



***Corporate Social Responsibility- As a Great Path to Achieve Sustainable
Development Goal.***

Ms. Bhumika Chirumamilla¹ & Ms. Prathyusha Vudumula²

ABSTRACT

Every organization, while they are doing some business and earning profits from society, has the minimum responsibility to look after the society and to provide some facilities and advantages to it, which we call corporate social responsibility. The first nation in the world to impose a mandate on CSR is India, including the CSR mandate in the Companies Act, 2013 is a great step in engaging the corporate sector towards the development of the country. The present research paper attempts to explore the relationship between social responsibility (CSR) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through its CSR practices, the Indian corporate sector can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. SDG and CSR both have a similar objective or purpose as the Development of India. Corporate Social Responsibility features like economic, Social, or Environmental all can be coupled with SDG, and it can help to tackle many challenges that India is facing in modern times. This research paper's focus is to understand how Indian corporations are contributing to SDG through their CSR efforts and by making better planning they can contribute more also the essential role of ethical business behaviour in addressing pressing societal and environmental challenges.

Keywords: *Corporate social responsibility, Sustainable development goal, social welfare, Society, corporate sector.*

¹ Author-BBA LLB 5th Year student, KLEF College of Law, KLEF (Deemed to be) University, Andhra Pradesh, Email: bhumikachirumamilla@gmail.com, M.NO:9182361858.

² Co-Author-BBA LLB 5th Year student, KLEF College of Law, KLEF (Deemed to be) University, Andhra Pradesh, Email: 514prathyusha@gmail.com, M.NO:9014119329

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Corporate social responsibility:

CSR stands for corporate social responsibility and is a self-organizing business model that empowers companies to be socially responsible for themselves, their stakeholders, and society at large. India is one of the first countries to make and implement a regulation on CSR. This paradigm reform that impacts companies that generate social capital was introduced through **Section 135³** on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). As per the act, section 135 applicable to every company either being a private or public company having

- Net worth – Rs.500 crore or more
- Turnover - Rs. 1000 crore or more
- Net profit - Rs. 5crore or more
- During any financial year (April 1st to succeeding year of March 31st)
- If any company does not satisfy during the last 3 consecutive years need
- not to comply.

Both private companies and public sector companies can contribute to CSR. According to **Schedule VII of the Companies Act 2013**, companies can contribute CSR towards the following:

- Eradicating hunger, poverty, and malnutrition
- Promoting education
- Promoting gender equality
- CSR initiatives related to the environment
- Protection of national heritage, art and culture
- Take measures that can benefit armed forces veterans, war widows, and their families
- Contribute towards PM National Relief Fund or any other Central
- Government fund for the welfare of the SCs, STs, Women, minorities and

³ Company Law, 2013

- backward classes
- Contribute towards development of technology in Central Government
- approved academic institutions
- Contribute towards rural area development and slum area development

Sustainable Developmental Goals and their targets:



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs are an urgent call for action by all countries, both developed and developing, in a global partnership to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. Below is a brief explanation of each SDG along with their targets⁴:

1. No Poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere. Targets include eradicating extreme poverty, implementing social protection systems, and ensuring equal rights to economic resources.
2. Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security, and promote sustainable agriculture. Targets encompass ending malnutrition, doubling agricultural productivity, and ensuring sustainable food production systems.
3. Good Health and Well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Targets involve reducing maternal and child mortality, combating communicable diseases, and achieving universal health coverage.

⁴ Article by United Nations

4. Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Targets include ensuring access to quality early childhood development, achieving universal primary and secondary education, and expanding educational opportunities for vulnerable groups.
5. Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Targets encompass ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women, ensuring equal participation in decision-making, and providing equal opportunities in education and employment.
6. Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Targets include achieving universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, improving water quality, and implementing integrated water resources management.
7. Affordable and Clean Energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. Targets involve increasing the share of renewable energy, enhancing energy efficiency, and expanding access to clean cooking fuels.
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Targets include achieving full and productive employment, promoting entrepreneurship, and ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation. Targets encompass enhancing technological capabilities, promoting sustainable industrialization, and expanding access to information and communication technologies.
10. Reduced Inequality: Reduce inequality within and among countries. Targets include empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status.
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Targets involve improving urban planning, providing access to safe and affordable housing, and reducing the environmental impact of cities.
12. Responsible Consumption and Production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Targets encompass achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, reducing food waste, and promoting sustainable practices in industries.
13. Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Targets include strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related disasters, integrating climate change measures into policies, and raising awareness about the impact of climate change.
14. Life Below Water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for

sustainable development. Targets involve preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution, conserving coastal and marine areas, and ending overfishing.

