INDIAN SCHOOL OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Systems Convening for Philanthropy for Inclusive Development

A Summary

ISDM CENTRE FOR PHILANTHROPY FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT | desta®

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About the convening

The **Centre for Philanthropy for Inclusive Development (CPID)** at the **Indian School of Development Management (ISDM)** organised a first-of-its-kind **Systems Convening** on September 20, 2023 for advancing philanthropy as a force for more inclusive development in the country. A diverse group of stakeholders from the philanthropic community, including Funders, Social Purpose Organisations (SPOs) and Philanthropy Support Organisations (PSOs) came together to deliberate upon some of the recurring problems that confront Indian philanthropy. Using a systems thinking approach, the participants discussed the barriers that are hindering the existing system's ability to achieve desired outcomes or change, how each actor in the system might be contributing to the recurring problems and what could be done to break out of these systems traps in the country.

The event, facilitated by Desta Research LLP, marked the beginning of CPID's journey of co-inquiry into and co-creation of the system of philanthropy for inclusive development in the country. The convening helped to create a space where we (ecosystem enablers, funding organisations, philanthropists, SPOs, thought leaders and others) learnt together, challenged some of our own paradigms and discussed ways of collective action to promote equality, justice and a dignified life for all. This document summarises the key learnings from the convening, encapsulating the key challenges, the value of a systems thinking approach, takeaways from group discussions, questions, and actionable recommendations that emerged.

By synthesising the insights shared during the convening, this summary aims to inform and inspire CPID's ongoing efforts in creating a focal point for collaborative efforts towards building the movement for philanthropy for inclusive development in the country.


Malini Thadani
Strategic Advisor, ESG, CSR


Matilda Lobo

Context: Key characteristics of Indian Philanthropy

While philanthropy has always played a key role in supporting social change by filling the gaps left by the state and market, and in maintaining the growth of a strong civil society, data has shown that it can play a much greater role in elevating the marginalised communities and supporting complex causes to address the widening inequality divide in the country.

Development expenditure in India is still significantly borne by the public sector. Compared to their counterparts in high-income countries, the affluent in India give less to philanthropy.

Education and healthcare are top choices for CSR and individuals. There is a lower focus on areas like human rights, gender equality, women empowerment, populations such as youth-at-risk, marginalised communities such as Dalits, Tribals, religious minorities, as well as vulnerable populations such as prisoners, sex workers, immigrants, and the like.

CSR and philanthropic giving influence SPO focus. SPOs are concentrated in the education and health sectors. Tighter donor preferences limit the autonomy of SPOs, hindering their ability to innovate, adapt to local conditions, or address broader issues like gender and social justice.

SPOs frequently face resource shortages. Excessive monitoring and compliance burden, and lack of long-term flexible support, in turn, limits their agenda and scope of work. SPOs led by members of the Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi communities face even more challenges.

Location biases are leaving some states behind. Certain geographic regions receive disproportionate funding and support, while others remain underfunded and frequently overlooked (like northeastern states, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir). Most funds are allocated to states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu, which are not the poorest states, nor the lowest on the Human Development Index (HDI).

Preferred states, preferred causes. Even in states like Maharashtra and Gujarat, which receive substantial funding, areas related to human rights and environmental causes get much lower funding compared to the funds allocated for education and healthcare (Candid, 2023).

Disparity in the distribution of intermediary support to social sector organisations. Intermediaries or philanthropy support organisations in India are predominantly concentrated in a select few regions, with Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal having a notable presence, while the northeastern states lag significantly in this regard (CSIP, 2022).

Dilemmas confronting philanthropy in India

The convening strengthened our understanding of why approaches in giving are the way they are, leading to the biases above, and how they can evolve to become more inclusive.

We explored the following dilemmas confronting Indian philanthropy:

Inherent funder-grantee power dynamics vs. Trust-based relationships

What kind of power does a funder have over the recipient? How can funders be more flexible in their giving, listen more to SPO partners, and invest in developing organisational resilience? What responsibilities do SPOs have in setting realistic expectations, developing trust/transparency?

Risk-aversion vs Risk-taking

How much patient capital can private philanthropy practically provide to fuel innovation? How can it support unconventional solutions in complex areas where the government or the market can't intervene? Beyond funding, how can it nurture an ecosystem of partnerships, knowledge sharing and joint action for social change?

