

CONTRIBUTION OF CSR FUNDS IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**D.D. Doke¹ and A.B. Dadas²**^{1,2}Neville Wadia Institute of Management Studies and Research, PuneMS, India¹dineshddoke@gmail.com, ²drdadas.10@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Agriculture sector is the most important sector of the economy. More than 50% of the population depends on it for livelihood. The sector however suffers from great distress due to several factors such as weather dependence, low income from the produce, lack of infrastructure etc. Given this backdrop, contribution of CSR funds in agriculture sector assumes great importance. Several corporates focus on agriculture area as part of their CSR activities. Agriculture offers various potential areas for CSR such as social development, entrepreneurship development, environment, natural resource management etc. However, more needs to be done in this field as there is enough scope for CSR activities.

Keywords: CSR, agriculture, farmers, weather, environment, resource management.

Introduction

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of Indian economy. According to the World Bank more than 50% of Indian families are dependent on agriculture. However, large part of agriculture is in distress. The reasons for the farm sector distress in India are several but some of the most important reasons are high risk in agriculture sector due to weather, low income from agriculture produce and lack of agriculture infrastructure. Given this backdrop, it becomes important that the corporate CSR is focused on Agriculture and rural development. CSR in these fields will support farmers and improve their condition.

Literature Review

There is ample research on CSR in agricultural sector. Below are a few abstracts of recent literature.

Nedumaran (2019), has posited that the exploration initially assesses applied effect of internet based agro communication on Agriculture development through CSR and concerning the use of CSR by agriculture farms to advance sustainable rural development. At that point exact information from 120 agriculture farmers beginning an assortment of cultivating, sizes, and Agriculture is broke down to decide the sort of cultivating who is associated with rural development and the sort of exercises they position. The paper makes an endeavor to investigate farmers utilizing internet based agro-communication on

Agriculture development through corporate social obligation (CSR). The examination question analyze whether these farmers utilized for internet communication in rural development, on the off chance that it is so what sort of CSR drive were embraced by them for development in rural regions and how does the corporate carry out their CSR program as a piece of their production points of view.

Nayak (2018), has argued that, this chapter depicts how through the prism of CSR, industry can take a stride in advancing its relationship with the partners. Agriculture continues to remain the mainstay of livelihood for chunk of the population. The area is drawn with the double overwhelming difficulties of delivering all the more all the while without draining natural resources. A pilot study is organized to acquire an understanding into the CSR-agriculture drive of the business. This reasonable part has not endeavored to locate the essential information, zeroing in on comparable issues from other investigations. Nonetheless, the proposed 3D methodology: "Different Dynamic Dignified," is a result of FGD which gives a framework to take a more extensive view for wider replication by customizing it to the neighborhood conditions. This part adds to the current writing and supporters that the business ought to focus on agriculture livelihood security in their CSR attempts.

Upadhyay (2019), has opined that, the intervention by corporate is said to massively

affect socio economic environment. The investigation plans to discover spending examples of CSR corpus by corporate on agriculture area as well as could be expected answer for farm area infrastructure bottlenecks in agriculture area through CSR intervention. This examination utilizes freely accessible CSR expenditure data on agriculture by 20 Indian corporate. Study tracks down that the CSR spending in agriculture is undeniably less in contrast with numerous areas like training, medical services, workmanship and culture and so on. Likewise a couple of enormous firms were deliberately spending a piece of their profit on CSR drives even before the arrangements identifying with CSR were presented in Companies Act 2013. The arrangement of required CSR consumption on agriculture area might be useful to bring farm sector out of misery.

According to Singh and Deewan (2019), this paper makes an endeavor to contemplate the effect of corporate social responsibility (CSR) its interaction, reasonable and theoretical agreement. It is likewise based with the understanding that corporate social responsibility is towards sustainable agriculture and rural infrastructure. The paper likewise tries to look the far and wide selection of corporate social responsibility (CSR) arrangements in non-industrial nations have prompted require a coordinated exertion to more readily catch CSR impacts. The paper considers the reasonable ramifications for the work to evaluate CSR commitment to local area development in agricultural nations. Rural infrastructure is essential for agriculture, agri-ventures and generally speaking economic development of rural regions. It likewise, unexpectedly, gives essential conveniences that improve the personal satisfaction. Corporate Social Responsibility has been standing out as of late by the corporate world around the world. The companies release their CSR through social development in different manners in changing degree.