15. Life on Land: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Targets include combating poaching and trafficking of protected species, promoting the sustainable management of forests, and restoring degraded land.

16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Targets involve reducing violence and exploitation, promoting the rule of law, and ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.

17. Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Targets include enhancing global partnerships for sustainable development, increasing financial and technical assistance to developing countries, and promoting the participation of developing countries in global governance.

Integration Of CSR With SDGS

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are connected in several ways. CSR refers to a company's efforts to be socially accountable by considering the impact of its activities on customers, employees, communities, and the environment. On the other hand, the SDGs are a set of 17 global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. The connection between CSR and SDGs can be outlined as follows⁵:

1) Alignment with SDG Targets: CSR initiatives of companies can be aligned with specific SDG targets. For example, a company's CSR program focusing on education and skill development can contribute to SDG 4 (Quality Education).

2) Integration of SDGs into Business Strategy: Companies can integrate the SDGs into their business strategy through CSR activities. This involves identifying how their operations can positively impact the achievement of the SDGs.

3) Collaboration for SDG Implementation: CSR encourages collaboration between companies, governments, and non-governmental organizations to address social and environmental challenges, which is essential for achieving the SDGs.

4) Reporting and Transparency: CSR reporting often includes information on a company's

⁵ Article by Impact Academy

contribution to the SDGs, promoting transparency and accountability in addressing global sustainability challenges.

5) Ethical Business Practices: CSR promotes ethical business practices, which are essential for supporting the principles and targets of the SDGs, such as responsible consumption and production (SDG 12).

6) Triple Bottom Line: Both CSR and SDG refer to the concept of the triple bottom line, which encompasses not only financial performance (traditional bottom line) but also social and ecological performance (CSR). CSR efforts often focus on improving the social and ecological aspects of a company's performance, which is consistent with sustainable development principles.

7) Social responsibility: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to actions that contribute to the social well-being of society in addition to the financial returns. Examples of CSR activities include philanthropic activities, community development projects, fair labour practices, etc. These activities contribute to the social aspect of sustainable development by tackling issues such as poverty, inequality, and social welfare.

Analytical data with interpretation

Table I Schedule VII of Company Act 2013, various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities mapped to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

S.NO	CSR ACTIVITES	SDGs
1	eradicating hunger, poverty, and malnutrition	1,2,3,6
2	promoting education	1,2,4,8
3	promoting gender equality and empowering women	1,5,10
4	ensuring environmental sustainability	6,7,9,11,13,14,15
5	protection of national heritage, art, and culture	9,11
6	measures for the benefit of armed forces veterans, war widows, and their dependents	3,4,8
7	training to promote rural sports, nationally recognized sports, paralympic sports, and Olympic sports	8,10
8	contribution to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM CARES Fund)	1,2,3,4,6,9, 15
9	Contribution a) to incubators or research and	9,13,12

	development projects in the field of science, technology, engineering, and medicine b) Contributions to public-funded Universities.....	
10	rural development projects	1,2,3,4,9
11	slum area development.	1,2,3,4,6,7,9
12	disaster management, including relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction activities.	1,2,3,4,6,9,11,13,14,15

Case studies illustrating successful integration of CSR activities with SDG implementation

Case Study 1: Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan Company⁶:

Unilever SDG Focus: Various SDGs including Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Clean Water and Sanitation, Gender Equality, and Responsible Consumption and Production. Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan is a prime example of how a company has integrated CSR activities with the implementation of multiple SDGs. The plan focuses on addressing various sustainability challenges through its business operations and supply chain. Unilever has targeted several SDGs with specific initiatives, such as:

1. Zero Hunger and Good Health and Well-being: Unilever has committed to improving nutrition and providing access to safe and affordable food products through the fortification of its food products and partnerships with local communities.
2. Clean Water and Sanitation: The company has implemented water conservation measures in its manufacturing processes and has also worked on water access and sanitation projects in vulnerable communities.
3. Gender Equality: Unilever has placed a strong emphasis on gender inclusivity through various initiatives, including promoting women's economic empowerment and gender diversity within the organization.
4. Responsible Consumption and Production: Unilever has set targets to reduce the environmental impact of its products and promote sustainable consumption through initiatives such as waste reduction and sustainable sourcing. The Sustainable Living Plan demonstrates how Unilever's CSR activities are aligned with specific SDGs, resulting in tangible positive impacts on the environment and society while contributing to the company's long-term sustainability and growth.