Output-driven approach vs. Outcome-driven approach

How do we strike a balance between Interventions yielding quick, visible outcomes versus those that require longer incubation periods and more flexibility to achieve meaningful outcomes?

Restricted funding vs. Unrestricted funding

How can funders give a proportion of funds for capacity-building and strengthening operational efficiency of the beneficiary organisations? How can they keep funding flexible funding for organisations to accommodate changing project needs and circumstances?

Community participation vs. Top-down approach

Instead of having a top-down approach of dictating solutions, how can organisations prioritise grassroot level experiences and community wisdom? To what extent do boards and the leadership incorporate grantee, community, or lower level staff input in major decisions? How can philanthropy empower communities to sustain themselves?

Own discretion vs. Accountability and transparency

What type of accountability is expected from funders where there are so many expectations and rules from beneficiaries? What information should they disclose publicly?

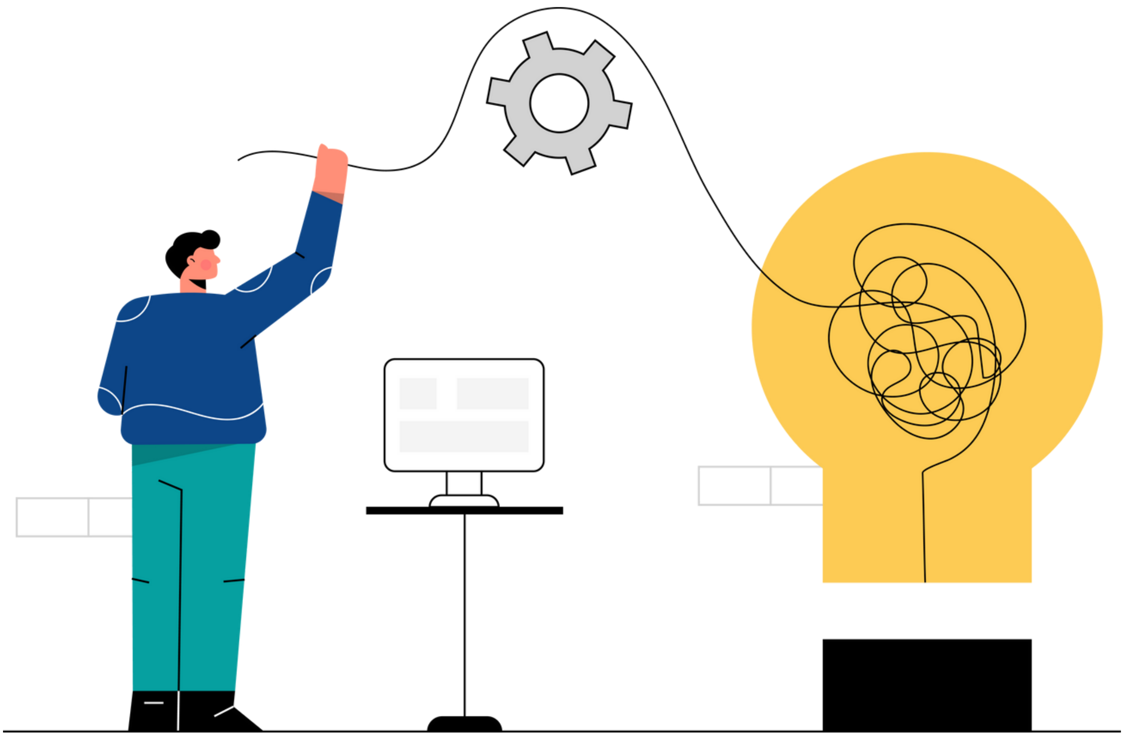
Increased projectisation of development vs Efficiency to drive scale

Is too much projectisation and templatisation of development leading to proportionately large amounts of energy and effort on reporting and compliance? Are funders consequently becoming more focused on deliverables than on strengthening the fundamentals of a more just society?