According to Pillai et al. (2019), the ventures to sustainable agriculture and food systems contribute straightforwardly to decreasing hunger, poverty and unhealthiness of the focused-on population and positive commitment towards environmental

government assistance. The issues influencing Indian agriculture spread across the whole horticultural value chain directly from soil and water conservation to market availability and social concerns related. This paper maps three significant center zones under agriculture where in the CSR speculations can be channelized. This incorporate tending to the Environmental constraints, Improving Access to Markets and Social engineering and different sub-components for financing being proposed under these recommended center territories. The paper tries to investigate openings for advancing dependable interests in agriculture and food systems through CSR ventures. This paper adopts a contextual investigation strategy and examinations with regards to the different development work done by ICRISAT and utilizing the effects as a directing factor for proposed speculation ideas.

Case studies

1) Krishi Mitra – Mahindra and Mahindra

Mahindra and Mahindra, with the assistance of Swades Foundation, BAIF Development Research Foundation and Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, dispatched the Krishi Mitra project where it helped small and marginal farmers by educating them in updated techniques in farming. The farmers were trained in viable farming works on including soil health, crop planning, creating model farms with bio dynamic farming practices, thereby increasing crop efficiency, through the Wardha Family Farming Project, Krishi Mitra and Integrated Watershed Development Project.

Moreover, the task likewise accommodated soil testing, advisory services, drip irrigation, community farming, seed culture farming, agriculture extension services, infrastructure development and capacity building resulting in progress in horticultural efficiency, to support the farmers (Thacker, 2020).

2) Project Moo under HUL's Prabhat Initiative

'Project Moo' is a piece of 'Prabhat', a community development initiative of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) that has been dispatched in association with UDAY –

an ability development association joined forces with the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC). The undertaking is first of its kind comprehensive AgTech arrangement that intends to handle milk deficit, traceability and private extension issue through dairy farm management and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) training. The task was dispatched at Mohi Khurd Village in Rajpura, Punjab, India. It pointed toward creating sustainable livelihoods for farmers by imparting dairy skills to rural farmers, including women dairy farmers. This included setting up of awareness camps on dairy as a sustainable business, providing advanced and financial literacy, visiting farmers at their doorsteps with a group of dairy specialists and empowering farmers carefully through MoooFarm farm management portable application.

Focus Areas for CSR in Agriculture

1) Environmental Sustainability

Environmental issues are generally imperative to the agriculture sector, and the current agriculture sector is moving away from environmental sustainability for different reasons. Environment assumes a significant part in agrarian creation. It has high influence on the growth, development and yield of crops, incidence of pests and diseases, water needs and fertilizer requirements.

2) Natural Resource Management

India has just 4% of the fresh water resources and 17 percent of the worldwide population. Agriculture uses 70% of the water resources. Population growth, outrageous occasions of climate change, over abuse, imbalanced outside utilization of input, changing land use design, changing food propensities, and so on, are increasing the tension on delicate natural resources. Consequently, conservation, optimum use and recycling of natural resources is vital for ensuring sustainable food and nutritional security.

3) Social Development

The significant actors for development of society in the rural regions are Youth and Women. The accomplishment of agriculture is basic for the endurance of every single rural community (a large portion of the population), and to take care of the entire population. Empowering women will have the biggest effect to the entire family and keep away from the most sensational of human abuses. Unhealthiness in rural territories needs to be handled at the source - agriculture and rural networks. Engaging youth is basic for the long-haul practicality of agriculture. Therefore, there is an enormous investment potential for social capital development through training, developing and nurturing them.

4) Entrepreneurship Development

Agriculture everywhere on the world is going through a period of change. In this changing situation, agriculture is taking new shape and expanding its extension past the constraints of simple crop development and animal husbandry for livelihood of the rural population. Exercises like value addition, diversification, high tech agriculture, precision farming, agripreneurship, organic farming and so on are step by step getting due consideration of individuals involved in redefining agriculture.

Conclusion

Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy, given that 50% of population is dependent on it for livelihood. However, the agriculture sector is in distress due to several challenges such as dependence on the weather, lack of infrastructure, low income from the produce etc. Given this background, CSR activities focused on agriculture assume great importance. Several corporates cover this field as part of their CSR activities. There are several focus areas for CSR in agriculture such as environmental stability, natural resource management, social development, entrepreneurship development etc. Notwithstanding the already done projects on agriculture front there is enough scope for additional work in this field.

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