Case Study 2: GSK's Partnership for Prevention and Treatment of Neglected Tropical Diseases

⁶ Book on Unilever's sustainable living plan

Company⁷: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) SDG Focus: Good Health and Well-being (specifically Target 3.3 on ending epidemics) GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has partnered with various organizations and governments to address neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) as part of its CSR initiatives, aligning with SDG Target 3.3 on ending epidemics. GSK's efforts include:

1. Drug Donations: GSK has committed to donating billions of doses of medicine to support the treatment and prevention of NTDs in affected regions, addressing SDG Target 3.3 to combat infectious diseases.
2. Research and Development: The company has invested in research and development of new treatments for NTDs, demonstrating its commitment to innovation in addressing global health challenges.
3. Public-Private Partnerships: GSK has engaged in partnerships with governments, NGOs, and other pharmaceutical companies to strengthen health systems and increase access to treatments for NTDs. By integrating its CSR activities with the prevention and treatment of neglected tropical diseases, GSK has made significant contributions to achieving SDG Target 3.3, improving the health and well-being of millions of people in underserved communities. These case studies exemplify successful integration of CSR activities with SDG implementation, highlighting the positive impact that businesses can have on sustainable development by aligning their strategies with the global goals.

Recommendations for shaping the future of CSR to better contribute to sustainable development

To shape the future of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for better contribution to sustainable development, organizations can consider the following recommendations:

- Integrate CSR into Core Business Strategy: Embed CSR initiatives into the core strategy of the organization to ensure alignment with business goals and long-term sustainability.
- Adopt a Multi-Stakeholder Approach: Engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, and government entities, to drive collective action towards sustainable development.
- Set Clear and Measurable Goals: Establish clear, time-bound, and measurable goals for CSR initiatives that align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to track progress and demonstrate impact.
- Promote Transparency and Accountability: Practice transparency in reporting CSR activities and impacts while holding the organization accountable for its commitments and

⁷ Article by WHO

actions.

- **Invest in Employee Engagement:** Foster a culture of sustainability and social responsibility among employees through training, education, and involvement in CSR initiatives.
- **Embrace Innovation and Technology:** Leverage innovation and technology to drive efficiency, create sustainable solutions, and address social and environmental challenges.
- **Prioritize Environmental Sustainability:** Focus on reducing environmental impact through measures such as carbon footprint reduction, waste management, and sustainable sourcing practices.
- **Support Diversity and Inclusion:** Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organization and incorporate these values into CSR programs to create positive social impact.
- **Collaborate for Impact:** Partner with other organizations, NGOs, governments, and academia to leverage expertise, resources, and networks for greater impact on sustainable development goals.
- **Measure Social and Environmental Impact:** Implement robust impact measurement and evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of CSR initiatives and identify areas for improvement.

By adopting these recommendations, organizations can enhance the effectiveness of their CSR efforts, contribute meaningfully to sustainable development goals, and create shared value for society, the environment, and business success.

Conclusion:

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) constitutes a core component for the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by ensuring that business operations undertake social and environmental responsibilities. Such dual objectives can be achieved through integration of CSR into core strategies since organizations would enhance economic development while improving social issues, environmental concerns as well as community development. Businesses, for instance, by taking up strategies such as carbon footprint reduction strategies, encouraging the use of fair labour practices and nurturing local economies do improve their images but offer benefits to stakeholders in a much wider scope in the long term. In addition, CSR provides a platform for innovative ideas, fosters responsible behaviour in consumption, and builds synergies that further advance the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. To sum up, practicing CSR is not only a question of ethics for businesses; it is also a way for them to give back to the world in a strategic manner: it is a way to

help build a better social order which will in turn ensure the resilience and success of the businesses even in such cross-cutting changes as climate change.