How systems thinking helps addressing the dilemmas

The challenges philanthropy is trying to address are interconnected, creating a degree of complexity for solving. These challenges involve various stakeholders at different levels, each with different goals. Despite best intentions and concerted efforts, the challenges persist. In order to understand what makes these challenges emerge and persist, it is important to study the interactions between the various stakeholders and identify the key traits and belief systems being reinforced. The interactions and relationships between these stakeholders generate this complexity leading to perpetual vicious cycles. Through this convening, an attempt was made to help the stakeholders zoom out and look at the larger system that they are part of. This allowed for them to be able to locate their own belief systems and institutional aspects that are, in unintended ways, perpetuating the problems they are trying to solve.

A mix of different tools and methods were used. The participants were shown causal loop diagrams that highlight the reasons for the prevalence of developmental challenges that the philanthropic system is trying to solve. Some philanthropic dilemmas were also highlighted and then the participants were asked to work upon those using the Iceberg model.

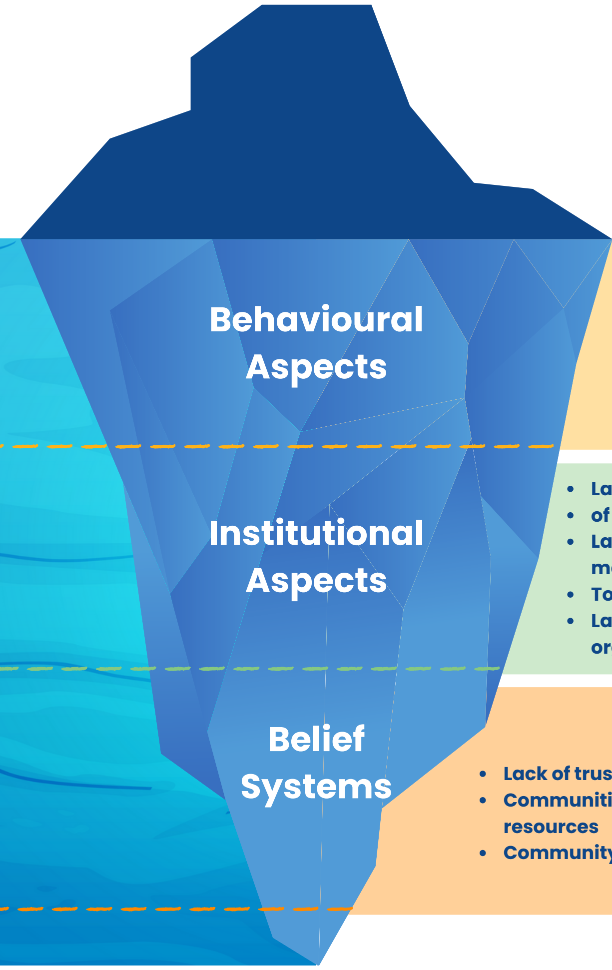


Iceberg model

Systems thinking uses the iceberg model as an approach to dive deeper into underlying layers, which are causing symptoms of a problem. The model serves as a framework for understanding problems, guiding us to move from observing events to understanding patterns and behaviours of such events. It allows us to uncover the structures that are driving the patterns and events and to bring to surface the underlying mental models that are creating these structures.

The iceberg model was used as a tool to understand the behavioural aspects, institutional aspects and belief systems that are driving the challenges and dilemmas mentioned in the above section. The participants were asked to populate behavioural aspects, institutional aspects and belief systems against each layer of the iceberg, causing the dilemmas in the system. The participants were prompted to use the iceberg models to understand a) the system as it was and b) the new system they want it to become, keeping in mind that they are part of the present system.

The following key points emerged through the group work and subsequent discussions. These points are based on our analysis of the different icebergs created by the different groups and, thus, reflect what we consider to be the most important and profound insights that emerged from the convening.



