and Financial Inclusion:** Highlights the effectiveness of targeted strategies, such as the JAM initiative, in empowering marginalized populations and promoting economic growth.

- **Collaboration Importance:** Stresses the necessity of collaboration between public and private sectors to ensure effective implementation and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Focus on Long-term Goals:** Encourages a shift from short-term gains to long-term sustainability and social responsibility in business practices.
- **Comprehensive Reporting:** Underlines the need for more thorough reporting on SDG progress, particularly in areas like justice and institutional accountability.

## Conclusion

The discussion highlights the importance of integrated sustainability efforts and collaboration among stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Prioritizing social inclusion and transparency is essential for creating a more equitable and sustainable future.



## KEY INSIGHTS

### 1. Mr. Neeraj Mehra

- Focus on CSR in education and nutrition.
- Challenge: Encouraging greater participation in CSR initiatives.
- Clients and partners are committed to achieving carbon neutrality.
- Exploring strategies to increase engagement in sustainability efforts.

### 2. Ms. Abida Aneez

- Representing Legal India, an electrical sector company operating in 40 countries.
- Key challenges include ensuring a green supply chain for steel and addressing climate diversity, inclusion, and CSR.
- Since 2020, focus areas have included education, health, skill development, disaster management, and environmental sustainability.
- Internal resistance to ESG initiatives as they are relatively new.
- Need for reliable suppliers offering sustainable alternatives, particularly in electrical appliances.
- Efforts to make Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs) more sustainable.
- Challenges in plastic recycling due to lack of support.

### 3. Ms. Anyuta Dhir

- Emphasized the importance of sustainability and resource efficiency in business operations.

### 4. Ms. Akshita Shukla

- Discussed strategies for integrating sustainability into the business space effectively.

### 5. Mr. Sameer Madan

- Advocates for a bottom-up approach in CSR initiatives.
- The target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.
- Implemented report-based printing in offices to reduce paper waste, achieving a 60% reduction in paper usage.
- Stress that profitability is a prerequisite for effective CSR and ESG implementation.

### 6. Mr. Vipul Singh

- Ensures all projects align with SDGs, CSR, and ESG frameworks.
- Successfully eradicated 70,000 tons of carbon emissions through sustainable initiatives.
- Engaged in tree plantation drives.
- Noted that Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) face approval-related challenges in executing CSR initiatives.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### 7. Mr. Mohd.Hammad

- Focus on leveraging solar power to enhance energy efficiency in hospitals.

### 8. Mr. Gambhir Aggarwal

- Many companies are still struggling to integrate CSR into their core business strategy.
- ESG efforts predominantly focus on environmental sustainability and corporate backing.

### 9. Ms. Shivani Agarwal

- ESG is gaining more focus within companies.
- CSR funds are managed through employee-driven projects, fostering collective participation.
- Introduced an internal initiative where latecomers contribute to a pooled CSR fund.

### 10. Mr. Praveen Karn

- Companies face stakeholder pressure and must navigate diverse expectations.
- Emphasized the need to establish governance structures for ESG implementation.
- Management hesitance towards ESG adoption remains a challenge.
- Handling critical data for sustainability reporting is crucial.
- Sustainable supply chain development, aligned with SDGs, remains complex.
- Discussed a CSR-ESG initiative related to prison rehabilitation projects.

### 11. Ms. Kavita Sah

- Advocates for serving customers by improving their environmental conditions.
- Highlights a shortage of professionals in the CSR and ESG sectors.

### 12. Ms. Muskan Jain

- Focus on CSR market development and community skill enhancement.
- Emphasized skilling, education, and employment opportunities.
- ESG Council ensures holistic stakeholder alignment.
- Equally prioritizes Environmental, Social, and Governance (E, S, and G) aspects.
- Raised questions on measuring ROI in CSR and ESG, including SROI (Social Return on Investment), EROI (Environmental ROI), and GROI (Governance ROI).

### 13. Mr. Joy Mukherjee

- Works at the foundation level with a focus on water conservation and agriculture projects across India.
- Stressed the need for synergy between CSR and ESG for maximum impact.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### 14. Mr. Devasheesh Kumar

- Focus on education and health initiatives.
- Struggles with integrating sustainability into operations.
- Identified solar power as a low-hanging fruit for sustainability efforts.
- Examined additional strategies to reduce carbon footprint.

### 15. Mr. Parvind Negi

- Works in education(Industrial Training Institutes - ITIs) and healthcare (16 Mobile Medical Units - MMUs) while supporting skill development initiatives.

### 16. Mr. Vishal Dhingra

- Engaged in global initiatives focusing on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB).

### 17. Mr. Ravinder Singh

- BHEL is working to align CSR with ESG objectives.
- Implementing CSR projects for mentally challenged children.
- Integrating solar energy into production structures to enhance sustainability.

## Closing Remarks

- Ms. Lichia Saner-Yiu: Acknowledged the diverse and knowledgeable group contributing rich insights into CSR and ESG.
  - Mr. Raymond Saner: Emphasized the importance of moving beyond 2% compliance to focus on meaningful community development. Highlighted that giving back to society can also drive business profitability and long-term sustainability.
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## 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:** CSR Strategy, 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

For suggestions and feedback, Connect with us :



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