SYSTEM AS-IT-IS

What behavioural aspects and institutional aspects, and belief systems do you think are reinforcing the problem you have chosen to work upon

Behavioural Aspects

- Assumption of Inefficiencies
- Risk-aversion
- Reliance on proven models
- Expectation of gratitude from funders

- Gender inequality in giving
- One-size-fits all approach
- Short term focus with tangible goals
- Skewed funding priorities

- Preferred areas
- Monitoring not used for learning
- The urge to 'solve' the 'development problem'
- Duplication of resources

Institutional Aspects

- Lack of collective infrastructure
- of giving
- Lack of a decision-making matrix
- Top-down funding approach
- Lack of transparency in organisational processes

- Ecosystem of measurement
- Impact is limited to short-term outputs
- Slow decision making

- Lack of community representation
- Failures are not seen as learning opportunities
- Feedback loops are one-way
- Funding driven by Funder's wants

Belief Systems

- Lack of trust
- Communities lack knowledge and resources
- Community is dependent and vulnerable

- SPOs have no management capabilities
- SPOs are all about hearts; corporate sector is all about efficacy
- Communities know more about the problems but struggle with solutions

- Taking a deficit-based approach
- Funders like to micro-manage
- Decisions should be made by people with more resources

SYSTEM TO-BE

What changes do you wish to see in all these aspects and what is your role in bringing about these changes

Behavioural Aspects

- Less focus on immediate, visible, quantifiable outcomes
- Greater patience for long-term intangible and qualitative change

- Funding to be more flexible more honest and more responsive to the needs of the community
- Community oriented solutions are more sustainable

Institutional Aspects

- Philanthropic funding is an enabler, not the only answer
- Redistribution of Power
- Frameworks to understand impact and not focus on immediate outputs

- Feedback loops flowing in both directions
- Regular cross-sectoral stakeholders' meetings to co-create
- Creation of spaces to include community's voices

Belief Systems

- Believe that the community knows what it needs
- Believe that we can learn from failures
- Collective voice is important but only possible if individual voices are also heard

- SPOs are the experts who can develop solutions to their own challenges
- Believe that the funds are a means to an end
- Approach: I don't have all the answers, I need others to co-create solutions

Lack of trust

System as-it-is

Behavioural Aspect

There is a lack of trust amongst the key stakeholders namely, funders, SPOs and communities. A lack of trust can undermine the overall impact of philanthropic initiatives, as stakeholders may be less likely to collaborate or support long-term projects.

Institutional Aspect

Overall, there has developed an 'Ecosystem of Measurement' where outputs , and many a times, just inputs are looked at for impact. But not what impact this investment has had.

Belief System

SPOs lack the capacity to utilise the money efficiently and, therefore, cannot be trusted with the donor's money. There is a deeper belief system that persists in the donor community that people who have money are inherently more capable of addressing social problems. There is also this belief that the poor are less capable, and even if we give them the means and resources, they would just squander them away.

System to-be

Adopt a trust-based philanthropy approach, which focuses on building trust and long-term relationships. This approach acknowledges that both funders and beneficiaries are experts in their respective fields and encourages open and transparent communication. Trust-based and collaborative philanthropy can be enabled only if we are transparent about our practices, allowing us to study behaviours and motivations only if we have information to share with each other. Trust based philanthropy can happen only if we are willing to engage with communities, and work through inherent power structures.

Complex monitoring mechanisms

System as-it-is

Behavioural Aspect

Philanthropic funding has been favouring short-term and easily visible work. While this helps achieve quick and measurable results, it does not alleviate the causes that lead to the problem in the first place. In pursuit of acheiving quick,, measurable and tangible results, funders and , especially CSR funders heavily rely on a rigorous monitoring mechanism.

"Sponsoring one child's education gets you adoring letters but does not tell you how it affects the family"

Institutional Aspect

There is a significant emphasis on FAS (Financial Accounting Standards), and funders expect SPOs to strictly comply with their proposed planned budgets. Any deviations are frowned upon.

CSR has had a significant impact on the entire philanthropic ecosystem, particularly in the area of monitoring. The legal provisions of the CSR Act are highly stringent and can also hold the board members accountable. Therefore, to avoid personal and organisational penalties, "there is a pervasive approach of over-caution in the top management when it comes to CSR". This leads to exceedingly strict and rigorous accounting and reporting expectations from SPOs.

"Overall, there has developed an 'Ecosystem of Measurement' where outputs, and several times, just inputs are looked at for impact. This is how much we have invested in child-health. But not what impact this investment has led to."

Belief System

Funders believe that they need a high degree of control and influence over various aspects of the projects that they are funding. As a result, monitoring becomes quintessential to exercising that control.

CSR is regarded as an extension of a corporate organisation, which adheres to certain regulations, standards and procedures in their business activity. This approach is replicated in CSR leading to expectations of excessive audit checks, and accounting rigour from the beneficiaries. Gradually, this practice of over-reporting has permeated beyond CSR.

System to-be

The frequency and complexity of reporting requirements needs to be reduced. Donors and funding organisations need to lay emphasis on qualitative reports over quantitative ones, allowing beneficiaries to share stories, successes, and challenges rather than just numbers

Top-Down approach

System as-it-is

Behavioural Aspect

Philanthropic funding, intervention planning, designing and monitoring, all follow a unidirectional top-down approach. Systems that include communities in the planning and implementation of interventions meant for them, are rarely seen. This top-down approach to funding restricts the focus to short-term outputs at the expense of long-term and sustainable social impact.

Philanthropic funding, intervention planning, designing and monitoring, all follow a unidirectional top-down approach. Systems that include communities in the planning and implementation of interventions meant for them, are rarely seen. This top-down approach to funding restricts the focus to short-term outputs at the expense of long-term and sustainable social impact.

Institutional Aspect

Inequitable power dynamics between funders and beneficiaries lead to and perpetuate top-down approaches. Funders also have specific priorities or agendas, which leads to top-down funding.

Belief System

People don’t drive decisions, money does. Since funders possess the funds, they hold the decision-making power. There's also a prevailing belief that the poor deserve charity, but not power perpetuating the belief that people are incapable of working towards solutions to their own problems.

“I will design I know better”: funders believe that their ability to run a successful business organisation equips them to apply the same principles to address chronic social issues.

System to-be

Creating more spaces to discuss and talk to each other- for the funder, SPOs, and community representatives to understand each other's needs, barriers, struggles and what works and what could work. Engaging with beneficiaries and communities to co-design programs, fostering transparent communication, and building local capacity can promote a more bottom-up and empowering approach to funding and development.

Aversion to risk-taking

System as-it-is

Behavioural Aspect

Funders tend to be risk-averse rather than risk-takers. Despite the potential for philanthropists to be more inclined toward risk and innovation, there is a preference for working with 'Proven Models' of successful interventions. Even when funding is initially provided for high-risk areas, it often dries up over time.

Institutional Aspect

Non-conventional approaches are often ignored to avoid any discord with the existing system or any possible confrontation with the government.

Belief System

Risk is equated with failures in Indian society. This stems from the idea that mistakes are inherently wrong. We are consistently punished for making errors, constantly reminded that mistakes are incorrect and labeled as 'failures.' As we grow up, we tend to perpetuate this equation, but it's important to realise that 'Mistakes ≠ Failures'.

"We used to fund ideas, now we just fund programs"

System to-be

Philanthropy can provide "customised and innovative solutions" to complex social problems. Traditional approaches, especially the one-size-fits-all approach, have failed to address them.

Failures provide us with the best opportunity to learn. Valourisation of 'success' stops us from 'learning from failures', which is critical in a space like philanthropy that is expected to experiment, and try new and innovative interventions to address social issues. Philanthropists can and should be more risk-prone and innovative; everyone wants to work on 'Proven Models' of successful interventions.

Learnings from the convening and Actionables for CPID

The discussions indicated that participants were able to reflect and locate their own roles and responsibilities in the system that they are part of. While the convening provided a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the challenges that confront philanthropy, it also threw up questions and aspects that need further exploration.

Learning

Lack of open and candid communication among stakeholders is a bigger problem than it is assumed to be. There is a need to have 'Safe spaces' for collaboration where honest and open exchanging of learnings and ideas can take place.

Action

CPID will work towards organising more such convenings, discussions, and spaces to bring all stakeholders together to have candid discussions.

Learning

CSR funding has a palpably overarching impact on the entire philanthropic ecosystem in India. Participants unanimously agreed that the Companies Act 2013, was a watershed moment in Indian philanthropy, that has not only significantly increased the overall quantum of philanthropic funding but is also changing its character.

Action

CSR needs to be looked at independently from the other forms of philanthropy and not merely a subset of philanthropy. Although they are not completely mutually exclusive, the motivators, challenges and barriers are distinctly different. CPID can create and disseminate knowledge on this.

Learning

There is a misconception amongst some CSR funders as well as SPOs that no more than 5% of the organisation's total expenses can be allocated to administrative costs in a CSR-funded project. However, some participants clarified that the 5% cap applies to CSR funders themselves and not to the beneficiaries receiving CSR funds.

Action

CPID will disseminate this information widely so that SPOs are encouraged to spend more funds on capacity building or organisational development.

Learning

We learned through this convening that, despite the challenges confronting Indian philanthropy, there are some encouraging signs of change. Some philanthropies are shifting their focus toward underserved areas, recognising the significance of long-term change and adopting more inclusive funding practices that benefit numerous SPOs and, consequently, the communities. However, a persistent challenge lies in the lack of available knowledge and the fragmentation of efforts and isolated initiatives.

Action

CPID can connect actors working on making philanthropy more effective to link different tools and practices, amplify common messages and promote joint action for inclusive development. CPID can find ways to identify, record and present a set of case studies highlighting best practices for both funders and SPOs.

Learning

Embrace broader perspectives and diverse voices to build the narrative on PID. Instead of focusing only on a handful of issues and set models, as well as on the usual voices in the philanthropy system, we should broaden our perspectives. For example, we must include philanthropic voices from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. We should also have perspectives of the communities directly impacted by philanthropic interventions. When the focus expands, it will create opportunities to approach complex social challenges more holistically and comprehensively.

Action

Organise a series of convenings in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities to bring together philanthropy thought leaders and practitioners from foundations, SPOs, corporates, and PSOs to deepen the systems-level understanding of the development sector, get feedback from stakeholders on our learnings and understand how individually and institutionally they can support the movement.

Learning

While there are some ongoing efforts in this direction, there is no unified framework or a set of guiding principles that can help organisations to reflect on, or initiate their transformative journey towards inclusive philanthropy.

Action

The Philanthropy for Inclusive Development framework, led by CPID, co-created with funders, SPOs, philanthropy networks, advisories, and academic centres, intends to create a Self Assessment tool for funders through which they can critically look at their practices and identify potential areas that need to be addressed for more sustainable impact. The framework will distil collective insights and experiences, combining global and local wisdom, and will encompass principles, actionable points, and practices that organisations can embrace to initiate this transformative journey.

The Road Ahead

More such exercises would create a process of internalising the challenges we often face in the system. Such internalisation is essential for any change to happen or be contemplated. This convening has started that process, and more exercises that build upon the current findings shall help in finding answers to some of the existing dilemmas.

The more stakeholders get involved in such convenings, the better the chances of understanding the 'real' problems and finding real solutions. For example, the community, representatives of which were not present for this convening, is an essential stakeholder in this system. Hence, an attempt has to be made to include them on such occasions to hear their voices and help them reflect upon their belief systems and behaviours driving some of the problems they are trying to solve.

Participants in the convening

Aman Pannu leads the Corporate Communications and CSR division at DCM Shriram Ltd. She also serves as the President of the DCM Shriram Foundation, which focuses on holistic development and water in agriculture. Under her guidance, the foundation has initiated numerous projects aimed at enhancing the quality of life for communities within the company's operational areas.

Aman Pannu
DCM Shriram Foundation

Anuradha Rajan is the Honorary Executive Director of the South Asia Women Foundation India, a national women's fund in India. Anuradha brings valuable experience from her previous role as the Chief Executive at Mumbai Mobile Creches. Her commitment to social change spans over a decade, including significant contributions as a Gender and Development Research Specialist.

Anuradha Rajan
SAWF IN

Arun Nathan is Partner, Sattva Consulting. Prior to this, he has led CSR and Sustainability initiatives across companies like L&T Finance, Lifestyle International Private Ltd and IDFC Group. He was the Chief Operating Officer of Jagtiani Foundation (India), a private philanthropy set up by promoters of the Landmark Group.
Arun is an alumnus of The London School of Economics and IRMA.

Arun Nathan
Sattva Consulting

Dr. Avneet Kaur has worked across the public and private sector in areas of policy making, program implementation, advisory, knowledge management, Human Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility. Avneet has worked with the National Skill Development Corporation and led the first Development Impact Bond for skilling. She is a Cambridge Commonwealth Trust scholar and holds a doctorate in Development Studies from the University of Cambridge (UK).

Dr. Avneet Kaur

Bridgespan Group

Deepinder Janeja works with L&T Group companies on CSR partnerships and capacity building. She has experience in research and analysis, teaching, capacity building, grassroots-level action, program development, management, and evaluation. She holds a Master's degree in Sociology from India and a Master's degree in Communications from the USA.

Deepinder Janeja

Larsen & Toubro Limited

Deepthi Bopaiah currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of GoSports Foundation, where she aims to create sports role models in India. Deepthi also brings financial expertise from her time at HSBC, where she served as Vice President, specialising in wealth management for premier banking clients. Her career journey showcases her commitment to excellence, leadership, and making a positive impact in both corporate and sports sectors.

Deepthi Bopaiah

GoSports Foundation

Gayatri Nair Lobo is the Chief Executive Officer of the ATE Chandra Foundation. She has previously served as CEO at the India School Leadership Institute (ISLI), where she played a pivotal role in the development of educational leadership. Her journey also involves roles at Artha India , where she serves as a member of the Board of Directors. She is an active participant in The/Nudge forum as a speaker.

Gayatri Lobo

ATE Chandra Foundation

Malini Thadani is a seasoned independent director and Board Adviser with a strong commitment to fostering organisational resilience and forward-thinking strategies. She serves on the board of AU Small Finance Bank as a non-executive independent director. She also holds positions as an independent director and board member in companies like Saksoft. Previously, she served as the Asia Sustainability Head for HSBC in Hong Kong.

Malini Thadani

ISDM Faculty, Strategic Advisor, ESG, CSR

Matilda Lobo is a seasoned professional who currently serves as the Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) & Sustainable Banking at IndusInd Bank, India. Under her visionary guidance, the bank has effectively implemented a new CSR strategy, ensuring that 100% of CSR funds are deployed with a strong focus on achieving a high-impact social return on investment.

Matilda Lobo

IndusInd Bank

Naghma Mulla has driven the vision of the EdelGive Foundation, strengthening its core principles of collaborative philanthropy and transforming it from a grant-making foundation to a philanthropic asset management platform. She is General Board Member at Goonj, India Climate Collaborative. She also provides strategic guidance to the Migrants Resilience Collaborative, the largest migrant collective in the world.

Naghma Mulla
EdelGive Foundation

Narendranath Damodaran has served in key leadership positions at PRADAN, including as Executive Director and Program Director, and has played a pivotal role in shaping PRADAN's vision and impact. His journey in the field of development began in rural India, where he played a crucial role in organising rural women into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and implementing livelihood programs during his tenure as a field professional at PRADAN in Jharkhand and Rajasthan.

Narendranath Damodaran
PRADAN

Neelima Khetan is a CSR and social sector professional with nearly four decades of experience and has played pivotal roles in the CSR initiatives of significant corporate groups. She has held leadership positions like – India Country Director of the American India Foundation and Chief Executive of Seva Mandir. She was also the Acting Director IRMA in 2006-07. She recently co—edited the book *Anchoring Change, Seventy-Five Years of Grassroots Interventions that Made a Difference.*

Neelima Khetan
CSR and Social Sector Advisor

Neera Nundy

Dasra

Neera Nundy is the Co-founder and Partner at Dasra India and plays a crucial role in bringing capacity building, knowledge, funding, and networks to the sector. She holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and is a fellow of the third class of the Kamalnayan Bajaj Fellowship of the Ananta Aspen Center and a fellow of the Aspen Global Leadership Network. She is a board member of The Hunger Project, American School of Bombay, and Aangan Trust.

Priyanka Dutt

Giving Tuesday

Priyanka Dutt is a seasoned social impact leader with over two decades of experience in the private and social sectors in India, using the power of media and communication to drive social impact. She previously served as the Country Director at BBC Media Action, India, where she provided strategic and operational leadership to the organisation's India country program. Prior to joining the nonprofit sector, Priyanka produced and directed entertainment television shows for channels such as BBC World, ESPN, and the Star Network.

Puja Marwaha

CRY

Puja Marwaha has been with CRY since 1994, having joined to set up the organisation's Human Resources function. For over two decades, Marwaha has helped build an organisational framework for CRY that best captures the essence of justice and equity. A post-graduate in Human Resources from XISS Ranchi, Marwaha is an Aspire India Fellow, a board member at VANI (Voluntary Action Network India) and is on the academic advisory boards of XIM School of Sustainability and XISS Ranchi.

Pushpa Sundar is a distinguished professional with a profound legacy of over 30 years in the realm of development and civil society, she was the Founder Director of the Sampradaan Indian Centre for Philanthropy. Through regular writings in notable publications such as *The Wire*, *Mint*, and *The Hindu BusinessLine*, Pushpa Sundar utilises her platform to share invaluable insights on critical topics encompassing CSR, philanthropy, and pressing social issues.

Pushpa Sundar

Independent Consultant and Writer

Dr Samar Verma is the Program Officer at Ford Foundation leading the program portfolios on Technology and Society, Future of Workers, and Philanthropy. He has 25 years of professional experience in the corporate sector, conducting policy research, leading think-tank, international development and research grant management based in India and UK.

Samar Verma

Ford Foundation

Sherry Yezdani leads strategic partnerships and operations at SVP India and plays a pivotal role in enhancing the impact of SVP India through institution and brand building. Sherry's expertise encompasses conceiving, leading, and managing Pan India initiatives, strategies, and engagement opportunities to foster growth for partners and NGOs, along with developing learning avenues for all stakeholders.

Sherry Yezdani

Social Venture Partners-SVP

Sunil Bhandari
RPSG Group

Sunil Bhandari is the Executive Director - Corporate at RP Sanjiv Goenka Group. He is a chartered accountant, and during his two-decade tenure in the group, he has played a key role in overseeing company takeovers, sales, and accounting system restructuring. Currently, he is responsible for Group Finance & Cross Synergy.In addition to his corporate role, he is also a poet who has published two Amazon bestsellers. He is passionate about the development sector and is an active SVP participant.

Suresh Reddy
SRF Foundation

Suresh Reddy is a distinguished professional with a profound background in CSR and education. He currently serves as the Lead CSR & Director at SRF Foundation in Gurgaon, India. Suresh has previously worked with the Byrraju Foundation, Dr. Reddy's Foundation, and CARE India. He has also served as a lecturer at the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), conducted action research, and supervised trainee school work.

Vikram Solanki
Educate Girls

Working with Educate Girls over more than eight years, Vikram Solanki is the Head of Operations at Educate Girls. His journey began as a Project Manager for the Development Impact Bond (DIB) in Bhilwara District, Rajasthan. He is a valuable part of the Educate Girls team, making a meaningful impact on education.

TEAM DESTA

Mihir uses systems thinking and modelling to create conversations on sustainability agendas and facilitate group decision-making processes. He founded DESTA Research LLP in April 2018 and is currently a visiting faculty member for System Dynamics Modelling at TISS, Hyderabad. He works with philanthropies, think tanks, and non-profit entities to mainstream systems thinking into their planning and implementation. In his previous roles, he has worked with Watershed Organisation Trust and TERI.

Mihir Mathur
Founder-Director,
Desta Research LLP

Kartik has a passion for understanding complex interconnections and dynamics. He has published a patent using a multidisciplinary approach to design and engineering at the Indian Institute of Information Technology Design and Manufacturing (IIITDM), Chennai. As a part of the India Fellow social leadership program, he has worked extensively with a non profit women empowerment, entrepreneurship, and livelihoods in tribal villages of Chhattisgarh.

Kartik Bitra
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The Indian School of Development Management (ISDM) is a first-of-its-kind, internationally renowned, and autonomous institution established in 2016. ISDM's mission is to establish Development Management as a distinct discipline separate from business management or public administration. It aims to empower social purpose organisations to have a meaningful impact on a population scale by building a robust foundation of theory and practice in Development Management, transforming the way these organisations are led and managed.
Visit us at www.isdm.org.in

Centre for Philanthropy for Inclusive Development

The Centre for Philanthropy for Inclusive Development (CPID) is a Centre of Excellence, under the aegis of the Global Knowledge Hub at ISDM. It is dedicated to catalysing philanthropy as a force for inclusive development through a combination of rigorous research, learning programs, knowledge exchanges and convening diverse voices.
Visit us at www.isdm.org.in/centers-and-projects/cpid.